



## Indian Health Board of Minneapolis, Inc.

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### Indian Health Board of Minneapolis (IHB) – Traditional Indigenous Medical Practices (TIMP) and Medicaid Reimbursement

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#### About IHB

- Founded in 1971 to serve the Minneapolis urban American Indian community.
  - Provides integrated medical, dental, behavioral health, recovery, and Indigenous services to approximately 10,000 patients annually.
  - IHB is part of the I/T/U system (Indian Health Service facilities, Tribal Health Programs, and Urban Indian Health Organizations).
    - UIOs receive just 1% of IHS funding despite serving over 70% of AI/ANs in urban areas.
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#### Traditional Indigenous Medical Practices (TIMP)

TIMP refers to culturally specific healing services grounded in Indigenous knowledge, including:

- Ceremonies: Drum blessings, naming ceremonies, pipe ceremonies, full moon ceremonies, etc.
  - Cultural Consultations: Guidance from elders and medicine people.
  - Cultural Teachings and Group Activities: Traditional medicine preparation, talking circles, winter storytelling, drum-making, wild rice parching, or making moccasins, ribbon skirts & other cultural items.
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#### What We Are Asking For

- Approval of a Section 1115 Waiver Request from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to authorize Medicaid reimbursement for TIMP.
  - Precedents exist: Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Oregon have secured similar waivers.
  - Funding would support reimbursement for:
    - Individual Services: Cultural consultations and certain ceremonies.
    - Group Services: Certain ceremonies, traditional teachings groups and cultural activity groups.
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#### Why It Matters

- Health Outcomes: Traditional healing practices have been shown to improve mental health and substance use outcomes.
- Equity & Sovereignty: Ensures equal access for AI/AN communities to culturally aligned health services and federal government's obligation to provide health care to American Indians.
- Sustainability: Moves traditional healing funding from short-term grants to sustainable Medicaid reimbursement.

- Respect for Cultural Integrity: Billing and reporting would protect patient privacy and maintain the private nature of these practices.

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**How This Benefits Minnesota**

- Expands culturally appropriate care for Minnesota's urban AI/AN population.
- Reduces health disparities among AI/AN communities.
- Promotes long-term financial sustainability for traditional healing services.

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**SUPPORT TRADITIONAL INDIGENOUS MEDICAL PRACTICES FOR BETTER HEALTH OUTCOMES IN MINNESOTA**

Contact: Dr. Patrick Rock, CEO, Indian Health Board of Minneapolis at 612.721.9856

## **Talking Points for Dr. Rock's Testimony – March 19, 2025**

1. Introduction
  - To Chair and members of the committee. Who is Dr Rock and what is IHB.
2. Context of the I/T/U System
  - IHB is part of the I/T/U system of Indian Health Service (IHS) —Indian Health Service (IHS) facilities, Tribal health programs, and Urban Indian Health Organizations (UIHOs)— which reflects the federal government's trust responsibility to provide health care to American Indian and Alaska Native people.
  - IHS and Tribal programs receive direct federal funding, but UIHOs like IHB are chronically underfunded, yet 70% American Indian patients live in urban setting.
3. Definition of Traditional Indigenous Medical Practices (TIMP)
  - Traditional Indigenous Medical Practices (TIMP) include cultural activities and ceremonies and are grounded in Indigenous knowledge systems. Examples include traditional medicine preparation and use, talking circles, winter storytelling, drum-making, wild rice parching, or making moccasins, ribbon skirts & other cultural items
4. What We Are Asking For
  - We are seeking a Section 1115 waiver request to allow Medicaid reimbursement for these practices—similar to what Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Oregon have already secured. This would ensure long-term sustainability and expand access to culturally appropriate care in MN.
5. Why It Matters
  - Research shows that traditional healing practices improve mental health outcomes, enhance substance use recovery, and strengthen cultural identity. This proposal supports health equity for American Indian people while respecting cultural integrity and sovereignty
  - Call to Action (CTA): We urge the committee to support this critical step toward health equity for urban American Indian communities.
6. Closing
  - Thank you for your time and consideration. I'm happy to take any questions.