



October 30, 2020

Dear Tribal Leader:

I am writing to provide an update since my September 8, 2020 letter regarding a partnership with the Indian Health Service (IHS) to support the implementation of the national [Community Health Aide Program](#) (CHAP).

I am pleased to announce that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Minority Health (OMH) has awarded a contract to James Bell Associates to identify the factors that promote or restrict the implementation of the national CHAP. After a very thorough and competitive evaluation of proposals from organizations with demonstrated expertise and experience working with Tribal communities, James Bell Associates was selected to develop, test and implement a toolkit to support Tribal communities in assessing readiness for CHAP implementation. The contract project period is September 30, 2020 through September 29, 2022.

Partnership with Tribal communities and IHS is critical to meet OMH's mission to improve the health of American Indian and Alaska Native populations. Through our close collaboration with Tribal communities, IHS and James Bell Associates, OMH is pleased to have the opportunity to support the IHS policy to expand CHAP from Alaska to the continuous 48 states. I look forward to this continued partnership to support the national expansion of CHAP.

If you have any questions about this project, please contact CAPT Damion Killsback, OMH Senior Advisor for Tribal Affairs via email at Damion.Killsback@hhs.gov or by phone at 240-453-6177.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Felicia Collins".

RADM Felicia Collins, M.D., M.P.H.
Assistant Surgeon General, U.S. Public Health Service
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Minority Health
Director, Office of Minority Health

Attachment: September 8, 2020 Letter



September 8, 2020

Dear Tribal Leader:

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Minority Health (OMH), I am pleased to announce an upcoming partnership with the Indian Health Service (IHS) for a new project to support the national expansion of the [Community Health Aide Program](#) (CHAP).

In July, IHS announced the national expansion of the CHAP. Since its establishment in 1968, CHAP has proven effective for addressing health service delivery needs in rural Alaskan areas. The program provides education and training of Tribal community health providers to increase access to quality health care, health promotion and disease prevention services. OMH supports the IHS policy to expand CHAP from Alaska to the contiguous 48 states.

As key partners in meeting OMH's mission to improve the health of racial and ethnic minority and American Indian and Alaska Native populations through the development of policies and programs that help eliminate health disparities, Tribal communities play a vital role in protecting the health of communities. Likewise, OMH seeks to support the sustainability and spread of effective policies, programs and practices that improve health outcomes.

In partnership with IHS, OMH will support an assessment to identify the factors that promote or restrict the implementation of the national expansion of CHAP. I expect this assessment to result in the development of a resource to support Tribal communities in assessing readiness for CHAP implementation.

OMH is committed to improve the overall health of American Indian and Alaska Native communities. I look forward to our continued partnership through this new venture to support the national expansion of CHAP.

If you have any questions, please contact CAPT Damion KILLSBACK, OMH Senior Advisor for Tribal Affairs via email at Damion.Killsback@hhs.gov or by phone at 240-453-6177.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Felicia Collins".

RADM Felicia Collins, M.D., M.P.H.
Assistant Surgeon General, U.S. Public Health Service
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Minority Health
Director, Office of Minority Health