

Program name: Indigenous Health Program

Affiliated hospital: Boston Children's Hospital

Program leadership:

- Indigenous Health Program (IHP) Director: Julia Rubin-Smith, MD, MSPH
- IHP Primary Care Director: Lara Antkowiak, MD, MEd
- Global Health Program Director: Michelle Niescierenko, MD, MPH
- Global Operations Manager: Mirona Dragnea, JD
- Program Manager: Carolyn Baer, MPH (enrolled member of Cherokee Nation)

About: The Boston Children's Hospital Global Health Program launched its Indigenous Health Program in 2022, with the goal of improving the health and wellbeing of American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) children through partnership with the Indian Health Service (IHS), as well as collaborations with Tribal Health and local communities. Currently the IHP works primarily in the Great Plains Area (GPA), where one third of the Indigenous population are children 14 years and younger.¹

Currently the IHP sends pediatrics faculty to two sites in the GPA: the Cheyenne River reservation in South Dakota and the Turtle Mountain reservation in North Dakota. Faculty provide full-scope general pediatric care, including outpatient primary care, inpatient hospital care, delivery attendance, and consults to the Emergency Department. Using a job-share and rotating faculty model, we have been able to provide full year pediatric coverage at both sites. At the request of Great Plains Area leadership, the IHP will be expanding its pediatric services to several additional hospitals and clinics throughout the GPA over the next five years.

In addition to providing clinical care, IHP pediatricians are actively engaged in teaching. We provide pediatric education to general providers (family medicine, emergency medicine, APPs), and supervise pediatric and family medicine residents who have interests in global health and rural health. We are continuing to build our educational opportunities, with a particular focus on AI/AN trainees and students exploring health careers, as well as students from colleges and universities within the GPA. We have also engaged the expertise of multidisciplinary team members including Nursing and Child Life to improve pediatric care on multiple levels. The IHP is committed to expanding its contributions to education, quality and process improvement, health infrastructure, and public health initiatives.