

March 3, 2021

Secretary Elizabeth Smith
Chair, CARES Act Steering Committee

Dear Secretary Smith:

We are writing to request an extension of the funds granted to the Northwest Arkansas Council and UAMS Northwest for addressing COVID-19 in Special Populations. We were awarded three MOUs in July 2020. These MOU expire March 2021. We request to continue the work through May 31, 2021 so that we can ensure that case numbers stay low until vaccination availability and uptake is increased.

We are not asking for more funding; we are requesting an extension of time to spend the allocated funding.

Cases among Latinx and Marshallese residents were on a steady increase from March through July and were ~400% higher than the general population. Since we implemented the collaborative plan for the Latinx and Marshallese community members, the weekly proportion of cases among Latinx and Marshallese community members has sharply declined. In July, 45% of all adult COVID-19 cases (cumulative proportion) in NWA were Latinx, and 19% (cumulative proportion) were Marshallese. As of March 2021, the cumulative proportion was 28.3% among Latinx and 6.2% among Marshallese. As of March 2021, the new weekly proportion was 14.2% among Latinx and 1.7% among Marshallese. In short, our efforts are working, and we have reduced the COVID-19 disparities experienced by Latinx and Marshallese community members.

As restriction are being eased, it is imperative that we continue a coordinated effort to ensure there is not a resurgence of COVID-19 in the Latinx and Marshallese communities. We are making excellent progress and would like to continue this important work through the end May 2021.

Please let me know if you require additional details regarding this request.

Respectfully submitted,



Nelson Peacock
President and CEO
Northwest Arkansas Council



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