



May 20, 2025

nákʷs. ʔíy t sʔísilp xʔaʔ tit tómxkl (Hello and welcome to our land).

On behalf of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, I'm honored to welcome you to the Washington State Tribal Opioid Fentanyl Summit here at ilani, on the aboriginal lands that have sustained our people since time immemorial.

For generations, we have honored our traditions and worked to uplift our people and neighbors. It is in this spirit that we host this gathering. We hope that it will be a place for us to stand united as we strive for collaboration, healing, and action.

The challenges presented by the opioid crisis touch every corner of our community, and it is with a shared commitment and urgency that we come together to address them. As tribal leaders, healthcare professionals, advocates, and community members, we each bring unique perspectives and expertise. Together, we share knowledge, strengthen partnerships, and forge new strategies to combat the devastating effects of opioid addiction.

The Cowlitz Indian Tribe is committed to innovative, community-centered solutions to this crisis that extend services and support beyond our own people, recognizing that healing is most powerful when it embraces all those affected. We understand that addressing addiction requires a holistic, accessible, and culturally grounded approach. In 2023, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe introduced a new Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) van to help further serve and interconnect our network of clinics and communities we serve as we combat the opioid crisis in Western Washington. The MAT van, funded through an Innovation Grant from HealthierHere and supported by various community partners, offers a holistic care model that includes medication-assisted treatment, mental health services, and counseling in a mobile, on-demand format. It serves both rural and urban locations, ensuring that even the most underserved areas have access to life-saving addiction treatment.

Let this gathering be a reminder of our shared responsibility to support those in need, to protect future generations, and to honor the lives lost by committing ourselves to meaningful change. The work we do here matters, and the connections we build will carry forward long after this summit ends.

Thank you for joining us in this effort. Your presence reflects the strength of our collective will and the hope we hold for a brighter, healthier future.

Sincerely,

William B. Iyall
Tribal Chairman