

2022 Accomplishments

DIVISION OF NURSING SERVICES



In 2022, the Division of Nursing Services (DNS) continued to prioritize and strengthen many of its foundational relationships vital to the growth and success of the Division and the IHS Nursing workforce. Collaborating with the National Nurse Leadership Council (NNLC), the Division continues to work to advance Nursing and give a voice to nursing, shape policy, improve professional development, advance facility certification and accreditation, support health care equity and diversity, enhance training and education, and support advanced practice credentialing. We intend to continue the journey toward nursing excellence and remain committed to improving patient outcomes for the communities we serve. The reengagement of DNS and the NNLC has been a major factor to the accomplishments in 2022 and demonstrates the power of maintaining and nurturing partnerships with Nurses in the field.

REENGAGEMENT AND RECONNECTION



- The DNS continues to support the efforts of the **National Nurse Leadership Council** in the request to **elevate Nursing and create an Office of Nursing**.
- Continued **Quarterly Newsletter** publication for **IHS Nursing** and the **Nurse of the Month** recognition program to highlight important contributions of I/T/U nurses in providing the highest quality care to our AI/AN patients, families, and communities.
- Drafted and implemented several position descriptions and budget documents to support and **expand DNS services and outreach** to the field in order to improve the support and resources available for IHS' largest workforce. **DNS' commitment to growth and expansion** is demonstrated by the hiring of two Nurse Consultants and multiple other positions are pending approval.
- Reestablishment of meetings with the **USPHS Chief Nurse Officer** and in 2023 the IHS CNO will re-engage with Chief Nurses from other agencies to discuss best practices and the advancement of Nursing.
- In 2022 DNS served as the **Business Owner** for the agency to pursue the procurement of an electronic record system for **Employee/Occupational Health (EOH)** and while the work continues the DNS Director has stood up an IHS-wide multi- disciplinary workgroup to begin development of the requirements for the **Statement of Work** and has worked collaboratively with OIT to complete the HHS level requisite items as the designated business owner.

COVID-19 ACTIVITY



- The Division of Nursing Services actively participated and served in a leadership position on the IHS Vaccine Task Force; planned and facilitated Vaccine Error Webinar, January 2022, with over 100 staff members in attendance.
- The Division of Nursing Services continued to provide Project Management services for the Critical Care Response Teams (CCRT) contract. The Project Manager assisted in the planning and coordination of 6 CCRT deployments during CY 2022. As part of additional CCRT Program Management functions, the Project Manager participated in the newly formed IHS Nurse Educator Network, revised the CCRT Pre-Deployment Planning Document, compiled a Summary of Recommendations, and has participated in beginning planning discussions surrounding CCRT Program Evaluation.
- DNS actively leads coordination calls with the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) to provide subject matter expertise on all clinical matters for students and staff. These calls are held in partnership with the CDC and included, but were not limited to, vaccination updates and planning support to BIE for the return of students to four Off Reservation Boarding Schools (ORBS). The planning efforts included review of school reopening plans, arranging for COVID testing and testing supplies, and refining plans through table-top exercises. BIE ORBS returned to in-person learning with minimal to no disruptions. While the implementation of these calls started during the COVID response efforts, they have transformed to include many other disciplines and now focus on much needed behavioral health activities.

PUBLIC HEALTH



- Ongoing coordination with **Baby Friendly (BF) USA** and **IHS BF designated hospitals** to maintain Baby Friendly status. Implementing policies and practices that foster breastfeeding which reduces current and future medical problems and translates into health care cost savings through decreased hospitalizations and pediatric clinic visits. DNS maintains a contract for **Lactation Education Resources (LER)** to provide online breastfeeding and Baby Friendly Hospital training available for staff to support and maintain the BF Hospital designation.
- The **Public Health Nursing (PHN) Program** reported patient encounters for communicable disease, surveillance, contact tracing, testing, patient monitoring, and vaccination activities in 2022. These efforts resulted in an overall increase in the number of PHN activities reported to address the **COVID-19 crisis** and PHN patient encounters. The final 2022 result of 428,476 patient encounters exceeded the target of 330,000 by 98,476 encounters, a 30% increase.
- DNS serves as the **Contracting Officer Representative (COR)** to support and ensure professional services for consultation and provision of education and hands on training for obstetrics and gynecology, Neonatal, and Women's Health providers; and for the **HQ IDIQ staffing resource contract option** to provide safe and quality health care services to AI/AN people during a staffing crisis.
- DNS funds and maintains the contract for **NetCE**, an **online nurse training service** available to all IHS nurses to offer free continuing education to assist in maintaining licensure.
- **Concluded the five-year PHN Grant Program, Community Based Model of PHN Case Management Services (Behavioral Health)**, which awarded \$1,500,000 per year to improve behavioral health outcomes. Four of the seven PHN case management programs continued the established PHN services for high risk behavioral health patients using local clinic or tribal funding to continue support of this case management model.

PUBLIC HEALTH

- In 2022 the new PHN Grant Program, **PHN Case Management: Reducing sexually transmitted infections**, awarded seven grants and three federal program awards to mitigate the prevalence of sexually transmitted infections within Indian Country through a case management model that utilizes the PHN as the case manager.
- Collaboration with the Office of Quality on the **Public Health Nursing QI project - Charter and PDSA on Syphilis** to provide guidance and team-based patient care for treatment in the field and to help support decreasing syphilis morbidity and mortality rates in the American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) people.
- In partnership with Health Promotion/Disease Prevention colleagues hosted the **IHS Public and Community Health Virtual Summit** on September 7-9, 2022 with over 400 participants to support patient and community health and sponsored PHN breakout sessions on sexually transmitted infections and prevention efforts.
- Participation on the **2022 IHS Virtual Partnership Conference, "The Future of Indian Health Care Starts with Us,"** which emphasized the importance of taking care of ourselves in order to take care of our patients, partners, and customers. PHN participation on panel for **Coding & Billing for Vaccines** presentation – WRAP Work Session to advance understanding and strengthen program effectiveness by sharing best practices to support vaccine administration which had ~3000 attendees.
- Supported PHN program management efforts by hosting **PHN data mart enhancements and improvements** for maintenance and updates for PHN workload activity to support data driven decision-making and promote data reporting.



"I'll go and do more."

ANNIE DODGE WAUNKA

2022 Accomplishments

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN



- The IHS/HRSA Interagency Agreement for FY22/FY23 continues to fund the contract with Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) to design and implement a hybrid simulation training program. The EDs are partnered with Academic Medical Centers (AMC) to implement a curriculum of in-person and tele-simulations to prepare emergency room staff to become competent in the care of children and newborns during pediatric emergencies.
 - The IHS Hybrid Simulation Training Project outcomes for 2022: 1) 100% compliance with curriculum by AMC-PECC dyads at 7 sites, 2) 100% PECC and AMC retention for FY2022 – 2023, 3) A Net Promoter Score of 79/100 – participants would recommend the program to colleagues, 4) Demonstrated change in provider knowledge, attitudes, and teamwork during simulations, 5) Obtained Pediatric Readiness Score for each site.
 - Thirteen (13) IHS and tribal EDs have a designated Pediatric Emergency Care Coordinator (PECC). PECCs maintain the relationship with the AMC partner and coordinate the simulation training. The IHS Hybrid Simulation Training Project has established partnerships with ten AMCs among the 13 participating EDs. The AMC partners are Emergency Medicine physicians who volunteer to work with ED staff to conduct simulations and share evidence-based practices.
 - The IHS EMSC Program continues to expand its visibility with collaborations with the nationally recognized EMSC Innovation and Improvement Center (EIIC), the National Pediatric Readiness Quality Initiative (NPRQI), interagency workgroups such as the HRSA lead Federal Interagency Committee on Emergency Medical Services (FICEMS) Evidence-Based Practice and Quality (EBPQ) Committee, and serve as the IHS stakeholder representative on the Pediatric Pandemic Network (PPN) to ensure AI/AN children have access to high quality emergency care that meets national standards.
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2022 Accomplishments

GERIATRIC EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT ACCREDITATION

- As a result of the EMSC Nurse Consultant representation and support of IHS EMSC efforts, the NPRQI invited IHS to participate in field testing the first quality initiative to establish a platform that will provide a snapshot of pediatric emergency care delivery over time using a core set of nationally vetted pediatric emergency care quality measures.
- The EMSC Nurse Consultant partnership with Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR) resulted in participation in the development of the HHS Child and Adolescent Health Emergency Planning Toolkit and consultation on HHS Maternal Child Health Emergency Planning Toolkit.
- The EMSC Nurse Consultant curated and maintains a database and listserv of Emergency Department contacts throughout IHS and tribal EDs; creating a channel of communication among EDs, allowing connections on a national level and helping disseminate information for grants, training, and education opportunities from federal, state and local partners, and national organizations.
- The National IHS Geriatric ED Accreditation (GEDA) Initiative workgroup partnered with American College of Emergency Physicians Geriatric ED Accreditation Program to recruit IHS and tribal EDs to pursue Bronze – Level 3 Geriatric ED Accreditation. Nine of 11 participating EDs submitted their applications. Six sites have applications pending board approval. Three EDs have achieved Bronze – Level 3 accreditation – Northern Navajo Medical Center, Crow Northern Cheyenne Hospital, and San Carlos Apache Healthcare Corporation (tribal).
- The IHS and tribal Geriatric ED teams implemented geriatric-focused policies and protocols for Fall Prevention, Depression and Suicide Screening, Medication Management/Reconciliation, Geriatric Trauma Considerations, and Decreasing Prolonged ED Stays.



“Let us put our minds together and see what life
we can make for our children”

SITTING BULL

WOMEN'S HEALTH



- Women's Health (WH) Nurse Consultant was requested to serve on the **10th International Meeting on Indigenous Child Health (IMICH)** Planning Committee and provided 53 presentation abstract reviews.
- The WH Consultant continues to work in collaboration internally, and with our federal partners and other external agencies to **improve health outcomes for AI/AN women and children**, including: Federal Partners Maternal Health Working Group, Interagency Policy Committee, Agency Priority Goals working group, CDC Hear Her Campaign, OPHS/ASPE Congenital Syphilis Evaluation Project, Healthy Native Babies Project transition, United States Breastfeeding Committee; CMS-Maternal Health Model Concept/HRSA Birthing Friendly Hospital designation.
- **Collaborated with Public Affairs** on health notices and observances, including RSV and M-Pox publications; Domestic Violence Awareness Month Resources and social media posts for Forensic Nursing Week, Native American Heritage Month, National Women's Blood Pressure Awareness week; Intradermal Competency/Memo Review; Abortion FAQ Review; led the DNS submission for **National Breastfeeding Month** awareness campaign materials including website banner, Week in Review submission, blog, and multiple social media posts, including one post specific to chestfeeding, raising awareness and inclusivity for sensitive health care topics.
- **Drafted CMO talking points** for the Committee on Native American Child Health (CONACH) meeting; Violence Against Women Conference; Federal Hypertension Control Leadership Council Meeting; **Drafted response letters** on behalf of the IHS Director for letters received concerning IHS Sexual Assault Protocols; reviewed numerous documents for clearance as SME for Women's Healthcare; reviewed National Intimate Partner Violence Protocol; provided SME review and updates of Chapter 13 of the Indian Health Manual.

FORENSIC NURSING

- The Forensic Nursing program returned to the Division of Nursing Services in October 2022 and is diligently working to reestablish the programs that are critically needed by nurses in the field.
- Forensic Nurse Consultant, Ms. Nicole Stahlmann joined the DNS team in November 2022. Ms. Stahlmann brings forensic nursing experience, having achieved national board certification as a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner – Adult/Adolescent and Advanced Forensic Nurse. The program focus on forensic nursing policy and planning within IHS and work to improve SANE-A and SANE-P certifications of nurses in the field. The Forensic Nurse Consultant role will also focus efforts on providing training, education, and technical assistance across IHS to improve resources and enhance access to quality care delivery.
- Notifications for the Forensic Healthcare Funding Opportunity were distributed in December 2022. The purpose of the funding is to develop and/or expand forensic services in 10 federally-operated IHS facilities, funding each facility at \$200,000 per year for 5 years, funding which totals \$10,000,000.



ADVANCED PRACTICE NURSING

- DNS added the new Advanced Practice Nurse Consultant position in October 2022. The focus areas of this new position are recruitment and retention, professional development, standardization in credentialing and privileging of Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN), APRN role utilization, and APRN programs. Including collaboration with the Chief Clinical Consultant for Advanced Practice Nursing and Area Nurse Consultants to prioritize initial program focus areas for the APRN program. The goal of these efforts aligns with the IHS Strategic Plan to improve access and quality of care delivery and to recruit and retain a dedicated, competent, and caring workforce.
- In the process of editing of the **Indian Health Manual, Chapter 4, Part 3-Nursing**, with a focus on APRN specific areas to modernize policy guidance.
- **Collaborating with IHS Human Resources for APRN data**, including IHS scholarship recipient information to leverage data to support program recommendations and objectives.
- **Evaluating a new graduate transition to practice program and funding opportunities** to support more new graduate hiring and support for the IHS scholarship recipients in the initial repayment phase.
- **Collaboration with Uniformed Services University (USU)** to facilitate clinical placement in support of the recently added APRN students to the Memorandum of Agreement with USU for clinical placements across IHS. Ongoing exploration and documentation of the Area contacts and processes for clinical placements of APRN students. Contacts will be utilized to support APRN IHS scholarship recipients to assist with clinical placement when needed which may reduce the risk of loan repayment default and enhance the new graduate APRNs experience and preparedness to begin a full time position after school completion, a value added to the student and the IHS.



VISION AND GOALS FOR 2023 AND BEYOND

- In collaboration and partnership with the Office of Quality - launch of the IHS Nursing Leadership Training Curriculum, this will include an IHS-wide rollout plan through PAS and Area Offices. Trainings are planned to be held in Spring 2023.

Public Health Nursing

- Hire a PHN Grant Program Consultant (GS-0685-13, Public Health Advisor) to provide technical assistance for the cooperative agreement grant, PHN Grant, Public Health Nurse Case Management: Reducing sexually transmitted infections, to secure and effectively manage assets and resources in support of grant program success.
- Enhance and update the PHN data mart to support PHN program management for data collection and analysis to help ensure safe and culturally appropriate PHN care and services are provided in AI/AN communities to improve health care outcomes.

Emergency Medical Services for Children

- Based on the success achieved in 2021/2022 through this IAA between HRSA and IHS, HRSA has indicated a willingness to increase the IAA funding for FY2023-2024 to continue to grow the IHS Hybrid Simulation Training Project into a sustainable program and to continue the direct impact it is having on emergency pediatric readiness in IHS and Tribal EDs.
- Further develop the IHS Hybrid Simulation Training project to a sustainable training program, where Pediatric Emergency Care Coordinators (PECC) and Academic Medical Center partners are independently and actively engaging in a training curriculum to advance emergency pediatric readiness.
- Establish and codify a Pediatric Emergency Care Coordinator (PECC) role with authorized protected time at every IHS and tribal emergency department to support training and education needs, evidence-based practices and policy development for emergency pediatric care.



VISION AND GOALS FOR 2023 AND BEYOND

Women's Health

- Launch a national **Maternity Care Coordination** program in collaboration with the IHS MCH Consultant. Evidence indicates birth outcomes are significantly improved by case management and care coordination connecting patients to evidence-based resources that meet their health care needs. An IHS Maternity Care Coordination program offers an opportunity for improved patient satisfaction, increased access to care and improved obstetric, neonatal, and infant health outcomes.
- Partner with external agencies including NIH, the Preeclampsia Foundation, the Alliance for Innovation in Maternal Health (AIM), HRSA, and the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences on projects aimed at improving health equity and health outcomes in **pregnant and postpartum** patients, including self-monitored blood pressure project expansion, supporting OB READY initiatives, especially in rural communities, and securing grant funding for the **IMPROVE** rural community care project partnership.

Forensic Nursing

- Reestablish the **Forensic Healthcare Domestic and Sexual Violence Training and Technical Assistance contract**, which was formerly awarded to the International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN). Updating this contract will elevate nursing by offering technical assistance, training and education to healthcare providers serving in IHS, focusing on understanding the impact and implications of trauma and violence; providing the ability to conduct high quality medical forensic examinations, evidence collection techniques, and offer appropriate resources for patients.
- Provide 10 applicants \$200,000 per year for five years, to **build and/or expand forensic services for federally operated IHS facilities**. As a deliverable for this funding, recipients will meet with the Forensic Nurse Consultant on a regular basis to ensure programmatic success and sustainability.



“The secret of our success is that
we never, never give up.”

WILMA MANKILLER

VISION AND GOALS FOR 2023 AND BEYOND

Advanced Practice Nursing

- Develop a program for APRN clinical placement through transition to practice for new graduate APRNs, with an initial focus on IHS scholarship recipients. This program will support the AI/AN workforce and employer throughout the APRN educational process through initial employment and lay the foundation for a rewarding and inspiring career with IHS. The APRN workforce initiative will promote professional development and APRN retention through support for new graduate APRNs while enhancing the AI/AN provider pool.
- Align IHS policy with current national APRN standards of care and practices to promote recruitment and retention of APRNs, ensure APRNs are utilized to the full practice authorized and ultimately create an updated practice environment and culture. These efforts align with the IHS strategic plan of work force enhancement and improved access and quality of care delivery.

American Rescue Plan Act (APRA) Funds

- The Indian Health Service (IHS) recently published notification of the decision on distribution of \$210 million Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for various public health workforce activities. Included in this distribution will be \$92 million for school nurses in Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) funded schools. The funding is approved and DNS will utilize it to manage several nursing positions. These funds will be used to provide nursing support to 181 BIE-funded K-12 schools for 5 years. The BIE School Nurse positions will provide critical support to school-based health clinics to ensure students receive quality patient-centered care that is consistent with the Patient-Centered Medical Home principles; and operational characteristics of appropriate, timely care that is cost-effective, culturally competent, and coordinated to affect desired clinical outcomes. This effort aligns with the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) vision that all students are healthy, safe, and ready to learn.
- Three new DNS position requests are tied directly to the planned ARPA funding - the School-Based Health Services Nurse Consultant, Employee Health Nurse Coordinator, and Lead Clinical Immunization Coordinator/Program Manager.

