

National Indian Health Board



National Indian Health Board Resolution 23 – 06

Support for Updating the National Tribal Behavioral Health Agenda

WHEREAS, the National Indian Health Board (NIHB), established in 1972, serves all Federally recognized American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) Tribal governments by advocating for the improvement of health care delivery to AI/ANs, as well as upholding the Federal government's trust responsibility to AI/AN Tribal governments; and

WHEREAS, Tribal leaders encouraged collaboration with the NIHB, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the Indian Health Service (IHS), and other key partners to produce a national Tribal Behavioral Health Agenda (TBHA) that would serve as a blueprint for increasing national visibility and awareness of AI/AN mental health and substance use concerns and improving the behavioral health and well-being of AI/AN communities; and

WHEREAS, the first national Tribal Behavioral Health Agenda was published in 2016, and includes historical context for behavioral health issues in AI/AN communities, behavioral health care and supportive service recommendations, and considerations for effective Tribal, federal, state, and local collaboration and priority areas; and

WHEREAS, over six years have passed since the publication of the TBHA, during which AI/AN communities have experienced the COVID-19 pandemic and increasing rates of behavioral health disparities, especially related to substance misuse, overdose deaths, and suicide; and

WHEREAS, Tribal leaders and representatives, especially the SAMHSA Tribal Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC), have requested that the TBHA be reviewed for the following: evaluation regarding its practical use and impact in Tribal communities; any initial dissemination, communication, and feedback collection strategies that were implemented; possible content revision and updates needed due to both the natural passage of time and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; and an effective dissemination, communication, and implementation plan for the updated TBHA; and

WHEREAS, the NIHB served as a key partner in the development and production of the TBHA: in collaboration, in engagement with Tribal leaders, administrators, and members, and in the assurance that the TBHA was Tribally driven and culturally centered in its content, elevation of Tribal voices, and declaration of AI/AN cultural wisdom; and

WHEREAS, the NIHB recognizes that SAMHSA was the federal lead in the development of the TBHA, providing staff, resources, and funding for its creation, and acknowledges SAMHSA’s collaborative process and elevation of Tribal voices; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Indian Health Board supports the review and updating of the TBHA in accordance with the current behavioral health needs and priorities of Tribal communities, with an effective communication, dissemination, and implementation plan; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NIHB seeks to partner with SAMHSA in the review and updating of the TBHA, with resource and funding support provided by SAMHSA as appropriate and in keeping with the document’s initial collaborative process that ensured its completion.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the policy of the National Indian Health Board until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the Board, with quorum present, on the 22nd day of June, 2023.

ATTEST:



Chairperson, William Smith



Vice Chairperson, Nickolaus Lewis