

Community Health Aide Program (CHAP)

Indian Health Service/California Area Office

2026 Annual Tribal Consultation

March 4, 2026

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Dr. Miranda Davis – CRIHB





INDIAN HEALTH
COUNCIL, INC.

RESEARCH AND STUDENT
DEVELOPMENT




What is **CHAP?** (COMMUNITY HEALTH AIDE PROGRAM)

CHAP is a community-driven culturally appropriate healthcare delivery model that aims to improve access, quality and outcomes in tribal communities.


EDUCATION PATHWAYS

there are many different pathways into the CHAP program, such as:

-  Community Health Representative (CHR)
- certified medical assistant
- high school diploma/GED
- dental assistant
- peer support



Dental Health Aide Program (DHA/P)



Behavioral Health Aide Program (BHA/P)



Community Health Aide Program (CHA/P)

Primary Dental Health Aide I (PDHA I)

PDHA II

Expanded Function DHA I (EFDHA I)

EFDHA II

BHA I

BHA II

BHA III

BHA IV/Practitioner (BHP)

CHA (CHA I and II)

CHA/P (CHA III and IV)

DHA/Hygienist (DHAH)

DHA/Therapist (DHAT)

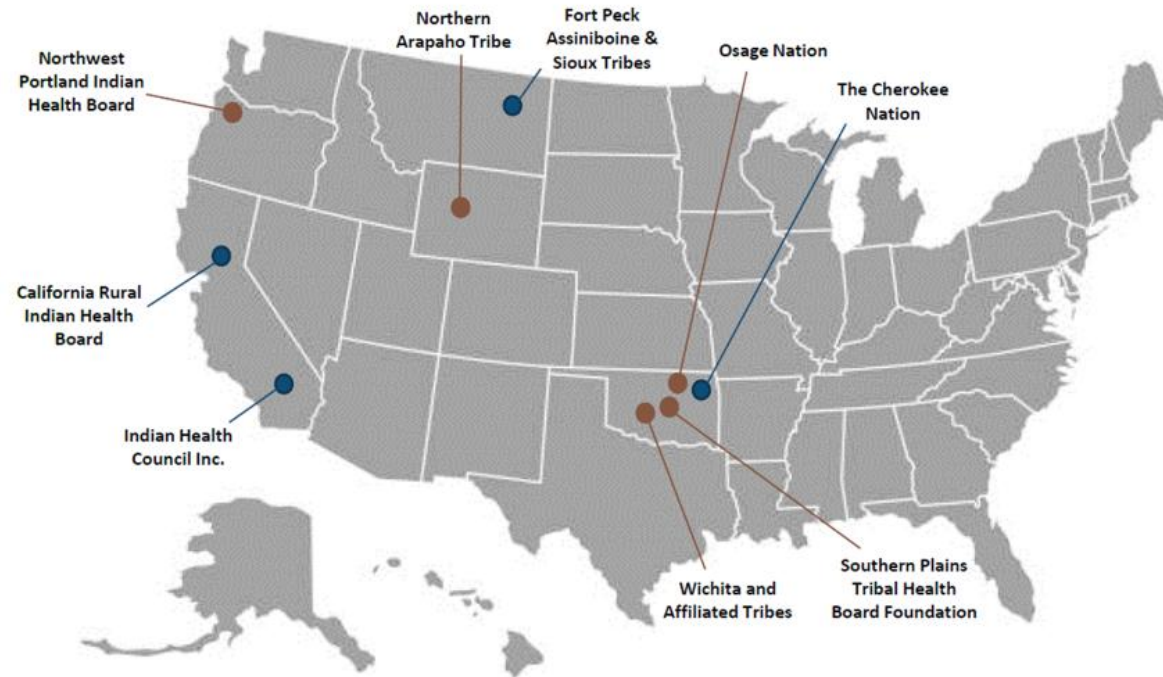


EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR CHAP PROVIDER TYPES

All CHAP
education
programs
are:

- ✓ Competency-based, accessible, culturally relevant
- ✓ Compliant with CHAP Standards & Procedures
- ✓ Reviewed by Academic Review Committee (CHARC, BHARC, DARC)
- ✓ Approved by a Community Health Aide Program Certification Board (CHAPCB)
- ✓ Taught in collaboration with clinics for practicum/preceptorship (supervised) work

CHAP GRANTEES



- Tribal Assessment and Planning (TAP) Grantees
 - Allocated \$375,000 to four grantees in second year funding period
- Tribal Planning and Implementation (TPI) Grantees
 - Allocated a minimum of \$540,000 to four grantees in second year funding period
 - NWPaiHB “graduated” to ACB phase



5 OPERATIONAL TRIBAL CHAPS
Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Oklahoma

IHC CHAP TAP Grantee Updates

INDIAN HEALTH COUNCIL, INC

- **Focus Groups completed in November:**

 - Internal Participants – 111

 - External Participants - 110

- **In Progress:**

 - Data Analysis

 - Financial Analysis

 - Reporting

 - CHAP Dental & Medical Workgroup Participation

- **Visit to working CHAP Sites (Washington) in Feb:** BH, Dental, & Medical reps to attend

- **IHC & CRIHB to apply for the CHAP Tribal Planning and Implementation Grant**

Governance



Governance and Board Roles: Circular 24-16 outlines the structure of NCHAPB and collaborative relationship between IHS and tribal representatives. **Dr. Loretta Christensen serves as the Chair** & is responsible for vetting nominations for board appointments. **Robert Houle, Tribal Health Director, Bad River Health & Wellness Center, Bemidji Area was voted in as NCHAPB Vice Chair in March '25.**



Federal Responsibilities: IHS Headquarters CHAP team is responsible for carrying out all federal duties related to the National CHAP, including providing TA to grantees, developing & submitting the annual report to Congress, preparing budget requests, & offering SME across the CHA, DHA, and BHA disciplines. They manage the SORN, oversee Tribal Assessment and Planning (TAP) & Tribal Planning and Implementation (TPI) NOFOs, finalize & implement the circular, handle contracts, and address tort coverage needs. **IHS Reps/SMEs: Dr. Christensen, Dr. Mark Clark, Dr. Marcy Ronyak, Dr. Wyatt Whitegoat, Dr. Cheryl Sixkiller, Dion Reid, Bobbi Jo Peltier.**



Board Documentation and Oversight: Circular 24-16 calls on the NCHAPB to establish its bylaws, policies, and procedures. The board plays a central role in supporting the vetting of national CHAP curricula, developing national Standards and Procedures (S&Ps), and shaping educational and clinical program design. **CA Representative: Angelina Renteria, COO Indian Health Council, Inc.**



ACB Establishment and Mentorship: The circular also supports the formation of ACBs, which serve not only as certifying bodies but also as mentors for other Areas working to establish their own ACBs. This mentorship approach reinforces a collaborative model of growth and sustainability for CHAP across IHS Areas.

Community Health Aide Program (CHAP) Boards:

National CHAP Board and Area Certification Boards (ACB)

ihs.gov/ihm/circulars/2024/community-health-aide-program/

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Indian Health Service
Rockville, Maryland 20857

INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE CIRCULAR NO. 24-16

COMMUNITY HEALTH AIDE PROGRAM

- D. National CHAP Board. The NCHAPB is a permanent national IHS board responsible for supporting Tribal and Federal CHAPs, establishing and maintaining minimum CHAP standards and procedures in the contiguous 48 states, and overseeing CHAP ACBs.
- E. Area Certification Board. The ACB will adopt standards and procedures in compliance with the National CHAP standards and procedures (National S&Ps) to recommend certification of health aides within their respective disciplines. The ACBs will recommend approved education and training programs and continuing education requirements within their respective disciplines to the NCHAPB Chair or their designee.

Essential Steps to Establish the NCHAPB



Area Certification Board

- **Responsibilities:**

- Adopts standards and procedures in compliance with the National CHAP S&Ps to recommend certification of health aides within their respective disciplines.
- Will recommend approved education and training programs and continuing education requirements within their respective disciplines to the NCHAPB Chair or their designee.

- **Area Office Role:**

- Formally establish the ACB to certify health aides.
- Work with Tribal leaders to appoint board members.
- Ensure balanced representation of Federal and Tribal members.
- Maintain regular communication with the NCHAPB regarding guidance, reciprocity between Areas, and oversight.
- Certify CHAP providers based on national standards.

- **Portland Area CHAP Certification Board (Establishment letter signed 11/26/24):**

- First Area Certification Board in the contiguous 48 states.
- Authorized to certify DHATs, PDHA-1, and BHA I-III.
- Will assist in the certification process and “mentoring” for other Areas.





**California does NOT currently have
an ACB.**

Steps to Establish an Area Certification Board



Necessary infrastructure for a CHAP Area Certification Board (ACB)

- Advisory workgroup(s) – recommended
- ACB Seating Chart and Nomination Process
- Academic Review Committees
 - Behavioral Health ARC
 - Community Health ARC
 - Dental ARC
- Entity with capacity and desire to administer and staff ACB and ARCs
 - Alaska: Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
 - Portland Area: Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board
 - California: _____
- Plan for the collection and storage of information

Opportunity: Join the California CHAP Champions

- Advisory group for anyone interested in CHAP in California
- Organized by CRIHB, IHC and CA NCHAPB Representative
- A platform for Tribes/Tribal Organizations to voice questions and specific CHAP needs that are relevant to their tribal communities.



Administering an Area Certification Board

- Administering entity works with advisory workgroup, receiving and documenting input from all interested Tribes.
 - Administering entity may formally recognize a plan to create and administer an ACB.
 - Administering entity fulfills several duties:
 - Budget for staff and meetings
 - Convene advisory workgroup, create and store meeting records
 - Develop seating matrix, with advisory workgroup
 - Establish Academic Review Committees, including nominations, bylaws.
 - Draft initial bylaws
 - Schedule meetings for workgroup(s), ACB, and ARCs
 - Meeting planning and logistics, agendas
 - Calendar polls, virtual / in-person, travel as applicable
 - Create and store meeting minutes, send for review
 - Compile and mail meeting packets and other Board communication
 - Securely collect and store information from applicants
 - Receive and respond to questions/communication/applications for the Board
-

CHAP Activities that may occur *prior to* ACB Establishment:

- CHAP outreach and education
- State Plan Amendment (SPA) for Medicaid reimbursement
- BHA/CHA/DHA education program planning and building
- Education of providers using existing education programs (AK, WA)
- Partner with other existing ACBs for certification of providers
- IHS NOFO: CHAP TPI available to T/TOs

- A note on IHS grant funding:

“Any T/TOs who receive a CHAP grant, either TAP or TPI, would need to relinquish their grant funding if an ACB in their respective Area is stood up within their funding period.”

Thank you!

Angelina Renteria,
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NCHAPB CA Rep
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Community Health Aide Program

California Rural Indian Health Board

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Steps to Establish an Area Certification Board



Step by step: Now to the future of an ACB

CHAP Champions Involvement

- Understand CHAP structure, process, and components
- Share priorities
- Outreach to stakeholders
- Plan for development of an ACB

ACB Planning Steps

- Draft an ACB seating chart
- Draft an ACB nomination process
- Draft bylaws
- Consider Tribal consultation

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CRIHB CHAP TAP Update

Completed activities

- Structured data collection:
 - 9 focus groups completed in November 2025 by CRIHB and Garrow Consulting
 - Clinic staff, including dental, behavioral health, and primary care
 - Data collection analyzed, Cohort 1 and 2 reports completed

CRIHB CHAP TAP Update

In-Progress activities

- Transition to targeted leadership education and engagement
 - Plan for the best next steps to provide tailored support for CHAP implementation
 - **Tribal priority: reimbursement for CHAP services**
 - **Completed activities:**
 - Tailored CHAP educational sessions for 7 participating clinics completed
- Financial Federal Report (**FFR**)
 - Accounting of how grant funds were expended during the project period
- Participation in the National Standards and Procedures workgroup for Community Health Aides
 - Aligned agreement and understanding of CHA Standards and Procedures

CRIHB CHAP TAP Update

Future Activities

- Application for IHS CHAP Tribal Planning and Implementation Grant
 - Incorporating feedback received from focus groups and tailored educational sessions
 - Opportunity to request specific work plan activities

Next step for SPA:

- Tribal leaders may request a California State Plan Amendment to authorize reimbursement for services provided by CHAP-certified providers.
- Recommendations from DHCS:
 - Request CHAP SPA as a topic for upcoming DHCS meeting agenda
 - As appropriate, send letter(s) to DHCS to request a CHAP SPA
 - DHCS will work collaboratively with Tribes and Tribal Organizations

Next steps for CHAP:

- Seek additional funding opportunities.
- Get involved! Join CHAP Champions.

[Home](#) > [Medicaid](#) > Medicaid State Plan Amendments

Medicaid State Plan Amendments

A Medicaid and CHIP state plan is an agreement between a state and the Federal government describing how that state administers its Medicaid and CHIP programs. It gives an assurance that a state will abide by Federal rules and may claim Federal matching funds for its program activities. The state plan sets out groups of individuals to be covered, services to be provided, methodologies for providers to be reimbursed and the administrative activities that are underway in the state.

When a state is planning to make a change to its program policies or operational approach, states send state plan amendments (SPAs) to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) for review and approval. States also submit SPAs to request permissible program changes, make corrections, or update their Medicaid or CHIP state plan with new information.

2026 CHAP Symposium



FROM VISION TO PRACTICE:

STRENGTHENING CHAP FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF TRIBAL HEALTH

MAY
5TH - 7TH, 2026



REGISTER

BILLINGS HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTER | BILLINGS, MT | 59101

The 2026 National **Community Health Aide Program (CHAP)** Symposium is a three-day convening of Tribal leaders, health professionals, students, educators, administrators, policymakers, and partners committed to strengthening community-driven health systems in Tribal and rural communities.

Join us to share best practices, address regulatory and funding challenges, support Tribal workforce and student leadership development, and strengthen collaboration across Tribal, state, and federal systems.

SAVE THE DATE!



Questions: Christina Freidt, ckfconsulting@outlook.com | Rosanna Pine, rosanna.pine@rmtlc.org

Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council, 2929 3rd Ave N., Ste 300, Billings, MT 59101

Thank you!

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➤ CHAP Champions



SCAN ME