

Preventing the next indigenous healthcare crisis | MedCity News

By Morgan Haynes

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Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it – at least, according to philosopher George Santayana. Most of us simply shorten that to say that history repeats itself. But is it true when it comes to healthcare? A look at Native American history suggests it is.

[During the 1918 flu pandemic](#), the global fatality rate ranged from 2.5 percent to 5 percent. For Navajo Nation, though, the fatality rate hit a whopping 12%. If that sounds familiar, it's because a century later, Native American reservations again suffered through catastrophically high Covid-19 infection and fatality rates, compared to the rest of the United States. The Navajo Nation had a [higher Covid-19 death rate than any U.S. state](#). A CDC study found [American Indian and Alaskan Native people were 3.5 times more likely](#) to be diagnosed with the coronavirus than White people and 4 times as likely to be hospitalized. And while [35 percent of Native Americans who died from Covid-19 were under 60](#), that has held true for only 6% of White Americans.

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