



Indian Health Service Statement

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Statement on *'Ending the HIV Epidemic: A Plan for America'* by IHS Principal Deputy Director Rear Adm. Michael D. Weahkee

The Indian Health Service lauds the president's [*'Ending the HIV Epidemic: A Plan for America'*](#) initiative, and is grateful for the opportunity to address [HIV in Indian Country](#).

With this initiative, we have an unprecedented opportunity to make a real difference in reducing HIV transmission. By strategically focusing our efforts on communities most impacted, and in partnership with Native communities, we can end the HIV epidemic in Indian Country by encouraging individuals to get educated, get tested, get involved in prevention, and get treated for HIV.

While new HIV infection rates have stabilized overall in Indian Country, American Indian and Alaska Native communities have seen a 70% increase in new infections among our young Native men who have sex with men. The Indian Health Service's goal is to ensure access to quality health services for American Indians and Alaska Natives living with HIV and those at risk of contracting HIV. To achieve this goal IHS is using innovative tools such as telehealth and implementing a strategic public health approach. These strategies are essential to reach our patients most in need.

By ensuring that everyone with HIV is aware of their infection and receiving the treatment they need, we can significantly reduce new infections.

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. Our mission is to raise the physical, mental, social, and spiritual health of American Indians and Alaska Natives to the highest level. Follow the agency via social media on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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