Whereas, nearly 13% of AI/AN youth ages 12-24 experienced a depressive episode or related mental illness in 2018, and an estimated 20% require treatment due to early alcohol use\(^1\); and

Whereas, the Indian Health Service (IHS) uses Youth Regional Treatment Centers (YRTCs) for acute behavioral healthcare for AI/AN adolescents, but national capacity only meets 4% of the need\(^2-3\); and

Whereas, YRTCs help adolescents develop independent living skills, provide schooling attuned to individual needs, create post-discharge sobriety plans, and coordinate prison diversion programs\(^4-5\); and

Whereas, while 61% of arrested AI/AN youth are eligible for YRTC diversion programs, only 14% ultimately receive care at YRTCs\(^6\); and

Whereas, the IHS, in consultation with Tribal leaders and key parties, has voiced concerns regarding AI/AN youth traveling across state lines to seek care at non-IHS treatment centers\(^6\); and

Whereas, non-IHS treatment centers are not equipped to address the complex effects of intergenerational trauma, systematic discrimination, and displacement on AI/AN youth mental health\(^7-9\); therefore be it

RESOLVED, that our American Medical Association support the expansion of Indian Health Service Youth Regional Treatment Centers, recognizing them as a model for culturally-rooted, evidence-based behavioral health treatment, and prompt referral of eligible AI/AN youth to Youth Regional Treatment Centers (YRTCs) for community-directed care. (New HOD Policy)

Fiscal Note: Minimal - less than $1,000

Received: 4/5/2024

REFERENCES


4. IHS. Youth Regional Treatment Centers. https://www.ihs.gov/yrtc/

6. IHS. IHS Holds Grand Opening for New Youth Regional Treatment Center in California. 2022. 


RELEVANT AMA POLICY

H-160.963 Community-Based Treatment Centers

D-350.988 American Indian / Alaska Native Adolescent Suicide
Our AMA will: 1) provide active testimony in Congress for suicide prevention and intervention resources to be directed towards American Indian/Alaska Native communities; 2) encourage significant funding to be allocated to research the causes, prevention, and intervention regarding American Indian/Alaska Native adolescent suicide and make these findings widely available; and 3) lobby the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs on the important issue of American Indian/Alaska Native adolescent suicide. [Sub Res. 404, A-11; Reaffirmed: BOT Rep. 7, A-21]

H-345.974 Culturally, Linguistically Competent Mental Health Care and Outreach for At-Risk Communities
Our AMA supports adequate attention and funds being directed towards culturally and linguistically competent mental health direct services for the diverse, multi-ethnic communities at greatest risk, and encourages greater cultural and linguistic-competent outreach to ethnic communities including partnerships with ethnic community organizations, health care advocates, and respected media outlets. [Res. 917, I-13; Reaffirmed: Res. 426, A-16]