

National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

March 20, 2020

“Resiliency + Action: Ending the HIV Epidemic in Native Communities”

“Resilience + Action: Ending the HIV Epidemic in Native Communities” is the theme for the National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NNHAAD) 2020 to highlight current health and biomedical strategies and community responses to HIV/AIDS in tribal and urban communities. The National Native HIV Network (NNHN) has taken the lead the national coordination of NNHAAD activities, social marketing/social media, and announcements that include NNHAAD website update, national calendar of events, social media, electronic social marketing materials and outreach.

This year’s NNHAAD poster was designed by Jolene Yazzie (*Diné*) to include this year’s theme to protect our people by ending the HIV epidemic and inclusion of cultural images and advocates in HIV prevention for our American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian communities. Agencies and individuals, can download and print this year’s poster at www.nnhaad.org and also include contact information and/or NNHAAD activities in the blank space at the bottom of the poster.

NNHAAD is a national mobilization effort designed to encourage Native people (American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians) across the United States and Territorial Areas to get educated, get tested, get involved in prevention and get treated for HIV and AIDS. NNHAAD was founded in 2007 among three (3) collaborating Native serving agencies to bring awareness about HIV/AIDS to our Native communities from tribal lands, reservations, villages, and urban areas and is observed annually on March 20th, the first day of Spring.

The first day of Spring was chosen as the date to celebrate NNHAAD by individuals in the community who participated in a national survey to determine the most appropriate day. It was acknowledged that in many Native cultures across the United States, the four seasons are highly respected because they closely represent the cycle of life. Spring represents a time of equality and balance and is the only day when day and night are at equal lengths. It is considered a time of profound change, new beginnings and birth; A celebration of life for all people. The cycle of life is defined by the change in seasons, and ceremonies are held to recognize the passing of one season and the beginning to another.

The National Native HIV Network (NNHN) was created in 2017 as a community-led response to increase and organize a Native national voice and presence in the HIV movement. With support from the HHS Office of the Secretary’s Minority HIV/AIDS Fund (MHAF) and Indian Health Service (IHS) and the Albuquerque Area Indian Health Board (AAIHB) coordinates a wide array of key stakeholders from the twelve IHS Areas to form the NNHN. The Network provides input and guidance to assist IHS and other agencies in efforts to reach high-risk American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) populations with HIV testing, prevention, and treatment. NNHN builds group capacity and provides assistance to support extensive community engagement strategies, dissemination of information at regional and national levels, and supports professional and leadership development to sustain these efforts.

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