



THE NAVAJO NATION

RUSSELL BEGAYE PRESIDENT
JONATHAN NEZ VICE PRESIDENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FEBRUARY 16, 2017

Office of the President and Vice President
Mihio Manus
Nicole Macias
928.871.7000
OPVP.PressRoom@gmail.com

VICE PRESIDENT NEZ ADVOCATES FOR INDIAN HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT ACT DURING CDC-ATSDR TRIBAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING



Vice President Jonathan Nez voices the Navajo Nation's support to increase resources to prevent chronic diseases and suicide at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention Tribal Advisory Committee.

ATLANTA – On Feb. 15, Navajo Nation Vice President Jonathan Nez represented the Navajo Nation at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Tribal Advisory Committee to discuss four main topic areas that directly impact tribes and funding sources.

The four topic areas included budget and tribal direct funding strategies; cultural practices and evidence-based interventions; injury prevention and control; and chronic disease prevention and health promotion.

“This tribal advisory committee benefits all tribal communities and broadens understanding of all people in this discussion,” said Vice President Nez. “It will take a collective voice from all tribal nations to keep the Tribal Advisory Committees, the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, and the Affordable Care Act in place within the Trump administration.”

He voiced the Navajo Nation's support to increase resources to prevent chronic diseases and suicide. Cultural sensitivity training and consultation was mentioned as a high priority to CDC representatives to ensure effective nation-to-nation dialogue.

“I would like to see a fully functional epidemiology center on the Navajo Nation to conduct research and propose cost-effective strategies of disease prevention and health care delivery,” said Del Yazzie, acting director of the Navajo Epidemiology Center.

Through the technical assistance provided by the CDC, the Navajo Nation was able to issue public service announcements through the radio to inform constituents about Hantavirus. For 2017, there has already been three confirmed cases of Hantavirus on the Navajo Nation.



Vice President Jonathan Nez alongside current TAC members.

TAC provides CDC and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry with recommendations and guidance on policies, guidelines, and programmatic issues affecting the health of American Indian and Alaska Native tribes. The committee is composed of 16 delegates and authorized representatives from federally recognized tribes, each acting on behalf of his or her tribe.

CDC expressed interest in certifying tribal emergency response teams so that they are prepared in the event of a catastrophe.

“We need your help to also build the public health infrastructure on tribal nations. There has been an increased need for critical infrastructure but public health infrastructure is needed within our tribal nations as well,” said Lisa Pivec, Director of Cherokee Nation’s Community Health Promotion. “Carve out dollars for infrastructure and workforce and make connections and technical assistance and use that. Model being a national model and mentioned before that health systems international model of delivery and issues surrounding that.”

“Our administration would like to thank the CDC for the work they are doing in Indian Country, especially on the Navajo Nation. To the service providers in the room, you are making a difference. Thank you for providing us with the tools to fight off the monsters plaguing our people,” said Vice President Nez.

There are currently four vacancies on TAC. Vacancies have been the lowest in a number of years. Should you have a question about recommending someone to the committee, please contact José T. Montero, MD, at 404-498-0563 or email tribalsupport@cdc.gov.

The next TAC meeting has been tentatively scheduled to take place on Aug. 8 and 9.

###