



STATE OF WASHINGTON
 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
 PO Box 47890 | Olympia, Washington 98504-7890
 Tel: 360-236-4030 | 711 Washington State Relay

March 17, 2026

Re: Collaborative- State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) Focus Areas

Greetings Honorable Tribal Leaders, Partners, and Professionals:

In accordance with chapter [43.376 RCW](#), the [Washington State Centennial Accord of 1989](#), and the Washington State Department of Health (WA-DOH) [DOH Consultation and Collaboration Procedure](#), we are seeking additional collaboration on the [Washington State Health Improvement Plan \(SHIP\)](#). In March 2025, we held [Tribal Listening Sessions](#) that helped inform the identification of two focus areas.

Following the Tribal Listening Sessions, the SHIP Alliance, a group consisting of statewide cross-sector leaders, community members, and Tribal representatives convened to synthesize the results from Tribal and community feedback, the State Health Assessment, as well as other recommendations from relevant policy reports, to ultimately identify two SHIP focus areas: **Mental and Behavioral Health (including substance use); and Access to Care**. Learn more about the focus areas [here](#).

The next phase of the SHIP process includes the development of strategies and policy solutions to address these two high priority areas. To accomplish this, WA-DOH will host two SHIP Tribal listening sessions; each focused on one of the two focused areas. We invite Tribal leaders, Tribal public health professionals, and other Tribal partners to collaborate at the following:

Meeting Type	Date and Time	Zoom Information
Listening Session #1 Access to Care	Thursday April 23, 10:30am-12:00pm	Meeting ID: 844 5366 4425 Passcode: 755481
Listening Session #2 Mental and Behavioral Health	Tuesday April 28, 2:00pm-3:30pm	Meeting ID: 874 9868 3748 Passcode: 025627

There are additional convenings taking place across the public health system. Please email SHIP@doh.wa.gov to learn more.

For additional information, please contact Chelsea Henry, SHIP Manager, chelsea.henry@doh.wa.gov, or Candice Wilson, Executive Director, Office of Tribal Public Health and Relations (OTPHR), at candice.wilson@doh.wa.gov or 360-819-7626.

Respectfully,

Kristin Peterson, JD
 Chief of Policy
 Executive Office of Policy, Planning, and Evaluation

- cc: Dennis E. Worsham, Secretary of Health, WA-DOH
 Jessica Todorovich, Chief of Staff, Office of the Secretary, WA-DOH
 Dr. Tao Kwan-Gett, State Health Officer, WA-DOH
 Candice Wilson-Quatz'tenaut (Lummi), Executive Director, OTPHR, WA-DOH
 Gina Legaz, Performance and Policy Director, WA-DOH