

# Board Meeting Tribal Liaison Presentation

# Presenter

DATE: October 24, 2024



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Tribal Liaison

**Who is the  
Tribal Liaison?  
What does she  
do?**



## **Tribes are Sovereign Nations & the Tribal Liaison is responsible for fostering relationships that lead to a greater understanding and the inclusion of AI/AN health care needs within organizational strategies, policies, and business practices.**

The Exchange honors government-to-government relations per RCW 43.376, and the Tribal Liaison is responsible for maintaining effective communication and collaboration between the Exchange and Tribal Governments. Additionally, the Exchange acknowledges the need to go beyond its responsibilities to federally-recognized Tribes and develop meaningful processes to confer and partner with non-federally recognized Tribes and other tribally-led and serving organizations.

The Tribal Liaison is responsible for planning, training coordination, and consultative advice. This position will serve as an internal resource to Exchange leadership and staff, providing consultative advice and ensuring appropriate staff access to training, resources, and processes.

According to the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI): The essence of Tribal sovereignty is **the ability to govern and to protect and enhance the health, safety, and welfare of Tribal citizens within Tribal territory.** Tribal governments maintain the power to determine their own governance structures and enforce laws through police departments and Tribal courts.



# Why are Tribal Relationships Important at WAHBE?



# Federal Trust Responsibility and Tribes

The federal government has a trust relationship with Tribes that is derived from treaties, statutes, and opinions from the Supreme Court.

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Section 3 of P.L. 94-437: The Indian Health Care Improvement Act

\*'Indian' terminology used instead of Native or Indigenous based on laws established through federal Indian law.



*...it is the policy of the Nation, in fulfillment of its special responsibilities and legal obligations to the American Indian people, to ensure the highest possible health status for Indians\*.*

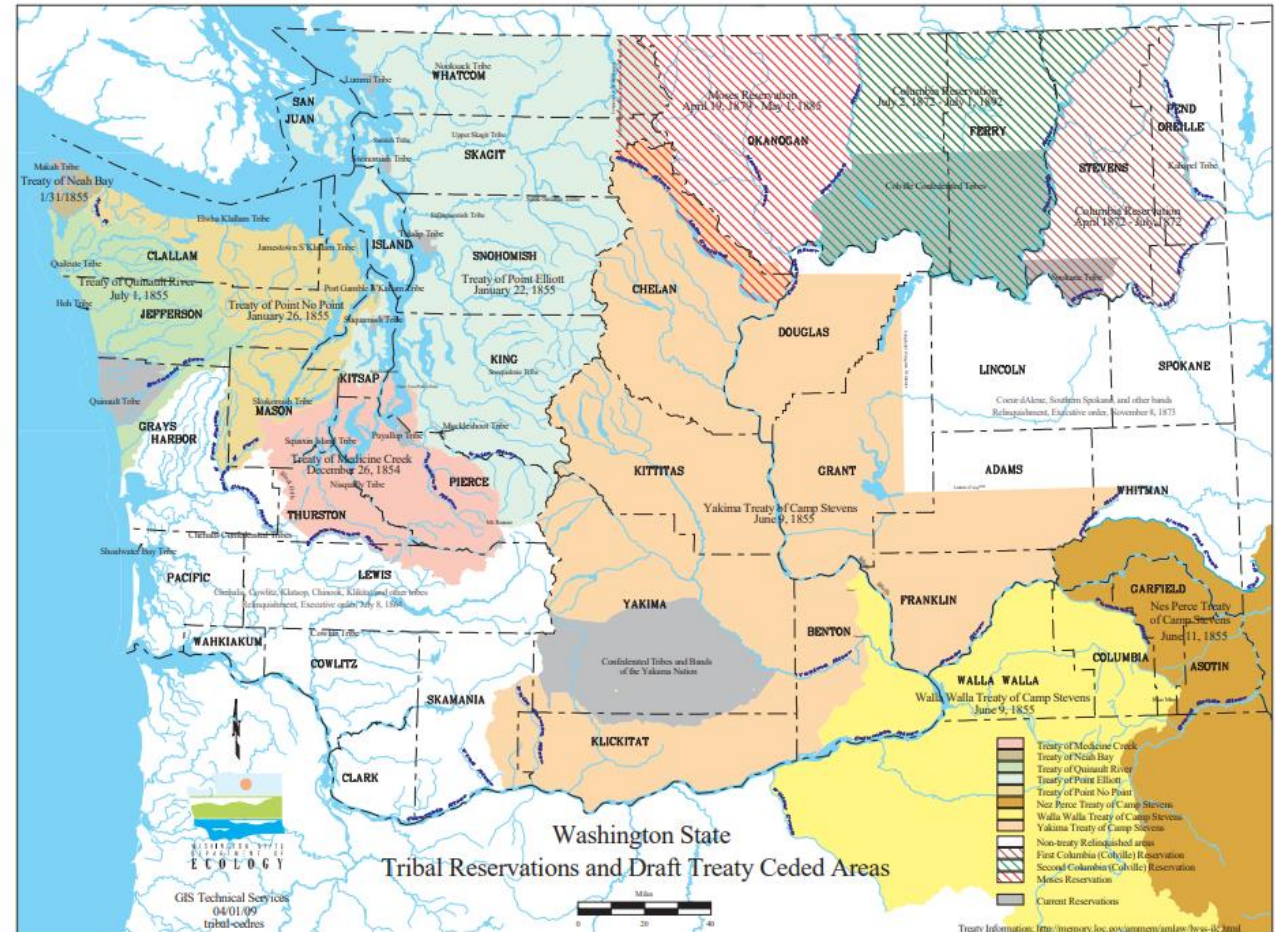
# The Indian Health Care Improvement Act, the Affordable Care Act & Tribes

**Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA):** IHCIA is a federal law reauthorized under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2010 and codified in 25 U.S Code, Chapter 18. The IHCIA was originally enacted in 1976 to address the deplorable health conditions in Indian Country.

ACA offers many new opportunities for Tribal health programs and American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) individuals.

Under WAC 284-43-0140 “health carriers shall comply with all Washington state and federal laws relating to the acts and practices of carriers and laws relating to health plan benefits.” An “Indian health care provider” in WAC-284-43-0160(20) means an Indian Health Service operated program, a Tribal owned and operated program authorized under 638 contract and compact, and an Indian Health Service recognized Urban Indian Health Program (UIHP).

These options can help improve individual health, the health of family members, and the Tribal communities.



**Washington State Tribal Reservations and Draft Treaty Ceded Areas**

Note: [This image is also available online.](#)

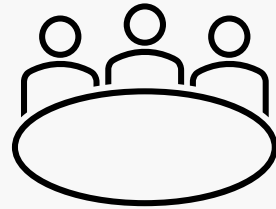
# Why now & what initiatives are occurring?

I want to be able to address some questions I have heard, be transparent and have more people get to know me.



## Outreach

My granddaughter joined me at the Puyallup Tribe's Wellness Powwow.



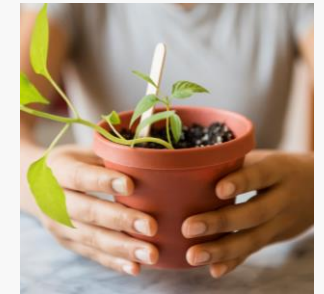
## Consultation

The Decision Package for the 2023-2025 Biennial Budget included funding for a Tribal Lead Organization.



## Meetings with Tribes, Tribal Consortia, State & others

There are several obligated through policy, such as the Governor's Indian Health Advisory Council (GIHAC) and many others.



## Revitalizing Tribal Advisory Workgroup & Tribal Assister Meetings

We are getting good attendance and feedback. Including roadmaps for future action.

# Many streams of our work:



- Tribal Workgroup Advisory (TAW) Purpose and Policy
- Land Acknowledgment Work
- Tribal Lead Organization Update
- Medicaid Unwind Strategies
- Tribal Assister Meetings
- Opioid Fentanyl Workgroup
- 988 and Tribal Centric Behavioral Health
- MCO Rapid Response Meetings
- Governors Indian Health Advisory Committee (GIHAC)
- AIHC Delegate
- Centennial Accord



# Current Tribal Advisory Workgroup Purpose & Policy

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- **Tribal Advisory Workgroup**
- **A. Purpose of the Tribal Advisory Workgroup (TAW)**
  - To assist in the identification of any proposed policy or action that have Tribal implications; and
  - To satisfy the requirement for the Washington Benefit Health Exchange (The Exchange) to collaborate with the tribes, UIHPs, and the AIHC. Collaboration is a working relationship between the parties to identify issues and propose recommendations for consideration at formal consultation.
- **B. The TAW shall be facilitated by the HBE and AIHC** and shall consist of representatives from The Exchange (including the Tribal Liaison), Tribal leaders, I/T/Us, and AIHC Executive and Policy Committee members. These representatives will participate in at least bimonthly meetings each year. Notice regarding these meetings will be a calendar invite to all parties from all Washington State Tribes, usually the Health Directors, UIHPs and AIHC.
- **C. TAW meetings will consist of experts and decision makers** who will explain issues and listen to the concerns of tribal leaders, I/T/Us, and the AIHC. I/T/Us, tribal leaders, and the AIHC will provide advice and recommendations on the development of WHBE policies or actions that have tribal implications.
- **D. TAW meetings, recommendations, and other forms of collaboration contribute to the consultation process** but are not a substitute for the requirement for The Exchange to conduct formal consultation as required by this policy.





## Tribal Land Acknowledgement

Navigator In Service Day 2021  
James Manuel – Tribal Liaison

Special Thanks: This presentation is based on research and materials developed by the Health Care Authority Office of Tribal Affairs

## Advice & Direction on Land Acknowledgement

Tribal Leader wisdom is necessary and appreciated.

### Olympia Washington

The Washington Health Benefit Exchange office in Olympia is located on lands ceded by the Squaxin Island and Nisqually people, who have been stewards of this land since time immemorial.

- ▶ Above is when the Land Acknowledgement was developed and introduced.
- ▶ To the right is why the Exchange worked to develop the Land Acknowledgement.

### Why give a land acknowledgement?

Tribal land acknowledgments help us learn the stories of the people who survived colonization, genocide, land theft, and other atrocities and continue to thrive as culturally unique political entities ("tribes" or "Indian Nations").

By offering tribal land acknowledgments, we show respect for the true history and lived experience of indigenous communities.

- ▶ Above is the current Acknowledgement for The Exchange.
- ▶ What do our Tribal Leaders and representatives wish to hear, and honors, Tribes in Washington state?

# Medicaid Redetermination & OE

## *Tribal Impact*

16,063 Federally-recognized Tribal members have lost WAH since 4/1/23

8,127 members regained coverage through Washington Healthplanfinder

- 4,724 members returned to WAH
- 773 members were found to be QHP-eligible & selected a plan
  - 89% receiving APTC & 72% receiving Cascade Care Savings
  - 68% with net monthly premium under \$25
  - Average net QHP premium: \$88/mo.

Of the 16,063 Federally-recognized Tribal members who lost WAH

- 4,724 members returned to WAH = **29.4%**
- 773 members were found to be QHP-eligible & selected a plan = **4.8%**
- 10,566 difference (perhaps still eligible for WAH?) = **65.8%**

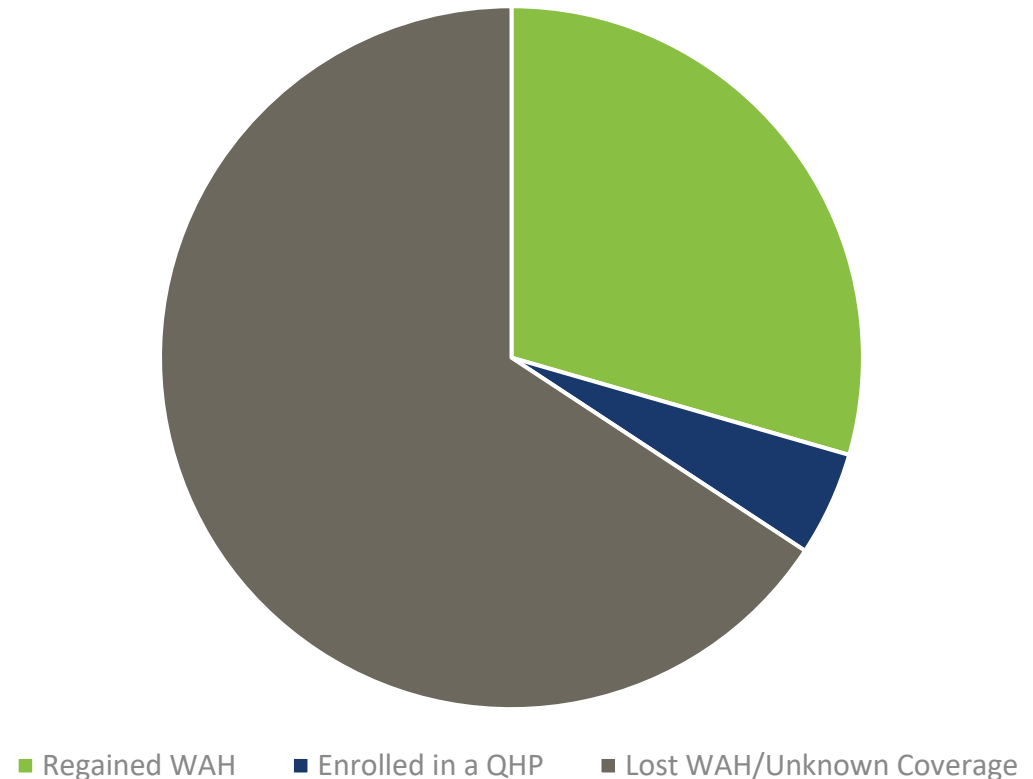
*Data accurate as of 04/01/2024*

# Medicaid Unwind according to the Tribal Self-Governance Advisory Committee

*"The unwinding process is resulting in many people getting disenrolled from Medicaid. Millions have lost coverage not because they are not eligible, but because they did not respond to requests from their Medicaid program. This is a serious issue in Indian country."*

02/16/2024

Medicaid Unwind AI/AN Washington State in Graph Form



# Washington Health Benefit Exchange & Tribes

- Our mission is to radically improve how Washington residents secure health insurance through innovative and practical solutions, an easy-to-use customer experience, our values of integrity, respect, equity and transparency, and by providing undeniable value to the health care community.

The Mission (in part)



- The process of advancing toward equity and becoming anti-racist is disruptive and demands vigilance to dismantle deeply entrenched systems of privilege and oppression... To be successful, we must recognize the socioeconomic drivers of health and focus on people and places where needs are greatest.

Our Equity Statement (in part)



- With Tribes there are unique and legal considerations as they are sovereign nations.
- Also, Tribes face larger disparities in accessing health care and face worse health outcomes.
- These tie into our Mission, Equity Statement, as well as state and federal requirements.

Tribal Initiatives & Goals



# I have a question. Below is the Strategic Plan. After my presentation how does this fit in with Tribal Relations, in your opinion?

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## Board Strategic Plan

Under Second Engrossed Senate Bill 6089, the Exchange is required to submit a comprehensive five- year and 10-year strategic plan to the Legislature. The current plan focuses on four core outcomes: 1) Define and Deliver Operational Excellence, 2) Increase Number of Insured and Access to Affordable Coverage, 3) Advance Consumer Choice and Decision-Making and 4) Promote Equity Across System. This plan represents a detailed framework for how these outcomes will be accomplished.

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# Any Questions?



You can also email or call me with any follow-up questions.

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I have heard some concerns about what's okay to ask and it's fine to talk with me about cultural differences and similarities.

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We have the same goals for health equity and wellness.



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