Health Equity at NIHB: 2022 Recap

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3 Tribal Health Equity Events in 2022

May: Inter-Tribal World Café on Health Equity
- Foundations of Health Equity in Indian Country
- Key Drivers of health inequities for AI/AN

August: National Tribal Health Equity Summit
- What does health equity mean from a Tribal perspective?
- How do we advance health equity in Indian Country?

September: CMS Listening Session
- Specific feedback on the CMS Framework for Health Equity
- Rethinking how CMS approaches health equity for AI/AN
Key Questions

- Why are these inequities happening?
- Why have previous efforts to address health disparities fallen short?
- What is unique about working for health equity in Indian Country?
- What role can CMS play in advancing health equity for American Indians and Alaska Natives?
Why are these inequities happening?

Colonization

Disconnection from community, identity, and culture

Disruption & distrust

Erasure

Systemic, self-perpetuating barriers

Inequities in health outcomes for American Indians and Alaska Natives:

AI/AN life expectancy is now 11 years less than for the general American population
Why haven’t previous federal efforts worked?

- Culturally inappropriate interventions
- Neglect to recognize U.S. policies as the root causes of health inequities
- Disregard the historical and ongoing trauma of AI/AN people
- Insufficient resources
- Paternalism instead of self-determination
- Focus on disparities and deficits instead of strengths
Foundations of Health Equity in Indian Country

- Tribal Sovereignty
- Resilience through culture
- Strong Tribal institutions
- Tribal empowerment in state & federal governance
- Federal trust responsibility
CMS can advance health equity for AI/AN by:

- Keeping all health equity work in context
- Accepting the federal government’s responsibility to ensuring good health and well-being for AI/AN people
- Respecting Tribal sovereignty
- Conducting meaningful Tribal consultation
- Being responsive
- Recognizing that the answers for health equity lie within Tribal communities
How will this year’s Tribal health equity work advance NIHB’s mission?

- Advocacy
- Policy Analysis
- Strategy Development
- Education
- Grant Writing
- Technical Assistance to Tribes
What’s Next?

“How do we create the conditions for equity for Indigenous peoples? Equity, for me, is fundamentally about justice. So we might ask: What does a just system for health look like for Indigenous peoples? How do we create the conditions for just systems to thrive?”

– Tribal Health Equity Summit Participant
Questions?

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