

# RURAL HEALTH LINK: THE RURAL TRIBAL COVID-19 QUARTERLY DIGEST



The **Georgia Health Policy Center (GHPC)** and **Seven Directions** would like to welcome you to the *Rural Health Link: The Rural Tribal COVID-19 Quarterly Digest*. This newsletter will share program updates, the technical assistance schedule of events, as well as a variety of resources focused on COVID-19 and tribal health. Each issue will also feature a grantee spotlight article and video. We welcome your feedback. If you have any comments or recommendations for future content, please reach out to us at [chssteam@gsu.edu](mailto:chssteam@gsu.edu).

## GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT

The White Mountain Apache Tribe is using the Rural Tribal COVID-19 Response grant to expand its community health representative program. The grant enabled the tribe to hire a medical assistant and two certified nursing assistants, who have been valuable to conducting high-risk follow-up visits to quarantined members.

The Georgia Health Policy Center recently spoke to J.T. Nashio, the program director for the community health representative program for the White Mountain Apache Tribe, about participation in the Rural Tribal COVID-19 Response Grant program.

[Learn more](#)

## PROGRAM SPECIFIC UPDATES

### RTCR Quarterly Technical Assistance Schedule Quarter 3: May–July 2021

#### Rural Tribal COVID-19 Response Webinars(RTCR)

#### Effective Communication and Engagement

As a reminder the slides and recording from the *Effective Communication and Engagement* webinar held on May 6, 2021, have been posted to the [grantee](#)

#### Indigenous Evaluation Approaches Part 1

The slides, recording and resources from the Indigenous Evaluation Approaches held on June 10, 2021, have been posted as well, you can find them

#### Indigenous Evaluation Approaches Part 2

**UPCOMING WEBINAR**  
The second part of Indigenous Evaluation Approaches Webinar will be held on July 22, 2021 at 2pm EST. Attendees must

[website](#). You may find the materials directly on the [Rural Tribal COVID-19 Response Grant page](#).

on your grant page [here](#).

register in advance for this meeting.

Register

## RTCR Peer Group Calls

The second quarter peer group calls took place in April on the following topics:

- Addressing behavioral and mental health needs
- Staff morale and burnout
- Culturally competent health care
- Effective engagement strategies
- Indigenous public health communication and education: COVID-19 messaging
- Overcoming supply chain challenges
- Telehealth

There were some great resources shared during these calls, you can find them [here](#) under the resources section.

## Upcoming Peer Calls for July 2021

\*Please note that these calls are held two times per date and are in ET time zone.



### Building Capacity to support Provider and Community Wellbeing and Mental Health + The Data to Strengthen Health Department Efforts\*

July 6, 1PM - [Meeting Link](#)  
July 6, 3PM - [Meeting Link](#)

This peer call will feature one of your fellow grantees and you will hear from them on steps/strategies their organization has taken to support staff members during COVID-19. The discussion will include strategies such as: wellness check-ins at meetings; reaching out to community members; and providing vacation time.



### Substance Use Disorder (SUD)\*

July 8, 1PM - [Meeting Link](#)  
July 8, 3PM - [Meeting Link](#)

This peer call will feature other tribal sites that have implemented strength-based interventions with cultural practices. In addition, solutions and strategies will be discussed for access to care and disparities in care.



### Youth Mental Health - Talking with Youth about Resources\*

July 13, 1PM - [Meeting Link](#)  
July 13, 3PM - [Meeting Link](#)

This peer call will feature peer grantee site(s) sharing strategies to support Youth during the pandemic. The discussion will include: creating a support system; creating partnerships with

other systems, such as the school district; and what strength-based strategies look like.



## Stress Reduction and Staying Well

July 13, 1PM - [Meeting Link](#)

July 13, 3PM - [Meeting Link](#)

Join us for a discussion on how to take care of grantee staff as they support their communities. Peers will share strategies to monitor staff well-being without adding additional work. In addition, we will practice stress/anxiety reduction strategies that everyone can participate in and take back to their tribes and communities. A safe and healthy team is an excellent role model for our tribal communities.

## GRANTEE DELIVERABLE

Quarter 4 reports are due **June 26, 2021**. Please remember you can use your calls to discuss your reports with your TA provider and get assistance with completing your quarterly reports. Additionally, refer to or ask your TA and project officer for the quarterly report guidance that was sent to you via email in April.

## NEWS ARTICLES

### [Vaccine Update: CDC Advisers Endorse Pfizer Vaccine for Children 12–to–15-Year-Olds](#)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently announced that they recommend children between the ages of 12 and 15 years old receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. This news broke a couple days after the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) provided emergency authorization of the Pfizer vaccine for this age group. This is a significant step towards reopening schools on a larger scale and achieving herd immunity or protection nationally. Clinical trial data shows that other than a slight increase in fevers, the side effects for 12 to 15-year-olds who have received the shot are insignificant. Pfizer and BioNTech plan to request authorization for 2 to 11-year-olds in the fall. [Click here](#) to access the article.

### [Unrecognized Tribes Struggle Without Federal Aid during Pandemic](#)

As federally recognized tribes have been receiving funding through the Indian Health Services to support COVID-19 response efforts, unrecognized tribes have received absolutely nothing. Tribes that are not recognized by the U.S. government have been leaning on neighboring tribes for testing, vaccine, resources, and other means to survive the coronavirus pandemic. This includes traveling two to three hours to receive vaccination and resources. Additionally, unrecognized tribes do not receive funding for clinics and often must travel to receive medical care, which can be difficult. Tony Johnson, chair of the Chinook Indian Nation, states that they haven't lost any tribe members from the virus itself but have lost members due to the consequences of COVID-19 such as addiction and untreated chronic conditions. [Click here](#) to access the article.

## RESOURCES

### [Funding Opportunity: Emergency Broadband Benefit Program](#)

Created in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, the Federal Communications

Commission's Emergency Broadband Benefit Program assists families and households with affording internet service. The program provides a discount of up to \$50 per month toward broadband service and associated equipment rentals for eligible households and \$75 per month for households on tribal lands. Additionally, there is a one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, tablet, or desk computer. To qualify for the program, a member of the household must meet at least one of the eligibility criteria:

- Income at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines or participates in certain assistance programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Medicaid or Lifeline
- Receive benefits under the free and reduced-price school breakfast or lunch programs
- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year
- Experienced a substantial loss of income due to job loss or furlough since Feb. 29, 2020, and a total household income in 2020 at or below \$99,000 for single filers and \$198,000 for joint filers
- Meets the eligibility criteria for participating provider's existing low-income or COVID-19 program

This is a great funding opportunity to disseminate to members of the communities you are serving! [Click here](#) for more information. [Click here](#) to apply for the program.

### **[Request for Information on Advancing Equity and Support for Underserved Communities](#)**

The Office of Management and Budget is requesting input from various stakeholders throughout the nation, including those working in tribal communities, on available methods, approaches, and tools that the government can utilize to promote equity and support underserved communities. Responses should be submitted by July 6, 2021. [Click here](#) to submit an official response.

### **[Psychological First Aid for COVID-19 Frontline Workers in American Indian/Alaskan Native Communities](#)**

The John Hopkins Center for American Indian Health convened a community advisory board (CAB) to culturally adapt the Psychological First Guide for American Indian and Alaska Native communities to support responders in their daily COVID-19 responses. The CAB was comprised of representatives from a variety of tribes, frontline workers, mental health, and public health professionals. The guide includes four modules that provides users with guidance and resources around supporting themselves and their families, supportive communication for everyday interactions, offering practical support to community members, and supporting everyone in their communities collectively. [Click here](#) to access the guide.

### **[We Can Do This: COVID-19 Public Education Campaign](#)**

We Can Do This, is a national COVID-19 public education campaign created by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The goal of the campaign is to increase public confidence in COVID-19 vaccines to increase our national vaccination rate. The campaign includes resources and tool kits that are culturally appropriate for American Indian and Alaskan Native (AI/AN) communities. Resources and toolkits that are provided include toolkits for AI/AN tribal leaders, fact sheets, and promotional material for the radio, social media, and to disseminate throughout the community. [Click here](#) to access the resources.

### **[COVID-19 Youth Vaccine Flyer](#)**

The FDA recently authorized the Pfizer vaccine for children between the ages of 12 and 15. Considering this news, John Hopkins Center for American Indian Health created a COVID-19 vaccine flyer for youth. This flyer is great promotional material to post within the communities you serve to encourage children and families to get the Pfizer vaccine. [Click here](#) to access the flyer.

### **[Tip Sheet: Addressing COVID-19 Misinformation](#)**

The National Institute of Health's Community Engagement Alliance Against COVID-19 Disparities developed a tip sheet on addressing COVID-19 misinformation for health professionals working with community members. The tip sheet provides suggestions on identifying key misinformation in your community, selecting which misinformation to

address, how to acknowledge and empathize with community members, and how to debunk and explain misinformation. [Click here](#) to access the tip sheet.

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### [Connecting Prevention Specialists to Native Communities](#)

***Monthly, every Friday from 11-12 p.m. MT***

Please join the National American Indian and Alaska Native Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Tribal Training and Technical Assistance Center as they host virtual trainings for prevention specialists to support Native communities. The training will cover topics including crisis response and resources will be shared.

[Register](#)



### [Virtual: COVID-19 Updates for Primary Care Clinicians](#)

***July 24, 2021, from 10:00-11:30 a.m. ET***

Please join the Rural Medical Education Collaborative as they host a webinar discussing recent updates concerning COVID-19 prevention and treatment and address challenges facing rural and underserved communities.

Experts will discuss new therapeutic options for inpatient and outpatient settings, current guidelines for treatment, long-term follow ups, and COVID-19 vaccines.

[Register](#)