



APR 27 2022

Dear Tribal Leader and Urban Indian Organization Leader:

I am writing to initiate Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer to seek your input and recommendations for revisions to the new 2022-2026 Indian Health Service (IHS) Office of Urban Indian Health Programs (OUIHP) Strategic Plan.

On December 16, 2021, the IHS hosted a virtual Urban Confer session to seek input from Urban Indian Organization (UIO) Leaders to promote meaningful discussion to identify priorities. There were six written comments submitted. We also summarized comments UIO Leaders provided during the virtual Urban Confer session. These recommendations and comments are being utilized to develop a first draft of the 2022-2026 OUIHP Strategic Plan (see Enclosure).

In general, commenters recommended the following:

- Support efforts to diversify funding through third-party billing and reimbursements to ensure sustainability;
- Support efforts to attract and retain skilled, culturally competent health service providers;
- Support improving the Health Resources and Services Administration's Auto-Health Professional Shortage Area scoring;
- Address workforce shortages through the IHS Scholarship Program and the IHS Loan Repayment Program;
- Improve data quality;
- Support funding and parity for health information technology modernization;
- Support Urban Confer across the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the White House;
- Improve the capacity of Urban Indian Organizations to respond to public health emergencies, including access to the Strategic National Stockpile;
- Expand Community Health Aide and Community Health Representatives Programs to Urban Indian Organizations;
- Support advanced appropriations;
- Support recognition of Traditional Health Providers as a billable service;
- Support more resources for Behavioral Health Services;
- Develop long-term strategies for unforeseen events (e.g., public health emergencies) and the impact to Urban Indian Organizations;
- Streamline contracting and funding reporting with Area Offices;
- Support UIO facility and services expansion; and
- Support health care education and initiatives.

Please note that some of the items listed above may fall outside the scope of the IHS, for example require a legislative change or action from an agency outside of the IHS.

As a next step, the IHS will host Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer sessions to develop a second draft of the Strategic Plan.

**TRIBAL CONSULTATION AND URBAN CONFER SESSIONS (VIRTUAL):** Please register and join us for the Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer sessions that follow:

<b>VIRTUAL URBAN CONFER SESSION OFFICE OF URBAN INDIAN HEALTH PROGRAMS STRATEGIC PLAN</b>	
<b>DATE:</b>	Friday, April 29, 2022
<b>TIME:</b>	2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Eastern Time
<b>REGISTRATION LINK:</b>	<a href="https://ihs.gov.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJIsdeCqrDooH43xPy8e6Jq3aHoVcZCb6nk">https://ihs.gov.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJIsdeCqrDooH43xPy8e6Jq3aHoVcZCb6nk</a>

<b>VIRTUAL TRIBAL CONSULTATION SESSION OFFICE OF URBAN INDIAN HEALTH PROGRAMS STRATEGIC PLAN</b>	
<b>DATE:</b>	Monday, May 2, 2022
<b>TIME:</b>	2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Eastern Time
<b>REGISTRATION LINK:</b>	<a href="https://ihs.gov.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJIsfuigpjMsHX7sDR0cwcyIC-i9AIZtC_8">https://ihs.gov.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJIsfuigpjMsHX7sDR0cwcyIC-i9AIZtC_8</a>

**WRITTEN COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:** I would also like to encourage Tribal Leaders and Urban Indian Organization Leaders to e-mail your comments and recommendations by the Consultation and Confer comment deadline of **Friday, May 20, 2022.**

- Please e-mail your comments to: [consultation@ihs.gov](mailto:consultation@ihs.gov); or [urbanconfer@ihs.gov](mailto:urbanconfer@ihs.gov); SUBJECT LINE: **2022-2026 OUIHP Strategic Plan.**

Page 3 – Tribal Leader and Urban Indian Organization Leader

I look forward to your feedback and recommendations on improving the OUIHP Strategic Plan.

If you have questions, please contact Ms. Cindy Baldwin, Health System Specialist, OUIHP, IHS, by telephone at (240) 393-7347, or by e-mail at [cindy.baldwin@ihs.gov](mailto:cindy.baldwin@ihs.gov).

Thank you for your partnership as we work to evaluate your priorities and ensure the highest possible health status for Urban Indians.

Sincerely,

/Elizabeth A. Fowler/  
Acting Director

Enclosure: Draft Office of Urban Indian Health Programs 2022-2026 Strategic Plan