



Covered California Response to Tribal Advisory Workgroup Letter: Recommendations to Improve the Covered CA System for American Indians and Alaska Natives

Tribal Recommendation 1: Support the “Definition of Indian bill (S. 1575)” recently introduced in the U.S. Congress by issuing a letter to all relevant Federal agencies encouraging them to also support this legislation.

Covered California Response: Covered California is prohibited by our authorizing statute from advocating for legislation. However, Covered California is committed to working with our federal partners to address policy and operational issues that impact the American Indian and Alaska Native communities. Following the 2012 Consultation, CCIIO hosted a phone conversation with CRIHB and Covered California at Covered California’s request to discuss the possibility of changing the definition of Indian.

Tribal Recommendation 2: Take a leadership role similar to the State of Washington’s Health Benefit Exchange by mandating the Qualified Health Plans offer to subcontract with all Tribal Health Programs and Urban Indian Clinics.

Covered California Response: Covered California does not currently require Qualified Health Plans to contract with, or offer contracts to, particular provider types. However, Covered California does require its issuers to contract with at least 15% of available essential community providers (ECPs) in each geographic region they serve, and specifically includes Tribal Health Programs and Urban Indian Clinics in its definition of ECP. Covered California also plans to include the Model QHP Tribal Addendum in its 2015 QHP contract. The Tribal Addendum sets the framework for issuers that contract Tribal health care providers.

Tribal Recommendation 3: Assist in ensuring Covered California’s expedited and smooth adoption of aspects of the new State law regarding Tribal Medi-Cal administrative claiming processing using the California Healthcare Eligibility, Enrollment and Retention System (CalHEERS).

Covered California Response: The California Department of Health Care Services operates the Tribal Medi-Cal administrative claiming program. To the extent CalHEERS changes are required to implement state law, Covered California will support DHCS in that effort consistent with our joint management of CalHEERS.

Tribal Recommendation 4: Continue providing support to Covered California’s Tribal Consultation program.

Covered California Response: Covered California is committed to continuing its Tribal Consultation program as well as its Tribal Advisory Workgroup. The intent of Covered California’s Tribal Consultation Official Policy is to achieve the following:

- The development of a partnership between Tribes and the Exchange in implementing the Affordable Care Act.
- The incorporation of the special benefits and protections extended to Tribes under the Affordable Care Act into Exchange policies, business processes and systems.
- The opening of communication channels for Tribes to raise issues with the Exchange.
- The maximization of participation of eligible American Indians in the Exchange.