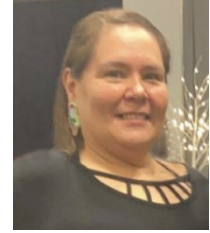


Nurse of the Month – November 2023

The IHS Division of Nursing Services is pleased to announce the recipient of the Nurse of the Month for November 2023 is Mikisha Longie, BSN, RN a Public Health Nurse/Colorectal Cancer Coordinator from the Turtle Mountain Service Unit in the IHS Great Plains Area. Mikisha is an invaluable member of the Quentin N Burdick Healthcare Public Health Nursing Team and IHS. Throughout her tenure, she has demonstrated versatility and expertise in all Nursing Departments. Her vast experience across different areas of healthcare has provided her with a well-rounded perspective on the challenges and intricacies of patient care and advocating for their health.



In addition to her roles as a Public Health Nurse, Mikisha has actively sought the opportunity to lead and contribute to community health literacy in Colorectal Cancer Screening. She has educated and emphasized the importance of screening for colorectal cancer to patients and the community.

Mikisha possesses an admirable character and deep-rooted care for both her community and the Turtle Mountain People, educating and giving patients informed health care decisions in screening themselves for colorectal cancer. In this critical role, she has effectively managed colorectal cancer screening kits distribution and education, ensuring the community has access to vital colorectal cancer resources and screening. Her ability to provide these resources and education is a testament to her resilience, resourcefulness, and commitment to public health and to health literacy.

Mikisha has been critical to the ScreeND project, which was not making forward progress until she joined the team. Here are some ways she has assisted the ScreeND Program:

- Mikisha spends time at the Senior Meals program to educate about the importance of Colorectal Cancer screening using a standard set of questions to determine risk level, show the steps to complete a stool test with a demo kit, and use the “Rollin' Colon” model to help patients visualize the colon and common colon conditions.
- She reaches people at home, work or school through a mobile unit, visiting all areas of the Reservation and offering health education, immunizations, CRC screening, and much more.
- Mikisha was instrumental in developing a standing orders policy for CRC Screening of average risk patients, breaking down a very difficult structural barrier, as the clinic is short on providers, with patients taking months to get an appointment. The standing order allows public health nurses to assess level of risk and order stool-based CRC Screening tests for average risk patients without a clinic visit. She worked with the clinic manager to develop a system to enter the orders and have those signed off and followed up by one designated provider.
- Mikisha ensures that patient education materials are attractive to her patients, using local tribal colors, symbolism, and wording. She frequently includes a traditional greeting in the Ojibwa or Metis' language.
- Mikisha provides reminders to patients to complete screening tests if they are not finished in 2-3 weeks. In addition, she provides reminders when they are due for rescreening. She is adamant that patients get their results regardless of outcome. "Patients who are negative have the same worry as the patients who are positive and should get their results in the same timely manner."
- Mikisha has mastered the RPMS EHR and I-care systems to maximize using data and data retrieval and reporting. This has allowed them to review cases, missed opportunity reports, and provider assessment and feedback on a regular schedule. In addition, she has built panels for each provider so that she can run individual provider rates. She shares those results in GPRA and Medical Staff meetings so that providers can see where they are compared to the national goal and peers. Those who are performing well can then share their strategies for patient compliance with those who are struggling.
- Mikisha is a natural partner - she reaches out to others who share her passion for CRC Screening and achieves synergy to achieve a goal. She has worked with clinic staff, tribal health educators, referral sites, benefits staff, tribal council, and community groups just on the CRC work alone.
- In March of 2023, the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa declared March as Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month across the Reservation. She has built a strong trust within our healthcare facility and the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa People.
- Mikisha spoke at the annual North Dakota Colorectal Cancer Roundtable meeting in May 2023 and was extremely well received by the audience.

Her years of experience in various healthcare settings, coupled with her leadership roles and unwavering commitment to her community, make her a standout candidate. Mikisha has made significant contributions to the field of public health, IHS colorectal cancer screening rates, and in particular, addressing the health disparities faced by Indigenous populations.