



American Indian Cancer Foundation.

NEWS RELEASE
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AICAF APPLAUDS THE BIDEN-HARRIS ADMINISTRATION’S NEW PROPOSED CMS RULES TO EXPAND ACCESS TO HIGH-COST DRUGS AND CANCER TREATMENT AT TRIBAL FACILITIES

ST. PAUL, MN— On July 10, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), proposed new policies that aim to reduce maternal mortality, advance health equity, and support underserved communities.

Spearheaded by the Biden Cancer Moonshot, the proposed rules would enable Indian Health Service (IHS) and Tribal facilities to receive additional funding to provide cancer treatment to patients with Medicare in Tribal communities.

“We commend the President and First Lady for their unwavering dedication to ensuring that cancer patients have access to quality care, no matter where they live. The Biden-Harris Administration’s efforts to reduce barriers for IHS and Tribal facilities represent a monumental step forward. By enabling these facilities to expand their health care services, including crucial cancer treatment, we can expect significant improvements in health outcomes for American Indian (AI) communities,” said AICAF CEO Melissa Buffalo. “This initiative not only promises better access to care but also brings hope for earlier detection and more effective treatment options, ultimately leading to better survival rates.”

One of the biggest challenges for AI people in getting on-time cancer screening and access to high-quality treatment is that some IHS facilities can’t provide specialized services, which include oncology. This can mean that cancer is found at a more advanced stage, which is harder to treat and can lower survival rates.

While the new proposed rules establish a pathway for Tribal facilities to expand the range of health care services they offer, it is important for the Biden-Harris Administration to build upon this work and reach the Biden Cancer Moonshot goals by considering these co-factors that impact the most recent proposed rules:

- Life expectancy for AI men and women.
- Current mortality rates for AI populations as an indicator for understanding the efficacy of Medicare reimbursement rates in Tribal communities.
- Definition of access in Tribal communities.

For more details on the proposed policies, read the full press release from CMS.gov here: [Biden Harris Administration Proposes Policies to Reduce Maternal Mortality, Advance Health Equity, and Support Underserved Communities.](#)

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