



JUN 21 2019

Dear Tribal Leader and Urban Indian Organization Leader:

I am writing to initiate Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer on developing an Indian Health Service (IHS) Opioid Grant Program to distribute the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 opioid funding. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019 (Public Law 116-6), provided a \$10 million increase in the Alcohol and Substance Abuse Program budget line to better combat the opioid epidemic by creating a Special Behavioral Health Pilot Program (SBHPP), modeled after the Special Diabetes Program for Indians.

The explanatory statement further instructs the IHS that the SBHPP be developed in coordination with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to award grants for: 1) supporting the development, documentation, and sharing of locally designed and culturally appropriate prevention, treatment, recovery, and aftercare services for mental health and substance use disorders in American Indian and Alaska Native communities, and 2) providing services and technical assistance to grantees to collect and evaluate performance of the program.

During the formal Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer sessions, I invite you to provide feedback on the following:

- Which priorities need to be considered in developing grant program objectives and goals to address opioid prevention, treatment, and recovery?
- What are the associated national outcomes with each of the priorities identified?
- How can the IHS demonstrate effectiveness using data and evaluation methods?
- What distribution formula or methodology should be utilized in the selection and award process?

To frame these sessions, the IHS Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) will host learning sessions that will share the summary of previous opioid listening sessions and further explain grant distribution options currently in use within the IHS Office of Clinical and Preventive Services. To find proposed dates and locations of Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer sessions, please visit <https://www.ihs.gov/dbh/consultationandconfer/>.

I encourage you to participate in following virtual Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer sessions that will be hosted by the IHS DBH, in partnership with the IHS Opioid Coordinating Group, and the Heroin, Opioids, and Pain Efforts (HOPE) Committee through August 1, 2019:

Virtual Tribal Consultations

- Monday, June 24, 2019 from 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. (ET)
- Adobe Connect: <https://ihs.cosocloud.com/vtc>
- Conference Call-in line: (800) 832-0736; Room Number *4571119 #

Virtual Tribal Consultations

- Tuesday, July 9, 2019 from 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. (ET)
- Adobe Connect: <https://ihs.cosocloud.com/vtc>
- Conference Call-in line: (800) 832-0736; Room Number *4571119 #

Virtual Urban Confer

- Wednesday June 26, 2019 from 2:00-4:00 p.m. ET
- Adobe Connect: <https://ihs.cosocloud.com/vtc>
- Conference Call-in line: (800) 832-0736; Room Number *4571119 #

Written comments will be accepted through the duration of the Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer comment period. **The deadline to provide comments is Thursday, August 1, 2019.**

Send comments by e-mail to: consultation@ihs.gov or urbanconfer@ihs.gov

Subject Line: IHS FY 2019 Opioid Grant Funds

Send comments by postal mail to:

RADM Michael D. Weahkee
Principal Deputy Director
Indian Health Service
5600 Fishers Lane, Mail Stop: 08E86
Rockville, MD 20857

Attention: IHS FY 2019 Opioid Grant Funds

I look forward to your input and recommendations on developing an IHS Opioid Grant Program to address the opioid epidemic.

Thank you for your support and partnership in addressing important behavioral health issues in the communities we serve. If you have questions about the process for submitting a comment on the FY 2019 Opioid Grant Funding Tribal Consultation and Urban Indian Organization Confer, please directly contact Ms. Michele Muir-Howard, DBH, IHS, by telephone at (301) 443-2038, or by e-mail at michele.muir-howard@ihs.gov.

Sincerely,

/ Michael D. Weahkee /

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