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# Tribal Health Research Office

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Division of Program Coordination, Planning, & Strategic Initiatives  
National Institutes of Health (NIH)

## National Institutes of Health (NIH) / Indian Health Services (IHS) / Substance Abuse and Mental Health (SAMHSA) Tribal Consultation on the Opioid Crisis in Indian Country

Held in Conjunction with the National Indian Health Board

9<sup>th</sup> Annual National Tribal Public Health Summit

### Consultation Responses

The structure for the two-day session included a combination of presentations followed by in-depth discussions with Tribal leaders and participants. Broadly speaking, the concerns and challenges communicated by Tribal leaders and participants revolved around several overarching themes.

- The need for more direct, non-competitive and formula-based funding to Tribes to address behavioral health and substance use priorities.
- Concerns around addiction risks with medication-assisted treatments such as methadone and buprenorphine for opioid use disorder;
- The need for more direct, meaningful and timely Tribal consultation to determine distribution pathways for funding, respond to proposed regulatory changes, and to advance the government-to-government relationship between Tribes and the federal government;
- Expanding the use of traditional medicines and cultural practices to prevent and treat addiction, and requests for a special federal-Tribal summit on traditional medicine;
- The impact of historical, intergenerational and current trauma in Tribal communities on behavioral health outcomes related to drug misuse, addiction and overdose;
- Challenges with behavioral health data collection and analysis including undercounting of AI/ANs in state and national surveillance systems, racial misclassification of AI/ANs, and shortages in Tribal public health surveillance infrastructure and capacity to make accurate and comprehensive assessments of need;
- Expanding culturally appropriate primary prevention and awareness activities for Tribal youth to reduce the risk of substance use initiation.

For consultation summary please visit: <https://dpcpsi.nih.gov/thro/tribal-consultations>



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