American Indian/Alaska Natives (AI/AN) in California have been greatly impacted by the opioid crisis. In order to learn more about the harm affecting reservations, rancherias, families, and homes, CRIHB staff traveled throughout California to speak with Tribal communities. The following illustration represents the voices of Central California Tribal communities.

Our young people are easily addicted to drugs because of all the trauma that is brought from generations. They come from broken homes. They’re trying to take the pain away.

“We need to get Narcan out into the community. We need harm reduction education. We need Native-based treatment centers. We need spiritual guidance counselors.”

“It’s a Tribe thing. It takes a village. We have to all do it together, so we need to have our leaders on board.”

“Our young people are easily addicted to drugs because of all the trauma that is brought from generations. They come from broken homes. They’re trying to take the pain away.”

“We need to get youth involved with learning their songs, dancing, talking to the spirits, and praying.”

We need to strengthen our traditional foundation.
Healing Our California Tribal Communities:
A Strategic Plan to Address Tribal Opioid Use

California Tribal communities have been greatly impacted by the current opioid crisis. This epidemic has strained families, communities, health, and public safety. While there are no easy fixes or solutions, there are proven methods to help those addicted and prevent others from succumbing to the powerful draw of opioids.

Local coalitions, Tribal leaders, communities, organizations, and other key stakeholders such as CRIHB play a vital role in developing and implementing the environmental, individual, and societal factors to permanently shift the opioid tide.

Based on current statewide statistics, the results from the SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) conducted by CRIHB Opioid Program Staff and the lived experiences and stories of California Tribes, five major key focus areas have been identified as having the greatest importance in addressing the opioid epidemic in California Tribal communities:

1. Prevention
   a. Community Education
   b. Youth Education
   c. Health Care Provider Education
   d. Medication Safety Education
2. Expanding Treatment and Recovery Services
3. Expanding Partnerships
4. Engaging Tribal Leadership
5. Expanding Substance Use Policies
   a. Community
   b. Clinical Setting

To help guide efforts in developing an opioid response plan for California Tribal communities, the full version of the Strategic Plan can be accessed at https://crihb.org/ctec/#opioidstrategicplan

For questions of comments regarding the Strategic Plan, please contact the CRIHB Research and Public Health Department at 916-929-9761 or rph@crihb.org.

This plan was supported by the Tribal Public Health Capacity Building and Quality Improvement, Cooperative Agreement number NU38OT000264, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention or the Department of Health and Human Services.