

December 11, 2020

Dear AAIP membership,

**This is a quick update and also an ask of AAIP members.**

**Update:** Many of you are concerned that AAIP has not addressed the recent closures and cessation of services at IHS facilities in the Southwest. AAIP leadership with the Policy and Legislative Committee has been very active and has met at least three times with IHS Director, Admiral Weahkee and Admiral Toedt. I have held back on updates in the hopes that we could get more concrete answers and plans. I realize now that it is time to share with you our understanding of events and recommendations to the Indian health service. Please watch for further updates this weekend.

AAIP is also very active in getting messages to our communities on the critical role that the vaccines will play in decreasing the tremendous impact of COVID 19 on Native people. We have a town hall on Sunday the 13th at 2PM CST and will also be posting PSAs and video messaging from our members on our website for distribution to our respective communities.

**Ask:** Given the enormity of our task in convincing at least 60-70% of our communities to get vaccinated (twice), we need a task force. We have a start with the upcoming town hall and the messaging to our communities, but this will require a sustained effort and vigilant effort. I am asking for any of you who feel you might have the capacity now and/or over the next several months to consider volunteering to be on an AAIP COVID 19 Vaccine Task Force. If you are interested, please reach out to the AAIP office.

Thank you all for your time and commitment to our communities.

Mary