



THE IHS PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER

A journal for health professionals working with American Indians and Alaska Natives



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Editor's Note: In commemoration of American Heart Month and consistent with the Department of Health and Human Services' plan to designate the February issue of The Provider as the annual issue devoted to heart health, we present the following articles devoted to this topic.

Hormone Replacement Therapy and Cardiovascular Disease

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Hormone replacement therapy has recently come into the spotlight in both the lay and medical press. The long held belief that hormone replacement therapy had significant cardioprotective effects for postmenopausal women was based primarily on observational studies and prospective trials assessing intermediate end-points. Estrogen replacement therapy had favorable effects on lipid profiles, angioplasty results, and outcomes after bypass surgery. Cohort studies, mainly the Nurse's Health Study, showed significantly lower rates of myocardial infarction and stroke among the women on combination hormone replacement therapy (HRT). Estrogen improves endothelial function, decreases low density lipoprotein (LDL), inhibits oxidation of LDL, increases high density lipoprotein, and decreases Lp(a) and fibrinogen. While progesterone ameliorates some of the positive effects of estrogen therapy on lipids, the Nurse's Health Study found reductions in coronary heart disease among women taking combination therapy. Since women experience a ten year lag in the onset of coronary artery disease compared with men, and this delay was thought to be due to the hormonal milieu prior to menopause, it made perfect sense to try to recreate that hormonal environment and stave off the 30-fold rise in coronary heart disease that occurs with menopause.

The average age of menopause in the US is 51 years. Approximately one million women each year undergo menopause. With a life expectancy of 80 years, one-half to one-third of a woman's life may be spent in a postmenopausal state. Menopause is defined as the end of ovarian function and generally occurs over 2-8 years. During that time there is a decline in estrogen and progesterone levels, along with increasing

levels of follicular stimulating hormone (FSH).

The clinical definition includes 12 months without menses, elevation of FSH to greater than 50 IU/ml and estradiol levels below 50 pg/ml. These hormonal changes result in distressing clinical symptoms in the majority of women. Hot flashes, with their associated flushing, vasodilation, and perspiration, occur in 50% to 80% of women and can last from 5 years to 15 years. The intensity and severity of hot flashes vary among women. Insomnia also increases after menopause and may result in decreased mental acuity, irritability, depression, and increased fatigue.

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Urogenital changes include vaginal wall thinning and degeneration, decreased elasticity, decreased lubrication, dyspareunia, pelvic laxity with prolapse, increased urinary tract infections, and incontinence. Osteoporosis is a major health concern for women and increases significantly after menopause, affecting 50-68% of women over the age of 50. Bone loss accelerates at the time of menopause, increasing from 0.3%/year to 3%/year for approximately five years. By 5 to 7 years after menopause, women have lost approximately 20% of their bone mass.

Menopause and aging are associated with increases in body mass index, hypertension, diabetes, and the metabolic syndrome. Since cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of mortality among women, and because one out of every two women will die of heart disease or stroke, this postmenopausal increase in risk factors is important. The protective effects of hormones were believed to delay the onset of heart disease, and the postmenopausal increase in heart disease was presumed to be due to a deficit of these hormones, so it seemed logical that hormone replacement was the correct course of action.

The Heart and Estrogen/Progesterone Replacement Trial (HERS)

The Heart and Estrogen/Progesterone Replacement Trial (HERS) was the first trial that undermined this thinking. The HERS trial was the first large-scale, double-blinded, randomized, prospective trial to assess the effects of hormone replacement on risk of coronary heart disease, looking at hard clinical events such as myocardial infarction or death from cardiovascular causes. In this study, 2,763 postmenopausal women, average age of 67 years, with known coronary artery disease or coronary artery disease equivalents were randomized to conjugated equine estrogen (CEE) 0.625 mg and medroxyprogesterone (2.5 mg) or placebo. Initial follow-up was 4.1 years. In the first year of therapy, there was a 50% increase in cardiac events. By the end of the trial, there was no significant difference in nonfatal myocardial infarction or cardiac mortality.

Given concern that the positive effects of HRT were being missed because follow-up was too short to see the benefits, an open-label follow-up study extended to 6.8 years, HERS II, was proposed. Even with longer follow-up, there was no difference in cardiovascular event rates or mortality for the HRT arm compared to placebo. There was a significant increase in deep venous thrombosis, pulmonary emboli, and gallbladder disease among the HRT patients. There was a nonsignificant increase in breast cancer rates and overall cancer rates among the HRT group. Interestingly, there was no significant difference in the overall fracture rate between HRT and placebo, calling into question a primary indication for use of hormone therapy.

Women's Health Initiative (WHI)

Given the results of HERS and HERS II, the benefits of HRT were called into question. Since these trials were performed

to assess benefits of HRT in secondary prevention, it was unknown whether HRT might be cardioprotective as a primary prevention measure. The Women's Health Initiative (WHI) sought to answer this question. In this study, 16,608 healthy, postmenopausal women, mean age of 63 years, were randomized to combination therapy with CEE and medroxyprogesterone or placebo and were to be followed for 5.2 years. An arm of the trial evaluated CEE alone versus placebo in women who had undergone a hysterectomy.

The combination treatment arm was stopped early secondary to excess rates of breast cancer. Outcome analysis again revealed a significant increase in coronary heart disease rates among women treated with HRT compared to those on placebo (hazard ratio of 1.29). Results confirmed an almost 2-fold rise in cardiovascular events during the first year of therapy. For every 10,000 patient years of treatment, there would be 7 additional cardiac events in the treatment arm above event rates in the placebo arm. There was also an increase in breast cancer rates of borderline significance with a hazard ratio of 1.26 but with confidence intervals touching 1.0. For every 10,000 patients years of treatment, there would be 8 extra breast cancer cases in the treatment arm. Venous thromboembolism rates were significantly higher and, in fact, doubled in the treatment arm. While there was a significant decrease in the overall fracture rate for women in the HRT arm, there was no significant difference in hip fracture rates between the HRT and placebo.

Where did we go wrong? First, the bulk of the data prior to these trials was observational rather than randomized. Since observational trials cannot correct for other factors that may alter risk, the strength of the data is limited at best. Given a standard benefit from placebo in many trials, any results from therapy not assessed against a placebo cannot prove therapeutic benefit above placebo. In other words, all benefit seen might be placebo effect and the same results might have been achieved with a placebo. The scientific soundness of double-blind trials results in controlling behavioral alterations on the part of both the patient and physician that might occur depending on the therapy. Lastly, many of our assumptions regarding the benefits of HRT were based on trials assessing intermediate end-points such as lipid profiles, endothelial function, or plaque burden rather than clinical events. It may seem logical to assume that if a therapy improves lipid profiles and people with better lipid profiles have fewer coronary events, then the therapy that improves lipid profiles will decrease coronary event rates. Scientific study, however, has clearly shown that intermediate endpoints are not surrogates of clinical endpoints.

What are some of the limitations of these trials? The mean age of the women in these trials was significantly older than the mean age of menopause, suggesting that the population in the trials does not represent the typical perimenopausal patient presenting to her physician for consideration of hormone therapy. Subgroup analysis of the HERS trial showed a similar increase in the cardiac event rates among all the age groups.

The estrogen used in almost all US trials is CEE while

worldwide 75% of HRT has 17 β -estradiol as the estrogen component. Almost all US trials use medroxyprogesterone as the progestin, so there is no data regarding clinical effects of different progestins on clinical endpoints. There are clear data that different progestins as well as different dosing regimens have different side effect profiles and different pharmacologic effects on lipid profiles. We do not have data to determine if different agents, different delivery systems, or different dosing regimens might result in different outcomes. We also do not have data to determine if estrogen without a progestin may have cardioprotective effects, though the remaining arm of the WHI may answer that question. Much lower doses of estrogen improve bone density, and it is possible that lower doses may result in improved cardiovascular outcomes, though this is speculative.

On the other hand, approximately 50% of women stop HRT in the first year due to unacceptable side effects, and by three years, approximately 70% to 80% of women have stopped HRT. The main reasons for stopping HRT are vaginal bleeding and breast pain. Other less common side effects include headache, weight gain, depression, and bloating. Side effects vary depending on the type of progestin. Often the type of HRT may be guided by a woman's tolerance of oral contraceptive prior to menopause. Notably, the concentration of hormones in HRT is much lower than the concentrations in oral contraceptives.

What can we offer our patients?

Hormone replacement therapy is the most effective treatment for the symptoms of menopause. HRT is 75-90% effective in treating hot flashes and sleep disturbances associated with menopause in the majority of women. Megestrol, clonidine, and methyldopa are effective for decreasing hot flashes but have significant side effects as well as medication interactions that limit their utility. Phytoestrogens may decrease the intensity but not frequency of hot flashes; in a controlled trial rhythmic deep breathing decreased hot flashes by 39%; black cohosh may decrease sleep disturbances; and selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors may diminish hot flashes and sleep disturbances, although the data are relatively limited at this time.

Practical suggestions include maintaining cool ambient temperatures; avoiding hot or spicy foods, alcohol, and caffeine; regular exercise; and dressing in layered clothing. Atrophic vaginitis with urinary tract infections may be treated with local estrogen creams. Pelvic floor laxity can be treated with pelvic floor exercises, urethral sphincter collagen injections, pessaries, biofeedback, and electrical stimulation. The benefits of estrogen for stress incontinence are unclear. Lubrication locally can be very effective for minimizing dyspareunia.

HRT increases bone density and may decrease fracture rates. Proven alternative treatments include increased calcium intake, isoflavones, weight-bearing exercise, bisphosphonates, and selective estrogen receptor modifiers (SERMS). Ultimately, the decision must be based on a thoughtful evaluation of the risks and benefits of HRT in each individual woman. If

the woman is taking HRT solely for osteoporosis, there are clearly effective and safe alternatives. If the symptoms of menopause are refractory to other therapies and quality of life is significantly compromised, HRT may be the only option.

If a woman has been on HRT for reduction of cardiovascular risk, it seems clear that this is not an appropriate therapeutic choice, and she should be tapered off the therapy. There are many proven ways to decrease cardiovascular risk, such as regular exercise, smoking cessation, dietary modification and weight loss, and lipid-lowering therapy, if indicated. Women who choose to stop HRT after many years may be plagued with the same menopausal symptoms that led them to take HRT in the first place. Alternative treatment of symptoms may be tried but approximately 25% of those who stop HRT will restart it due to recurrence of intolerable symptoms. It is unknown whether women who resume HRT after stopping suffer the same increased risk of cardiovascular events as those first starting therapy.

Conclusions

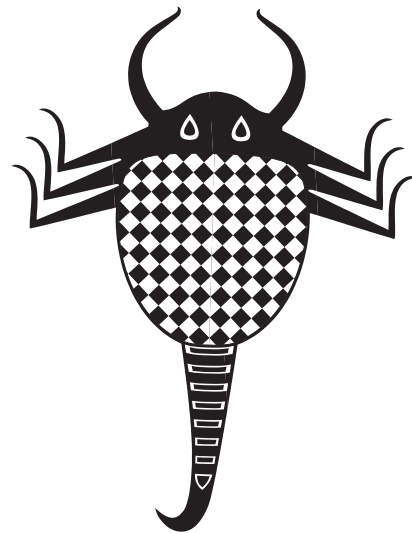
- In both primary and secondary prevention trials, HRT was associated with an increase in cardiovascular events, primarily during the first year of therapy.
- HRT is the most effective treatment for symptoms of menopause, such as hot flashes and insomnia.
- While osteoporosis increases at menopause and HRT improves bone mineral density, very safe and effective treatment alternatives are available.
- Urogenital symptoms may be effectively treated with local therapies.
- Data regarding the risks and benefits of estrogen without progesterone or very low dose preparations is not yet available.
- Conclusions regarding the studied combination of conjugated equine estrogen and medroxyprogesterone cannot be applied to all formulations without trials to study these other compounds.
- Cardiovascular disease increases in women significantly after menopause.
- Cardiovascular risk prevention with proven medical therapies and lifestyle modification is essential in the fight against coronary disease.

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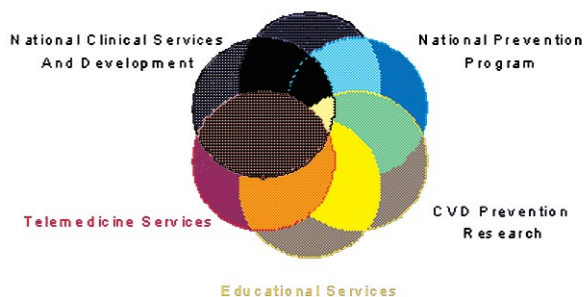
Clinical Cardiology Services within the Indian Health System

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The Native American Cardiology Program (NACP) was started in 1993 as a collaboration between the Phoenix and Tucson Areas of the Indian Health Service; the Tucson Veterans Administration Medical Center; and the University of Arizona in Tucson, Arizona. As the IHS Cardiovascular Center of Excellence, the NACP was developed as a clinical cardiology program, providing services in Tucson as well as in the rural IHS hospitals and clinics of the southwest. Due to the increasing rates of cardiovascular disease (CVD), the program has grown and, under the direction and guidance of our tribes and service units, has expanded its services in a number of arenas. The NACP offers a comprehensive array of sophisticated clinical care and preventive services; in addition, the program emphasizes the provision of educational services, development and expansion of clinical cardiology programs, prevention research activities, and the increasing use of telemedicine and related technologies for clinical care and provider education.

The Native American Cardiology Program

Phoenix, Navajo and Tucson Area Direct Clinical Services



In the southwest, in partnership with our communities and service units, additional services are available via advanced

telecommunication technology. These “telecardiology” services include clinical and preventative consultation, immediate and routine echocardiography interpretation and Holter monitoring and event recording interpretation and coordination. Within the resource limitations of our program, the program is pleased to collaborate with and offer these services to other Indian health sites across the nation. The following three major NACP services could be considered as potentially available to your clinic or hospital site.

Echocardiography (Cardiac Ultrasound) Interpretation

The availability of echocardiography is very important for the diagnosis and treatment of patients with known or suspected heart disease, and, in acute situations, a well-performed and promptly reviewed echocardiogram can be life saving. Indeed, the assessment of wall motion abnormalities in the emergency setting provides significant guidance in the difficult decision related to the administration of thrombolytics and the appropriate transfer for acute intervention.

Generally, an echocardiogram is performed by a trained technician (sonographer) using an appropriate echocardiogram machine (although the NACP, in conjunction with the University of Arizona, has trained a number of physicians in the acquisition of echocardiographic images as well as the basic interpretation of echocardiograms). In ideal situations, the sonographer records the video on videotape or as a digital file, and a cardiologist at that site then reviews the study. However, in most Indian health facilities, this level of expertise is often not available. Therefore, the study may be interpreted by another trained physician, skilled in echocardiography interpretation or, alternatively, the study may be physically transported to another center for delayed review. Many IHS or tribal facilities do not have any capacity for echocardiography, in part because a sonographer may not be available and/or prompt interpretation by a cardiologist is not available. The lack of prompt interpretation may result in the possibility of a delayed diagnosis or inappropriate therapy.

In the southwest, the NACP has developed a service offering traveling contracted sonographers to various sites, along with the availability of immediate echocardiographic interpretation, as well as prompt reviews for non-urgent studies. This service, based on secure information technology methodology, uses an “encoder” to convert echocardiograms to digitally compressed files that can then be immediately (within minutes) transmitted to our IHS server in Tucson. The study can then be accessed

by an IHS cardiologist for emergent or prompt review. Rapid study transmission times and automated notifications to cardiologists allow for a prompt review of studies and an enhanced level of care.

Clearly, the potential benefits are significant for rural Indian health hospitals and clinics. Delays in diagnosis and treatment can be reduced, resulting in a dramatic increase in quality of cardiovascular care across the entire Indian health system.

Holter Monitor And Event Recorder Program

Due to discoveries of suboptimal Holter and event monitor systems for the diagnosis of arrhythmias by some of the sites we serve, the NACP has also developed a centralized capability for Holter monitor and event recording interpretation. This system utilizes a company that provides the necessary equipment (at a reasonable rate) for the rural placement of this equipment at the ordering site with direct connectivity to the NACP. This is coupled with rapid study transmission to NACP for reading, allowing for 48-72 hour availability of faxed results to the ordering provider and urgent/emergent phone call notification about more serious results and concerns. This system allows for an integrated and uniform approach to cardiac rhythm disturbances for our patients.

Telemedicine Services

The NACP, in collaboration with the Arizona Telemedicine Program and the University of Arizona, has established telemedicine services that are potentially available to any IHS or tribal site across the nation with telemedicine equipment and appropriate connectivity. These opportunities for collaboration include the monthly IHS Cardiology Grand Rounds (CME), scheduled clinical evaluations of patients for cardiovascular disease at a distance, and the use of real time telemedicine for emergency echocardiography. In addition, based on work done to date at the Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation, on-site dobutamine stress echocardiography can be offered for those facilities with sonographers (or physicians trained in image acquisition) and physicians with dobutamine stress testing expertise and training. These services may offer greater convenience, decreased transportation needs, and cost savings for those served at your clinical site.

If your hospital or clinical site is interested in developing a collaboration with the Native American Cardiology Program related to any of these services, please call Dr. Galloway at (928) 214-3920.

The authors would like to acknowledge the expertise and assistance of Dr. Mark Carroll, Chief Medical Officer, Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation, for his generous efforts related to this article, as well as his continued outstanding guidance in the development and optimal use of appropriate, leading edge technology within the NACP.



Cardiovascular Prevention Activities within Indian Health: A Status Report

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In the past, the rates of risk factors for atherosclerosis and cardiovascular disease (CVD) as well as the manifestations of coronary heart disease, stroke, and peripheral vascular disease in Native Americans appears to have been quite low compared to the general US population. However, over the past several decades the rates of cardiovascular risk factors among American Indians and Alaska Natives have markedly increased, with the concomitant development of a significant and alarming rise in the manifestations of atherosclerosis and cardiovascular disease.

Indeed, since 1968, the age adjusted CVD mortality rates within the general U.S. population have declined by more than 50%.¹ During this same period, however, among American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN), the incidence of CVD has dramatically increased with CVD incidence rates now at almost double that of the general U.S. population.² Indeed, CVD has become the leading cause of death for American Indians. CVD has also become a major source of disability, hospitalization, and both inpatient and outpatient procedures. As a result, a need for effective and aggressive primordial, primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention activities has become widely recognized by Indian communities as well as by those working within the Indian health system.

Within the past year or so, due to the dedicated efforts of many outstanding individuals within Indian communities as well as in private and federal agencies, there have been multiple, significant successes in this arena. We would like to take this opportunity to celebrate the successes of our team, our colleagues, our neighbors, and our partners in these CVD prevention efforts and would like to share their successes with you.

A major success has been the entry of the Indian Health Service into the Healthy People 2010 CVD Prevention Partnership with the American Heart Association, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS), and the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP), developing the ability to focus significant national expertise and resources on the prevention of CVD and its consequences within American Indian communities. Currently, this partnership is involved with a number of the projects described below.

The establishment of a National AI/AN CVD Prevention

Committee, involving staff from IHS and the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, has fostered the development of focused CVD activities. This committee's goals have been to further coordinate and enhance current and future CVD prevention activities within Indian communities, as well as to provide oversight to some of the activities described below.

A successful National Roundtable on CVD Prevention among American Indians and Alaska Natives was held in Washington, DC on September 25 and 26, 2003. Experts in CVD prevention (including the American Heart Association, the American Diabetes Association, the American College of Cardiology, National Institutes of Health, Centers for Disease Control, leaders of academic CVD Prevention programs, and others) were brought in to assist tribal leaders in developing a strategic plan for the prevention of CVD within Indian communities.

A collaboration between the Indian Health Service and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute led to the development and funding of a national Strengthening The Heartbeat of American Indians and Alaska Natives "Train the Trainers" CVD Prevention Conference in Phoenix in December, 2003. This week-long program began with a one-day tribal leaders meeting for education and the development of successful collaborations for the prevention of heart disease among American Indians and Alaska Natives. The ensuing meeting provided training for community leaders and faculty for a planned series of regional train-the-trainer CVD prevention conferences throughout the US in 2004-2005 with subsequent community dissemination.

These plans include developing prevention efforts and trainings for more than 200 tribes and urban Indian communities. The training manual for this course, the Native American-specific Heart Healthy Manual, was developed by NHLBI in conjunction with IHS and three tribal communities who received NIH funding for the development of prevention programs within their communities: the Ponca Tribe in Oklahoma, the Bristol Bay Corporation in Dillingham, Alaska and the Laguna Pueblo in New Mexico. Other sites that are initiating new or expanding current CV Prevention projects with support from IHS include the Santa Fe Indian Hospital, in New Mexico; the Clinton Service Unit, in Oklahoma; Crow Agency, Montana; and the Northern Cheyenne Service Unit, Lame Deer, Montana.

A national Indian health provider CVD prevention and treatment education program has been completed recently, incorporating regional seminars throughout the country, along with the broad distribution of educational guidelines and

materials through multiple mechanisms. A number of trainings for public health nurses and community health representatives on this topic have been held as well.

The Indian Health Service is participating with NHLBI in a “Stop Atherosclerosis in Native Diabetics” (SANDS) project, a five year, multi-center scientific evaluation of the benefit of more aggressive secondary prevention of CVD among those at the highest risk: those individuals with diabetes mellitus.

Members of the prevention committee have participated in the American Diabetes Association/American College of Cardiology collaboration entitled the “Make The Link,” which promotes community and provider education focusing on the link between diabetes and heart disease.

There are plans for a national “Prevention of CVD and DM Among Native Americans” conference to be held in spring 2005 in Phoenix, in conjunction with the Joslin Diabetes Clinic and multiple other partners (including the American Heart Association, the American College of Cardiology, the American Diabetes Association, National Institutes of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the University of Arizona, and others). This conference will focus on cutting edge clinical and community prevention knowledge and expertise.

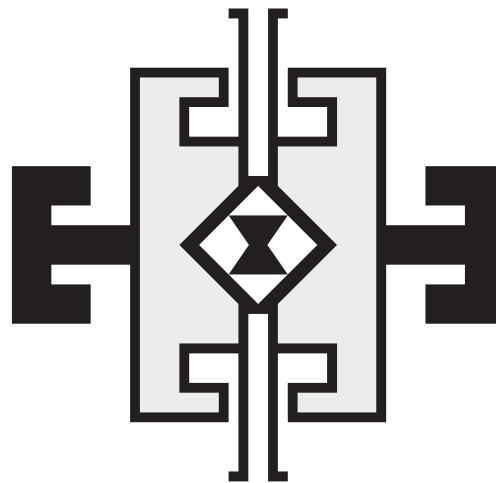
In addition, a number of efforts have been focused on the development of clinical reminders, registries, and other mechanisms to ensure appropriate CVD prevention interventions during clinic visits, including lipid and blood pressure control, as well as educational reminders for patients, as an option integrated within the PCC+ system.

Finally, the Indian Health Service and tribal communities, with support from the American Heart Association, are working on an initial trial of the national “Get With The Guidelines” program to ensure that appropriate secondary prevention efforts are made at the time of hospital discharge for patients with coronary artery disease. We are beginning efforts to implement this within our clinics for outpatient use as well.

All of these prevention efforts are the result of the collaboration between dedicated individuals from tribes and Indian communities, private, non-profit organizations, and federal agencies. While showing significant promise and initial success, these efforts are just beginning to have the impact of a significant and coordinated prevention effort. If you are interested in being a part of the team, those of us focused on the prevention of CVD among American Indians and Alaska Natives welcome your assistance and future participation.

Author’s Note: This article is written on behalf of the numerous individuals within Indian Health who are focused on the prevention of CVD among American Indians and Alaska Natives.

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The Indian Health Service Integrated Diabetes Education Recognition Program: A System to Assure Quality Diabetes Services in I/T/U Facilities

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Introduction

In March 2002 the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) approved the Indian Health Service (IHS) as a national accreditation organization for outpatient diabetes self-management education (DSME) services. With this approval, diabetes self-management training programs accredited by the IHS are able to receive “deemed” status under the Medicare program and are allowed to seek Medicare reimbursement of DSME services for Medicare Part B-eligible beneficiaries.

Achieving CMS approval as one of the two national accreditation organizations for outpatient diabetes self-management education (the American Diabetes Association is the other) is a culmination of the IHS’s history as a leader in setting standards for quality diabetes education and care. The IHS is a member of the consortium that developed and revised the *National Standards for Diabetes Self-Management Education*. Since 1986, the *IHS Integrated Diabetes Education and Care Standards* have been used by IHS, tribal, and urban (I/T/U) health care facilities to guide and improve diabetes education and care (See Figure 1 in opposite column).

The Integrated Diabetes Education Recognition Program (IDERP) — the IHS accreditation program approved by CMS — builds on this history by enabling I/T/U facilities, serving American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) and meeting the *National Standards for Diabetes Self-Management Education*, to seek recognition for quality diabetes education and care services. IHS Recognition has other benefits in addition to acknowledging the quality of the diabetes services, including:

- Medicare reimbursement of DSME.
- enhanced marketing of quality diabetes services to the community and providers.
- improved clinical and behavioral outcomes for participating patients with diabetes.

Further, there is no application cost for IHS recognition.

Figure 1. Timeline of events leading to the IDERP

Timeline
2002: IHS approved by CMS as national accreditation organization for DSME services
1988: ADA Diabetes Care Standards developed
1986: IHS Integrated Diabetes Education and Care Standards developed
1986: National Certification Board for Diabetes Educators (CDE exam)
1986: IHS Clinical Standards of Diabetes Care Developed
1984: <i>National Standards for Diabetes Self-Management Education</i> developed (revised 1995 and 2000)

IDERP is also the only national accreditation program that provides the flexibility of a three-stage approach to meeting standards and recognizes program integration of educational, clinical, and public health standards. Programs at Level 1, or the developmental stage, are beginning to work on developing a quality program. Programs that complete Level 2, or the educational stage, have a quality diabetes education service in place. Completion of Level 3, or the integrated stage, means that a facility is offering the best in diabetes care and education practices by integrating community-wide prevention programs, diabetes clinical systems, and educational programs for people with diabetes and their families.

Eligibility

The IHS IDERP is available only to I/T/U programs that serve American Indians and Alaska Natives. Programs need to have provided diabetes education services for at least six months and have a minimum of six months of educational and clinical outcome data before applying for IHS Recognition. They need to

submit application within three months of the end of the data period used.

Frequency of Accreditation

Full accreditation is awarded for three years. Recognized programs need to maintain the IDERP standards and requirements during the three-year recognition period. Programs seeking continuation of their diabetes education program recognition must reapply three months before the date recognition expires.

Application and Review Process

The Indian Health Service National Diabetes Program (IHS NDP) encourages collaboration in those sites with tribal and IHS diabetes education programs in order to submit one application for the site. It would be a duplication of effort to have two diabetes education programs operating within one community.

However, if programs offer their diabetes education services at more than one site (more than one community), each site needs to submit a separate application. Some of the information will be the same for each application, but each site will have some unique information in their application, such as site-specific team meetings, performance improvement data, consumer satisfaction surveys, and/or consumer advisory members. Programs are encouraged to seek clarification from the IHS NDP, before applying for IHS recognition, concerning whether the requirement for separate applications applies to them.

Figure 2 below depicts an applicant checklist to guide programs through the application process. Programs need to prepare and submit four copies of a complete Recognition Application to the IHS NDP. The IHS NDP logs in the application and distributes it to a review coordinator, who assigns review of the application to two reviewers (different professional disciplines). Reviewers complete their review with a Reviewer Checklist, following standard instructions and scoring criteria. They are required to send their review documentation to the review coordinator within six weeks. The review coordinator contacts reviewers to discuss reviewer

findings, tabulates review findings, and prepares a summary for IHS NDP. After the IHS NDP reviews the summary from the review coordinator and reviewers, it makes the final decision regarding accreditation status. The IHS NDP notifies applicants of the accreditation decision within 12 weeks following receipt of the application. See Figure 3 for a list of successful applicants.

Figure 3. List of recognized IDERP Types of Accreditation

IHS Recognized Programs (November 2003)
* Albuquerque Service Unit Diabetes Program, Albuquerque, NM
Diabetes Education Path to Health (DEPTH), Phoenix Indian Medical Center, Phoenix, AZ
Educating Partners in Care, Sapulpa, OK
Educating Partners in Care, Okemah, OK
Educating Partners in Care, Okmulgee, OK
Educating Partners in Care, Eufaula, OK
*New Patient Diabetes Education Program, Claremore, OK
SEARHC (Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium) Diabetes Program, Juneau, AK
SEARHC Diabetes Program, Sitka, AK
STAR (Start Taking an Active Role) Diabetes Self-Care Education Program, Shawnee, OK
Wagner IHS Diabetes Program, Wagner, SD
*Also ADA Recognized

The Indian Health Service National Diabetes Program awards **full accreditation** to applicants who document evidence that all review criteria are met (See Figure 4 next page). **Provisional accreditation** is a six month conditional award given to programs

Figure 2. Applicant Checklist

Applicant Checklist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Team obtains (from IHS NDP) and studies the <i>IHS Recognition Program Standards and Review Criteria Manual, Sample Materials for Developing Quality Diabetes Education Programs</i> and <i>Recognition Application</i> · Team uses the <i>Reviewer Checklist</i> in the <i>Recognition Program Manual</i> to complete a self-assessment of their diabetes education program · Team chooses type of Recognition to apply for · Team requests technical assistance from NDP as needed to meet Recognition requirements · When team determines that the diabetes education program is meeting all required IHS Recognition Program standards and review criteria, coordinator completes Recognition Application and sends four copies to IHS NDP

with a maximum of three incomplete review criteria. In this case, programs need to provide documentation of evidence addressing deficiencies cited by reviewers within six months. When all review criteria are met, the program is awarded full accreditation as of that date. Applications receive a **denial** when there is inadequate documentation of four or more review criteria. Programs must be fully recognized to seek Medicare reimbursement.

Each program fully accredited by the IHS IDERP needs to maintain the Recognition Program standards during the entire three-year recognition period. They are required to follow monthly and annual reporting requirements and need to be prepared for a possible site audit. Applications for continuing accreditation after three years need to show documentation of ongoing activities that assure continuity of IDERP standards and review criteria.

Figure 4. IDERP Standards Application Documentation

1. Organizational structure, mission statement, goals, and support for DSME are in place.
2. Target population and educational needs are identified and resources are available.
3. Advisory body participates in planning and review.
4. Coordinator oversees program planning, implementation, and evaluation.
5. Instructional team is collectively qualified to teach content and includes RN and RD minimum.
6. Instructors obtain regular continuing education.
7. Written curriculum with criteria for successful learning outcomes is used; assessed need of individual determines content delivered.
8. Individualized assessment, educational plan, and periodic reassessment directs selection of educational materials and interventions.
9. Documentation of individual's assessment, education plan, intervention, evaluation and follow-up is in medical record.
10. Continuous quality improvement process is used.

The documentation that programs send with their recognition application is critical to the review team. Each reviewer uses this documentation to assess whether the applicant meets the IDERP standards and review criteria. When preparing an application, programs need to select documentation that best supports the quality of their diabetes education program. Applicants are encouraged to study the standards, review criteria, and instructions outlined in the *IHS Recognition Program Standards and Review Criteria Manual* and Recognition Application to assure that the documentation they provide with their application is pertinent and complete. Although it is not within the scope of this article to address all the review criteria and requirements for each standard, answers to some of the common questions follow.

Frequently Asked Questions

Our diabetes education program serves several different tribal communities — do we need a letter of support from every tribe?

Yes. Your application needs to show support from all tribal communities your education program serves. This support can be documented in various ways, such as letters of support from each tribe, tribal resolutions, letter of support from tribal

health board(s), etc. You may submit one letter from a local health board if the board contains representation from each community served.

Our program (policy) manual is not complete—can we still apply for Recognition?

Yes. However, each program needs to have an operational diabetes education program (policy) manual in place before applying for recognition. Your policy manual needs to document the structure and process of your diabetes education program, including organizational structure, mission, goals, staffing, annual plan and evaluation, description of educational process, follow-up, documentation, and other components. You do not need to submit the manual with your application.

Do we have to follow a special format for our meeting (team and advisory body) minutes?

No. Use a format that best suits your committee documentation needs. However, reviewers are looking for evidence of meeting standards and review criteria in your minutes, including committee composition, meeting dates, member attendance, interactive discussion of diabetes education issues, etc. For example, if your program serves more than one community, your advisory body needs to include a consumer representative from each community, and your minutes should reflect this.

Do we need to include position descriptions with our application?

No. You do not need to submit position descriptions with your recognition application. The application requires completion of a brief diabetes team member role and responsibility checklist.

Is there a credential or a continuing education requirement for the coordinator and instructors?

Yes. The coordinator needs to demonstrate education and experience in chronic disease management and is required to obtain 12 hours of relevant continuing education every two years. The coordinator does not have to be a certified diabetes educator (CDE) or licensed professional. For example, the coordinator could be a community health representative or administrator.

Instructors need to have recent didactic and experiential preparation in diabetes management and educational issues and be familiar with diabetes in AI/AN communities. Beginning in February 2004, at least one instructor must be a CDE. Instructors are required to obtain 12 hours of relevant continuing education every two years.

Do we need to include an actual patient record with our application?

No. You will need to provide copies of the diabetes education forms you use to document the education process — educational needs assessment, education plan, education intervention, and periodic follow-up.

Our hospital completes a consumer satisfaction survey every year — is this an acceptable method to assess diabetes education needs in our community?

No. If there are specific questions related to the diabetes

education program in this survey, it meets the requirement for consumer satisfaction, not for a needs assessment. Needs assessments look at the education needs of your community. The consumer satisfaction survey gathers feedback about the diabetes education program and services you provide.

We cannot always get everyone on our diabetes team together at team meetings — does everyone need to be at every meeting?

No, but minutes need to reflect the teamwork of core members — RN, RD, and primary care provider — at most meetings. Reviewers use the minutes to assess team composition, member attendance, and the team approach to diabetes education. Minutes need to document discussion, tracking, and recommendations related to diabetes education issues, as well as coordination with other departments.

Our coordinator and instructors have other responsibilities in our facility besides diabetes education — how much time is required for them to be working in the education program?

There is no minimum time (FTE) requirement for the coordinator and instructors. Reviewers assess whether the time involvement shown on the Coordinator and Instructor Profiles in the application is sufficient to meet the needs of the community served.

Does the Indian Health Service have a curriculum we can use?

Yes. The Indian Health Service's *Balancing Your Life and Diabetes* curriculum is an approved curriculum and is available from the IHS NDP. It can be ordered on line at www.ihs.gov/medicalprograms/diabetes. There are several other approved curricula listed in the Recognition Application. Programs using any of these approved curricula do not need to submit the curriculum with their application. If you are not using an approved curriculum, you will need to submit the entire curriculum with your application for review.

Not everyone who starts our diabetes education program finishes it — do we need to show that a minimum number (or percent) of participants complete the education program in order to apply for Recognition?

No. There is variability with program completion rates and reviewers do not consider them as a marker for quality diabetes education programming. Completion rates will vary according to the number of people with diabetes in your community, community/seasonal events, diabetes education program cycles, etc.

Programs need to set up a tracking system to identify participant movement through the diabetes education program. The tracking system will help you provide annual participant counts and profiles. It will also help your program with participant follow-up and program evaluation efforts. Tracking data may show that you need to rethink your program structure and process, especially if less than 50% of your participants are completing the critical elements of your diabetes education program — needs assessment, individualized educational plan, educational intervention, and periodic follow-up.

We have a program plan, including goals, objectives, and process/outcome measures, in our Diabetes Grant Plan. Does this meet the program plan requirement for IHS Recognition?

No. The goals, objectives, and process/outcome measures for your diabetes education program need to be specific to the diabetes education program services. The diabetes grant plan is usually too broad, applying to the entire diabetes community rather than only to participants in the diabetes education program.

We evaluate A1c and SBGM behavior each year through our IHS Diabetes Audit — does this meet the requirement for clinical and behavioral CQI reporting?

Yes. But, the general diabetes program audit results are minimally acceptable on an initial Recognition Application. Diabetes education program audit results specific to the education program and its participants are preferred. Programs might use the general diabetes audit in the early stages of education program development, but as the program evolves, program performance measures and evaluation data need to be more specific to those who have completed the education program. The continuous quality improvement process evaluates the diabetes education program effectiveness in order to identify opportunities for improvement. This process needs to include evaluation of a minimum of one behavioral and two clinical indicators. For example, SBGM behavior can be used as a behavioral indicator, and A1c can be used as one of the two required clinical indicators.

Site Audits

The IHS NDP performs random site audits of fully accredited programs to certify program compliance with IHS Integrated Diabetes Education Recognition Program standards and review criteria. The minimum number of site audits each year will be five percent of accredited programs within each IHS region (or one per region if there are less than ten). Programs will be asked to allow auditors access to the registry, policy and procedure manuals, meeting minutes, position descriptions, patient medical records, and other evidence of compliance with standards and review criteria. Programs will be notified of the date of their site audit about one month ahead of the visit.

Reimbursement

Programs that are fully accredited by the IHS IDERP are eligible to bill Medicare for reimbursement of diabetes self-management education. When IHS NDP awards IHS Program Recognition, they will provide the program with information about meeting CMS requirements, such as how to notify CMS of recognition status and how to assure consumer complaints are reported. Diabetes teams need to work closely with their facility's patient billing office (PBO) to coordinate the billing process and assure policies are in place to address consumer complaints. Programs may also check with their state's Diabetes Control Program, local American Diabetes Association, local diabetes educators' association, or IHS Area Diabetes Consultant for information about reimbursement for

Medicaid and private insurance. For more information on reimbursement contact:

- Tammy Brown, Co-Chair, IHS Integrated Diabetes Care and Review Board; e-mail tammy.brown@na.ihs.gov.
- IHS National Diabetes Program website: www.ihs.gov/medicalprograms/diabetes.
- Trailblazer Health Enterprises, LLC (National Medicare carrier for Indian Health) www.trailblazerhealth.com.
- American Association of Diabetes Educators — Government Relations, www.diabeteseducator.org.
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, www.cms.gov.

the IHS NDP if you have questions.

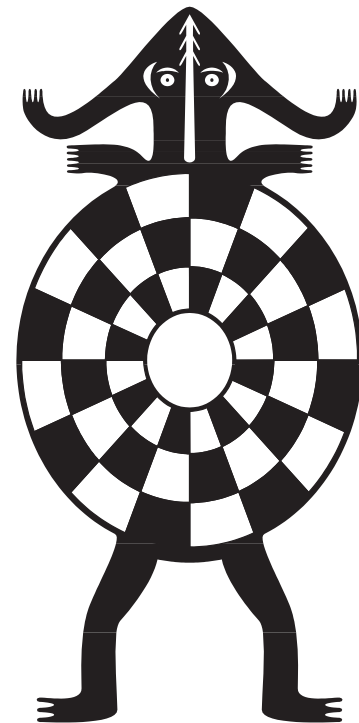
Technical Assistance and Information

Technical assistance is available on request from the IHS NDP to help programs meet IDERP standards and review criteria and prepare an application for IHS Recognition. Current information, manuals, and application materials are available from the IHS NDP website at www.ihs.gov/medicalprograms/diabetes (See Figure 5)

Programs may also contact Cecelia (Sea) Shorty at the IHS NDP, telephone (505) 248-4182, or e-mail diabetesprogram@mail.ihs.gov for Recognition Program information and resources.

Figure 5. IHS Integrated Diabetes Education Recognition Program Resources

- FAQ Sheets
- Recognition Application
- Standards and Review Criteria Manual
- Sample Materials for Development of Quality Diabetes Education Programs
- Reviewer Checklist



Conclusion

The Indian Health Service Integrated Diabetes Education Recognition Program benefits tribal communities by guiding and supporting the development of quality diabetes education programs, enhancing the marketing of their services, and improving outcomes for patients who participate in them. It also enables programs that receive IHS Recognition to seek Medicare reimbursement for diabetes self-management education. This article provides a brief overview of the IHS Recognition Program. We applaud your commitment to quality diabetes education in your community. Please do not hesitate to contact

Reviewers Needed for IHS Integrated Diabetes Education Recognition Program

Background

The IHS Integrated Diabetes Education Recognition Program is receiving an increasing number of Recognition Applications. A team of reviewers who represent the various IHS Area and professional disciplines is needed to review applications.

Serving as a reviewer provides an excellent opportunity to further develop expertise in diabetes self-management education, program implementation, and quality improvement, as well as improve critical review, communication, and consultation skills. Reviewers, by learning about the variety of educational tools and methods programs use to meet standards and review criteria, are better prepared to assist their own site, or sites in their Area, with achieving IHS recognition.

Reviewer Responsibilities

The role of Reviewers is to apply review criteria equitably to recognition applications, provide documentation of reviews for accreditation decisions, provide technical assistance to sites to prepare applications and meet full accreditation, and provide ongoing critique of the review process, tools, and materials.

Two reviewers (from different disciplines) evaluate each application by following standard instructions, checklists, and scoring criteria. Reviewers have six weeks to complete the review after they receive it. Most reviewers find it takes about three hours to review a recognition application. Reviewers may also be asked to assist with technical assistance/consultation to IHS, tribal or urban (I/T/U) programs, and with random site audits of fully recognized programs.

Reviewers choose the number of applications they will review each year, but they are asked to commit to at least one. Reviewers also determine their availability for technical assistance, consultation, and site audits, and may choose to do none of these.

Travel is not required to review applications. Most technical assistance and consultation to sites is provided by telephone and e-mail. Travel is required for on-site technical assistance and random site audits.

Reviewers serve on an ongoing basis. They may ask to be removed from the active reviewer list at any time. The IHS National Diabetes Program monitors reviewer performance based on timeliness of review completions, quality of review documentation, and required continuing education. They may remove a reviewer from the active list if these requirements are not met.

Reviewers perform their service at no charge to the IHS National Diabetes Program. Reviewers receive thank you letters after each review and an annual letter documenting their contributions and support for national Indian health diabetes program activities. Sites incur all costs of on-site technical

assistance they request. The IHS National Diabetes Program will incur travel costs for random site audits of recognized programs.

Reviewer Selection

Applicants need to meet the following criteria in order to be selected as a reviewer for the IHS Recognition Program:

- Licensed health care professional (RN, RD, NP, PA, MD/DO, RPh, Licensed Nutritionist, etc)
- Minimum five years experience (within last ten years and at least four hours per week) in direct education for people with diabetes in an I/T/U setting
- Two letters of reference (one including support from supervisor)
- CDE or demonstrated knowledge/expertise in direct education for people with diabetes in I/T/U settings
- Demonstrated knowledge and expertise in program evaluation, continuous quality improvement, and diabetes audits.

Reviewer Training

All Reviewers will receive initial training as well as annual updates of the IHS recognition review process. Initial training is completed through teleconferencing and mentorship with an active reviewer. Updates are provided through a reviewer listserv. Ongoing support is available from a review coordinator and the IHS National Diabetes Program staff.

Application Process

A reviewer application can be obtained from the IHS National Diabetes Program. The completed reviewer application, curriculum vitae, and letters of reference need to be sent to the review coordinator at the address listed on the application. The review coordinator will inform applicants of their reviewer status within two weeks of receipt of all application materials.

Information

For more information or to obtain application materials, contact
Cecelia (Sea) Shorty
IHS National Diabetes Program
Telephone (505) 248-4182
e-mail diabetesprogram@mail.ihs.gov

Upcoming Initial Reviewer Trainings
March 17, 2004
June 16, 2004
Complete your application now and join the
IHS Recognition
Program Reviewer team!

Recording Health Factors in the RPMS System

Scott Hamstra, MD, Health Factor Task Group, Clinical Information and Technology Advisory Group (CIMTAC), Whiteriver, Arizona

The Indian Health Service utilizes a robust Resource and Patient Management System (RPMS) electronic database that is added to on a daily basis as we record our patient encounters using paper Patient Care Component (PCC) forms. Historically, data entry clerks have grabbed a defined portion of the information documented on the encounter form and entered these data bits into the local RPMS database. This database is used to facilitate a number of processes. These data elements include Measurements, Purposes of Visit, Diagnoses, Problem Lists, Plans, and Procedures. Some information is integrated into the patient's electronic record directly if your site is using specific clinical applications, e.g., Laboratory and Immunization packages. This patient and visit information is available for a number of uses, including display on the health summary for individual patient care as well as review for performance improvement across the service unit population, e.g., as GPRA indicators.

While the use of ICD-9 and CPT codes often provide valuable information, some additional health information that would be valuable and helpful for both care of the patient and for GPRA measures is not easy to capture via these traditional methods. Due to this limitation, the Health Factors application was created. Health factor fields enable RPMS to record and track certain important health parameters. Initially, four categories were created, as follows:

1. Diabetes mellitus
2. Alcohol use or abuse
3. TB status
4. Tobacco use

Using the Tobacco Health Factor in patient clinic encounters as an example, I hope to illustrate the practical aspects of Health Factors, and show how the use of Health Factors helps address our unique data needs.

Andy, our first patient, arrives in primary clinic for follow-up of his hypertension. The provider asks Andy if he uses tobacco. He responds, Yes, he smokes cigarettes but doesn't chew tobacco. The provider would like to document this information in the medical record.

There are at least two options available to capture and record this information.

Method 1: The provider can document tobacco use as a secondary Purpose of Visit and add it to the Problem List. Data entry then captures the POV

Provider Narrative as an ICD-9 Code (choosing from four options):

1. Unspecified 305.10
2. Continuous 305.11
3. Episodic 305.12
4. In Remission 305.13

Note that the ICD9 coding does NOT distinguish between smoke and smokeless tobacco, even though clinically these are very different and have very different impacts on the patient.

Method 2: The other option is to for the provider to document tobacco use as a Health Factor; as seen below, this method provides more detail and specificity than the use of the ICD-9 codes. See Table 1.

Table 1. Options (12) for recording Tobacco as a Health Factor

Health Factors (Circle all that apply)	Definition
TO - Non User	Never used cigarettes or chewing tobacco
Current Smoker	Uses regularly
Current Smokeless	Uses regularly
Current Smoker & Smokeless	Actively trying to quit < 6 months smoke free
Cessation Smoker	Actively trying to quit < 6 months smoke free
Cessation Smokeless	Actively trying to quit < 6 months smokeless free
Previous Smoker	Quit: Smoke free for > 6 months
Previous Smokeless	Quit: Smokeless free for > 6 months
Smoker in Home	Exposure to Smoke (household)
Smoke Free Home	Smoke Free Home
TO - ETS	Exposure to Environmental Tobacco Smoke (work)
TO - Ceremonial	Ceremonial Use Only

In the case of Andy, using the first method, the provider records on the Purpose of Visit, as follows:

A/I/R	#	Purpose of Visit	Health Factors
		Hypertension	
A	2	Tobacco use	

The data entry clerk will capture these data elements, which are then searchable data bits in the RPMS database, and the information is displayed on the Health Summary as follows:

Problem List

- PL1 Hypertension
- PL2 Tobacco Use 305.11

Alternatively, using method 2, the provider records as follows at the end of the artical as follows:

A/I/R	#	Purpose of Visit	Health Factors
		Hypertension	Current Smoker

Here, the data entry clerk will capture these data elements, which are then searchable data bits in the RPMS database, and the information is displayed on the Health Summary as follows:

Health Factors

Current Smoker

Which documentation is quicker and easier? In this case, the methods are arguably about the same. However, which form of documentation provides the most valuable data? The Health Factor actually allows more specific documentation — smoking vs. smokeless — that ICD-9 coding does not.

Convinced? No? Let's try another example.

Susan, our second patient, arrives in primary clinic for prenatal care. The provider asks this 18-year old if she uses Tobacco. She responds, No, I have never smoked cigarettes or chewed tobacco and neither does anyone else in my home. The provider would like to document this information in the medical record.

How? There is no ICD-9 code to document the absence of diseases. After all, ICD-9 codes were created to document reasons why people die. How can the provider document the absence of smoking, get credit for asking the question, and help us demonstrate how many in a population are Tobacco Non-Users? The answer is, of course, to use the Health Factors method — the new data field that provides this ability! In this case, for Susan, the provider records as follows:

A/I/R	#	Purpose of Visit	Health Factors
		Prenatal Visit - 12 weeks	TO - Non User
			Smoke Free Home

The data entry clerk will capture these data elements. When entered into the database, this allows you can find how many prenatal patients do not use tobacco, and displays the information in the Health Summary as follows:

Health Factors

Tobacco Non-User
Smoke Free Home

One more example, a bit different and more complex, may be more convincing.

Our third patient, Tom, arrives in primary care clinic for a Bus Driver Physical. The provider asks Tom if the patient uses tobacco. He responds, Yes, he chews tobacco daily, but quit smoking a couple of years ago. The provider would like to document this information in the medical record or chart.

How? Using method 1, above, there are two options. First, the provider could use POV and ICD-9 codes to document both the active problem of using smokeless tobacco and the history of smoking; there is a V code (V15.82) for History of Tobacco use. Alternatively, the provider could use the Health Factor tobacco codes to document both elements of the history. In this case then, for Tom, the provider records as follows:

A/I/R	#	Purpose of Visit	Health Factors
		Bus Driver Physical Exam	
A	1	Tobacco use	
MHX		History of Tobacco Use	

The data entry clerk will capture these data elements, and the information displays on the Health Summary as follows:

Problem List

PL1 305.11 Tobacco Use

Past Medical History

History of Tobacco Use

Using the second, Health Factors, method, however, the provider records as follows:

A/I/R	#	Purpose of Visit	Health Factors
		Bus Driver Physical Exam	Current Smokeless
			Previous Smoker

The data entry clerk will capture these data elements. Once entered in the database, you can find how many men use smokeless tobacco, or even how many men use smokeless tobacco but are previous smokers. The information displays on the Health Summary as follows:

Health Factors

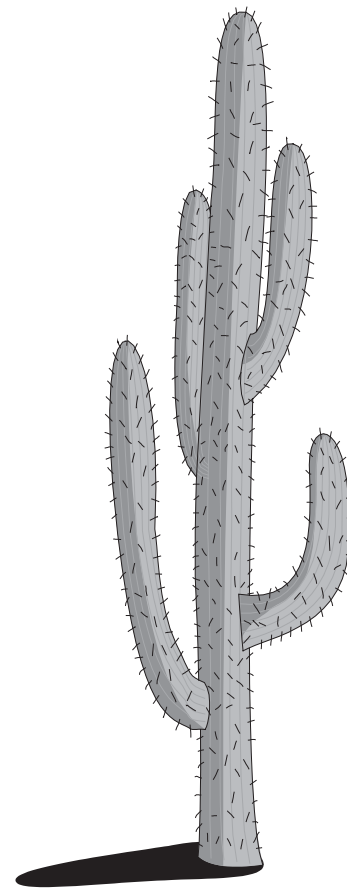
Current Smokeless
Previous Smoker

As can be seen above, the use of the ICD-9 codes can be confusing since it does not distinguish between Smoking and Smokeless. It is simply both easier and clearer to use the Health Factors method. These three examples demonstrate how **Health Factors** facilitate our asking every patient about tobacco use and facilitate **documentation** of more detailed information for all patient encounters, compared to using ICD-9 codes. We now also have a clear mechanism to document **Tobacco Non Users, Smoke Free Home, Smoker in Home, Exposure to Environmental Tobacco Smoke, and Ceremonial Use**, as well as to distinguish between the

kind of tobacco use — Smoker vs. Smokeless.

In future articles, we will explore in more detail other Health Factors that are currently available and the process by which other Health Factors can be added.

Special thanks to Caroline Renner, who has been championing tobacco issues in Alaska and helping to further develop this area.



The Indian Health Service

16th Annual IHS Research Conference

WHEN: May 11, 2004 - May 13, 2004

WHERE: DoubleTree La Posada Resort
4949 East Lincoln Drive
Scottsdale, Arizona 85253

FOR WHOM: People in Indian health systems and others in health system who are: Researchers, Health Care Professionals (including CHRs), Administrators, Health Board members, Tribal Council members, Traditional Healers and interested community members.

The 16th Annual IHS Research Conference, “MCH Research: Historic Reality and Future Hope,” will enhance our ability to ensure benefits of the research to Native communities and peoples. The conference will also examine in depth the impact of Women, Infant and Children’s research activity in American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities.

Tuesday’s presentations will focus on the impact of Native American Women, Infant and Children Research and discuss how to maximize research benefits and minimize harm to AI/AN individuals and communities, and how those involved can help plan the research to ensure benefits. We will highlight examples of helpful research by forming into small groups — each with researchers, Tribal Council or Health Board members, community members, program administrators, and clinicians — to discuss this research in Indian country.

Wednesday and Thursday sessions will focus on methods and results of current qualitative and quantitative research in Indian country.

The entire conference will stimulate both seasoned and new researchers with additional ideas they can use. The conference will also inform clinicians, health program administrators, community people, and Health Board and Tribal Council members about research, programs, or activities that may be helpful in their own communities. People experienced in community-based health programs and participatory research in Indian or other communities will discuss problems they encountered and how they solved them, by presenting their own research and by reviewing results presented by others. This is an opportunity for people who have never or seldom presented research results to do so in a friendly and supportive environment at a national meeting. It is also an excellent opportunity to learn from one another.

LODGING INFORMATION

The IHS has blocked 100 rooms under the “IHS Research Conference” at the DoubleTree La Posada Resort. Room reservations must be made by **April 7, 2004** by calling (602) 952-0420. The first 100 reservations will be a rate of \$79/night (single) or \$88/night (double), plus tax, on a first-come, first-served basis. Thereafter, the rate will reflect the area conference allowable rate.

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

Individuals who want to present their research should prepare an abstract and send it to Leslie Randall by **April 2, 2004** (see Call For Papers). For those attending the conference and who will not be presenting research, please send or e-mail your registration form to: Orié Platero, at 801 Thompson Avenue, TMP 450, Rockville, MD 20852; telephone (301) 443-1492; e-mail oplatero@hqe.ihs.gov; or fax (301) 443-1522.

ACCREDITATION

The IHS Clinical Support Center is the accredited sponsor of this meeting. The Indian Health Service (IHS) Clinical Support Center is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education, the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Commission on Accreditation, and the American Council on Pharmaceutical Education.

IHS 16th Annual Research Conference “MCH Research: Historic Reality and Future Hope”

REGISTRATION FORM

The broad theme of the 16th Annual IHS Research Conference will be the impact of Women and Children Research activities among Native communities and people. The conference will address related issues by providing a forum for learning about American Indian/Alaska Native research activities; discuss research methods and research findings to improve the health of the people involved; involve American Indian/Alaska Native people in the research process; allow for dialogue between American Indian/Alaska Native participants of the research activity; and promote caring and sincere concern for human safety throughout the research process.

The conference will be held at the DoubleTree La Posada Resort, 4949 East Lincoln Drive, Scottsdale, Arizona, 85253. Please reserve your room at the DoubleTree La Posada by April 7, 2004 by referring to the “IHS Research Conference.” The first 100 reservations will be a rate of \$79/night (single) or \$88/night (double), plus tax, on a first come-first-served basis. Thereafter, the rate will reflect area conference rate allowable charges. All government travelers must complete the actual subsistence form to be reimbursed the conference rate.

NAME: _____

TITLE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ FAX: _____ E-MAIL: _____

Whom are you representing? (Please check one):

- Tribe - Name: _____
- University: _____
- IHS - Location: _____
- Other Federal Government Agency: _____
- Other: _____

I will be attending the IHS Research Conference on the following days:

- Tuesday, May 11, 2004
- Wednesday, May 12, 2004
- Thursday, May 13, 2004
- Luncheon on Wednesday, May 12, 2004: # of ticket(s) _____ x \$20.00 ea = \$ _____

There is no registration fee to attend the conference, but there is a \$20.00 luncheon cost on Wednesday, May 12, 2004. If you plan to attend, please make checks payable to the “DoubleTree La Posada Resort,” and send with your completed registration form to address below no later than April 15, 2004.

IHS Research Conference Registration: Orié Platero/Cecily Ybarra
801 Thompson, TMP 450
Rockville, MD 20852
Telephone: (301) 443-1492, or 443-0222
Fax: (301) 443-1522
E-mail oplatero@hqe.ihs.gov or cybarra@hqe.ihs.gov

The DoubleTree La Posada Resort is providing full access to attendees with disabilities. If you need special accommodations, please note on the Registration Form, or call us before April 15, 2004.

16th Annual IHS Research Conference Call for Papers – Abstracts

The 16th Annual Indian Health Service (IHS) Research Conference, sponsored by the Office of Program Support and the IHS Clinical Support Center (the accredited sponsor), will be held May 11 – May 13, 2004 at the DoubleTree La Posada Resort, 4949 East Lincoln Drive, Scottsdale, Arizona 85253.

Submit your oral or poster presentation for the following categories **by April 2, 2004**: Aging, AIDS, Alcohol and Substance Abuse, Alternative Healing Practices, Cancer, Cardiovascular Disease, Diabetes, Environmental Health, Epidemiology, Health Care Administration, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, Health Services Research, Injury Prevention, Maternal and Children Health, Mental Health, Nutrition, Oral Health, Women's Health, and Traditional Medicine. Research that measures the effectiveness of innovative health care intervention, or that involves exemplary partnerships between researchers and tribes are encouraged.

Instructions for Preparing Abstracts:

1. You should share your research results with the tribe(s) involved in the research for tribal review and approval before presenting the results at the IHS Research Conference.
2. All abstracts accepted for either oral presentation or poster presentation will be reproduced in an abstract book for distribution. Therefore, all abstracts must be sent via diskette or e-mail document formatted in **MS Word**. Please follow the directions carefully on the following page.
3. Use the sample abstract form, next page, as a guide for size as you prepare your abstract. All copies must fit within the frame.
4. The abstract content should be structured as follows:
 - ▶ Title [bolded]
 - ▶ Authors [First name, Middle Initial, Last name] Note: Do not include degrees after the authors' names. Place an asterisk before the name of the presenting author.
 - ▶ Single space after the Title and Authors.
 - ▶ Single-space the text of the abstract with one continuous paragraph using Times New Roman 12 CPI.
 - ▶ The text should be no more than 250 words. Do not include figures, tables, equations, mathematical signs or symbols, or references.
 - ▶ Organize the text in the following manner and bold the Purpose, Methods, Results, and Conclusions
 - A brief Purpose statement or Background of the study
 - A statement of the Methods used (including number of subjects and other pertinent data)
 - A summary of the Results presented in sufficient detail to support the conclusion and
 - A statement of the Conclusion. (It is not appropriate to state, "The results will be discussed.")
 - ▶ Single space after the text of the abstract.
 - ▶ Add "For further information:" in bold, followed by the primary author's full name, official title, organization, address, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address.
5. Please check the desired form of presentation: oral, poster, or either one.
6. Please fill out the biographical sketch on the next page and fax or mail it to the address below.
7. **Abstracts must be received by close of business April 2, 2004.**
8. We will notify authors of the acceptance or rejection of their paper no later than April 15, 2004.
9. All abstracts should be sent to:
 - Leslie Randall, MPH, RN
 - IHS Epidemiology Program Office
 - 5300 Homestead Road, NE
 - Albuquerque, NM 87110
 - Telephone: (505) 248-4385; Fax: (505) 248-4393
 - leslie.randall@ihs.gov or LHR6@cdc.gov*

Indian Health Service 16th Annual Research Conference

ABSTRACT TEMPLATE AND BIOGRAPHICAL DATA FORM

Using “avoidable hospitalization” indicators to assess adequacy of primary care: the Indian Health Service (IHS) 1954-2004. Kay B. Yazzie, Eton Spencer Jones, *Thomas Z. Whitehorse.

Background: Major needs in assessing care included: using existing data; and assessing primary care. We used “avoidable hospitalization” indicators to assess how well IHS primary care prevented avoidable hospitalizations. **Methods:** The avoidable hospitalization indicators were: TB, pertussis, cervical cancer, rheumatic heart disease, and asthma, complications of hypertension, influenza and pneumococcal pneumonia in 65 + year olds, infant gastroenteritis, and newborn disease due to isoimmunizations. The IHS inpatient database for years 1954-2003 provided the count of cases. The denominator was the IHS Service Population derived from the census 1954-2003 of American Indian and Alaska Native residents. We calculated the all US rates using the National Hospital Discharge Survey. **Results:** Hospitalization rates for most avoidable conditions decreased more than had all hospitalizations. However the rates of four conditions decreased less than all, and worsened relative to the change in the US: pneumococcal pneumonia for 65+ year olds, newborn hemolytic disease, hypoglycemia, and asthma. **Conclusions:** IHS should investigate the epidemiology and the primary care of these conditions. Avoidable hospitalization indicators may detect changes in primary care or epidemiology rapidly and with good sensitivity.

For further information: Kay B. Yazzie, MD, PHD, Director, Tribal Health Program, 1230 Healing Way, Tucson, AZ 85746-9352. (520) 263-8500, fax (520) 263-8516, e-mail Blessing@tribe.gov

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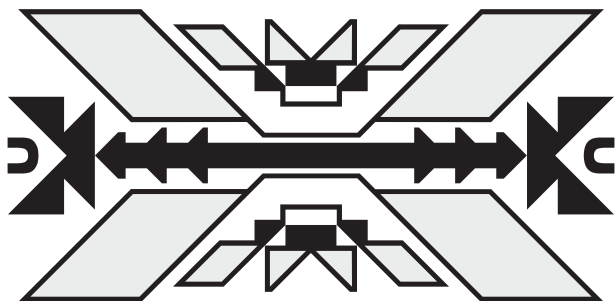
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POSITION VACANCIES □

Editor's note: As a service to our readers, THE IHS PROVIDER will publish notices of clinical positions available. Indian health program employers should send brief announcements on an organizational letterhead to: Editor, THE IHS PROVIDER, The IHS Clinical Support Center, Two Renaissance Square, Suite 780, 40 North Central Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona 85004. Submissions will be run for two months, but may be renewed as many times as necessary. Tribal organizations that have taken their tribal "shares" of the CSC budget will need to reimburse CSC for the expense of this service. The Indian Health Service assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of the information in such announcements.



Health Information Management Director and Health Systems Specialist/Business Office Manager Whiteriver Service Unit, Whiteriver, Arizona

The Whiteriver Service Unit is looking for highly motivated, progressive thinking, action-oriented people. We want to maximize our collections, use our resources efficiently, be on the leading edge of technology (PCC+, electronic medical record), and establish long-term goals that solidify our organization's future.

The Whiteriver Service Unit includes a 40-bed hospital and an ambulatory clinic in Cibecue about 40 miles away. We are a JCAHO accredited Critical Access Hospital, and have just completed our survey process with a score in the high 90s. Whiteriver is a very progressive service unit. It is well staffed and has been successful in generating third party revenue.

Whiteriver is located in the heart of the White Mountains, on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation in the east-central part of Arizona. This is a beautiful, scenic area with lots of ponderosa pine forest, lakes and streams, a ski resort, and a tribal casino. If you love the outdoors – hiking, fishing, skiing,

hunting, rafting, biking – this is the place for you! The people in “the valley” – Phoenix and Tucson – come here to get away from the heat in the summer. The Blue Ridge school district in Pinetop/Lakeside (20 miles away) is one of the top five school districts in the state of Arizona. Government housing is available.

Please contact one of the following people for additional information: Kay Tsouhlarakis, Acting HIM Director, telephone (928) 338-3570; Randy Haigh, Director, Professional Services, telephone (928) 338-5554; or Berlinda Hopper, Human Resources, telephone (928) 338-3559.

Physician

Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation; Fountain Hills (Phoenix) Arizona

The Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation is currently seeking a full-time physician to provide medical care, including diagnosis and treatment, to patients of the Wassaja Memorial Health Center. Qualifications include the following: 1) high school diploma or GED certification and a medical (MD or DO) degree; 2) completion of an accredited Residency program in Family Practice or Internal Medicine; 3) board certification in Family Practice or Internal Medicine; 4) current unrestricted medical license to practice in the State of Arizona; 5) current unrestricted Federal Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) Controlled Substance Registration Certificate; 6) Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) certification; 7) a minimum of three (3) years experience as a practicing physician in a clinic or hospital environment; 8) experience with, and sensitivity to, health care in Native American communities and/or minority health issues; and 9) current Arizona driver's license and the ability to meet FMYN insurance standards. FMYN offers a salary range of \$95,000 to \$140,000 per annum (DOE). This position is open until filled.

Submit resume to Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation, Human Resources Department, Attn: Kirby Sayles, PO Box 17779, Fountain Hills, Arizona 85269; telephone (480) 816-7118; fax (480) 816-9524; or e-mail ksayles@ftmcdowell.org.

Applicants claiming Indian Preference must submit a copy of their Certificate of Indian Blood with their resume. Applicants will be required to pass a pre-employment drug screen and complete a background check, which may include fingerprinting.

Physicians and other health care workers Northwest Tribes; Washington, Oregon, and Idaho

The Northwest Tribal Recruitment Projects (NTRP) networks with 43 northwest tribes to recruit and place health care professionals into tribal health care facilities and programs. NTRP searches for health professionals who seek challenging

and fulfilling positions in Native American communities. To this end, the NTRP works to make more health professionals aware of the rewarding opportunities available in Indian health care programs in the states of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. These include positions with the tribes directly as well as with the Indian Health Service (IHS). We have numerous vacancies at any given time in the health and allied health fields. We can alert you to current positions in your profession quickly and provide you with tribal applications and vacancy announcements. We, in turn, alert the hiring authority and provide the clinics with advanced copies of your resume. Often, the hiring authority will call applicants before the applicant can officially apply. This process has significantly reduced time for all parties concerned.

NTRP also provides tribal profiles, answers to commonly asked questions, information regarding the Indian Health Service College Loan Repayment Program and other information about the area served. We also offer an informative CD that explains the Indian Health Service, the Commissioned Corp, and tribal hire placements. To register with NTRP, please provide an updated resume (preferably in a Word document) with accurate contact information to Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board, 527 SW Hall, Suite 300, Portland Oregon 97201; e-mail your resume to gsmall@npaihb.org; or fax it to (503) 228-8182. For further information please contact NTRP toll free at (800) 338-8166.

Midlevel Provider

McGrath Health Center, Tanana Chiefs Conference; McGrath, Alaska

Tanana Chiefs Conference is seeking a Midlevel Provider for the McGrath Health Center. Incumbent is responsible for providing high quality patient care and some quality assurance administrative support at the McGrath Health Center located in McGrath, Alaska. Minimum qualification include: Certified Family or Advanced Nurse Practitioner licensed to practice in Alaska or with the ability to obtain an Alaska license; certification in advanced emergency skills (PALS, ACLS) required; strong emergency skills and independent practice experience required; experience working in Rural Alaska preferred; computer skills using MS Word and Excel; EMT I or EMT II certification preferred; strong verbal, written, interpersonal, organizational, and analytical skills; must maintain strict confidentiality. Contact Willow Bowen, HR Technician at (907) 452-8251 extension 3128; e-mail willow.bowen@tananachiefs.org; or visit the Tanana Chiefs Conference website at www.tananachiefs.org.

Medical Director/Family Practice Physician Native American Community Health Center, Inc.; Phoenix, Arizona

The Native American Community Health Center, Inc., (NACHCI) is recruiting for a Medical Director/Family Practice Physician to work in a growing primary health care clinic.

NACHCI is a non-profit, 501 (c) 3, Urban Indian Health Center located in central Phoenix and provides primary care services to eligible Native Americans residing in the Phoenix

Metropolitan Area. The clinic is open Monday through Friday, 8:00AM to 5:00PM (we recently added an evening clinic once a week). No weekends or holidays.

The Medical Director/Family Practice Physician will be responsible for supervising a physician assistant, a family nurse practitioner, two medical assistants and a licensed practical nurse. In addition to seeing patients, the incumbent will be responsible for overseeing the activities of the medical clinic as well as ensuring compliance with accreditation standards. The incumbent is directly supervised by the Medical Services Director.

The ideal candidate has the following characteristics: board certified; 3-5 years experience as a medical director/physician; an Arizona license; knowledgeable about accreditation standards; and Spanish speaking a plus.

Salary is competitive and we offer good benefits, which include a 403 (b) plan, medical, dental, etc.

If you are interested in working in a positive, friendly environment where the staff is committed to providing the highest level of services to the patients we serve, then NACHCI is the place for you. Please contact David Tonemah, Medical Services Director, at (602) 279-5262, extension 256 for more information.

Family Practice Physician

Dzilth-Na-O-Dith-Hle Indian Health Service Health Center; Bloomfield, New Mexico

The Dzilth-Na-O-Dith-Hle Indian Health Service Health Center is seeking a board certified family practice physician for a full-time position.

The facility is currently a four-provider outpatient clinic that is primary care oriented, with outpatient, dental, optometry, pharmacy, mental health, lab, radiology and other services. Our referral facility is the Northern Navajo Medical Center in Shiprock, New Mexico, located approximately 70 miles away.

The Dzilth-Na-O-Dith-Hle Indian Health Service Health Center is located on the Navajo Reservation in the "Four corners" area of New Mexico, which borders Colorado, Arizona and Utah. This area is renown for its outdoor activities including hiking, biking, skiing, kayaking, fishing, and many others. We are located approximately 40 miles from Farmington, New Mexico, from where many of the staff commute. For more information on our area, go to www.farmingtonnm.org.

Commissioned Corps or Civil Service positions are available. Please contact Don Casebolt, MD, 6 RD 7586, Bloomfield, New Mexico 87413; telephone (505) 632-1801, extension 6728.

MEETINGS OF INTEREST □

The 2004 Meeting of the National Councils for Indian Health February 23 - 26, 2004; San Diego, California

The National Councils (Clinical Directors, Chief Executive Officers, Chief Medical Officers, Oral Health, and Nurse Consultants) for Indian health will hold their 2004 annual meeting February 23-26, 2004 in San Diego, California. An exciting and informative program is planned to address Indian Health Service/tribal/urban program issues and offer solutions to common concerns throughout Indian country. The focus this year will be "Proactive Partners in the Global Health Community." Indian health program Chief Executive Officers and Clinico-administrators are invited to attend. The meeting site is the Bahia Resort Hotel, 998 W. Mission Beach Drive, San Diego, California. The Clinical Support Center (CSC) is the accredited sponsor for this meeting. Please contact Gigi Holmes at the Clinical Support Center (602) 364- 7777, or e-mail gigi.holmes@phx.ihs.gov.

Fundamentals of HIV/AIDS Preceptorships February 24 - 26, 2004; Phoenix, Arizona

These clinical preceptorships in HIV/AIDS are funded by an interagency agreement between the IHS the Pacific AIDS Education and Training Center. The IHS Clinical Support Center is the accredited sponsor for continuing education.

These preceptorships are offered to physicians and other health care providers (nurses, physician assistants, case managers, and pharmacists) working in American Indian and Alaska Native communities who have an interest in learning more about the fundamentals of counseling, testing, epidemiology, diagnosis, and management of HIV disease. A second element teaches participants how and where to access expert consultation on HIV care and treatment using the Internet and/or telephone consultation lines. A third component is the afternoon sessions when participants choose from a variety of opportunities to observe peer clinicians provide pre- and posttest counseling, or provide care at one of five local sites.

The program emphasizes skills building in counseling and testing, obtaining expert consultation through a variety of media, and in clinical experience at the Phoenix Indian Medical Center, the Carl T. Hayden Veteran's Administration Hospital, the Maricopa County Health Department STD clinic, Phoenix Children's Hospital, and the McDowell Health Care Center, a Ryan White funded clinic specializing in care of the person with HIV.

For more information, contact Erica Avery, Director, HIV Center of Excellence, Phoenix Indian Medical Center; telephone (602) 263-1541; or e-mail erica.avery@pimc.ihs.gov.

IHS Colposcopy Update and Review March 5 - 7, 2004; Albuquerque, New Mexico

This course is a 2fi-day update and review for ob/gyn physicians, family physicians, and advanced practice clinicians who perform colposcopy in IHS, tribal, and urban program facilities. The faculty will be nationally recognized experts in lower genital tract disease. The program will emphasize new developments in cervical cancer screening and the management of abnormal Pap tests. Diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the vulva and vagina will also be covered. The format will include lectures and small group discussions and slide reviews. The ASCCP Colposcopy Mentorship Exam will be offered (optional) to interested participants at the conclusion of the program.

For more information, contact Roberta Paisano, IHS National Epidemiology Program, 5300 Homestead Road, NE, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87110; telephone (505) 248-4132; e-mail roberta.paisano@mail.ihs.gov.

American Indian and Alaska Natives Health Care Provider Conference March 6, 2004; Phoenix, Arizona

The Sun Health Research Institute invites all Indian Health Service providers, tribal health representatives, tribal/urban health organizations, and non-governmental health organizations you to attend the "Native American Healthcare Provider Conference" to be held on March 6, 2004, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in downtown Phoenix.

The conference will focus on reaching out to Native American communities and Indian Health Service providers, in an effort to provide education and information about dementia, Alzheimer's disease, and other age-related diseases.

Not much is known currently about dementia and Alzheimer's disease in the Native American population. We aim to increase awareness among health care providers so they may better understand Alzheimer's disease within the Native American population.

Continuing Medical Education (CME) credits will be offered to physicians (11.5 credit hours). This activity has been approved by Sun Health.

We are looking forward to working with all of you to make this conference a success. There will be no cost to participate. If you have any questions or comments please do not hesitate to contact Minnie Jim, Native American Outreach Coordinator, at telephone (623) 875- 6524; e-mail

Minnie.Jim@sunhealth.org.

Navigating the New Medicare

March 6, 2004; Community Building, 104 W. 3rd Street, Grove, Oklahoma

April 3, 2004; The Tulsa Greenwood Cultural Center, 7200 N. Greenwood, Tulsa, Oklahoma

April 17, 2004; Southeast Expo Center, McAlester, Oklahoma

The Oklahoma State University Gerontology Institute, along with Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, AARP, Area Agency on Aging, Oklahoma Department of Human Services, and the Oklahoma State Insurance Commissioners Office are hosting informational forums throughout eastern Oklahoma for anyone interested in learning about the recent changes to Medicare. All forums will be held from 8:00 am to 12:00 noon, giving participants the chance to hear from experts in the field of Medicare. There will be a question and answer period for those who need specific information. There is no charge for any of the forums, and any questions about participation should be directed to the OSU Gerontology Institute at (405) 744-4945.

Strategies for Today's Clinicians: Management of TB, HIV, STDs, and Hepatitis C at the Border

March 26 - 27, 2004; Yuma, Arizona

This 1 1/2 day free conference will provide an update on TB, HIV, STDs, and Hepatitis C, common infectious diseases that affect many patients in the U.S./Mexico border region. Starting at 4 pm on Friday, March 26, participants will hear keynote speakers on border issues and rapid HIV testing, followed by dinner, and an update on Hepatitis C management. Saturday's agenda will address both clinical and program/case management topics, including epidemiology; STD/HIV interaction and implications for prevention; HIV/STD risk assessment and sexual history taking; TB screening, diagnosis, and treatment; HIV clinical manifestations and management; an STD Overview, including syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia, and herpes, and a special talk entitled, "Focus on Teens: STDs, HIV and Communication Issues." More detailed information, including a listing of faculty and a course agenda, will be available online at <http://www.fcm.arizona.edu/azaetc/Programs.html>. Lunch will be served on Saturday.

The target audience include physicians, advance practice nurses, physician assistants, registered nurses, public health nurses, mental health providers, case managers, and other interested health care providers working in the Yuma, Arizona or Imperial County, California regions. CME credits and nursing CEUs will be provided through the Francis J. Curry National TB Center.

This activity is cosponsored by the Arizona AIDS Education and Training Center (AZ AETC), the Arizona Department of Health Services, the Francis J. Curry National Tuberculosis Center, and the California STD/HIV Prevention Training Center (CA PTC). There is no fee for this training; however, pre-registration is required. For more information and registration information, contact the Arizona AETC at <http://www.fcm.arizona.edu/azaetc/Programs.html>.

4th Annual Advances in Indian Health

April 21 - 23, 2004; Albuquerque, New Mexico

The 4th Annual Advances in Indian Health conference is offered for primary care physicians, nurses, and physician assistants who work with American Indian and Alaskan Native populations at federal, tribal, and urban sites. Medical students and residents who are interested in serving these populations are also welcome.

Both new and experienced attendees will learn about advances in clinical care specifically relevant to American Indian populations with an emphasis on southwestern tribes. Opportunities to learn from experienced career clinicians who are experts in native people's health will be emphasized. Indian Health Service chief clinical consultants and disease control program directors will be available for consultation and program development.

Hotel accommodations are at the Holiday Inn Mountain View Hotel, 2020 Menaul, NE, Albuquerque, NM 87107; telephone (505) 884-2511; fax: (505) 881-4806. All room rates are subject to state and local taxes, which currently total 10.8125%. The special conference room rates are \$55.00 single or double occupancy; the deadline is April 7, 2004.

A Registration Form is posted on the University of New Mexico's CME website at <http://hsc.unm.edu/cme>. The conference brochure will be available in early March. To be on our mailing list, please call the Office of Continuing Medical Education at (505) 272-3942. The brochure will also be available, in February, on the UNM CME website at <http://hsc.unm.edu/cme>. For additional information please contact Kathy Breckenridge, University of New Mexico Office of Continuing Medical Education at (505) 272-3942.

Panel on Indian Health at 2004 American College of Physicians (ACP) Annual Session

April 22 - 24, 2004; New Orleans, Louisiana

For the first time, the ACP Annual Session will include a panel devoted to Indian health entitled "The Changing Health Status of American Indians and Alaska Natives." The Annual Session is intended for all physicians involved in the practice of internal medicine. This includes general internists, subspecialists in internal medicine, family physicians, general practitioners, and residents and fellows in internal medicine and its subspecialties. Medical students and allied health professionals will find many sessions of interest and will benefit from the scope and depth of the program. There will be an opportunity for physicians from Indian health (I/T/U) to meet during the annual session.

For more information, call (800) 523-1546, ext. 2600; or visit the website at www.acponline.org.

16th Annual IHS Research Conference

May 11 - 13, 2004; Scottsdale, Arizona

The 16th Annual IHS National Research Conference, "MCH Research: Historic Reality and Future Hope," will enhance our ability to ensure benefits of research to Native

communities and peoples. The conference will also examine in depth the impact of Women, Infant, and Children's research activity in American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities. This three-day research conference will bring together many stakeholders in American Indian/Alaska Native research activities including clinicians, health administrators, educators, consumers, researchers, and community and tribal government leaders across the nation.

The IHS Research Conference will be held at the Doubletree La Posada Resort, 4949 East Lincoln Drive, Scottsdale, AZ 85253; telephone (602) 952-0420; fax (602) 852-0151; website www.doubletree.com. The conference room rate is \$79.00 single/\$88 double per room, per night, plus tax. Be sure to mention "IHS Research Conference" to receive this rate. Deadline for room reservations is April 7, 2004.

The conference is sponsored by the Indian Health Service and the IHS Clinical Support Center (the accredited sponsor). Individuals who want to present their research should prepare an abstract and fax, mail, or e-mail it (in Word format) to Leslie L. Randall, RN, MPH by April 2, 2004 (see Call For Papers). If mailing, include a diskette with the abstract in Word. E-mail addresses: leslie.randall@ihs.gov or LHR6@cdc.gov

For more information, contact Orie Platero, Conference Coordinator, 801 Thompson Avenue, TMP 450, Rockville, MD 20852; telephone (301) 443-1492; fax (301) 443-1522; or e-mail oplatero@hqe.ihs.gov.

**2004 Primary Care Provider Training on Chemical Dependency
May 4-6, 2004; Phoenix, Arizona
August 10 - 12, 2004; Tacoma Washington**

This is a three-day intensive workshop that includes both didactic and experiential training. The curriculum is updated annually with the most current nursing, addictive medicine, and prevention information. This training is available to Indian health providers (physicians, physician assistants, nurses, and advanced practice nurses). Enrollment is limited to 30 providers (preferably 2 - 3 person teams from the same facility representing the various disciplines targeted). If selected, employees of P.L. 93-638 compacted or contracted tribal facilities that have taken tribal shares of the ASAPB and/or CSC will be charged a fee of \$350 to attend and will be expected to provide for their own travel and per diem costs. For more information, please contact Colleen Good Bear, MSW, LCSW, Division of Behavioral Health, Headquarters, Rockville, Maryland; telephone (301) 443-2038; fax (301) 443-7623.

**Office Based Opioid Treatment Course
May 7, 2004; Phoenix, Arizona
August 13, 2004; Tacoma, Washington**

The IHS invites all physicians to register for its upcoming Office Based Opioid Treatment (OBOT) Course to be held on the Fridays following the above PCP training on chemical dependency mentioned above, in the same location. Physicians attending the PCP training may elect to stay over for the OBOT course.

The course faculty features the top clinicians and researchers in the field. This new treatment modality reduces the regulatory burden on physicians who choose to practice opioid addiction therapy. It is open to all physicians, including federal, state, and military.

For more information, contact Colleen Good Bear, MSW, LCSW at the numbers above.

**IHS National Council of Nurse Administrators (NCONA)
Annual Meeting and Conference: "Renewing the Spirit
of Nursing"
June 14 - 18, 2004; Prior Lake, Minnesota**

IHS nurse administrators are encouraged to attend the annual NCONA Meeting and Conference to be held at the Mystic Lake Casino and Hotel, 2400 Mystic Lake Boulevard, Prior Lake, Minnesota; telephone (800) 262-7799. Make your room reservations by May 13, 2004. Be sure to mention the "IHS National Nurses Conference" when making your reservations.

Mountain Plains Health Consortium is the accredited sponsor for this meeting. More information about the conference will follow. Feel free to visit the NCONA web page for updates.

**Women's Health and Maternity Care Biennial IHS, Tribal,
and Urban (ITU) Meeting
August 4 - 6, 2004; Albuquerque, New Mexico**

The biennial IHS, tribal, and urban (ITU) Women's Health and Maternity Care Meeting is offered for all physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, nurse midwives, and physician assistants providing care at Indian health system facilities. Medical students and residents who are interested in serving these populations are also welcome. This year's theme is "Prevention and Health Promotion in Native Women."

Topics will include Domestic Violence; Internet Resources; The Postpartum Mom; Vaginal Birth after Cesarean; Breastfeeding and Type 2 DM Prevention; Syphilis Outbreak in the IHS - Lessons Learned; Urinary Incontinence; Infant Mortality; Hormone Replacement Risks; Prenatal Diagnosis; IUDs; Obesity in Early Childhood; and Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening.

The meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn Mountain View Hotel, 2020 Menaul, NE, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107; telephone (505) 884-2511; fax (505) 881-4806.

All room rates are subject to state and local taxes, which are currently 10.8125%. The special conference room rates are \$55.00 Single or Double Occupancy. The deadline is July 21, 2004.

The registration fee will be payable by check, credit card, or institutional purchase order. The conference brochure will be available in early April. To be on our mailing list, please call the Office of Continuing Medical Education at (505) 272-3942. The brochure will also be available in April on the UNM CME website at <http://hsc.unm.edu/cme>. For additional information please contact the University of New Mexico Office of Continuing Medical Education at (505) 272-3942.

Sixth National Conference on Changing Patterns of Cancer in Native Communities

September 9 - 12, 2004; Phoenix, Arizona

Subtitled “Honoring Our Native Families from Prevention to Cure,” this conference will focus on cancer epidemiology, control, and survival among Native populations. The goal is to evaluate progress in prevention of cancer in Native groups and in the early diagnosis, treatment, and survival of Native people diagnosed with cancer. The target audience for the conference will be community members, advocates, researchers, clinicians, and other health service providers working with Native populations: American Indians, Alaska Natives, American Samoans, and Native Hawaiians.

Featured topics will include Survivorship, Prevention, Early Detection and Screening, Cultural Sensitivity, Tobacco Issues, Traditional Diet, Men’s Cancer Issues, Navigator System, Community Partnerships, and Understanding Cancer Statistics and Registries. Featured Speakers include Wilma Mankiller (Cherokee Nation); Dr. James Hampton (Medical Director, Troy and Dollie Smith Cancer Center); Charles Wiggins (Utah Cancer Registry); Linda Burhansstipanov (Native American Cancer Research); and Marc Heyison (Men Against Breast Cancer).

Hosted by Spirit of Eagles, the conference will be held at the Wild Horse Pass Resort and Spa. For more information, contact the conference planning committee at (877) 372-1617; e-mail nativecircle@mayo.edu; or visit the website at www.mayo.edu/leadershipinitiative.





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THE IHS PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER



A journal for health professionals working with American Indians and Alaska Natives

THE IHS PROVIDER is published monthly by the Indian Health Service Clinical Support Center (CSC). Telephone: (602) 364-7777; fax: (602) 364-7788; e-mail: the.provider@phx.ihs.gov. Previous issues of THE PROVIDER (beginning with the December 1994 issue) can be found on the CSC Internet home page (www.csc.ihs.gov).

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Opinions expressed in articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Indian Health Service or the Editors.

Circulation: The PROVIDER (ISSN 1063-4398) is distributed to more than 6,000 health care providers working for the IHS and tribal health programs, to medical schools throughout the country, and to health professionals working with or interested in American Indian and Alaska Native health care. If you would like to receive a copy, send your name, address, professional title, and place of employment to the address listed below.

Publication of articles: Manuscripts, comments, and letters to the editor are welcome. Items submitted for publication should be no longer than 3000 words in length, typed, double-spaced, and conform to manuscript standards. PC-compatible word processor files are preferred. Manuscripts may be received via e-mail.

Authors should submit at least one hard copy with each electronic copy. References should be included. All manuscripts are subject to editorial and peer review. Responsibility for obtaining permission from appropriate tribal authorities and Area Publications Committees to publish manuscripts rests with the author. For those who would like more information, a packet entitled "Information for Authors" is available by contacting the CSC at the address below or on our website at www.csc.ihs.gov.

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