

Public-Private Collaborations in Rural Health

Tribal Health Funders Workshop

Marriott Bethesda Downtown at Marriott HQ
Dallas and Atlanta Rooms (Second floor)
7707 Woodmont Avenue Bethesda, Maryland 20814
(Closest Metro Stop: Bethesda 7450 Wisconsin Ave, Bethesda, MD 20814)

Wednesday, October 8, 2025

12:00 p.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Gather and Greet

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Welcome and Introductory Remarks

The opening keynote will set the tone for the day, and will be split between a focus on historical and contemporary context for Native American health and a specific description of the enabling legislation and infrastructure underpinning the Indian Health Services (IHS) and the entire ITU system. Dr. Kozhimannil will present first, using a Seven Generations perspective. She will start by drawing on her research expertise with a focus on current data on Native maternal and infant health - then looking back to a historical context of how the current statistics came to be, followed by examples of positive change and looking forward to the future. Then, the IHS team will describe the government-to-government relationship between tribes and the federal government, and how tribal sovereignty and the federal trust responsibility are enshrined in the US Constitution and the US Code. The IHS team will describe the current ITU system and how it functions to meet the health needs of Native Americans, highlighting both challenges and victories.

Katy Kozhimannil

*Distinguished McKnight University Professor
University of Minnesota School of Public
Health*

Stacey Ecoffey

*Deputy Director for Intergovernmental and External
Affairs
Indian Health Service*

1:30 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Ongoing Needs: Workforce Development

This session will highlight programs that address the critical workforce challenges facing tribal health systems and Native communities. Presentations will focus on innovative solutions aimed at recruiting and training a dedicated healthcare workforce.

Moderator: Mary-Katherine McNatt, A.T. Still University

Matt Tobey

Mass General Hospital

Tina Conners

Indian Health Service

2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Break and Informal Networking

2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Building Bridges: Fostering Meaningful Partnership

This panel will examine how partnership can be a powerful tool for improving health outcomes and quality of life in Native communities. We will explore the unique opportunities and challenges of these collaborations, which must honor tribal sovereignty and self-determination.

Moderator: Rebecca Brothers, Dogwood Health Trust

Carly Hare

Headwaters Foundation

Mac Hall

Project Venture

3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Mindful Engagement: Pro Tips for Effective Collaboration

This session will provide practical guidance for those seeking to work respectfully and effectively with Tribal entities. Attendees will gain insight into best practices for building trusting, mutually beneficial partnerships that respect cultural protocols and lead to sustainable, community-led solutions. Attendees will leave with a deeper understanding of the "why" and "how" of effective Tribal partnerships, empowering them to become better allies and collaborators in this vital work.

Moderator: Amy Elizondo, National Rural Health Association

A.C. Locklear

National Indian Health Board

Erik Stegman

Native Americans in Philanthropy

4:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Workshop Wrap-Up

Alan Morgan

National Rural Health Association

Tom Morris

Federal Office of Rural Health Policy

5:00 p.m.

Meeting Adjourns