



September 14, 2020

Dear Tribal and Urban Indian Organization Leaders:

This week, we have a few announcements we would like to share with you. First, in follow up to our recent [announcement](#) of the national expansion of the [Community Health Aide Program](#), our colleagues at the [HHS Office of Minority Health](#) recently sent a Dear Tribal Leader Letter announcing its support for an assessment to identify factors that promote or restrict the implementation of the national expansion of CHAP. The goal is to develop a resource that will support tribal communities in determining their readiness for CHAP implementation. For more information about this assessment opportunity, please contact CAPT Damion Killsback, OMH Senior Advisor for Tribal Affairs at Damion.Killsback@hhs.gov.

Also this week, OMH will host a virtual symposium on Thursday, September 17, to highlight state, tribal, territorial, and community-based efforts to address COVID-19 among racial and ethnic minority and American Indian and Alaska Native populations. The [Advancing the Response for Racial and Ethnic Minorities Communities](#) virtual symposium will feature national, state, tribal, and local experts leading these efforts and is developed for public health leaders at all levels and community organizations confronting the pandemic. You can register [here](#).

Recently, the Health Resources and Services Administration sent a [Dear Tribal Leader Letter](#) announcing the extension of the deadline for nominations to their newly created Tribal Advisory Council. Nominations for membership must be received [on or before September 30](#).

On September 9, the Administration for Children and Families [requested input](#) from tribal leaders on the [draft Missing and Murdered Native Americans \(MMNA\) Framework](#). The Framework is an essential component of the comprehensive response by the federal government to the victimization of Native Americans. As the Framework outlines, violence is a public health problem that results in emotional and physical wounds and requires health and human services interventions. In drafting the Framework, ACF established four pillars related to its responsibilities: (1) culture, language, traditional practices; (2) economic mobility; (3) prevention of the conditions that contribute to MMNA; and (4) social determinants of health (i.e. lack of economic stability, stable living arrangements, food security, early childhood and

family supports, and access to critical human services to reduce vulnerability and victimization. Input on the draft Framework can be submitted to ANACommissioner@acf.hhs.gov by October 9.

And as the work on Operation Warp Speed continues, I wanted to share a highlight from the Food and Drug Administration that details the [vaccine product approval process](#). FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research is responsible for regulating vaccines in the United States. If successful, the completion of all three phases of clinical development can be followed by the submission of a Biologics License Application (BLA). To be considered, the license application must provide the multidisciplinary FDA reviewer team (medical officers, microbiologists, chemists, biostatisticians, etc.) with the efficacy and safety information necessary to make a risk/benefit assessment and to recommend or oppose the approval of a vaccine. You can read more on the vaccine approval process [here](#).

At the Indian Health Service, we have been preparing and planning for the potential role IHS might play in COVID vaccine allocation and distribution. IHS is participating in regular coordination meetings with other HHS agencies and with Operation Warp Speed as a national vaccine distribution plan is being developed. This includes participation in distribution and strategy meetings with states and territories. Much of this remains developmental, and as the strategy unfolds, IHS will be a consistent voice and advocate for vaccine allocation within the Indian health system and within tribal communities.

Respectfully,

Michael

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Director, Indian Health Service

Below is general information on various topics that may be of interest to you and your community. Web links are included where you can find more information on each topic.

Testing/Supplies/Contact Tracing Resources:

- [CDC Updated FAQs on COVID-19](#)
- [CDC Updated Guidance on Cleaning and Disinfecting your home](#)

- [CDC Information on Making a Handwashing Solution For Use in Global, Low-Resource Settings.](#)
- [CDC Updated Guidance for Management of Patients with COVID-19](#)
- [CDC Updated Protocol for the tracing of close contacts](#)
- [CDC Updated Guidance on When to quarantine](#)
- [CDC Updated Guidance on When you can end home isolation](#)
- [CDC Updated Toolkit on cleaning, disinfecting, and hand hygiene in schools](#)
- [CDC Updated Staffing resources and guidance to enhance frontline public health capacity](#)
- [CDC Updated information on travel during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)