



January 8, 2021

Dear Tribal Leaders:

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Minority Health (OMH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), we are writing to share an update on a new campaign to raise awareness about urgent maternal warning signs. We respect and appreciate your leadership and partnership in protecting the health of American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) mothers and children.

Approximately 700 women die each year from complications related to pregnancy in the United States. Severe pregnancy-related complications have been steadily increasing in recent years and affect more than 50,000 women in this country each year. Sadly, in another example of disparity within Indian Country, AI/AN women are two times more likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than Caucasian women. Two thirds of these deaths could be prevented. Recognizing the urgent maternal warning signs and getting an accurate and timely diagnosis can save lives, which is why we believe this campaign is so important.

CDC released the first wave of the *Hear Her* campaign (www.cdc.gov/hearher) in August 2020 with the goal of raising awareness of potentially life-threatening warning signs during and after pregnancy and improving communication between patients and their healthcare providers.

In partnership with the Office of Minority Health (OMH), the campaign team is developing the next segment of the campaign, specifically focused on reaching and serving AI/AN women and their communities. These materials and messages will be designed based on feedback from AI/AN women, their support networks, and community leaders. A key component of the campaign is storytelling, and this segment will include videos featuring stories from AI/AN women. The campaign team will work with organizations serving tribal communities to develop culturally relevant tools and resources and disseminate through partners and channels that reach AI/AN people on tribal lands and in urban areas.

OMH and CDC are committed to improving the overall health of AI/AN communities. We look forward to our continued partnership and will share updates on this campaign as they are available.

For more information on the *Hear Her* campaign, please visit www.cdc.gov/HearHer. We will share updates through the CDC/ Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry Tribal Advisory Committee, Tribal Leader Directory and newsletters. You can reach the campaign team by emailing HearHer@cdc.gov.

Thank you for your interest, your leadership, and your support.

Sincerely,



Robert R. Redfield, MD
Director, CDC and
Administrator, ATSDR



RADM Felicia Collins
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cc: Wanda Barfield, MD, MPH, FAAP, RADM USPHS (ret.)
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