1ˢᵗ Annual National Native Health Research Training Conference
September 18-20, 2017
Denver, Colorado

Introduction

In 2017, the Indian Health Service (IHS) launched the **National Native Health Research Training Initiative** (NNHRTI) to promote Tribally-driven research activity through educational and training opportunities, including the first of five annual conferences that will build capacity and disseminate new and best practices for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) health research. The 5-year initiative and each of the five annual conferences are sponsored by the IHS and hosted by the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES), and the Native Research Network (NRN).

Conference Objectives

- Increase opportunities for AI/AN scientists and health professionals to share knowledge gained from health sciences research with AI/AN students and other scientists and health professionals.
- Increase the dissemination and use of biomedical, clinical, behavioral, and health science research findings to address the health needs of AI/AN communities.
- Enhance Tribal-academic collaborations and improve the ability of Tribes to better understand research findings, particularly related to the physical, biological, genetic, behavioral, psychological, cultural, and social implications of research.
- Increase the effective use of Traditional Medicine, Indigenous Knowledge, and Traditional Ecological Knowledge/Environmental Health to enhance protective factors/effects and to improve health outcomes among AI/ANs.

History

AI/AN research has led to important advances with respect to specific health issues (e.g., vaccines for preventable diseases, diabetes prevention) as well as approaches to conducting research in AI/AN communities (e.g., Community-based Participatory Research (CBPR)). Further, studies conducted by and for AI/ANs have demonstrated the benefits of designing and evaluating health care and research programs that are founded on cultural and traditional practices, spirituality, sovereignty, self-reliance, and collaboration. However, greater attention needs to be placed on developing research methods consistent with traditional AI/AN ways of knowing in evaluating and improving systems for health care delivery and research.

1st Annual NNHRT Conference Theme
Healing Ourselves: Cultural- and Traditional Medicine-based Approaches to Sustainable Health

Abstracts
The Conference Committee welcomes abstracts addressing topics related to this theme. In addition, we invite abstracts from a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives. We are interested in a diversity of (inter-)national, regional, and local perspectives. Submissions by researchers, health care practitioners, health systems experts, and doctoral students engaged in research are welcome.

Conference Tracks
The conference will have five tracks, which are described below. Examples of types of questions that could be considered for each track are included; however, these should not be considered exclusionary. They are intended only to be illustrative.

- **Biomedical and clinical systems and research (BCSR):** This track will highlight new advances in biomedical and clinical research in improving primary healthcare delivery, as well as innovative approaches in research that incorporate traditional AI/AN methodologies. The session will explore, among other questions: How are AI/AN researchers using traditional and cultural-based knowledge to break new ground in biomedical and health systems research? How can Western biomedical research models be informed by Traditional Knowledge? How are approaches to AI/AN research changing in response to community inclusion and consultation? What are good models for collaboration between Tribal and non-Tribal community-based health care providers that promote access to services, continuity of care, or public health? What is the future of biomedical and health systems research in AI/AN communities?

- **Injury Prevention:** This track will highlight evidence-based strategies by tribal, federal, state and local agencies applied to unintentional injuries. The session will explore: What are emerging injury prevention research applicable to AI/AN communities? How should the outcomes of injury prevention research be disseminated to be responsive to the needs of AI/AN communities and aimed at reducing health disparities?

- **Native Men's Health:** This track will focus on the health of young and adult AI/AN men. The session will explore: What resilience and protective factors have been identified and what is their role in health outcomes? How is culture-based prevention, intervention, and treatment modalities improving health outcomes for Native men? What models for men's health have demonstrated effectiveness? What are the research gaps in men's health? How can we successfully translate what we know into program development and implementation?

- **Traditional Medicine**: This session will focus on the value of Traditional Medicine in promoting AI/AN health. The session will explore: What are successful models of Traditional Medicine-based or related treatment? What challenges do researchers face today when evaluating the effects of Traditional Medicine in practice? How are these challenges being met? How are Traditional Medicine models changing? What are the strengths and weaknesses of different models? Are certain Traditional Medicine practices associated with certain outcomes? How will this information enhance Tribal-academic collaborations and improve the ability of Tribes to use research findings?

Traditional Ecological Knowledge/ Environmental Health (TEK/EH): This session will explore the intersection and interactions between TEK and EH. It will highlight the importance of intergenerational learning and the value of adapting STEM curricula to reflect a TEK perspective. Both successes and challenges of applying different but potentially complementary knowledge systems will be discussed. The session will consider questions such as: How is TEK being applied in contemporary research contexts to address pressing environmental concerns? How can TEK inform EH, and vice versa? How can TEK be used in ecological management and policy development? When can TEK be more informative than Western scientific methods? What is being done to prepare AI/AN tribal college students, scientists and health professionals to incorporate both TEK and current EH research methodologies in AI/AN health studies?

Abstract Submission

As stated above, we invite abstracts focusing on AI/AN research-related activity consistent with the five described tracks. Researchers from all organizational and institutional types (health service providers, governmental agencies, Tribal Colleges and Universities and other institutions of higher education) are encouraged to submit abstracts. We particularly welcome new scholars and members of AI/AN Tribes and other Indigenous populations interested in creating and engaging with a community of scholars through participation in the annual NNHRT conference.

Types of Presentations & Submissions: Abstracts may be submitted for a podium presentation, either as an individual presenter or panel session, or a poster presentation.

Dates & Deadlines

Abstracts must be submitted and received no later than **11:59 p.m. CDT on July 15, 2017**. For more information about the conference and abstract submission, including the abstract submission form, please see: www.NNHRTI.org.

Questions may be directed to: NNHRTIconference@NNHRTI.org.