



CALIFORNIA RURAL INDIAN HEALTH BOARD, INC.

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CRIHB AWARDED \$2.6 MILLION FOR LOCAL DENTAL PILOT PROJECT

Sacramento, CA – Out of 15 proposals, the Department of Health Care Services selected the California Rural Indian Health Board (CRIHB) as one of 15 proposals for Local Dental Pilot Project (LDPP) funding, with an award of \$2.6 million over four years. These pilot projects are one of four domains of the Dental Transformation Initiative (DTI). Within the Medi-Cal 2020 Waiver, the DTI represents a critical mechanism to improve dental health for children in the Medi-Cal program by focusing on high-value care, improved access, and utilization of performance measures to drive delivery system reform.

As the lead entity, CRIHB's LDPP is partnering with 12 Tribal and Urban health programs; three Tribal Head Start programs; and one Women, Infants, and Children program. "Given the importance of oral healthcare for Native youth, CRIHB is determined to advance the quality of dental care through all the participating programs of our Local Dental Pilot Project," stated Dr. Mark LeBeau, CRIHB CEO. Lisa Elgin, CRIHB Board Chair, commented, "The initiative is essential for CRIHB to ensure that Medi-Cal beneficiaries receive better oral health services, particularly Native children."

The LDPP is designed to address Native children suffering from tooth decay. In response, the project aims to intervene in the medical clinic during well-child visits. Ninety-six percent (96%) of children have access to primary medical care, while fewer receive regular dental care. By screening children in the medical clinic, the participating programs can increase children's access to dental services. During the well-child visit, an Oral Health Care Coordinator will perform a caries risk assessment, screen for oral disease, and will then refer the child for dental care and follow up with them to ensure that they complete their care. This strategy will increase the use of preventive dental services for children, increase oral health prevention, address caries risk assessment and disease management, and continuity of care among children.

One unique feature of the LDPP is that it includes children aged 0-20; most programs of this type focus only on the primary teeth. Over time, CRIHB hopes to show the number of dental preventive services increasing while the numbers of restorative procedures decrease, indicating a reduction in dental caries among Native youth.

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