

# HOW TO SUPPORT COVID-19 VACCINATION DECISIONS

## IN NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

Findings from *Understanding Diverse Communities and Supporting Equitable and Informed COVID-19 Vaccination Decision-Making*. Read more [here](#).

### ✓ ADDRESS EVOLVING INFORMATION NEEDS

Provide information on:

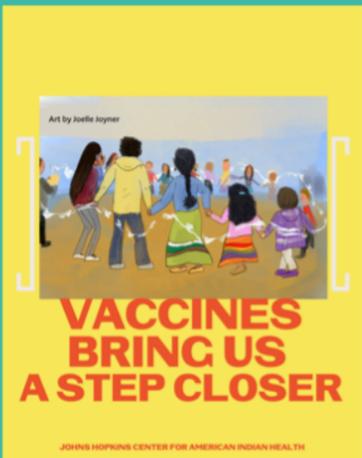
- Vaccine safety issues and ingredients, reactions with health conditions and medications, vaccine effectiveness for emergent variants, duration of protection, and whether vaccinated people can still transmit COVID-19 to others
  - Participants were particularly concerned about short-term expected side effects, allergic reactions, and any potential for unknown long-term impacts
- Numbers and experience - the number of people within the Tribe who have received the vaccine and any possible side effects, as well as the same information about Native American people overall
- Actions beyond vaccination - what else people can do to keep themselves and others healthy and contribute to stopping the spread of disease



### ✓ ACKNOWLEDGE VALUES AND LIVED EXPERIENCE

Acknowledge:

- Historical context resulting in present-day consequences - Historical abuse and neglect of Native Americans have left indelible marks on tribes and inadequate healthcare systems across Indian Country have led to Native Americans disproportionately experiencing the pandemic
- Values - Native community conversations approached the pandemic and the consequences of vaccines through a multi-generational lens; there were concerns about protecting elders and future unborn babies
- Lived experience - Traumatic historical experiences in trying to survive on government assistance have raised issues of jealousy and scarcity, which results in carefully watching equity-related access issues in the roll-out of vaccines, who is prioritized, and putting a high value on things not available yet (in this case vaccines)



### ✓ SUPPORT THE PROCESS OF DECISION-MAKING

- Provide safe platforms for individuals to talk to experts and with each other. Set up conversations with tribal leaders, elders, and other community members who can share more about their decision-making
- Show encouragement and appreciation for positive public health behaviors and decisions beyond vaccination that contribute to decreased disease rates, hospitalizations, and death
- To the extent possible, coordinate messaging on both tribal land and in the "border towns" to create more consistency



### ✓ MAKE IT EASY TO GET VACCINATED



- Make it especially easy for elders
  - Offer door-to-door or mobile units for those unable or uncomfortable traveling to a central location
- Ensure registration platforms account for different access and competencies regarding technology
- Provide culturally appropriate educational materials
- Implement safeguards against people going out of turn for vaccination and plan for what happens if people miss their appointment
- Be clear about what the next opportunity is if someone is not ready right now

Art by Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health (1, 2, 4) and Steve Thomas and the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (3)