



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
SECRETARY'S TRIBAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
BIDEN-HARRIS ADMINISTRATION UPDATES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)/
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)
Accomplishments and Activities Furthering
Biden-Harris Administration Priorities

1. **New Grants/Funding**

- a. [*FY 2024 Supplement: Strengthening Public Health Systems and Services in Indian Country \(CDC-RFA-TO-23-0001-02SUPP24\)*](#): In April 2024, CDC announced a program supplement for the 26 American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) tribes and regional AI/AN tribally designated organizations awarded funding under CDC-RFA-TO-23-0001: Strengthening Public Health Systems and Services in Indian Country. The CDC-RFA-TO-23-0001 recipients are eligible to submit applications for new FY 2024 Centers, Institute, and Offices (CIO) Project Plans according to the entity type, HHS Region, and/or IHS Area for which they received initial funding. The program's purpose is to strengthen the quality, performance, and infrastructure of tribal public health systems, including workforce, data and information systems, and programs and services.

Since August 2023, CDC has provided nearly \$26 million to the recipients through supplements to improve tribal public health infrastructure and services to tribal communities. The recipients will work to improve their capacity to develop, implement, and evaluate public health programs and services to address prioritized public health activities in AI/AN communities:

Federally Recognized AI/AN Tribes: Cherokee Nation, Chickasaw Nation, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Colusa Indian Community Council, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Forest County Potawatomi Community, Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma, Muscogee Creek Nation, Pueblo of Laguna, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians, Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians, and the White Earth Band of Chippewa Indians.

Regional and Other AI/AN Tribally Designated Organizations: The Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, Albuquerque Area Indian Health Board Inc., California Rural Indian Health Board Inc., Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council Inc., Indian Health Council Inc., Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona Inc., Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board, Rocky Mountain Region Tribal Leadership Council, Southern Plains Tribal Health Board, United South and Eastern Tribes Inc., Wabanaki Health and Wellness NPC, and the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation.

- b. [*A Cultural Approach to Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country \(GHWIC\) \(CDC-RFA-DP-24-0025\)*](#): This Spring, CDC announced the new GHWIC Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). The NOFO builds on previous and current GHWIC, Tribal Epidemiology Centers Public Health Infrastructure (TECPHI), and Tribal Practices for Wellness in Indian Country (TPWIC) programs. Input was also received from recipients and CDC's Tribal Advisory Committee to help shape the new NOFO. The new cultural approach is designed to be a more sustainable approach to chronic disease prevention, management, and control. With nearly \$21 million in annual funding, Healthy Tribes program anticipates awarding 30 Tribes, Tribal Organizations, and Urban Indian Organizations.

2. Tribal Engagement and Listening Sessions

Upholding the federal trust responsibility and honoring the sovereignty and self-governance rights of tribal nations, the Office of Tribal Affairs and Strategic Alliances (OTASA) has facilitated two listening sessions (one upcoming tentative listening sessions) and participated in two HHS tribal consultations since the November 2023 STAC. Additionally, the 27th Bi-annual Tribal Advisory Committee Meeting was hosted at CDC headquarters on February 21 and 22, 2024.

These sessions serve as a critical aspect of our government-to-government relationship with tribal nations, involving elected or appointed tribal leaders or their representatives, and are part of a suite of engagement methods including tribal consultation, information sessions, dialogues, and focus groups. These engagements ensure that tribal voices are heard in the development and shaping of strategic plans and policies, complementing formal consultation processes.

Notably, listening sessions offer a less formal but equally important avenue for various tribal public health leaders and representatives from Urban Indian Organizations, as well as state and local health departments to contribute their perspectives and insights. This input is crucial for CDC/ATSDR as it continues to develop and refine its approaches to serving AI/AN communities effectively.

Completed Listening Sessions

- CDC Grants Governance Board Tribal Listening Session – December 6, 2023
- Update for hexavalent combination vaccine (DTaP-IPV-Hib-HepB [Vaxelis]) for American Indian/Alaska Native infants Listening Session - January 9, 2024

Upcoming Tentative Listening Sessions

- CDC National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD)/Indian Health Service - Reducing RSV in AI/AN Infants – May 3, 2024

Consultations

- CDC/ATSDR participated in the HHS Tribal Consultation on the Draft HHS Tribal and TEC Data Access Policy – February 6, 2024
- CDC/ATSDR participated in the HHS Annual Tribal Budget Consultation - April 9-10, 2024

3. New Initiatives

- a. *CDC/ATSDR New CDC.gov*: CDC/ATSDR will launch the Clean Slate project to overhaul the government websites and streamline content by more than 60% so that people will be better able to find the information they're looking for to protect their health. This initiative will make public health pages easier to navigate while highlighting key information for AI/AN people.
- b. *Chronic Tribal Coordination Workgroup*: The National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP) recently initiated a new Tribal Coordination Workgroup for the Center to enhance cross-center coordination and prevent and manage chronic disease through support to tribes, tribal organizations, and Urban Indian Organizations. The workgroup has members from each of NCCDPHP's nine divisions and the Center's Office of the Director to ensure a comprehensive and holistic approach to how they provide support to tribes.
- c. *Respiratory Virus Recommendations*: On March 1, 2024, CDC released updated recommendations for how people can protect themselves and their communities from respiratory viruses, including COVID-19. The new guidance brings a unified approach to addressing risks from a range of common respiratory viral illnesses, such as COVID-19, flu, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), which can cause significant health impacts and strain on hospitals and health care workers. As part of the guidance, CDC provides active recommendations on core prevention steps and strategies and additional considerations for people who are at higher risk of severe illness from respiratory viruses, including older adults, young children, people with compromised immune systems, people with disabilities, and pregnant people.

4. **Trips to Indian Country**

- a. *Convening on Tribal Maternal Mortality Review*: On November 2-3, 2023, CDC collaborated with the National Indian Health Board (NIHB) to convene the first national meeting on Tribal Maternal Mortality Review on tribal lands in Santa Ana Pueblo, New Mexico. Participants included over 40 partners that came together representing tribes, several Tribal Epidemiology Centers, regional and national tribal serving organizations, Urban Indian Organizations, community-based tribal organizations, and individuals who provide tribal representation on state-run Maternal Mortality Review Committees (MMRC), in addition to NIHB staff, CDC staff, and supporting staff from CDC Foundation. The agenda included information sharing around existing MMRC processes, and foundational and ongoing Tribal Maternal Mortality Review activities. CDC will use insights from the meeting to further strategic planning and development of plans with tribal partners for establishing tribally led MMRCs, or other approaches that will work in alignment with the Enhancing Reviews and Surveillance to Eliminate Maternal Mortality (ERASE MM) program activities.
- b. *Director Cohen's Visit to the Chickasaw Nation*: In February CDC/ATSDR Director Dr. Mandy Cohen visited the Chickasaw Nation and met with tribal leaders. During her visit, Dr. Cohen had the chance to tour the Inchokma Mobile Medical Unit (IMU). Inchokma means "Feel Well, Be Well." This mobile care setting allows medical professionals to meet AI/AN patients where they are. This custom-built 40-foot mobile medical unit is equipped with two clinic rooms, testing and laboratory space, medical-grade vaccine cold storage, a bathroom, a wheelchair lift, an X-ray unit, and a workstation—allowing basic prevention and primary care services to be offered throughout the Chickasaw Nation. Please read more about this visit from the Chickasaw Nation's Press Release, [LINK](#).

- c. Healthy Tribes Program Site Visits: Below are the Healthy Tribes Program site visits from November 2023 to April 2024, aiming to assess the implementation and impact of initiatives within tribal communities.
- *Fort Peck Community College (FPCC), April 2024*: FPCC is a Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country (GHWIC) and Tribal Practices for Wellness in Indian Country (TPWIC) recipient. FPCC GHWIC Diabetes Prevention Program, TPWIC program, and Fort Peck Language and Culture Department collaborated to host its 2nd local Fort Peck Food Sovereignty Conference. The conference brings together community food system leaders to speak on efforts to return to environmentally sustainable indigenous food systems.
 - *Santo Domingo Pueblo, March 2024*: Santo Domingo Pueblo is a GHWIC recipient. One of the highlights was seeing the recipient's effort to provide public health messaging that is inclusive, culturally appropriate, and accessible to all community members; the GHWIC-funded program, Kewa Health Outreach Program (KHOP), responded to community feedback by translating lifestyle management programs into the Keres language, contributing to a program retention rate of 88%.
 - *Navajo Nation, December 2023*: Navajo Nation is a GHWIC recipient. During the site visit, Navajo staff provided an overview of GHWIC activity implementation, lessons learned, and program challenges experienced to date. Healthy Tribes Program staff provided over 15 recommendations to the recipient on ways to strengthen the program work plan and ideas to address program challenges.
 - *Native Americans for Community Action, Inc. (NACA), November 2023*: NACA is a TPWIC and GHWIC recipient, in Flagstaff, Arizona. NACA's TPWIC program, which fosters internal collaboration across departments to include behavioral health and youth programs to support a holistic health model. NACA GHWIC program partners with Northern Arizona University (NAU) to improve lactation support and access to breastfeeding pods on the NAU campus.
- d. National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) 2024 Annual Conference: CDC/ATSDR officials attended the [NCUIH Annual Conference](#) – Sustaining Traditions. CDC participated in Federal Agency Breakout Sessions on April 30, 2024. These sessions provided a unique opportunity for partner engagement.
- e. 28th Biannual CDC/ATSDR Tribal Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting: The CDC/ATSDR TAC will hold its 28th biannual meeting on August 7-8, 2024. The meeting will continue to be a hybrid in-person and virtual meeting. Registration for the in-person and virtual meeting can be found at [28th TAC Meeting Registration](#). The meeting includes discussions and engagement between CDC/ATSDR senior leaders and TAC members on public health topics currently relevant in Indian Country. CDC/ATSDR continues to use these opportunities to hear and learn from our TAC.

5. Executive Orders and Memos

- a. *E.O 14112 - Reforming Federal Funding and Support for Tribal Nations To Better Embrace Our Trust Responsibilities and Promote the Next Era of Tribal Self-Determination.* On December 6, 2023, the President signed this Executive Order to highlight the need for agencies to break down barriers for tribes so that they can access and utilize federal funds effectively. CDC/ATSDR in coordination with HHS continues to work towards increasing the flexibility of Federal funding for tribal nations. CDC/ATSDR will continue to engage tribes and tribal serving organizations and work collaboratively to identify methods and best practices to ensure they have the support needed to improve the public health of their communities. In 2023, the National Center for State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Public Health Infrastructure and Workforce at CDC, coordinated with the Office of Financial Resources and the Office of Grants Services to create an internal Grants Governance Board. This Board seeks to improve how CDC administers grants and recommend solutions that can be spread and scaled agency-wide. In December 2023, the Board held a tribal listening session to gain input from tribes on their concerns, ideas, and innovation for the CDC grants management lifecycle. In late February, the Board used this feedback—as well as input from other partners and CDC staff—to develop priorities. To address specific concerns of AI/AN award recipients, the Board has prioritized developing Tribal Funding Models.