

Native Americans

Native Americans have been disproportionately affected by the opioid and suicide epidemic, partially due to intergenerational trauma. Native Americans also face particularly complex policy issues — the Indian Health Service is funded as a separate system from Medicaid, and Native Americans on tribal lands are governed by tribes instead of states, both of which can lead to disparities in how well Native Americans are included in policy reforms.

FOCUS MENTAL HEALTH POLICY REFORMS FOR NATIVE AMERICANS

Native Americans could benefit from all of the reforms discussed in Healing the Nation and associated fact sheets, and need policy to support them as they face vast health disparities. At the same time, federal policy must consider the need for additional capacity, given a legacy of federal disinvestment. Policy must also appreciate the sovereignty of the tribes and ensure that the sovereign tribes have what they need to implement evidence-based strategies for mental health.

ACTION ITEMS

- The federal government should require that **all federal funding sources for mental health be distributed to tribes as well**, and given priority based on the greater mental health disparities.
- The federal government should **ensure that the Indian Health Service is engaged in the same reform efforts as the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services** in mental health and increase funding to build capacity for these efforts as appropriate.
- The federal government should **make funds available for tribes to build the necessary capacity** to join states in the learning collaboratives around different mental health reforms advocated for in this agenda.



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