



Office of Urban Indian Health Programs Work Plan Quarterly Report and Launch Plan Update – December 31, 2023

The Indian Health Service's mission is *"to raise the physical, mental, social, and spiritual health of American Indians and Alaska Natives to the highest level."*

Background

On June 5, 2023, the Indian Health Service (IHS) sent a [letter](#) to Urban Indian Organization (UIO) Leaders and Tribal Leaders announcing the publication of the [2023-2027 Office of Urban Indian Health Programs \(OUIHP\) Strategic Plan](#). In August 2023, the IHS developed the OUIHP Work Plan outlining the strategic activities identified in calendar year 2023 to address Urban Indian health priorities.

Status

Communications about the 2023 OUIHP Work Plan will include progress, barriers encountered, resources needed, next steps, specific timelines, and accomplishments. The OUIHP tracks progress for each activity and looks for sustained progress over time. Results of the work are made public for our partners and stakeholders' awareness. The OUIHP will provide regular updates on the progress of the [Work Plan](#) through a quarterly OUIHP Work Plan Report focusing on increased and effective communication with UIO partners while implementing sustainable actions.

Office of Urban Indian Health Programs Strategic Plan October – December Accomplishments

Pillar One – Provide effective timely and transparent communication.

- Updated the [OUIHP Strategic Plan webpage](#) featuring an orientation video on the Strategic Plan, and publication of the 2023 Work Plan and quarterly progress reports. {Goal 2/Objective 1}
- Updated recurring UIO and Area Urban Coordinator monthly meetings to the Microsoft Teams platform in December 2023, and updated UIO directories. {Goal 2 /Objective 1}
- Provided technical assistance to other federal agencies to engage UIO Leaders in an IHS UIO Listening Session by the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Health on Primary Health Care updates. {Goal 3/Objective 2}
- Ensured UIOs highlights and activities are communicated in the IHS Week in Review to improve communications with internal stakeholders, 26 UIO highlights were shared in the IHS Week in Review, bringing the total for the year to 132 UIO-related submissions. The Week in Review enhances UIO engagement and improves communication. {Goal 2/Objective 1}

Pillar Two – Improve OUIHP operations oversight and management.

- To improve the consistency and usefulness of the annual on-site review manual and process, engaged two UIOs in beta testing the revised electronic annual on-site review application. {Goal1/Objective 1}
- Engaged Area urban coordinators monthly in discussions on the standardizing and updating the urban contract template. {Goal 2}
- Provided six timely reminders of the 4-in-1 grant deadlines and multiple technical assistance and support on the FY 2024 non-competing continuation application process and submittal. {Goal 3/Objective 1}
- Initiated the planning of an OUIHP in-person staff retreat in June 2024 to support staff development, training, and team building. {Goal 4/Objective 1}



Pillar Three – Leverage partnerships to expand Urban Indian Organization resources.

- Collaborated with the Veterans Health Administration to ensure inclusion of UIOs in the work related to the [VHA-IHS Memorandum of Understanding](#), such as [conferring on the VHA-IHS MOU Operational Plan](#); the Native American Veteran PACT Act; [waiving copayments for eligible Native Veterans](#); the VA Office of Integrated Veteran Care and UIO reimbursement agreement program. {Goal 1/Objective 1}
- Collaborated with the [White House Council on Native American Affairs Health Committee](#) on the Native American Veteran Homelessness Initiative to encourage Native veterans to access these services. The Initiative is leveraging long-standing community-driven Stand Down events as an access point to serve Native veterans directly. This quarter, nine Stand Down events occurred in UIO communities. {Goal 1/Objective 1}
- Provided technical assistance on 100 percent Federal Medical Assistance Percentage for UIOs and assignment of [United States Public Health Service Commissioned Officers to UIOs](#). {Goal 1/Objective 2}
- Collaborated in six bi-weekly calls with the [Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Division of Tribal Affairs](#) on IHS, Tribal, and UIOs' priorities, such as activities and regulations related to AI/AN health, policy analysis, technical assistance, and guidance on national and local levels. {Goal 1/Objective 2}
- Awarded \$90,892 of the [fiscal year 2024 Urban Emergency Funds](#) to support the Indian Health Center of Santa Clara Valley to address emergency expenses due to roof damage from an earthquake. {Goal 1/Objective 5}

Pillar Four – Improve data quality.

- Four OUIHP staff completed the User Acceptance Testing to support the implementation of a new web-based data system for the 4-in-1 grant program. The UAT involved test case scenarios for super administrators, Area urban coordinators, and regular users, with next steps to modify the application further and deploy the UAT for end users. {Goal 1/Objective 1}
- Supported UIOs in the monthly export of workload reporting to the National Data Warehouse. OUIHP and NPIRS hosted seven separate Office hours for UIOs. {Goal 1/Objective 1}
- Supported UIO engagement in the fourth Tribal Consultation/Urban Confer held on November 8, 2023, on health information technology modernization. Currently, 12 UIOs have submitted statements of interest. {Goal 1/Objective 2}

Pillar Five: Expand UIO Infrastructure and capacity.

- This quarter provided three technical assistance sessions on construction guidance to support the American Indian Health & Services, Santa Barbara, California federal property transfer to support expanding UIO infrastructure and capacity. {Goal 1/Objective2}
- Provided technical assistance to three UIOs on the addition of new services, such as dental, chiropractic, and acupuncture services, and guidance on the credentialing and privileging of providers. {Goal 3/Objective 1}
- Provided support to 11 UIOs in providing high-quality and accessible care through accreditation readiness consultation services and training opportunities. {Goal 3/Objective 1}