



# Integration and Partnering for Positive Results

## Behavioral Health, Chronic Care Initiative and Health Promotion/Disease Prevention



### California Area Indian Health Service:

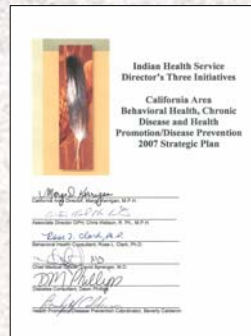
The **California Area Indian Health Service (CAIHS)** provides funding and support under the authority of the Indian Self Determination Act to a tribally-based healthcare delivery system for American Indians/Alaska Natives (AI/AN) living in the State of California. The State of California has the largest population of AI/AN people in the US (333,346 according to 2000 Census). There are presently 31 California tribal health programs operating 57 ambulatory clinics and eight urban Indian health programs.

To address emerging health challenges and disparities facing Indian people today, the CAIHS has focused on the integration of three health initiatives, Behavioral Health, Chronic Care Initiative and Health Promotion/Disease Prevention.



### Initiative Integration:

Beginning in 2006, the California Area IHS Office took steps to integrate the Indian Health Service (IHS) Director's three health initiatives. This resulted in increased collaborative activities to support the tribal and urban healthcare programs and communities. In addition, a strategic plan was developed in 2007 to direct future efforts and track successes. This strategic plan includes four focus areas, which are hoped to demonstrate integration of clinical services and community initiatives. The focus areas are: domestic violence, tobacco cessation, body mass index (including breast-feeding) and immunizations. The overall goal is to foster healthier lifestyles that support the elimination of health disparities for future generations of AI/AN people.



### Rural & Urban Healthcare Programs:

**Feather River Tribal Health (FRTH)**, which serves tribal members in the Oroville area of California, has brought Behavioral Health Services (BHS) into the medical department to support patient quality of life. A Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) was hired to work in the FRTH medical department. This allows medical providers to access BHS immediately for patients who are in crisis, or require behavioral health screening during a medical visit. It has improved patient-centered care and has reduced lengthy appointment wait times for those in crisis. Medical providers appreciate the immediate availability of BHS. The LCSW provides critical education to patients on such topics as lifestyle adaptation, stress management, exercise and disease process, all which help to reinforce patient's effort to self manage their outcomes.

**Indian Health Council (IHC)** is the California Chronic Care initiative pilot site and provides services to the North San Diego County reservations. Patients have been empanelled through a systematic process and care teams have been implemented to improve delivery of care. This process included review of all visits in an 18-month period and assigned providers to patients based on previous encounters. This pilot project has improved continuity of care and has helped set and track improvement goals for the empanelled patients. In addition, the care teams have been able to enhance relationships with their patients.



**Telemedicine** provides access to healthcare services that otherwise would be unavailable for many rural tribal members spread across California. Access to state of the art healthcare services in rural California is affected by weather, road conditions and long travel times. The ability to provide telepsychiatry services has expanded specialty care and integrated behavioral health services into the primary care setting in rural clinics. Telemedicine services also support diabetes case management as well as efforts to have multidisciplinary teams providing chronic disease management. Services provided, via telemedicine include: psychiatry, endocrinology, ophthalmology, dermatology and medical nutrition therapy.



**Round Valley Indian Health Center (RVIHC)**, in rural Mendocino County, is part of a project developed by University of California (UC), Davis Department of Pediatrics, in which youth engage in an innovative multidisciplinary wellness curriculum. The focus is on childhood obesity and its associated negative physical and emotional impact and the related health risks. The curriculum emphasizes culture and family systems; since the way families function has profound impact on children's feelings and habits. This IHS grant project has brought synergy between the RVIHC diabetes program, the school district and community members. This project continues to be supported by the UC Davis Department of Pediatrics. The clinical indicators developed and utilized for this project enhance patient-centered care. A separate planning grant to assess and prioritize social and environmental factors that influence childhood obesity will help guide future community-based efforts.



**United American Indian Involvement (UAI)**, based in Los Angeles, annually sponsors the Robert Sundance Summer Youth Camp, at Big Pine, California. This camp has been held for the past 18 years. Youth participants receive a thorough medical screening as part of the application process; which can detect needed immunization updates and previously undiagnosed vision and hearing problems. The camp also employs over 20 teenage and young adult workers. As the camp progresses, urban youth campers interact with local reservation youth, creating life-long friendships. A camp slide show of the weeklong activities is shown on the big screen and youth are recognized for their individual efforts. The camp also strengthens other UAI programs and more importantly continues the successful promotion of health, nutrition and better quality of life for AI/AN youth.

**United Indian Health Service, K'mi:w Medical Center, Redding Rancheria, Sonoma County Indian Health, Indian Health Center of Santa Clara, Toiyabe Indian Health Project, United American Indian Involvement, Riverside/San Bernardino County Indian Health and Indian Health Council** are recipients of the IHS Diabetes Prevention and Cardiovascular Disease Risk Reduction grants. This demonstration project is enhancing their diabetes programs, case management and chronic care efforts. In addition, these programs are supporting the advancement of the traditional healthcare model to addresses prevention and long term care of chronic conditions effectively. These community focused, patient-centered projects provide empowerment to support lifestyle change that will benefit not only this generation, but many more to follow.

The **Just Move It - California Challenge** collaborates annually with tribal and urban programs on prevention activities. These community activities likewise support the national Just Move It campaign, which promotes physical activity for AI/AN people and shares success stories on what is working at the local level.