



# Indian Health Service Press Release

October 29, 2024  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## IHS Awards \$12.3 Million to Help Fight HIV, Hepatitis C, and Syphilis in Native Communities

The Indian Health Service is announcing the allocation of \$12.3 million to 17 tribal and urban Indian organizations across 11 states as part of the Ending the HIV/HCV/Syphilis Epidemics in Indian Country (ETHIC) initiative. This funding will support efforts over a five-year period to directly address the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), and syphilis within Native communities.

"This funding will primarily focus on getting services and supplies into the hands of clinicians, public health staff, and ultimately, the individuals receiving the care that they need," said IHS Director Roselyn Tso. "This money is intended to improve the day-to-day delivery of services and equitable access to care, which are necessary ingredients to make progress towards ending the HIV syndemic in Indian Country."

The ETHIC initiative aims to provide resources to American Indian and Alaska Native communities to actively reduce new HIV infections and related co-morbidities, particularly syphilis and HCV infections. The IHS has specifically chosen to focus on syphilis as the rates among American Indian and Alaska Native people have skyrocketed and are over ten times as high as Whites, while also affecting Native women at a higher rate than other races. Substance use and challenges to accessing preventive services and care are also drivers of this epidemic. The recipients of these funds will work to improve HIV and syphilis-related health outcomes and reduce the disparities in these areas among Native populations.

The initiative will roll out in four interconnected parts, focusing on the implementation of effective, innovative strategies, interventions, and services tailored to the needs of these communities. It aims to significantly reduce the number of new HIV infections and co-occurring diseases, contributing to overall health equity in these populations.

Resources for the ETHIC initiative come to IHS through a competitive process through the [Minority HIV/AIDS Funds](#), via the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Infectious Disease and HIV/AIDS Policy – part of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health.

The following tribal and urban Indian organizations received funding:

Tribal/Urban Indian Organization	City	State	Amount
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Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium	Anchorage	AK	\$1,181,625
Maniilaq Association	Kotzebue	AK	\$2,307,606
Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc.	Phoenix	AZ	\$200,000
Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation	Tuba City	AZ	\$478,469
Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians	Alpine	CA	\$193,843
Denver Indian Health and Family Services, Inc.	Denver	CO	\$192,308
Sault Ste Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians	Sault Ste Marie	MI	\$122,149
Native American Community Clinic	Minneapolis	MN	\$560,110
Southern Plains Tribal Health Board Foundation	Oklahoma City	OK	\$786,000
Muscogee (Creek) Nation	Okmulgee	OK	\$186,507
Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma	Perkins	OK	\$543,269
Cherokee Nation	Tahlequah	OK	\$1,065,537
Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board	Portland	OR	\$2,500,000
Oglala Sioux Tribe	Pine Ridge	SD	\$145,000
Great Plains Tribal Leaders Health Board	Rapid City	SD	\$175,000
Texas Native Health	Dallas	TX	\$1,244,019
Squaxin Island Tribe	Shelton	WA	\$407,415

The awards will also enable the Indian Health Service and program staff to work with tribal and urban programs that they have not partnered with before. According to Rick Haverkate, IHS branch chief for HIV/HCV/sexually transmitted infections, “expanding the IHS, tribal, and urban network and creating new partnerships will be symbiotic, as IHS can provide resources and support to the recipient. In return, we can learn from their best practices and scale up nationally.”

**Key Goals of the ETHIC Initiative:**

1. Reduce new HIV, HCV, and syphilis infections to fewer than 3,000 per year by 2030.
2. Achieve a 90% reduction in new HCV infections and a 65% reduction in mortality compared to 2015 baseline levels.

The IHS HIV/HCV/STI Program serves as a national resource for IHS. It aims to include all health care service delivery systems, both internal and external, including IHS, tribal, and urban Indian health care facilities. Program goals include increased diagnoses, prevention, treatment, and response from American Indian and Alaska Native-serving organizations, people living with HIV/HCV/STIs, clinical and public health staff, and federal agencies.

The IHS, an agency in the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#), provides a comprehensive health service delivery system for approximately 2.8 million American Indians and Alaska Natives who belong to [574 federally recognized tribes](#) in 37 states. Follow the agency via social media on [Facebook](#), [X](#), and [LinkedIn](#).