

## **Listening Session Executive Summary**

### **Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder Resources for Native Americans Program**

**Introduction:** The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) held a Tribal Listening Session on the [Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder Resources for Native Americans](#) Program on August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023. This is a new program, authorized but not appropriated, under the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023. The listening session provided an opportunity for SAMHSA to share information about the statutory authority for the program and hear from Tribal Leaders.

**Background:** On December 29, 2022, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 was signed into law. The law amended Section 506A of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290aa– 5a) to create a Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder Resources for Native Americans (BHSUDRNA) Program. The purpose of the program is to provide services for the prevention of, treatment of, and recovery from mental health and substance use disorders among American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians. Eligible entities include any health program administered directly by the Indian Health Service (IHS), a Tribal health program, an Indian Tribe, a Tribal organization, an Urban Indian organization, and a Native Hawaiian health organization (Papa Ola Lokahi’). The program is authorized such that the Secretary acts through the Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use for SAMHSA, in consultation with the Director of the IHS. This new amendment to the statute states that the Secretary, in consultation with the Director of IHS and the eligible entities, shall develop a formula to determine the amount of an award for BHSUDRNA. SAMHSA, in coordination with IHS, held a virtual listening session on August 29<sup>th</sup> regarding development and implementation of the program. This document summarizes key messages and potential next steps that were shared during the virtual listening session.

#### **Key Messages/Themes that emerged from participants in the listening session:**

- Ensure Tribes do not have to compete against each other for funding.
- Consider using IHS user population in formula development.
- Consider using IHS contracting and compacting mechanism for funding.
- Create broad eligibility under BHSUDRNA to include as many Tribes as possible.
- Maintain grant requirements that are flexible to allow Tribes to use the funds to address their unique priorities.
- Ensure minimal reporting requirements and these measures should be developed by Tribes.
- Create a plan for sustainability of funding, to ensure continued success of programs.
- Eliminate ERA Commons and Government Performance and Results Act reporting requirements.

#### **Next Steps:**

- SAMHSA, in coordination with IHS, will hold an additional listening session on November 9<sup>th</sup> at 4pm ET. Register for link [here](#).
- SAMHSA will engage with Urban Indian Organizations and Papa Ola Lakahi’ to understand needs and gather additional input.
- SAMHSA will work with Tribes to schedule Tribal Consultation prior to implementation of the program.