



HEALTH REFORM AT A GLANCE: INDIAN HEALTH

The Affordable Health Care for America Act honors and builds on the responsibility that the federal government has to provide health care to American Indians and Alaskan Natives. Native Americans continue to suffer from high rates of uninsurance, as well as significant disparities in health outcomes. Health reform will address these issues by dramatically improving access to affordable health care coverage for Native Americans, expanding public health initiatives, and modernizing the Indian health care delivery system through reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act.

AFFORDABILITY AND QUALITY HEALTH CARE COVERAGE

- The Affordable Health Care for America Act will help expand access to quality and affordable health coverage to Native Americans by expanding Medicaid eligibility to 150% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and by providing premium subsidies that will assist low and moderate income families with incomes above 150% of poverty in purchasing health coverage through the Health Insurance Exchange.
- The Act preserves and protects Native Americans' choice of providers by requiring that Indian providers be included in the provider networks of insurance plans offering coverage through the Health Insurance Exchange.
- Taxpayers who are eligible for health care services as members of a federally-recognized Indian Tribe are treated as having satisfied the individual responsibility requirement of the Act.
- The Act also modifies the tax code to clarify that health coverage that is provided by a Tribe to a Tribal member is excluded from the Tribal member's taxable income.

IMPROVING PUBLIC HEALTH IN INDIAN COUNTRY

- The Act establishes a new grant program for which Indian Country is eligible that would fund evidence-based, community-level prevention and wellness services, with a priority given to those programs that target health disparities.
- The Act will also assist Indian Country by making funds available to Indian Tribes, Tribal Organizations, and Urban Indian Organizations for public health infrastructure improvements.
- The Act improves health data sharing across and within all HHS agencies and specifically includes Native American Epidemiology Centers so they can access vital health information.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE INDIAN HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT ACT

The Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA) expired in 2001. Health reform would reauthorize IHCIA and make necessary changes to improve and modernize the way health care is delivered throughout Indian Country. Reauthorization of IHCIA would help raise the health status of Native Americans by creating a permanent statutory framework for:

- Improving recruitment, training and placement efforts of sorely needed health care professionals throughout Indian Country through loan and scholarship programs;
- Increasing the construction of health care clinics and sanitation facilities, as well as making necessary repairs and improvements to existing ones;
- Providing Native Americans who are living in urban areas with access to critical health care services; and
- Providing behavioral health services in Native American communities, which suffer from high rates of mental health and substance abuse disorders.