



Indian Health Service Press Release

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New Funding Awards Promote HIV/AIDS Prevention and Engagement in Care

*Awards jointly funded by IHS and CDC tackle HIV prevention among
American Indians and Alaska Natives*

The Indian Health Service announced today two new cooperative agreements together totaling \$500,000 per year for HIV and AIDS prevention and care activities by tribes, tribal organizations and urban Indian organizations. Awardees receive up to \$100,000 a year for up to five years for community services including pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), risk reduction for persons who inject drugs and support for people living with HIV and AIDS to stay in treatment. This effort is part of an ongoing collaboration between IHS and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which funded the agreement and is providing subject-matter expertise to support the effort.

“These awards increase access to culturally appropriate, high quality HIV treatment for our American Indian and Alaska Native communities,” said Mary L. Smith, IHS principal deputy director. “It is important to keep investing in HIV prevention and outreach efforts, especially at the local level. Working with tribal organizations and with CDC on these agreements leverages resources to provide even more of the integrated and patient-centered HIV prevention and care that Indian Country needs.”

IHS awarded the cooperative agreements to:

- **First Nations Community HealthSource** in Albuquerque, New Mexico
First Nations Community HealthSource is New Mexico’s urban Indian health center and a Federally Qualified Health Center. For more than 43 years, First Nations has provided an integrated and culturally competent health delivery system that addresses the physical, social, emotional and spiritual needs of community members. First Nations operates two clinic sites and three school-based health centers.
- **Inter Tribal Council of Arizona** in Phoenix, Arizona
The Inter Tribal Council of Arizona was established to provide a united voice for 21 tribal governments located in the State of Arizona to address common issues of concerns. ITCA operates more than 30 projects and provides on-going technical assistance and training to tribal governments in program planning and development, research and data collection, resource development, management and evaluation. The goal of ITCA is to ensure the self-determination of Indian tribal governments through their participation in the development of the policies and programs which affect their lives.

“This multi-year collaboration supports a sustained, in-depth HIV prevention program that will benefit not only tribes but also American Indians and Alaska Natives in urban locations,” said Eugene McCray, M.D., director of CDC’s Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention. “Together CDC and IHS are reaching out to support tribal organizations to prevent and control HIV and sexually transmitted infections. We are bringing services right to the local level, reaching American Indian and Alaska Native communities.”

The funding is intended to improve HIV prevention and care outcomes of American Indian and Alaska Native communities, in alignment with the [National HIV/AIDS Strategy: Updated to 2020](#). The awards support activities in five emphasis areas:

1. Increasing access to comprehensive PrEP services
2. Identifying local-level priorities for HIV care needs and creating tools and resources
3. Improving engagement and retention in care among people living with HIV and AIDS
4. Supporting and educating communities on risk reduction activities for persons who inject drugs and extend access to services for medication-assisted therapies for persons with opioid addiction in accordance with federal, state, tribal and local laws
5. Increasing local-level delivery of age-appropriate HIV and sexually transmitted infections prevention education

A cooperative agreement is an assistance agreement in which the federal government provides funding or services to a tribe, tribal organization or Urban non-profit to accomplish specific activities or tasks. As part of this agreement, CDC is providing support and assistance that includes conducting site visits and assisting with the design of program components such as methods, surveillance, epidemiologic analysis, outbreak investigation, development of disease control programs and evaluation plans.

American Indians and Alaska Natives experience a disproportionate burden of sexually transmitted infections, especially youth. More than half of the new HIV diagnoses among American Indian and Alaska Native persons are estimated to be among people under the age of 35. For more data on STIs including HIV and AIDS in American Indians and Alaska Natives, see the [“Trends in Indian Health”](#) 2014 report.

The [IHS National HIV and AIDS Program](#) serves as the primary source for national education, policy development, budget development, and allocation for clinical, preventive and public health HIV and AIDS programs for the IHS, area offices and service units. The program also coordinates and promotes HIV and AIDS prevention and treatment activities specific to Indians as part of a comprehensive public health approach.

The [National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention](#) is responsible for most of CDC’s work to prevent HIV. The [Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention](#) is charged with the mission of preventing HIV infection and reducing the incidence of HIV-related illness and death.

The IHS, an agency in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provides a comprehensive health service delivery system for approximately 2.2 million American Indians and Alaska Natives.

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