



**aihc**  
AMERICAN INDIAN HEALTH  
COMMISSION FOR WASHINGTON STATE

**American Indian Health Commission for Washington State**  
**AIHC 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Delegates Meeting**  
*Hosted by Lummi Nation*  
Friday May 3, 2024 9:00 – 3:00

**Attendees:**

**Tribal Leaders –**

**Cowlitz** – Kay Culbertson

**Jamestown** – Loni Greninger

**Lummi** – Toni Hillaire, Maureen Kinley, Terra Olsen, Kathryn Halvorsen

**Muckleshoot** – Yvonne Oberly, Jeremy Pangelinan

**Nisqually** – Lisa Wells, Pete Ansara

**Nooksack** – Lona Johnson

**Shoalwater Bay** – Kim Coombes

**Skokomish** – Nicole Gibson

**Squaxin Island** – Lucy Hill, Jamie Queen

**Stillaguamish** – Jill Malone

**Suquamish** – Steve Kutz

**Swinomish** – Sarah Sullivan

**Tulalip** – Summer Hammons

**Upper Skagit** – Marilyn Scott

**Tribal Organizations –**

**NATIVE Project** – Toni Lodge, Dylan Dressler

**AICC** – Linda Lauch

**AIHC** - Vicki Lowe, Heather Erb, Pam Priest, Faith Turk, Jen Olson, Maria Ness, Kathryn Akeah, Terra Horton, Lisa Rey Thomas, JanMarie Ward, Jessica McKee, Cindy Gamble

**NPAIHB** – Nick Lewis, Veronica Smith, Rebecca Descombes

**Tribal Partners**

**HCA** - Aren Sparck, Lena Nachand, Lucilla Mendoza, Tina Burrell, Tina Anderson

**DOH** – Sec. Shah, Candice Wilson, Kristen Peterson, Kathy Pierre, Amanda Tjemslund, Christopher Castleberry, Emma Wolf, Katie Larkin, Macie Parker, Rob Oliver, Rosalinda Turk, Robert Oliver, Leah Wainman

**WAHBE** – Charlene Abrahamson

**OIC** – Todd Dixon, Melissa Kershner, Jeanne Lockhart

**DOC** - Harj Aulakh, Colleen Cawston

**WACH (WA Assoc of Community Health Clinics)** – HeidiAnna Brown

**DSHS** – Tim Collins

**COM** – Alden Andy, Michelle Gladstone-Wade

**DCYF** – Cassie Anderson

**WIC** – Sheryl Pickering

**ATG** – Asa Washines

**MCO's** – Theresa Hattori, CHPW





May 3, 2024

**AIHC Delegates Meeting**

9 am to 3:30 pm

In person: Lummi Nation- Silver Reef Casino  
4876 Haxton Way, Ferndale WA 98248Join  
Via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83246876418?pwd=dGs0VU5aazVLUFphMSs2QWZFdFBTUT09>

- 9:00 am **Welcome** –Anthony Hillaire, Chair Lummi Nation  
**Opening Prayer**- Terrence Adams, Lummi Nation
- 9:10 am **Establish Quorum** – Maureen Kinley, Secretary
- 9:15 am **Introductions** – All
- 9:25 am **AIHC Business**
- **Election of Treasurer**- Steve Kutz, Chair
  - **Approval of Agenda**- Maureen Kinley, Secretary
  - **Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes**- Maureen Kinley, Secretary
- 9:35 am **State Agency Updates**
- **Department of Health** – Candice Wilson, Director, Office Tribal Public Health and Relations
  - **Office of the Insurance Commissioner** – Todd Dixon, Tribal Liaison
  - **Washington Health Benefits Exchange** – Charlene Abrahamson, Tribal Liaison
  - **Attorney General's Office**- Asa Washines, Tribal Liaison
  - **Health Care Authority**- Aren Sparck, Administrator Office of Tribal Affairs; Lena Nachand, Lucilla Mendoza
- NOON - Lunch break**
- 1:00 am **Washington Tribal Prevention System** - Nick Lewis, Chair NPAIHB
- 1:30 pm **Link to Care** –Carlos Bustamante, Community Health Plan of Washington
- 1:45 pm **AIHC Chair Updates**  
Opioid Abatement Settlement funds- need plan before funding received, has to be spent by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
Increase Tribal FPHS Funds to 10%
- 2:15 pm **Open Delegates Discussion**
- 2:45 pm- **Executive Director Update** - Vicki Lowe, AIHC Director and Staff  
**WA State Tribal Opioid and Fentanyl Summit**- Registration, Overview of Agenda  
**Tribal and State Leaders Health Summit – 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**- Registration in June  
**AIHC Priorities Update**
- 3:30 pm **Executive Session** (if needed)

**Chair**-Stephen Kutz  
*Suquamish Tribe*  
**Vice-Chair**- Summer Hammons  
*Tulalip Tribes*  
**Treasurer**-Kim Coombs  
*Shoahwater Bay Tribes*  
**Secretary**- Maureen Kinley  
*Lummi Nation*  
**Member-at-Large**  
Linda Lauch  
*American Indian Community Center*

**Executive Director**  
Vicki Lowe

**Member Tribes:**  
*Chehalis*  
*Colville*  
*Cowlitz*  
*Jamestown S'Klallam*  
*Kalispel*  
*Lower Elwha Klallam*  
*Lummi*  
*Makah*  
*Muckleshoot*  
*Nisqually*  
*Nooksack*  
*Port Gamble S'Klallam*  
*Puyallup*  
*Quileute*  
*Quinault*  
*Samsish*  
*Sauk-Sulattle*  
*Shoahwater Bay*  
*Skokomish*  
*Snoqualmie*  
*Spokane*  
*Squaxin Island*  
*Stillaguamish*  
*Suquamish*  
*Swinomish*  
*Tulalip*  
*Upper Skagit*  
*Yakama*

**Member Organizations:**  
*Seattle Indian Health Board*  
*NATIVE Project of Spokane*  
*American Indian Community Center*



**Welcome** – Anthony Hillaire, Chair Lummi Nation 1:24  
**Opening Prayer** – Terrance Adams, Lummi Nation

**Establish Quorum – Maureen Kinley, Secretary**  
Quorum Establish – 13.

Steve Kutz stated that we are **institutional memories**. We need to be training, teaching, and sharing our history with those just coming into this work. Search these people out and teach them, bring them to meetings.

**Introductions** – All

**AIHC Business**

**Approval of Agenda**

Motion to Approve by Tulalip. Motion Seconded by Lummi. Motion Carries.

**Approval of [Prior Meeting Minutes](#)**

Motion to Approve by Tulalip. Motion Seconded by Lummi. Motion Carries.

**Election of Treasurer**

Summer Hammons nominated Lona Johnson from Nooksack. Lona accepted the nomination.

**State Agency Updates**

**[Department of Health](#)**, *Sec. Shah, Candice Wilson, Rob Oliver, Kathy Pierre, Chris Castleberry, Kristen Peterson.*

- **Opening Remarks**, *Sec. Shah*
- **Around DOH**, *Candice Wilson*
- **Legislative Update**, *Rob Oliver*
- **Prevention and Community Health Updates**, *Kathy Pierre.*
- **Environmental Public Health & HEAL Team Updates**, *Chris Castleberry.*
- **State Health Assessment**, *Leah Wainman.*

Sec Shah recognized May 5<sup>th</sup> which is observed as MMIWP Awareness Day and how crucial it is for us all to approach tribal public health with the deep understanding of the intersectionality of health, violence, trauma, and historical injustices. Our unity and shared commitment are essential to the work. He expressed his solidarity and allyship with Native communities and reaffirmed his dedication to supporting efforts and confronting the epidemic of missing and murdered indigenous individuals. A moment of silence was shared in remembrance.

DOH has made tremendous progress in the Office of Tribal Public Health and Relations. He was pleased to announce that they have not only built capacity but filled positions in OTPHR. There has also been a commitment on improving coordination across the agency to streamline information on a limited basis. DOH is continuing to work through the request for 10% set aside for the Tribes. Lastly, there has been work done with this group and outside agency on the Opioid/Fentanyl crisis. The Legislature has vested in this area of work.

**Comments-**



Steve Kutz presented an ask of Sec. Shah as well as the other Sec.'s, to identify all the departments and entities and schedule a face-to-face meeting with Candice and her staff to familiarize themselves with Tribal needs and work. Sec. Shah agrees with the spirit and wisdom to stay connected. The challenge is the state is so big. He believes there are opportunities with OTPHR. We have made great strides. He committed to continuing to do what they need to do to move the relationship forward and looking at improvements. He acknowledged that they do have an education and awareness component that is a significant issue. We need to be strategic in sustainable solutions.

**Steve commented that he doesn't see many of the DTLL's. Vicki receives all of them and will forward to the AIHC delegates.** Sec. Shah agrees this is an issue. There is a lot of important information DOH is trying to get Tribal leadership, who are busy. They are looking at various solutions such as sending letters on a particular day, sending as a digest, or posting on their website. Their goal is to improve this process. Sarah Sullivan suggests including the date that comments are due or when consultation is coming, in the DTLL. She also suggests having GOIA tracking all of it to streamline the process.

#### **Office of the Insurance Commissioner, Todd Dixon/Tribal Liaison.**

Todd introduced Melissa Kershner and Jeanne Lockhart who work in consumer advocacy at the Office of the Insurance Commissioner.

Car insurance rates are going up due to computerized cars, and climate change. OIC is working to keep rates down.

If tribes have complaints against insurers, send them directly to Todd Dixon.

AIHC Insurer Guidance- Heather Erb is working with OIC to update the issuers guidance from 2015 that helps insurers understand the federal and state laws around working with Indian Health Care Providers and American Indians/Alaska Natives. The guidance will be used to train carriers as well as tribal staff. Vicki added that tribal staff need to be educated to ensure when insurers deny claims or create barriers, they feel comfortable and knowledgeable enough to share cite what is being violated. Vick added that she and Heather have been discussing offering Continuing Legal Education to OIC and insurers.

#### **Questions/Comments –**

Toni remarked that Premera is their largest for-profit carrier, but she got notice that there is large health system (Multi-Care) that won't be accepting Premera at a local hospital as of 6/1/24. This really negatively impacts Indian health care in her area. Lisa, at Nisqually, also had issues with Multi-Care and Premera. Todd stated his office is working on this issue now.

Steve suggested creating a rule through OIC to require carriers working with tribes to have a Tribal liaison. Todd noted.

#### **Department of Child, Youth and Families, Cassie Anderson.**

DCYF - <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/tribal-relations/icw>

#### **Washington Health Benefits Exchange, Charlene Abrahamson/Tribal Liaison.**

#### **Attorney General's Office Updates, Asa Washines/Tribal Liaison.**

The next MMIWP Summit will be held in the fall at Silver Reef Casino. No specific dates yet.

PO Box 483, Port Angeles, WA 98362 – (360)797-5246 – [www.aihc-wa.com](http://www.aihc-wa.com)



## Lunch Break

Health Care Authority, Aren Sparck/Admin Office of Tribal Affairs, Lena Nachland, Lucilla Mendoza.

### Olympic Heritage Behavioral Health (OHBH), Lisa Burrell.

Olympic Heritage Behavioral Health was formerly Cascade Hospital in Tukwila, Washington. It has been purchased by DSHS and licensed as a residential treatment facility. It has capacity for 128 beds – 72 are operated by DSHS, 40 of them per legislation, will be contracted for Behavioral Health services.

A DTLL went out today on this project asking for tribal input through a survey. The survey will be open until May 20<sup>th</sup> and should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. The survey invites input on what services to provide to adults and helps identify who may be interested in this opportunity.

From Charlene in the chat.....<https://www.dshs.wa.gov/bha/division-state-hospitals/olympic-heritage-behavioral-health>

#### **Comments:**

Steve wondered if the tribes could contract for the 40 beds as a consortium or ??.

### HCA Updates, Lena Nachland and Aren Sparck.

#### **Health Care Management and Coordination System (HCMACS) -**

##### **HCMACS**

- Still in the demonstration phase
  - ▶ Behavioral Health
  - ▶ MyChart
  - ▶ Splicer (data and reporting)
- HCMACS has FTEs to fill and staffing up to do
- Tribes can participate in HCMACS meetings
  - ▶ Tend to be every two -three weeks depending on needs
- We know these four things are top of mind:
  - ▶ Cost
  - ▶ Data Sharing and Expectations
  - ▶ Co-development with Epic
  - ▶ Timeline
- We know Tribes will have to consider the work of Washington State/HCA and the modernization efforts of IHS

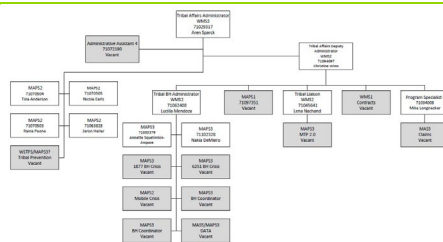
Formerly known as EHR as a Service. Washington State has chosen EPIC. The next HCMACS meeting is next Tuesday and welcome tribal participation. The meetings are recorded by AIHC as well as Vicki has slides, she can share. Lena added the demos were recorded as well.

#### **OTA is Growing –**

HCA is adding 14 new positions to better serve the needs of Washington State tribes. Steve commented the partnership HCA has with Tribes is making us the leader in innovation in Indian Country.



## OTA is growing!



## Pharmacy POS –

Launch has been delayed until June 8<sup>th</sup>. This does delay billing the encounter rate.

## MTP 2.0 and The Native Hub –

### MTP 2.0 and the Native Hub

- Medicaid Transformation Project 2.0
  - July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2028
  - Community-based Care Coordination
  - Reentry
  - Health Related Social Needs Services
- The Native Hub is currently be worked on in such a way as a plan will be presented to Tribes/IHCPs for review and discussion.
- HCA released reentry materials last week, with an information sheet and a form to indicate a desire to participate.
  - Tribal jails are eligible to participate.
  - <https://www.hca.wa.gov/about-hca/programs-and-initiatives/medicaid-transformation-project-mtp/reentry-carceral-setting>
- Another presentation is coming next week at the Monthly Tribal Meeting

## Comments –

Vicki wonders if after the MTM, it would make sense to have a tribal caucus to have conversation on this topic as a group so everyone is on the same page.

**Washington Tribal Prevention System: NORTH STAR**, Nick Lewis/Chair NPAIHB and Naomi Jacobson/NPAIHB.

Before presenting on the WA Tribal Prevention System, Nick Lewis shared an ask coming from the HHS Consultation for AIHC, NPAIHB and the state, to have conversation around working more closely to address Medicaid and Medicare issues jointly with CMS. An equal partnership would make a big difference to the work.

The first monthly meeting on the WTPS will be on May 8<sup>th</sup> with involvement from the youth going forward. There is also a pre-meeting scheduled for the 6<sup>th</sup>. Vicki will forward the invite. Five Tribes have passed resolutions to be partners of North Star and will focus on youth ages 0-25 in the Pacific Northwest and their families. Aren and Nick shared that discussions around how we can address the Opioid/Fentanyl crisis initiated the visit to Iceland last year to learn more about their model that treats individuals, using data. The work is beginning to bring this to Washington State and on a 10-year timeline to build a solid plan with a 2-year assessment period. Nick asked how we can ensure AIHC, the 5 Tribes, and NPAIHB are equal partners in this work and what does that look like. Steve responded that there needs to be a mechanism that is broader than AIHC or NPAIHB to engage in conversations with our elected leaders and our staff. ATNI maybe? Tribal Leaders need to be involved. Maybe Create a 501c3 to have training sessions, meetings to discuss progress and made decisions??

Nick shared a video on an Icelandic youth music festival SAMFESTINGURINN 2023 used to reach youth.



Tribes need to be involved in the conversations. Please let Naomi know if you want to be involved. [njacobson@npaihb.org](mailto:njacobson@npaihb.org).

### Comments –

Steve suggested having conversations with Sue Birch and Aren to better understand what we need to do together and how do we go about it. Should we involve Region 10? Aren responded that the tribes would need to make that request of the state as well as governor approval. There is also the business of traditional medicine. Is there any other business we need to get together on as well? Aren stated that he will bring representation to the next delegates meeting to discuss encounter rates.

The tribes will be learning from the tribes so how do we organize and do things differently from how we are doing them now? Charlene commented that no tribes or entities are intentionally silo-ing. Rather, how do we work together, keeping in mind the crucial work going on currently with limited resources in various ways to include data, build in replication and our ways of doing things that works...and be sustainable.

Vicki shared that in the state of Washington, they have developed the Pulling Together for Wellness framework over the last 10 years, working with Tribal leaders and Urban Indian health leaders to build healthy communities. There has been confusion over building a system vs a framework. Aren reminded the group that the WTPS: North Star is not prescriptive and is meant to be adapted to your tribal community to meet your specific needs and built upon your cultural strengths. Nick wants to see the PTW framework elevated, well-known and accepted in ALL communities because we know it works. The goal is for these efforts to be sustainable.

From the Chat: Regarding the Prevention System, the idea of letting the kids drive the work makes sense as well as planning and building on our strengths. Kids do want to be talked about. They requested we talk to them! Naomi Jacobson would love to provide a full presentation at some time to share more information about how we are working together and adapting this model to meet the needs of tribal communities.

[Link to Care](https://linktocarewa.org/), Carlos Bustamante/CHPW. <https://linktocarewa.org/>.

Carlos's contact information is [carlos.bustamante@chps.org](mailto:carlos.bustamante@chps.org), (866) 757-1832.

**AIHC Chair Updates**, Steve Kutz.

#### **Opioid Abatement Settlement Funds**

Tribes need a plan in place before funding is received. Funds have to be spent by June 20, 2025. Steve felt that it has not been made clear if funds can be spent on infrastructure or capital expenses in the grant application guidance.

[Exhibit E – Final Distributor Settlement Agreement](#)

#### **Increase Tribal FPHS Funds to 10%**

This is not a done deal yet. There is support across the total Foundation Public Health system. It will probably require some additional asks of the legislature.

#### **Health Professional Shortage Area.**

This was brought up at HHS Consultation. The system in place to figure out your HPSA score based on your location needs to be fixed. This score does affect loan repayment. AIHC will be setting up some training and discussion on this topic. Steve will work with



Vicki to get this set up. This is important for long term sustainability, especially in rural areas.

### **Comments:**

Kay Culbertson shared that they lost a doctor due to unsuccessfully getting their HPSA score increased after sending in data to support a change and meeting with the policy team. Their ask is that the tribes, regardless of their score, are able to accept the pay back for scholarship recipients and for loan repayments. Steve told them the same thing. Kay added the question to be asked is how many providers are being placed in Indian country.

Toni commented in the chat that we should ask HRSA/NHSC what the placement numbers are in the ITU IHS system of care. We could ask our new HRSA Tribal liaison, Dr. Blome. Maria Ness also commented that she wonders what it would take to get tribes/tribal nations designated as a “special population” for getting a health manpower shortage designation.

### **State Board of Health**

Steve has served on the board for almost 12 years and should have only served for 6 years. If anyone is interested in representing the board, please talk with Steve.

### **Open Delegates Discussion**

In the chat, Kay Culbertson suggested a discussion on the reduction in funding for the Sexual Assault Services? The Office of Crime Victims Advocacy is looking at the formula but it looks like our funding will be cut almost in half for 2025. Vicki responded she understood that the funding got cut at the federal level and they were trying to offset the funding at the state level. Kay shared the emails that came from Commerce. Could the tribes be included in the discussion regarding the formula? Alden Andy/COM responded that the tribes have 4 opportunities available for Tribes closing soon. He will email to Vicki and she will forward to delegates. Kay stated that OCDA will decide on the new formula and will be a significant cut for Cowlitz.

### **AIHC Updates**

**Executive Director Updates**, Vicki Lowe.

**WA State Tribal Opioid and Fentanyl Summit** – Registration, Overview of Agenda

**Tribal and State Leaders Health Summit** –

This will be the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of AIHC. How should we celebrate? Registration will be open in June.

**AIHC Priorities Update**

**Chief Policy Advisor Update**, Heather Erb.

**Using Opioid Settlement Funds on Homelessness and Housing**

Can Funds be used on homeless shelters? The answer is yes, but it needs to be treatment related.





**WSPHA Update, JanMarie Ward.**

The [2024 Washington State Public Health Association Conference](#) registration opened this week. The conference will be held October 9 –11 in Yakima. Over the last few years, they have been working to increase Tribal content to be more representative of Washington State. JanMarie is asking tribes to consider submitting an abstract. Vicki added that AIHC Tribal Foundational Public Health Services will be submitting an abstract.

**AIAN PRAMS, JanMarie Ward.**

JanMarie Ward and Cindy Gamble are engaging in an AIAN Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System that is funded through FPHS for 2 years. They are forming the steering committee for this work if anyone is interested. They need your input! And would love to visit your community. Contact JanMarie or Vicki.

**Closing Blessing, Candice Wilson.**

