

# Welcome to the SMAC Quarterly Meeting

- While you are waiting test your audio.
- You were automatically muted upon entry.
- Please only join by phone or computer.
- Please use the chat feature for questions and/or comments or raise your hand.

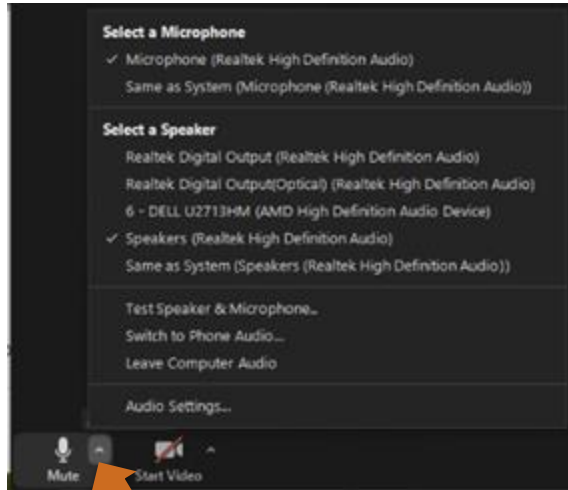
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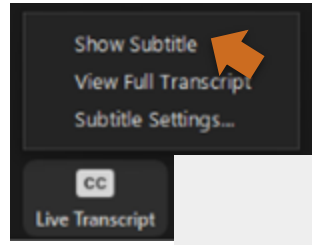
# Zoom Webinar Controls

Navigating your bar on the bottom...

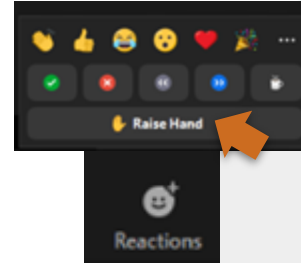
Audio Settings



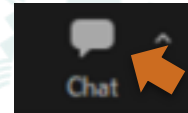
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Raise Hand



Chat

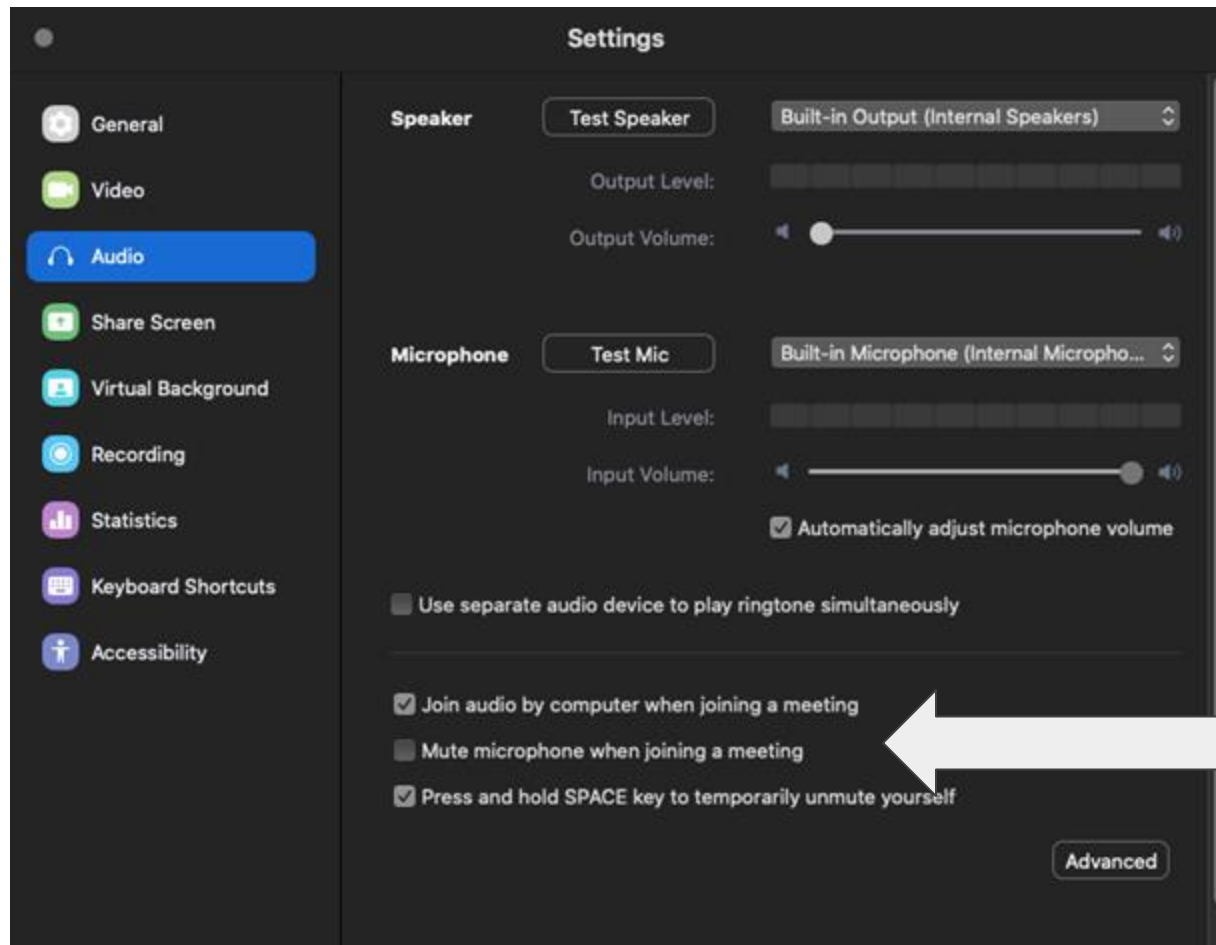


## KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS TO RAISE HAND

**Windows:** Alt+Y to raise or lower your hand

**Mac:** Option+Y to raise or lower your hand

# Audio Settings



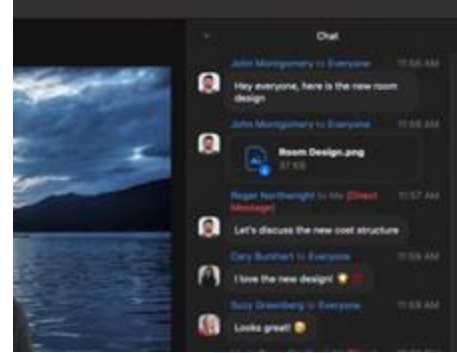
# Webinar Tips



**Mute your mic when you aren't speaking.**



**Limit background noise and distractions.**



**Use chat feature (or Q&A when available) to ask questions or share resources.**

# This Meeting Is Being Recorded

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**Please disconnect from this meeting if you do not agree to these terms.**



# **ARIZONA**

## **HEALTH CARE COST CONTAINMENT SYSTEM**

### **State Medicaid Advisory Committee (SMAC) Quarterly Meeting**

**July 9, 2025**

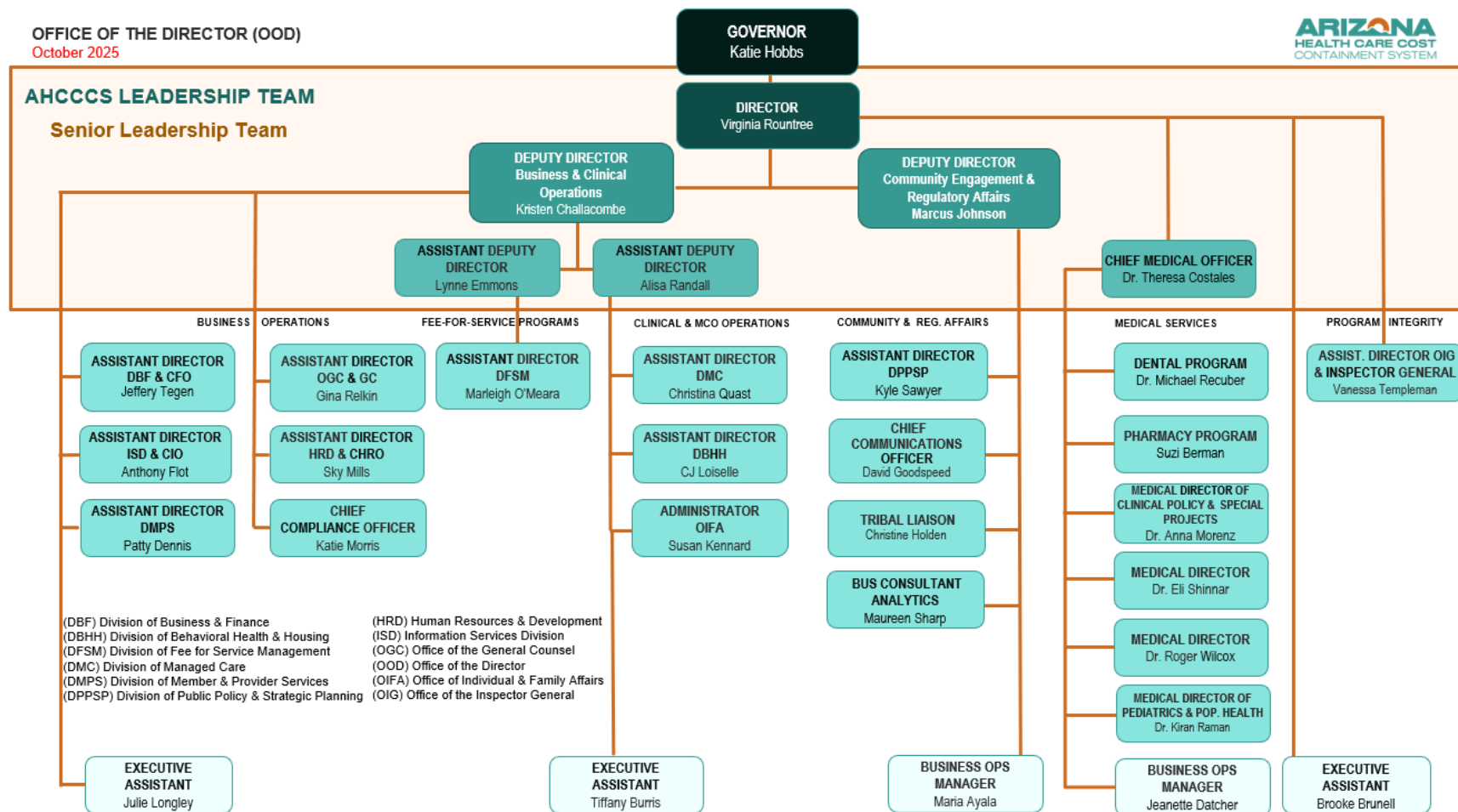
# AHCCCS Updates



**Kristen Challacombe**  
Deputy Director  
Office of the Director

## AHCCCS LEADERSHIP TEAM

## Senior Leadership Team





# Welcoming Ginny Rountree, AHCCCS' New Director!



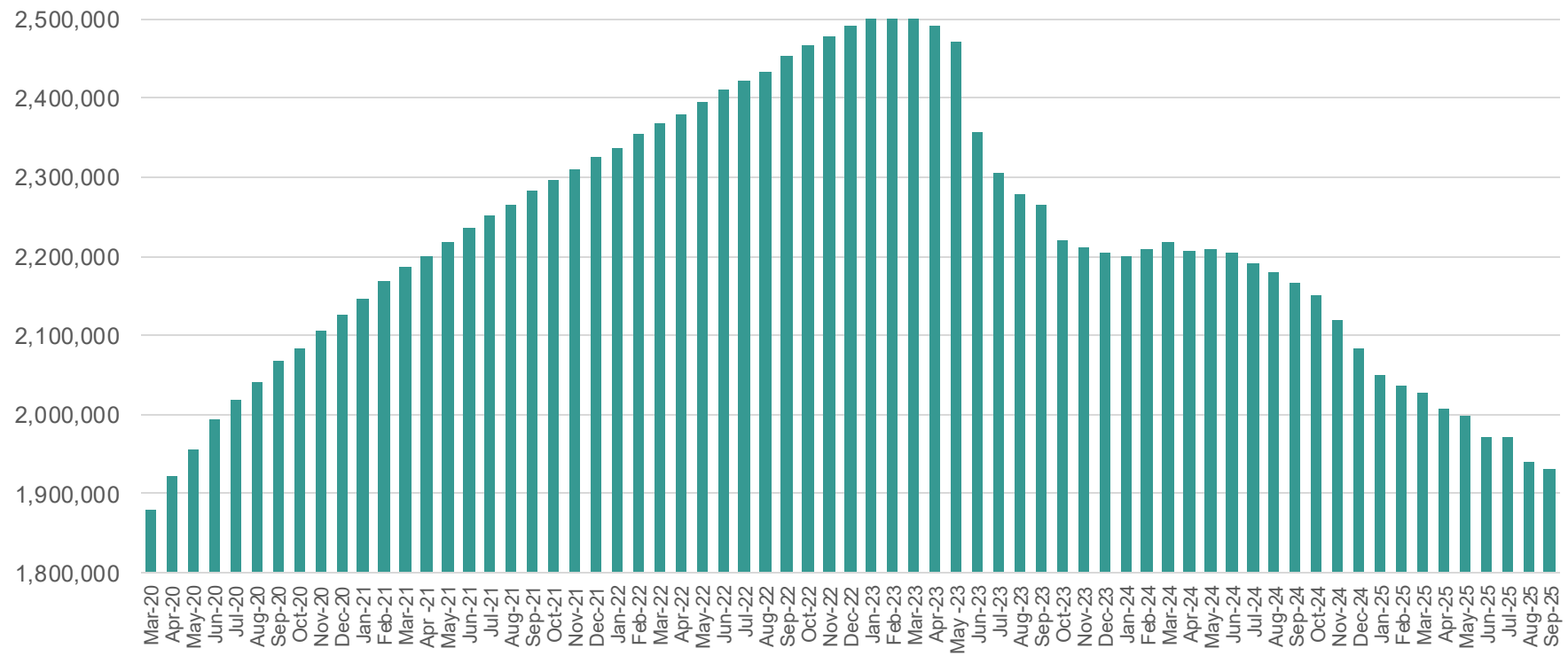
# HAPPY 60<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY MEDICAID!



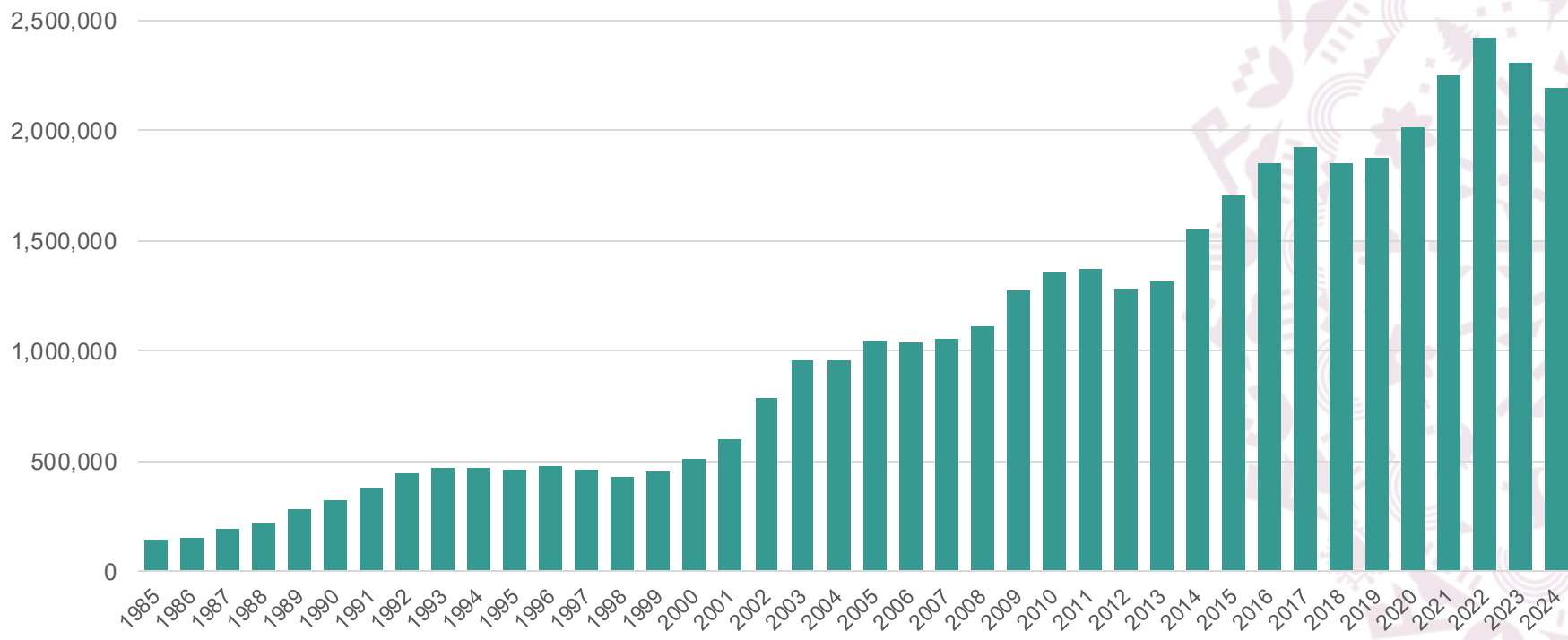
# 2025-2029 Strategic Plan



# AHCCCS Population: Mar. 2020 – Sept. 2025

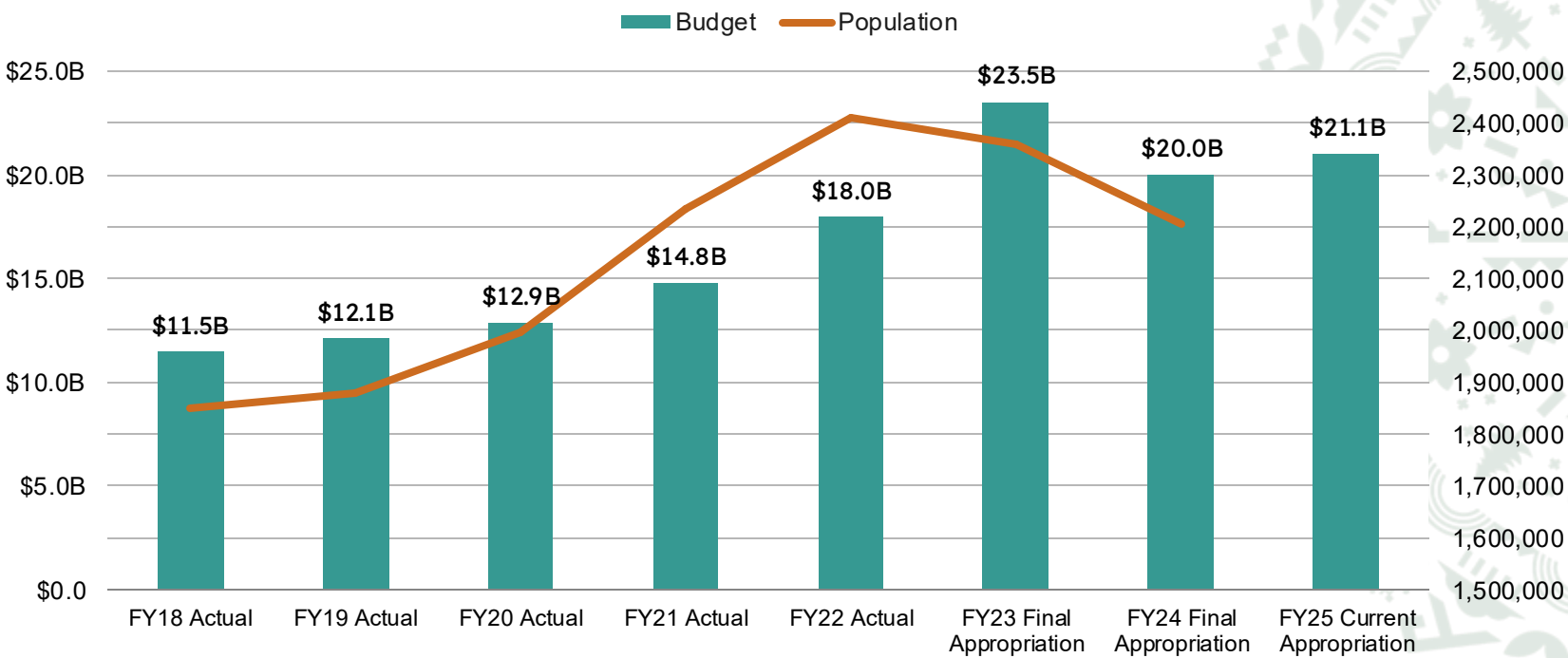


# AHCCCS Population as of July 1, 1985 – 2024



# State Fiscal Year 2025 Budget

AHCCCS APPROPRIATION AND ENROLLMENT



# October 1, 2025: A Big Day for AHCCCS

- Cochlear Implants
- Adult Speech Therapy
- Traditional Healing – Over 10 years in the making!
- Juvenile Justice Coverage – 30-day pre-release coverage of case management & EPSDT services to assist with Juvenile Reentry; launched w/Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections (ADJC)

# H.R. 1 – Overview

- On July 4th, 2025, President Trump signed H.R.1 – One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) in law.
- Medicaid related changes include changes that impact eligibility standards, Community Engagement Requirements, major Medicaid financing changes that reduce state funding, and impose additional administrative requirements.
- Implementation dates vary and take place over the next ten years; AHCCCS Budget proposal requests additional funding.
- The Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) is a grant program where states will need to apply to receive a portion of a \$50 billion funding allocation over the next 5 years, NOFO released mid-September with an application due date of November 5.



# H.R. 1 – Key Implementation Dates

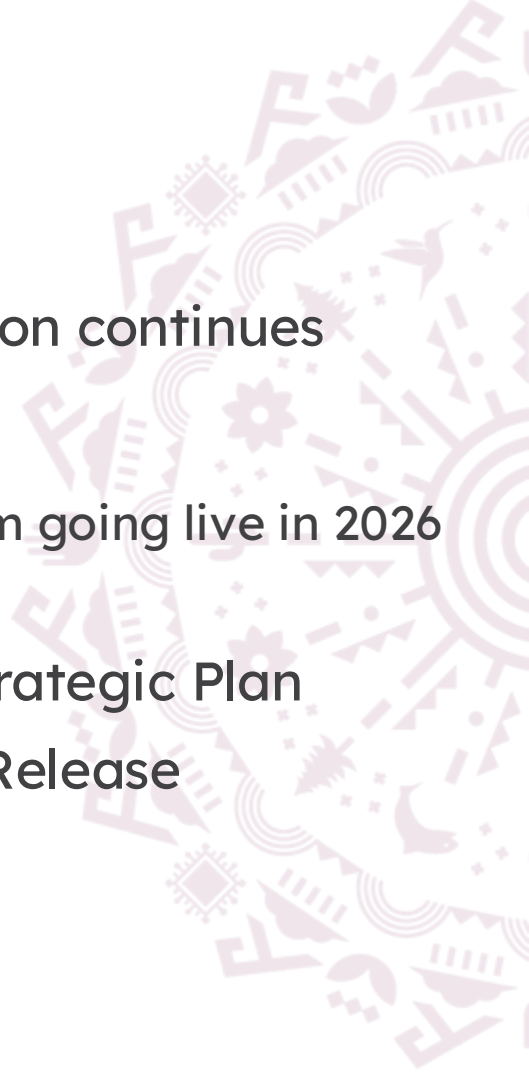
- Rural Health Transformation Program – 12/31/25
- Community Engagement/Work Requirements – 12/31/26
- 6-month Eligibility Redeterminations – 12/31/26
- Hospital Assessment Implications – Phase down by 2032
- Cost Sharing Changes – 10/1/28
- Administrative Costs for Implementation and Operations – 2026  
Legislative Session
- **IMPORTANT:** No immediate changes to AHCCCS member coverage

# H.R. 1 – Implementation Costs

- AHCCCS Budget Proposal contains information on the first year implementation costs associated with H.R.1
  - \$71.4 million total fund increase, \$18.8 million general fund increase
  - 320 additional FTEs required
- The link to the budget proposal can be found here: <https://www.azahcccs.gov/Resources/GovernmentalOversight/proposals.html>

# AHCCCS Moving Forward

- 1115 Waiver Renewal
- Medicaid Enterprise System (MES) Modernization continues
  - Our mainframe MMIS is over 30 years old
  - Pre-pay and Post-payment claims review system going live in 2026
  - EVV Contractor changes effective 10/1
- Improvements in Tribal Engagement/DFSM Strategic Plan
- Reentry Waiver Implementation: 90 days Pre-Release Coverage





# Open Discussion

# SMAC Member Spotlight Updates



**Vicki Staples**  
Director of Outpatient Behavioral  
Health Programs  
Valleywise Health

# Comprehensive Healthcare Services in Arizona | Valleywise Health



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## Proposition 409 A Vision for Better Health.

Valleywise Health is asking Maricopa County voters to approve an \$898 million bond proposal to expand access to vital care across Maricopa County. With voter approval, we can continue to build a healthier, stronger Arizona.

Learn more



Find a Doctor



Find a Location



Search Services



## Valleywise Health Magazine 2025

We're happy to share Valleywise Health's annual update, reflecting the collective impact we've made over the past year. This time, we are unveiling a magazine-style approach, which continues to highlight our ongoing commitment to improving healthcare access, elevating patient care, and building stronger community partnerships – just with a new look and feel. Inside, you'll find inspiring stories, significant milestones, and valuable insights into how Valleywise Health is shaping the future of healthcare across Maricopa County with compassion, innovation, and dedication. From enhancing behavioral health services to improving healthcare equity, this report reflects on our dedication to making a difference in our community.

Launch Magazine



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Home > About Valleywise Health > Patient Stories

## Patient Stories

At Valleywise Health, we are driven by a shared passion to heal, transform lives, and inspire hope. Our goal is for every patient to leave stronger, healthier, and more resilient—physically, mentally, and spiritually. These stories highlight the remarkable strength of our patients and the collaborative power of healing. Discover what inspires us to serve the mission of Valleywise Health by watching the videos below, and witness the transformative impact of compassionate, expert care from our dedicated teams.



## Explore the Power of Healing

All

GI

Women's Care

Burn Center

Cardiology

Reconstructive Surgery

HIV

Behavioral Health

x Clear



### William's Behavioral Health Story

After facing a mental health crisis, William O'Neil found hope and healing through Valleywise Health and the First Episode Center. With access to the right treatment, support, and education, he's...



### Robert's Behavioral Health Story

Robert Rodgers, Clinical Coordinator for the Forensic Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Team at Valleywise Behavioral Health Center – Maryvale, opens up about his powerful journey through addiction, trauma, and crime...



### Gina's Behavioral Health Story

From addiction and homelessness to a stable home, loving relationships, and a fulfilling career – Gina Amorosso's journey is one of resilience and hope. Valleywise Behavioral Health played a role...

*You're More to us.*



# THANK YOU

Vicki Staples, MEd  
Director Outpatient Behavioral Health Programs  
[Vicki.staples@valleywisehealth.org](mailto:Vicki.staples@valleywisehealth.org)







# Other SMAC Member Updates



# Open Discussion

# Tribal Relations Updates



Christine Holden  
Tribal Liaison  
Office of the Director

# AHCCCS Tribal Relations Team



**Christine Holden**  
Tribal Liaison



**Britnee Endischnee**  
Tribal Relations Coordinator



**Maria Alvarado**  
Business Operations Manager

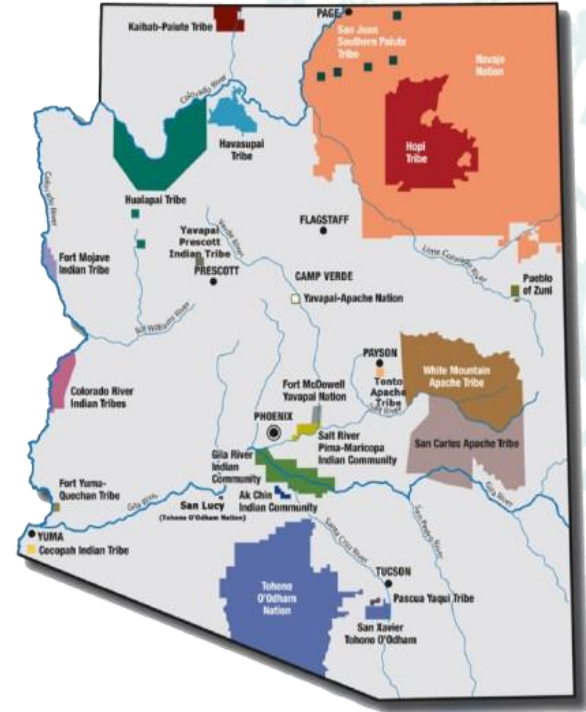


# Who We Are & How We Work

- **Mission:** Advance health equity by centering Tribal sovereignty in AHCCCS policy and operations.
- **Approach:** Government-to-Government engagement with in-person visits, mindful and active listening, and co-design.
  - Tri-Agency collaboration with the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) and the Arizona Advisory Council on Indian Health Care (AACIHC) on consultations and joint initiatives.
- **Principles:** Respect, reciprocity, transparency, and shared accountability.
- **Team Scope:** Tribal consultation, policy facilitation, issues triage, advisement, and cross-system problem-solving.

# Arizona Tribal Demographics

- 22 federal recognized Tribal Nations in Arizona
- ~300,000 AI/AN members statewide
- Tribal Health System (I/T/U):
  - IHS direct service facilities
  - Tribal 638 facilities tribally operated under self-determination contracts
  - Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs) serving urban AI/AN populations (*nationally, over 70% of American Indians live in urban areas*).
- Tribal communities span urban, rural, and reservation contexts



# 2024 AHCCCS Tribal Highlights

- **AIHP Tribal Verification Consultation Series** – Launched to enhance the enrollment process and protect program integrity, the initiative built consensus and strengthened relationships with Tribes and UIOs, with a continued focus on ongoing monitoring and consultation.
- **Establishment of the Tribal Policy Workgroup** – Established in 2024, a policy focused forum that creates a space for continued dialogue and action on health care policy.
- **Strengthening Tribal Relations** – The Tribal Relations Team added a new member to expand capacity for consultations and strengthen relationships with tribal partners. We also formalized a Tribal delegate appointment process to ensure more efficient, structured participation in consultations.
- **Fraud, Waste, & Abuse Response** – We developed the Tribal Social Awareness Campaign to combat fraudulent activities targeting AI/AN AHCCCS members, while phasing down humanitarian efforts to concentrate resources on high-impact Tribal communities.

# 2024 AHCCCS Tribal Highlights (cont'd)

- **Communication Enhancements** – Established the Tribal Relations inbox and re-launched the Tribal Relations newsletter to centralize inquiries and improve stakeholder communication. Ongoing engagement has increased participation in quarterly consultations and workgroups and strengthened relationships through Tribal visits, conferences, and training.
- **Traditional Healing** – Collaborated with the Traditional Healing Workgroup for federal approval of the 1115 Traditional Healing Waiver (Oct 2024).



# 2025 AHCCCS Tribal Highlights

- **AIHP Tribal Verification Implementation Phase** – Building on the 2024 consultation series, AHCCCS finalized mutually agreed policy updates, initiated internal system changes, and conducted a multi-month member outreach campaign to prepare members for verification changes.
- **Cross-Agency Collaboration (Tri-Agency Quarterly Meeting)** – AHCCCS, ADHS, and AACIHC formalized a Tri-Agency approach to quarterly Tribal meetings. This shift improved resource management, aligned messaging, and strengthened coordinated responses to Tribal requests and recommendations.
- **Continued Response to Provider Fraud & Member Protection** – The priority is member protection: rapid connection to legitimate services, safe re-entry/navigation support, and ongoing monitoring to prevent re-exploitation.

# 2025 AHCCCS Tribal Relations Highlights

- **AHCCCS-UIO Leadership Quarterly Meeting** – Established a standing leadership level quarterly with Urban Indian Organizations to strengthen communication, collaboration, and transparency between AHCCCS and UIO leadership and align priorities.
- **Traditional Healing Readiness & Launch Preparation** – Following federal approval and state budget authority, AHCCCS continued engagement with Tribal Nations through workgroup sessions, listening sessions, and 1:1 informational meetings to prepare for implementation, and Tribal Consultation.

# Traditional Healing Waiver: Locally Defined, Sovereignty-Centered

## A Tribal-Defined Approach

- The AHCCCS Traditional Healing waiver was constructed with intentional flexibility, allowing the definition, delivery, and governance of Traditional Healing services to occur at the local level.

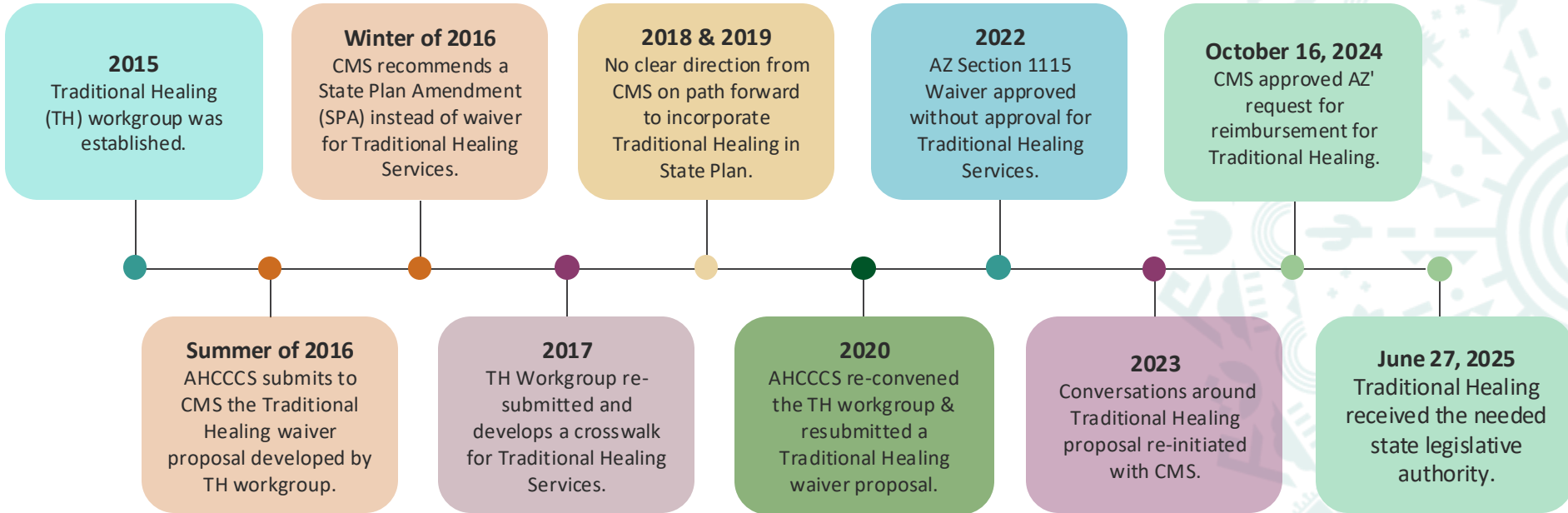
## Why It Matters

- No single definition of Traditional Healing can reflect the diverse cultural and spiritual practices of the 22 Tribal Nations in Arizona.
- This model was shaped in recognition of the sovereignty, self-determination, and inherent authority of Tribal Nations to define care for their people.

## What the Waiver Provides

- A funding pathway – not a prescription.
- Support for Tribally defined providers, practices, and protocols.
- Flexibility for each community to determine its own priorities, standards, and implementation strategies.

# Traditional Healing Waiver Timeline



# Traditional Healing Services

- **Covered Services** – Each IHS/Tribal 638 facility, in collaboration with the Tribal Nation, will determine/define traditional services for their facility.
  - The covered traditional healing services, limitations, and exclusions shall be described by each facility (working with each Tribal Nation they primarily serve).
- **Member Eligibility** – To receive coverage for traditional health care practices under the demonstration, a member must be 1) a Medicaid beneficiary, and 2) eligible to receive services delivered by or through IHS/Tribal 638 facilities as determined by the facility.
- **Traditional Practitioners** – Traditional Healers *will not* register as independent providers with AHCCCS, and must be either contracted with, or employed by, an IHS/Tribal 638 facility.
  - Traditional healers employed by or contracted with an UIO may provide reimbursable services through a care coordination agreement with an IHS/Tribal 638 facility.

# Waiver Reimbursement Methodology

Reimbursement for Traditional Healing services will be as follows:

- **Outpatient Facilities:** Reimbursed at the All-Inclusive Rate (AIR) published in the Federal Register that is in effect on the date of service for Medicaid outpatient services.
  - This AIR would be a part of the up to 5 AIRs within a single day that can be reimbursed to IHS/Tribal 638 facilities.
- **Inpatient Facilities:** Traditional healing is not paid separate from the existing inpatient AIR and is allowable within the existing AIR. The current inpatient AIR is not inclusive of traditional healing services, but CMS has indicated that it will be included in the future calculation of the AIR.

# Looking Forward

- Traditional Healing Implementation
- Cross Agency Standards for Tribal Engagement
- Internal Policy "Trigger" System
- Consultation Quality & Follow Through
- Plan for HR1 Changes (co-planning with Tribal Nations)





# Open Discussion



# Arizona Long Term Care System Elderly and/or Physically Disabled (EPD) Update



Jakenna Lebsock

Deputy Assistant Director ALTCS

Division of Managed Care

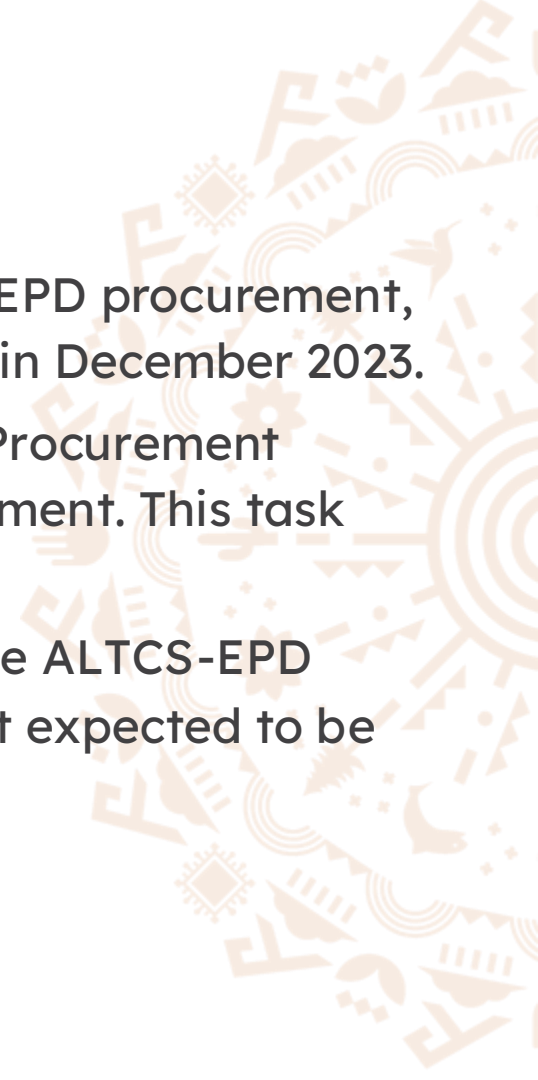
# ALTCS-EPD Update

- AHCCCS extended existing ALTCS-EPD contracts through September 30, 2026

GSA	Counties	ALTCS-EPD Health Plan
Central	Maricopa, Gila, Pinal (excluding Zip codes 85542, 85192, 85550)	UnitedHealthcare Community Plan Banner-University Family Care Mercy Care
North	Apache, Coconino, Mohave, Navajo, Yavapai	UnitedHealthcare Community Plan
South	Cochise, Graham, Greenlee, La Paz, Pima, Santa Cruz, Yuma, Zip codes 85542, 85192, 85550	Banner-University Family Care Mercy Care (Pima County only)

# ALTCS-EPD Update

- AHCCCS chose to terminate the YH24-0001 ALTCS-EPD procurement, and the related contract awards which were issued in December 2023.
- AHCCCS has issued a competitive task order for a Procurement Consultant to assist with a new ALTCS-EPD procurement. This task order was awarded on September 19, 2025.
- AHCCCS will issue a new health plan proposal for the ALTCS-EPD program, with submissions for the new procurement expected to be due in the Fall of 2026.





# Open Discussion

# SMAC Updates



Desiree Greene  
Project Manager  
BAC and SMAC Liaison  
Division of Public Policy and  
Strategic Planning

# New SMAC Member Spotlight - Jane Jepson



Jane is an accomplished and articulate business professional with a gift for presentations, data-driven decision-making, and developing strategic plans. Jane leverages technology to scale operations and assure regulatory compliance and is an expert in Microsoft Suite Products, Salesforce, Google Products, and Zoom to name a few.

She has many years of experience in sales, marketing, public relations, catering/hospitality, and budgetary management. Jane is also a very engaged advocate within the mental health space as a dedicated volunteer with Nami Valley of the Sun, teaching classes on Mental Illness, facilitating support groups for families, and providing presentations on Serious Mental Illness to Police Officers and others in the community.

Let's welcome Jane Jepson to the SMAC!

# Beneficiary Advisory Council: Why?

- In 2024, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) established a requirement for all state Medicaid agencies to operate a Beneficiary Advisory Council (BAC).
- The BAC creates an opportunity to elevate member, family member and/or caregiver voice in advising AHCCCS directly on policy and program administration.



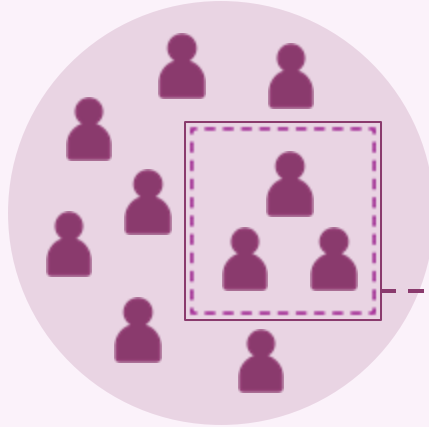
# Beneficiary Advisory Council (BAC)

The BAC is a dedicated forum for **people with lived experience** of the Medicaid program. BAC members must include:

Current and/or former Medicaid enrollees

Family members of enrollees

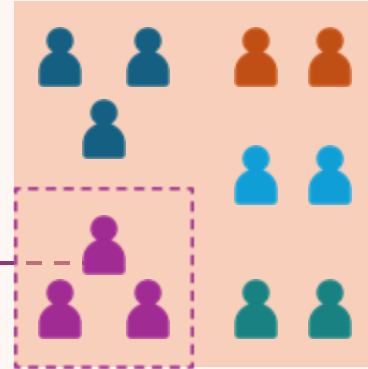
Paid or unpaid caregivers of enrollees



States must publicly post the MAC and BAC annual report, bylaws, membership lists, member recruitment/selection processes, and meeting minutes and **MUST** submit an annual report of all BAC activities.

# Medicaid Advisory Committee (MAC)

The MAC is a **diverse group of Medicaid stakeholders** with a wide range of perspectives and experiences. The MAC includes BAC members and at least one representative from each of these categories:



Clinical providers/  
administrators

Participating plans/  
state associations

Other state agencies as  
ex officio members

State, local, or community-  
based organizations

**By July 10, 2027, 25%** of MAC members must be from the BAC\*

*\*In the final rule, CMS opted to phase in this requirement, providing that 10% of MAC members must also be members of the BAC for the period July 9, 2025, through July 9, 2026; 20% for the period July 10, 2026, through July 9, 2027; and 25% thereafter.*



# Meeting Requirements



**The BAC must meet separately and in advance of MAC meetings.**

This helps ensure that the perspective of those with lived experience informs the broader discussions.



**The BAC and MAC must offer a variety of meeting participation options.**

Can be in-person, virtual, or hybrid, but telephone dial-in is always required.



**At least two MAC meetings per year must be public.**

Meetings must include dedicated time for public comment.



**The BAC and MAC must each meet once per quarter.**

Meetings may be held off cycle as necessary.

**At least one member of the state's executive staff must attend all BAC and MAC meetings.**

# Beneficiary Advisory Council Members

Aimee Griffith-Johnson
Amanda Mae Sampsel
Bonnie G Danowski
Cindy Mittlestadt
Dave J Ruitenber
Dominique Colunga
Edward Katz
Felicia Racquel Burford
Lois Earley
Trenae Lonetti



# BAC Members Serving on the SMAC

- Beginning on January 7, 2026, each SMAC meeting will also have two BAC representatives in attendance.
- Four BAC members will be selected to also serve on the SMAC.
- Each pair will only attend two of the four quarterly meetings.

BAC Member 1		BAC Member 2		BAC Member 3		BAC Member 4	
SMAC Jan Meeting		SMAC April Meeting		SMAC July Meeting		SMAC October Meeting	
Name	Name	Name	Name	Name	Name	Name	Name

# Current Public SMAC Members

Terry Benelli, Executive Director, Local Initiatives Support Corporation

Jennifer J. Burns, Director of Government Relations & Health Policy, Children's Action Alliance

*Open Seat November 2025 - Vince Torres, Community Member/Advocate*

Dina Norwood, Managing Attorney, Community Legal Services

Jill Anne Castle, Professor/Advocate/Consultant, Arizona State University

Diana "Dede" Yazzie Devine, Community Member/Advocate

Melissa Kotrys, CEO, Contexture

Tory Roberg, Director of Government Affairs, Alzheimer's Association, Desert Southwest Chapter

Serena Unrein, Community Member/Advocate

Jane Jepson, Senior Director, Triumph Education



**THANK  
YOU!**

**VINCE  
TORRES**

# SMAC Membership Subcommittee Open Seats Announcement

- Current SMAC Membership Subcommittee Members: Tory Roberg, Dina Norwood, and Vince Torres
- With Vince finishing up his 6 years of service on the SMAC next month, and Dina next year, we are seeking two new committee members to join the Membership Subcommittee.
- Time Commitment: It varies, but normally the time commitment is only 1-2 hours total, quarterly. This includes the time that it takes you to review the nominees and their supporting materials and the 45-minute review meeting that Desiree schedules.
- Please send your interest email to Desiree by **3 pm on Friday, November 14th.**

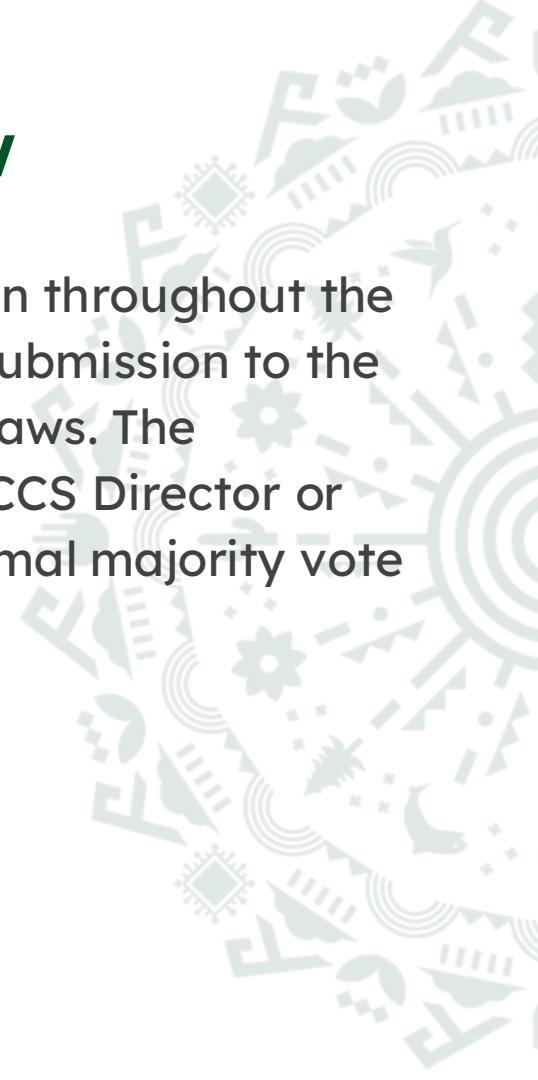
# SMAC Membership Assignments & Voting Session



Tory Roberg  
Director of Government  
Affairs  
Alzheimer's Association  
Desert Southwest  
Chapter

# SMAC Member Nomination Review

The SMAC receives many nominations for consideration throughout the year. The SMAC Liaison saves and prepares them for submission to the Membership Subcommittee in accordance with the bylaws. The Subcommittee provides recommendations to the AHCCCS Director or designee for consideration to move forward with a formal majority vote of the SMAC during an open meeting.





# Current Provider SMAC Members

***Current Open Seat - John Hogeboom, CEO/President, Community Bridges, Inc.***

Dr. Aaron Knudson, Internal Medicine and Pediatric Hospitalist, Banner Page Hospital

***Open Seat November 2025 - Dr. Elizabeth McKenna, M.D., Co-Owner, Healing Hearts Pediatrics***

Dr. Jessica B. Peterkin, Dentist & Founder/CEO, Ministry of Dentistry, Inc

Vicki Staples, Director of OP Behavioral Health, Valleywise Health

***Current Open Seat - Mary Jo Whitfield, VP of Integrated Health, Jewish Family and Children's Services***

Jennifer Longdon, Chief External Affairs Officer, AZ Alliance for Community Health Centers (new member)

Karen Resseguie, Behavioral Health Administrator, Foundation for Senior Living

Katherine Andersen, Director of Health Information Management and Medical Staff; Privacy Officer, San Carlos Apache Healthcare Corporation

Brittney Kaufmann, Chief Executive Officer, Health System Alliance of Arizona



*Thank You*

**John Hogeboom**

The background is a solid light pink color, densely covered with small, circular confetti in various colors including red, teal, yellow, and light blue. The confetti is scattered across the entire frame, creating a festive and celebratory atmosphere.

# Thank You

## MaryJo Whitfield



*Thank You*

**Dr. Elizabeth McKenna**

# Recommendation for two Provider Member Assignments

Nominee	Title	Association
Helena Whitney	Senior Vice President Policy & Advocacy	Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association
Ryan Johnson	Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist	Ryan Johnson & Associates, LLC



# SMAC Member Assignment Vote

# SMAC Member Open Seats Announcement

- As of next month, we will have two open seats, one for a Provider and one for a Public member. If you are interested or know someone who would be a great fit for the SMAC, please see the blank nomination form on the SMAC webpage. Please submit that nomination form and any other supporting materials to the following inbox: [communityengagement@azahcccs.gov](mailto:communityengagement@azahcccs.gov).
- For the January 2026 meeting, we will be voting in a new Provider and Public SMAC member. The cut-off date for nominations and supporting materials is by **3 pm Friday, November 14th**.





# Open Discussion





# Call to the Public

# 2026 SMAC Meeting Calendar

Per bylaws language, SMAC meetings are to be held during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of January, April, July, and October from 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

## 2026 SMAC Meetings:

January 7, 2026

April 8, 2026

July 8, 2026

October 7, 2026 (final meeting of the year)

For all SMAC Dates and Meeting Materials, see the following link:

<https://www.azahcccs.gov/AHCCCS/HealthcareAdvocacy/smac.html>

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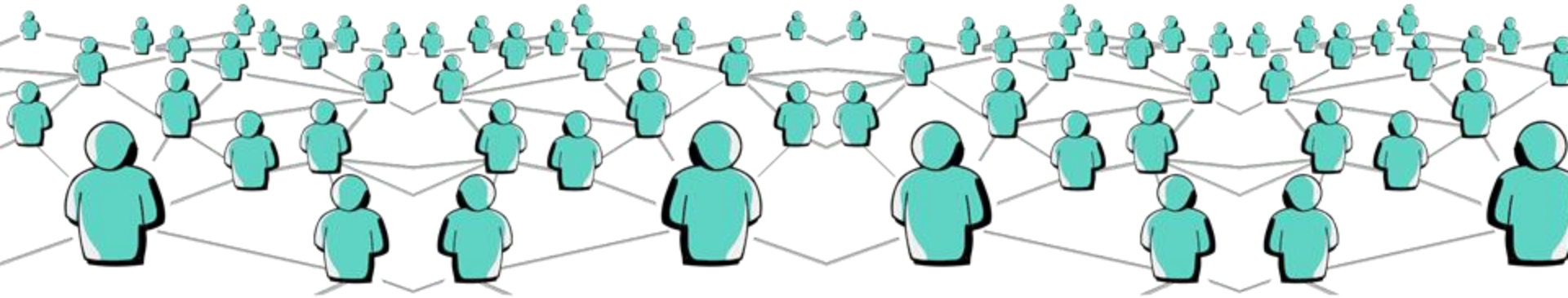
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# Learn About AHCCCS' Medicaid Program on YouTube!




Watch our Playlist:

[Meet Arizona's Innovative Medicaid Program](#)

# Other Resources - Quick Links

- AHCCCS [Waiver](#)
- AHCCCS [State Plan](#)
- AHCCCS [Grants](#)
- [About AHCCCS](#)
- [Acronyms](#)
- [State Medicaid Advisory Coommittee \(SMAC\)](#)
- [Communicating the BAC and MAC](#)
- [Beneficiary Advisory Council \(BAC\)](#)
- [Tribal Relations](#)





**Thank you and have  
a great day!**