

In January, staff from the Arizona Department of Health Services, Division of Behavioral Health (DBHS) organized a panel discussion concerning Native American suicide prevention during the Annual Tribal Legislative Day. With six panelists from tribes, regional behavioral health authorities, and other providers, more than 100 attendees engaged in an active two-hour conversation about suicide prevention on and off tribal lands.

In May, in collaboration with the Governor's Office of Tribal Affairs, DBHS organized two tribal community conversations on suicide prevention. The first conversation took place May 7 at Casino Del Sol, south of Tucson. Some 35 southern tribal members and community stakeholders gathered to discuss suicide prevention. Speakers from two regional behavioral health authorities discussed prevention resources available and how to access services. Additionally, they spoke about how to recognize signs and symptoms of depression and suicidal thinking – and how to start a conversation with an individual in crisis.

The afternoon sessions featured a speaker from Housing and Urban Development to discuss housing funding available, and the suicide surveillance team from the White Mountain Apache Reservation.

On May 21, an additional 35 members and stakeholders from northern tribes gathered at Twin Arrows Casino on the Navajo Reservation. Again, representatives from the regional behavioral health authority discussed recognizing depression and how to access services – including crisis services – in northern Arizona.

The afternoon session featured representatives from the Flagstaff community advocacy group – Closing the Gap, and, Diana Yazzie Devine of Native American Connections, who spoke on housing as healthcare.

The conversations are on-going. The 2015 State Plan to End Suicide, which includes such outreach, [can be found here](#).

DBHS staff also directly outreached the following tribal communities concerning suicide prevention during fiscal year 2015: Hualapai, Supai, Salt River, Gila River, Pascua Yaqui and White Mountain Apache.

DBHS staff will present to the Arizona Commission of Indian Affairs on suicide prevention in June.

For more information about suicide prevention in Arizona, contact Kelli Donley: kelli.donley@azdhs.gov