

CONTINUED SUPPORT OF THE “ENDING THE HIV/HCV EPIDEMIC IN INDIAN COUNTRY” FUNDING

POSITION STATEMENT

The 21 Member Tribes of the Inter Tribal Association of Arizona (ITAA) support the continuation of the “Ending the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)/Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) Epidemic in Indian Country (ETHIC)” funding through the Department of Health and Human Services to address diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of HIV, HCV, and syphilis within Native communities.

KEY POINTS



With Minority HIV/AIDS Funds and IHS, Tribal and Urban Indian partners, **expanded access to testing, prevention, and treatment** services for HIV, HCV, and sexually transmitted infections, demonstrating measurable impact across Indian Country.



ETHIC funding outcomes in Indian Country:

- HIV screening among adults/adolescents increased from 31% to 57% (83% improvement).
- Syphilis testing more than doubled within one year.
- Phoenix Indian Medical Center achieved viral suppression of over 90% for people living with HIV, leading Arizona’s viral suppression rate.



ITCA outcomes:

- Developed partnership with Phoenix IHS Area Region to conduct facility assessments in service units to increase testing, diagnosis, treatment, and care.
- Provided Partner Services Training for thirty (30) clinicians focusing on strengthening the syndemic response in their tribal communities.
- Provided support for eleven (11) health clinicians to attend training with the National Coalition of STD Directors.



BACKGROUND

The Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. (ITCA) has been a recipient of the ETHIC cooperative agreement since fiscal year 2024. The funding provides training, technical assistance, and resources to IHS Service Units and 638 facilities in the Phoenix-Tucson Indian Health Service Region. These resources provide funding for STI prevention and testing activities carried out by clinicians, Community Health Representatives, and health educators in Tribal communities.

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Key Points

- With strategic investments through the Minority HIV/AIDS Funds and IHS, Tribal and Urban Indian partners, expanded access to testing, prevention, and treatment services for HIV, HCV, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). These efforts are improving health outcomes, strengthening systems of care, and demonstrating measurable impact across Indian Country, despite operating with significantly fewer resources than other federal programs.
- ETHIC funding provided to tribal and urban Indian organizations resulted in the following outcomes in Indian Country:
 - Since 2012, HIV screening among adults/adolescents increased from 31% to 57% (83% improvement).
 - In response to the current Syphilis Outbreak in AI/AN, IHS implemented a national syphilis screening metric. Syphilis testing more than doubled within one year.
 - In 2024, Phoenix Indian Medical Center achieved viral suppression of over 90% for people living with HIV, leading Arizona’s viral suppression rate.
 - Enhancing Telehealthcare Services in Indian Country: This project supported over 26 ECHO clinics held each month, recruited over 1,412 clinical sites, provided treatment recommendations for 1,600 patients, hosted 40 virtual and in-person trainings, trained over 2,749 providers from Indian Country, and supported 1,200 virtual ECHO sessions with approximately 50,188 total participants.
- ITCA outcomes:
 - Developed partnership with Phoenix IHS Area Region to conduct facility assessments in service units to increase testing, diagnosis, treatment, and care.
 - Developed site-specific reports, which included recommendations for best practices, resources, and capacity-building needs to develop, improve, or expand existing clinical STI services.
 - Provided Partner Services Training for thirty (30) clinicians focusing on strengthening the syndemic response in their tribal communities.
 - Provided support for eleven (11) health clinicians to attend training with the National Coalition of STD Directors.

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