



USET

SOVEREIGNTY PROTECTION FUND

USET SPF Alert

IHS Announces Funding Decision for FY 2020 CHAP Expansion Funding

Dear USET SPF Membership,

On Wednesday, April 28th, the Indian Health Service (IHS) released a [Dear Tribal Leader Letter](#) (DTLL) announcing the decision to distribute funding allocated to the national Community Health Aide Program (CHAP) expansion, including \$5 million under Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 appropriations. On September 21, 2020, IHS [initiated](#) Tribal consultation on the use of \$5 million in FY 2020 funds, seeking recommendations on the implementation and development of a national CHAP. Along with the CHAP Tribal Advisory Group, IHS reviewed all comments received and developed a [final summary report](#).

Since the initiation of the consultation, IHS allocated an additional \$5 million from the FY 2021 appropriations for a total of \$10 million in combined funds for national CHAP expansion. According to the DTLL, \$7.7 million of this sum will be allocated to administer two separate CHAP-related grant based programs for Tribal Nations and Tribal organizations in each 12 IHS Areas. These include:

- \$3 million in grants for Tribal Nations and Tribal Organizations positioned to begin operating a CHAP.
 - IHS anticipates making 3 grants of approximately \$1 million each for a period of 2 years will be awarded to invest in existing training infrastructure, continued planning, and assessment efforts.
- \$4.7 million in grants for Tribal Nations and Tribal Organizations to assist with planning efforts and assessing the applicability of a CHAP.
 - IHS anticipates making 9 grants of approximately \$520,000 each to be awarded for a period of 2 years to initiate the planning and assessment of beginning a CHAP.

According to the DTLL, IHS is utilizing two grant-based programs for this funding to target resources to Tribal Nations that are either ready to begin CHAP implementation or those that require additional planning resources to determine feasibility. USET SPF reiterates that the grant-based funding model is this a violation of the federal trust obligation. We continue to advocate for funding mechanisms reflective of the unique nature of the federal trust obligation and Tribal sovereignty, including funding through ISDEAA contracting and compacting.

The remaining \$2.3 million will support the IHS national CHAP infrastructure at both Headquarters and Area levels, including:

- \$1.7 million to IHS Headquarters for national CHAP infrastructure for staffing to develop the National Certification Board, National Standards and Procedures, and ongoing technical assistance as well as strategic planning for the efforts to expand into the contiguous 48 states for both FY 2020 and FY 2021; and
- \$640,000 for IHS Area Offices to support Area-level infrastructure in the contiguous 48 states where there are CHAP providers trained and ready to be certified.

As a next step, the IHS Office of Clinical and Preventive Services will soon publish Notices of Funding Opportunities, including anticipated grant cycle start dates, in the Federal Register this summer. Because these funds include FY 2020 allocations, which has an obligation deadline of September 30, 2021, IHS expects to begin funding distribution as soon as possible.

For your reference, we are including [comments](#) submitted by USET SPF to IHS in June 2019 regarding the agency's request for input on the draft policy to "implement, outline, and define a National [CHAP]" as authorized under amendments to the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA). In our comments, we expressed our continued support for the expansion of CHAP with maximum flexibility for Tribal Nations while underscoring that nationalization must not come at the expense of other vital IHS services.

For questions or concerns, please contact USET SPF Policy Analyst, Sisy Garcia at sgarcia@usetinc.org.