



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
Prevention and Community Health  
Post Office Box 47830  
Olympia, Washington 98504-7830  
711 Washington Relay Service

October 23, 2023

Greetings Honorable Tribal Leaders and Tribal Partners –

**SUBJECT: Collaboration - Progress Update on Health Equity Zones Initiative**

In accordance with chapter [43.376 RCW](#), the [Washington State Centennial Accord of 1989](#), and [DOH Consultation and Collaboration Procedure](#), we invite collaboration with Indian tribes and tribal organizations in the development of policies, agreements, and program implementation that directly affects Indian tribes and tribal people.

An overview of the implementation work to date with upcoming actions steps on the [creation of Health Equity Zones](#) and implementation of [SB 5052](#) is attached. We appreciate your guidance and input with the following:

- Connect directly with the Nooksack Indian Tribe and the Lummi Nation to invite tribal community members to participate in planning of the Rural Health Equity Zone in Whatcom County.
- Participate in the identification and implementation of a health equity zone in a tribal or urban Indian community.
- Identify relevant tribal community health staff, health commissions, and/or youth councils to guide health equity zone selection and implementation.
- Provide [feedback](#) on the proposed health equity zone selection process.
- Solicit additional information with collaboration.
- [Request consultation](#) if desired.

For additional information on the Health Equity Zones Initiative, please contact Office of Family and Community Health Improvement Director Katie Eilers at [katie.eilers@doh.wa.gov](mailto:katie.eilers@doh.wa.gov) or 360-236-3687. For tribal related matters please contact DOH Tribal Policy Director Candice Wilson at [candice.wilson@doh.wa.gov](mailto:candice.wilson@doh.wa.gov) or 360-819-7626.

Sincerely,

Michele Roberts, MPH, MCHES

Assistant Secretary - Division of Prevention and Community Health

Cc: Umair A. Shah, MD, MPH - Secretary of Health - Department of Health  
Candice Wilson Quatz'tenaut (Lummi) - Tribal Policy Director - Department of Health  
Kristopher Holiday - Chief of Strategic Partnerships - Department of Health  
Elizabeth Perez - Chief of Public Affairs and Equity - Department of Health  
Kristin Peterson - Chief of Policy, Planning and Evaluation - Department of Health  
Jessica Todorovich - Chief of Staff - Department of Health  
Lacy Fehrenbach - Chief of Prevention, Safety and Health - Department of Health  
Katie Eilers - Director, Office of Family and Community Health Improvement - Department of Health  
Lydia Guy Ortiz - Section Manager, Community Workforce and Partnerships - Department of Health