



MAY 18 2018

Dear Tribal Leader and Urban Indian Organization Leader:

I am writing to initiate a Tribal Consultation and an Urban Confer on the funding mechanism to distribute behavioral health initiatives that are currently distributed through grants. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 Explanatory Statement encourages the Indian Health Service (IHS) to transfer behavioral health initiative funding through Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA) contracts and compacts rather than through grants.

Currently, the total funding amount appropriated for all Agency behavioral health initiatives is \$59.2 million. Of this total amount, the IHS funds approximately \$51.9 million through grants and Federal awards that includes \$5.9 million for Urban Indian Organizations. The remaining \$7.3 million supports IHS National Management. The IHS Division of Behavioral Health will host a series of virtual learning sessions to further explain how the behavioral health initiative funding is distributed through grants, including a devoted session on IHS National Management. I encourage you to participate in this learning series that occurs prior to the formal Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer sessions. Please see the enclosed schedule for additional information on the virtual learning series.

During the formal Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer sessions, I invite you to provide feedback on all topics related to our behavioral health grants. However, there are few topics that I ask for your specific input on and those are listed here:

- Distribution methodologies (e.g., national funding formula that is used as a standard; national formula and Area formulas that vary depending on the input of Tribes for that region; base funding for all Tribes, Tribal Organizations, or Urban Indian Organizations; funding for only those Tribes, Tribal Organizations, or Urban Indian Organizations that currently receive funding and add Tribes with new funding/increases);
- Funding formulas (e.g., Tribal Size Adjustment, User Population, Disease Burden, Poverty, etc.);
- Funding for Urban Indian Organizations;
- Impact on current grantees
- Funding mechanism (grants, cooperative agreements, ISDEAA contracts, or compacts).
- Demonstrating effectiveness (e.g., data collection, evaluation, establishing national outcomes; Tribal Epidemiology Center funding for technical assistance, evaluation; etc.); and
- Advocacy and raising national awareness and visibility (National Indian Health Board, National Council of Urban Indian Health cooperative agreement funding and support).

I encourage you to participate in the following virtual Consultation and Confer sessions:

### **Tribal Consultation**

- Thursday, June 7 from 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. ET
- Wednesday, June 20 from 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. ET

### **Urban Confer\***

- Thursday, June 14 from 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. ET

(\*There will be an In-Person Confer session at the 2018 National Council for Urban Indian Health Annual Leadership Conference on Wednesday, June 27 from 9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. ET. Please visit [www.ncuih.org](http://www.ncuih.org) for more information.)

### **Virtual Conference Details**

- Conference Call-in line: (888) 947-8932; **Passcode:** 2084762
- Adobe Connect: <https://ihs.adobeconnect.com/ruz69531xeyt/>; **Room Passcode:** ihs123

Written comments will be accepted through the duration of the Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer period. **The deadline to provide comments is Wednesday, August 1, 2018.**

Send comments by e-mail to: [consultation@ihs.gov](mailto:consultation@ihs.gov) or [urbanconfer@ihs.gov](mailto:urbanconfer@ihs.gov)  
**Subject Line: IHS Behavioral Health Funding**

Send comments by postal mail to: RADM Michael D. Weahkee  
Acting Director  
Indian Health Service  
5600 Fishers Lane, Mail Stop: 08E86  
Rockville, MD 20857  
**ATTN: IHS Behavioral Health Funding**

I look forward to your input and recommendations regarding behavioral health initiative funding. Following the close of the comment period, the IHS will convene the National Tribal Advisory Committee on Behavioral Health (NTAC) to review all comments. The NTAC will then formulate recommendations for IHS leadership to review and consider.

If you have questions about the process for submitting a comment on the behavioral health initiative funding Tribal Consultation and Urban Indian Organization Confer, please directly contact Ms. Anna Johnson, Management Analyst, Division of Behavioral Health, IHS, by telephone at (301) 443-2038 or by e-mail at [anna.johnson2@ihs.gov](mailto:anna.johnson2@ihs.gov).

Sincerely,

/Michael D. Weahkee/

RADM Michael D. Weahkee, MBA, MHSA  
Assistant Surgeon General, U.S. Public Health Service  
Acting Director