



Indian Health Service Press Release

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IHS Targets \$24.7 Million to Address Diabetes Prevention/Complications among American Indians and Alaska Natives

The Indian Health Service (IHS), an agency of the Department of Health and Human Services, has announced the availability of \$24.7 million in competitive grant funds to be awarded to IHS/Tribal/Urban Indian programs. The grants are to be targeted at efforts to prevent diabetes among American Indians and Alaska Natives, and to address cardiovascular disease risk factors, one of the most serious complications of diabetes.

“In the last decade, the prevalence of diabetes among American Indians and Alaska Natives has increased more than 50%, making this grant funding of timely and vital importance” stated Dr. Charles W. Grim, Director of the IHS. “These grants will help to reduce the effects of this devastating disease, which is daily taking its toll on the health of Indian people and the vitality of Indian communities.”

These newly established competitive grants are offered through the Special Diabetes Program for Indians grant program, which was established by the Balanced Budget Act of 1998. This grant program, administered by the IHS, promotes collaborative strategies for the prevention and treatment of diabetes and its complications for American Indians and Alaska Natives. This is accomplished by the 12 IHS Area offices through coordination of a network of 19 model diabetes programs, regional diabetes consultants, and Tribal, IHS, and Urban Indian diabetes prevention and treatment programs.

Over the past 4 years, \$500 million in non-competitive grants have been provided to more than 320 Tribal, IHS, and Urban Indian health programs in 35 states to support diabetes prevention and disease management activities at the local level. Grantees use these funds to improve their diabetes wellness/physical activity centers, provide diabetes self-management training, and purchase newer medications that are more effective in treating type 2 diabetes. This program has substantially increased the availability of services such as basic clinical exams, newer treatment medications and therapies, laboratory tests to assess diabetes control and complications, screening for diabetes and pre-diabetes, nutrition education, and physical fitness activities.

Diabetes rates are significantly higher among American Indians and Alaska Natives than in the general U.S. population, as is the incidence of diabetes related complications. Although there are still significant challenges in dealing with the epidemic of diabetes, there are many new opportunities and strategies that will strengthen clinical, public health, and community approaches to the problem of diabetes.

Further information on the IHS National Diabetes Program and related subjects is available at <http://www.ihs.gov/MedicalPrograms/diabetes/index.asp> . Application information for SDPI grants is available at http://www.ihs.gov/MedicalPrograms/Diabetes/apply/ag_index.asp .



NOTICE TO EDITORS: For additional information on this subject, please contact Public Affairs Staff at 301-443-3593. Additional information about the IHS is available on the IHS website

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