



MAR 26 2021

Dear Tribal Leader and Urban Indian Organization Leader:

On behalf of the Indian Health Service (IHS), I am writing to announce an updated allocation of \$95 million in telehealth funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), Pub. L. No. 116-136. The IHS previously announced allocation of these funds via Dear Tribal and Urban Indian Organization Leader Letter on April 23, 2020.

Based on comments we received during rapid Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer sessions on April 1, 2020, and feedback provided by Tribal Leaders and Urban Indian Organization (UIO) Leaders over the past several months, the IHS will allocate resources to IHS, Tribal, and UIO health programs for COVID-19 related telehealth needs.

During the rapid Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer sessions held on April 1, 2020, Tribal Leaders and UIO Leaders expressed support for the following:

- Allocating resources using existing distribution and Tribal share methodologies, including distribution to Tribal health programs (THPs) and UIOs through funding mechanisms authorized by the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA) and the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA).
- Distributing resources to all levels of the IHS, THPs, and UIOs health system.
- Maximum flexibility to allow each Tribal community to respond to their unique COVID-19 response needs.

The IHS will allocate \$67 million to the IHS and THPs, based on existing distribution formulas for program increases in Hospitals and Health Clinics, Alcohol and Substance Abuse, and Mental Health funding. Tribal Health Programs will receive these one-time, non-recurring funds through unilateral modifications and/or amendments to their existing ISDEAA agreements. These funds must be used for the purposes for which they are appropriated, and must be used consistent with the conditions established by law, or the funds must be promptly returned to the IHS. Eligible contract support costs may be added to this funding, and the IHS and each Tribal health program will negotiate these amounts after these payments are made.

The IHS will allocate \$4 million to UIOs. The IHS will work with UIO Leaders to provide these funds through existing IHCIA contracts by providing a one-time, base amount for each UIO, and an additional amount based on each UIO's Urban Indian users. The funds must be used for the purposes for which they are appropriated, consistent with a modified scope of work for each contract.

The IHS will use the remaining \$24 million to support nationwide outreach, education, training, technical assistance, contract management, coordination and program/policy development activities, as well as the acquisition of a clinical video telehealth solution.

I am grateful to the Tribal Leaders and UIO Leaders who shared essential feedback and recommendations on these funding decisions. We will begin the distribution of these funds as soon as possible, which are available through September 30, 2021.

Thank you for your continued partnership as we work collectively to maximize all of our resources to support our American Indian and Alaska Native communities during this COVID-19 public health emergency.

Sincerely,

/Elizabeth A. Fowler/
Acting Director