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The Community Health Aide Program (CHAP) & Dental Health Aide Therapy (DHAT) Extending the Healthcare Workforce in Tribal Communities

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➤ Topics

➤ What is CHAP?

- CHAP intro video
- Roundtable Discussion #1
- CHAP benefits
- CHAP timeline & tiers
- DHAT updates

➤ Current CHAP TAP Project

- Goal, Objectives, Activities
- CHAP Advisory Committee

➤ Roundtable Discussion #2

➤ Survey findings

➤ Q & A



➤ CHAP purpose

The Community Health Aide Program aims to reduce healthcare gaps in Native communities and provide assistance to underserved Tribal Health Programs by creating a trained network of health aides that extend the *dental*, *behavioral*, and *primary* health care workforce.





COMMUNITY HEALTH
AIDE PROGRAM



➤ Roundtable Discussion #1

Discuss as a group the following questions:

1. Can your Tribal communities relate to the barriers one may experience in receiving or accessing healthcare like those mentioned in the video? If so, which barriers?

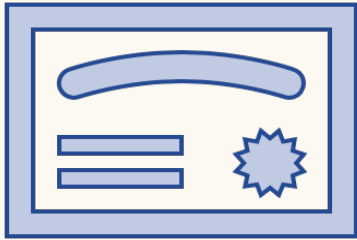
2. List additional reasons which may make it difficult for people in your community to access healthcare:

3. What do you believe are the top three things your Tribal communities need regarding access to culturally competent healthcare?

4. What programs or procedures have your clinics and/or Tribes established to overcome barriers related to accessing healthcare?



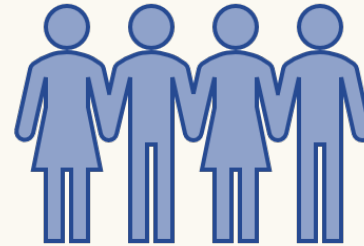
➤ Benefits of CHAP



Tiered
certification in
specialized
content



Health Aides practice
under the supervision
of a licensed clinician



Expands system
of care and Tribal
workforce



Increases access
to culturally
competent care



Creates jobs in Tribal
communities

➤ CHAP Tiers

Behavioral Health Aide

- Behavioral Health Aide I
- Behavioral Health Aide II
- Behavioral Health Aide III
- Behavioral Health Aide Practitioner

Supervising Clinician: Licensed Behavioral Health Provider (LICSW, LCSW, Psych, etc.)

Community Health Aide

- Community Health Aide I
- Community Health Aide II
- Community Health Aide III
- Community Health Aide IV
- Community Health Aide Practitioner

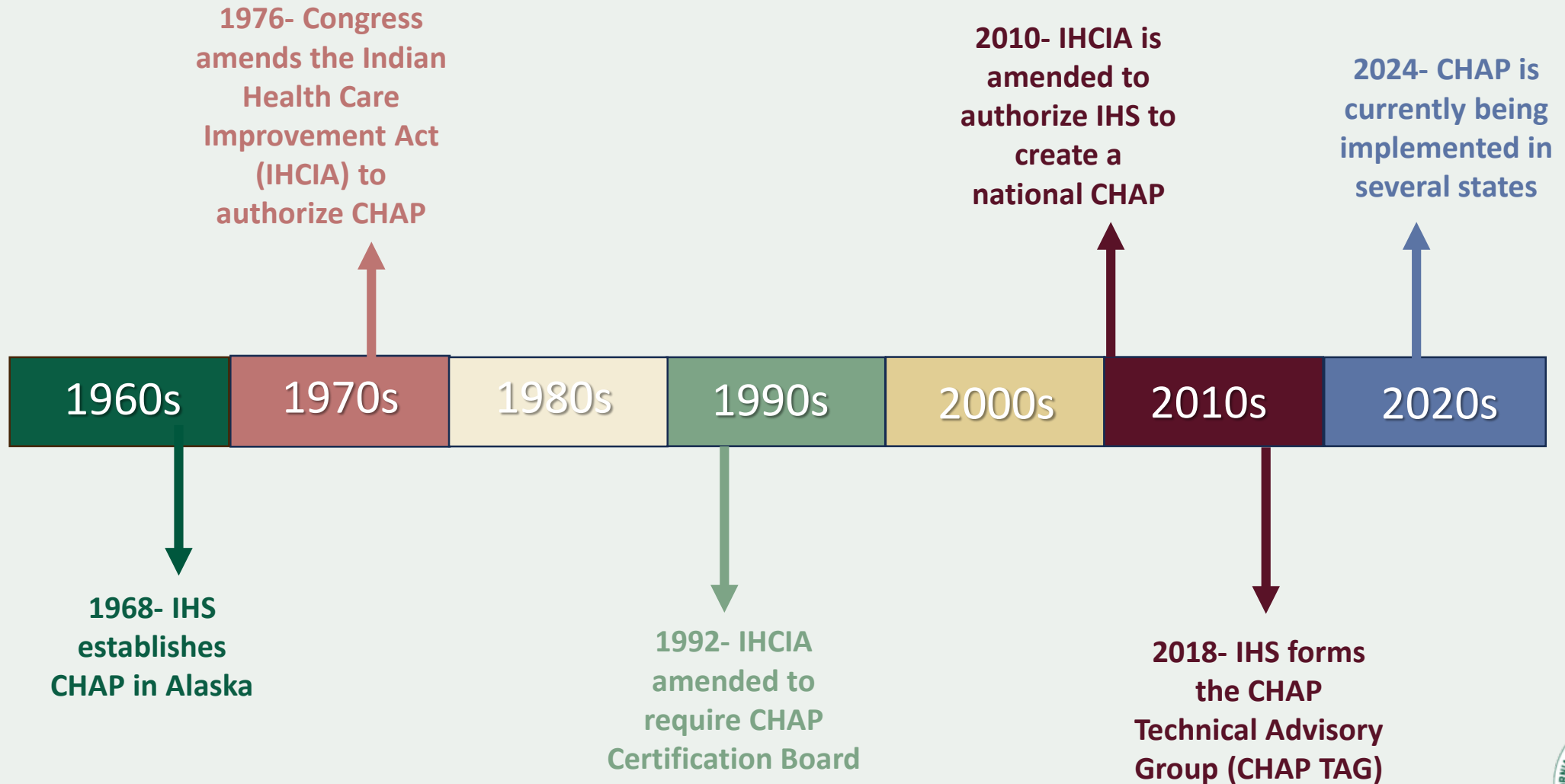
Supervising Clinician: Licensed Physician or Physician Assistant

Dental Health Aide

- Dental Health Aide I
- Dental Health Aide II
- Expanded Function Dental Health Aide I
- Expanded Function Dental Health Aide II
- Dental Health Aide Hygienist
- Dental Health Aide Therapist

Supervising Clinician: Licensed Dentist

➤ CHAP Timeline Highlights



➤ Dental Health Aide Therapy (DHAT)

Dental Health Aide Types

Primary Dental Health Aide I & II → Dental Assistants (Care Coordinator/DA/RDA)

Expanded Function Dental Health Aide I & II → Reg. Dental Assistants in Expanded Functions (RDAEF)

Dental Health Aide Hygienist → Reg. Dental Hygienist in Alternative Practice (RDHAP)

Dental Health Aide Therapist → Dental Therapist (not yet approved in CA)

➤ Dental Health Aide Therapy (DHAT)

- AKA Dental Therapists
- Requires the highest level of education and training of the Dental Health Aides
 - Three academic years of education and training in dental disease prevention, restorative, relatively non-complicated extractions and basic dental treatment skills.
 - Training can be accomplished in two academic years via compressed curriculum.



➤ Current CHAP Project

Tribal Assessment and Planning (TAP) Grant Program

Goal

To aid Tribes and Tribal Organizations in assessing the feasibility on implementing CHAP into their existing Tribal Health system

Objectives

Identifying *barriers relating to:*

- *Clinical & Training Infrastructure
- *Implementation Cost
- *Reimbursement
- *Education & Workforce
- *Cultural Inclusion
- *Determination of Implementation

Activities

- Identify & plan educational partnerships
- Collect data regarding barriers
- Establish a CHAP Tribal Advisory Committee

Tribal Assessment and Planning (TAP) Grant Program

Mini-Grants

- **Accepting up to 10 THPs/Tribes**
- **Up to \$10,000 through June 2025**
- **Deliverable-based contracts with CRIHB**

➤ CHAP Advisory Committee Recruitment

Tribal Health Program Directors

Community Health Representatives

Behavioral Health Directors & Clinicians

Dental Directors & Dentists

Primary Health Directors & Doctors

Nominated Community Members

Clinic Managers

Purpose of CHAP Advisory Committee

- Help identify barriers and feasibility for CHAP implementation
- Better understand the needs of the community
- Assist with extending CHAP educational partnerships
- Offer solutions, feedback, and advice



➤ Roundtable Discussion #2

Discuss as a group the following questions:

1. **Brainstorm the reasons and/or barriers which make it difficult for Tribal community members to become healthcare professionals:**
2. **How would you design an educational pathway into healthcare careers? What would your community need to accomplish this?**
3. **What are some thoughts, questions, or concerns you may have when considering potential CHAP implementation within your community/region?**



➤ CHAP 2021-2023 Survey Findings

During the previous CHAP Tribal Assessment and Planning (TAP) grant, seven Tribal Health Programs participated in gathering data via surveys and focus groups.



These surveys sought to understand various barriers within the healthcare system which would hinder patient care, access, employment, and training. The surveys also identified interest level in CHAP involvement.



There were five different participant groups:

- ▶ Clinic Staff
- ▶ Tribal Members
- ▶ Patients
- ▶ Students
- ▶ Workforce



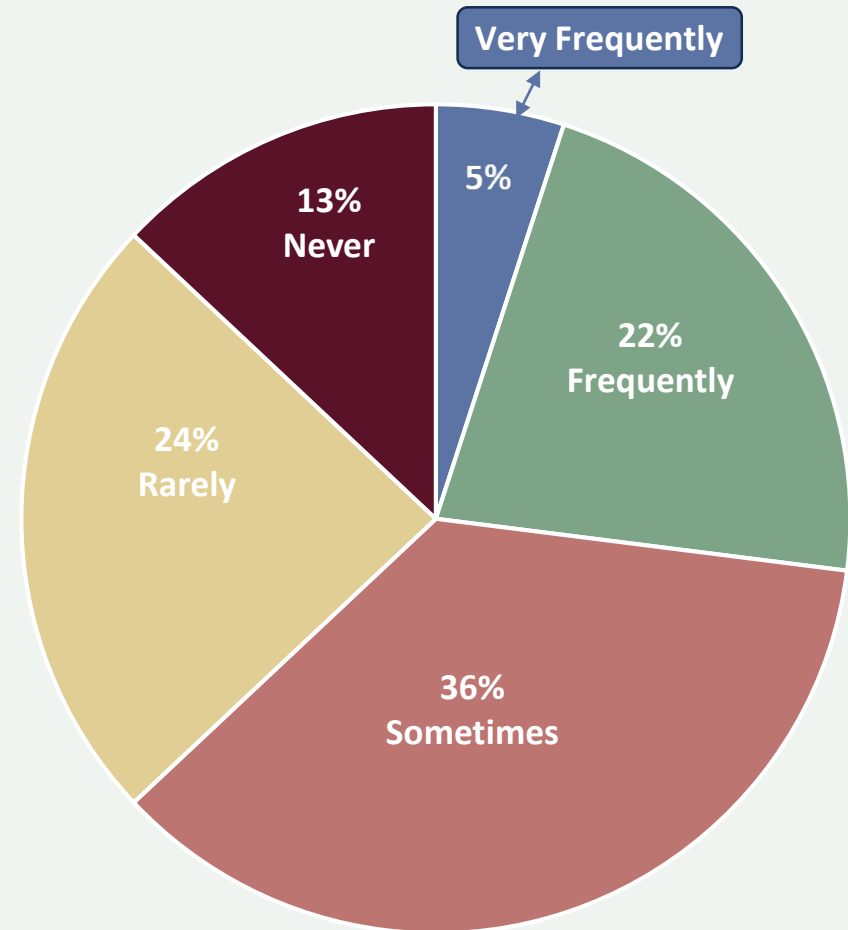
➤ CHAP Survey Findings: Clinic Staff

Frequency at which you've encountered workforce barriers while employed in healthcare

From a list of various workforce barriers, Tribal clinic staff were asked to mark the level of impact each barrier has on their ability to obtain or maintain employment in healthcare.

The barriers checked most frequently in combination of “high impact” or “some impact”:

- ✓ Lack of adequate pay
- ✓ High levels of work-related stress
- ✓ Lack of adequate staffing
- ✓ Ineffective healthcare policies, rules & regulations



➤ CHAP Survey Findings: Clinic Staff

From a list of various pre-employment training barriers, clinic staff were asked to mark the level of impact each barrier has on their ability to complete or pursue pre-employment training.

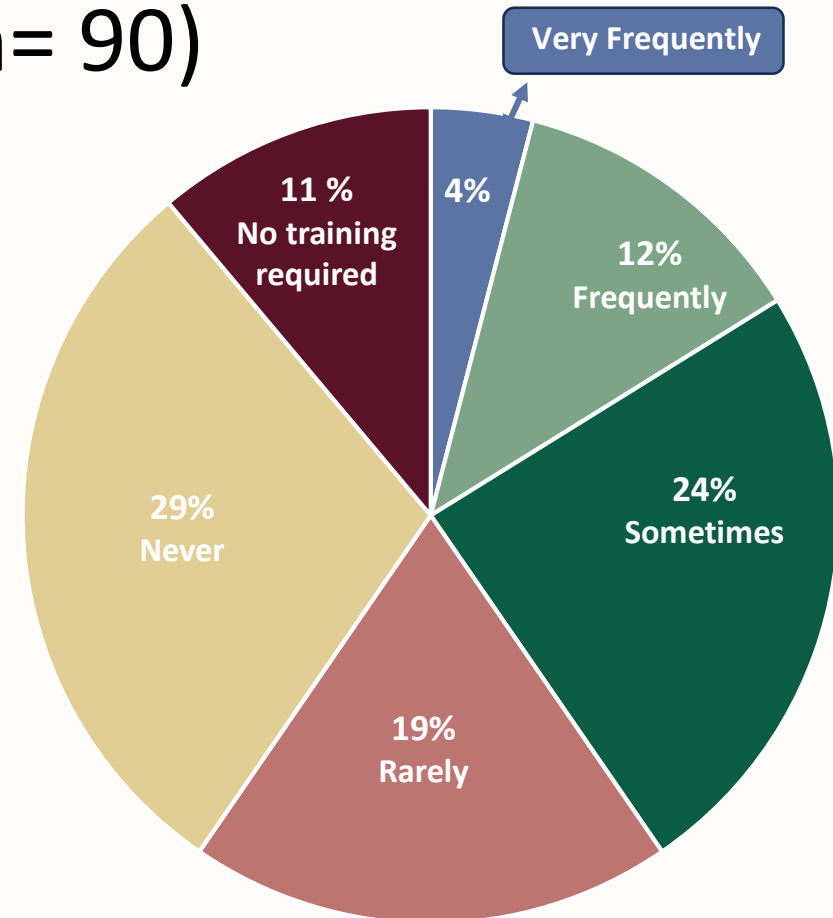
The barriers checked most frequently in combination of “high impact” or some impact”:

- ✓ Limited number of training programs
- ✓ Lack of training programs nearby
- ✓ Cost of training program
- ✓ Lack of culturally competent training
- ✓ Lack of diversity in training programs



Frequency at which you've faced barriers when pursuing or completing a pre-employment training program

(n= 90)

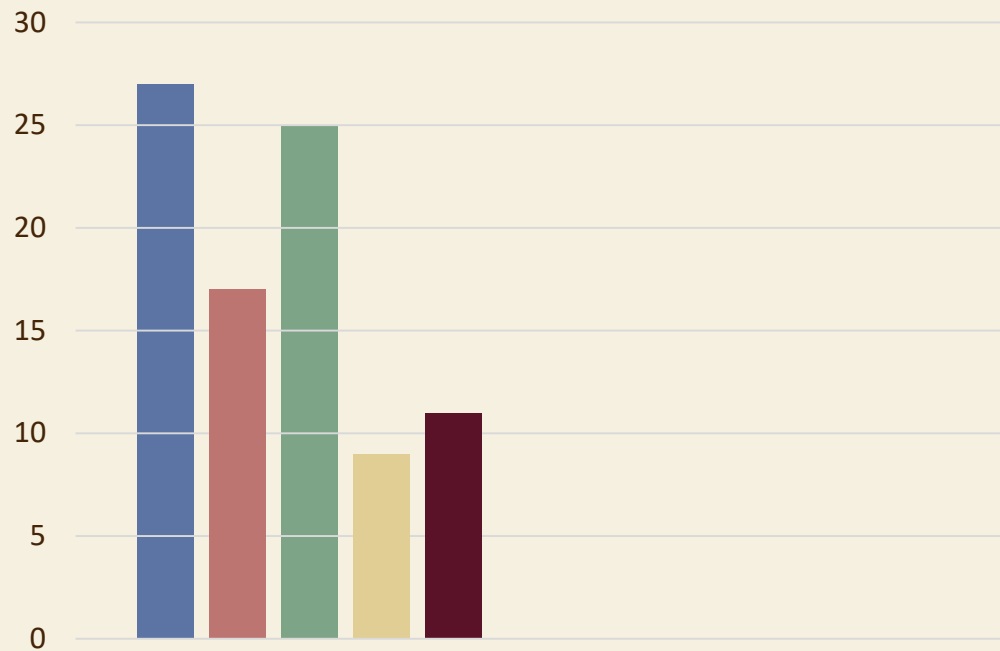


➤ CHAP Survey Findings: Clinic staff

(n=89)

Perspectives on CHAP

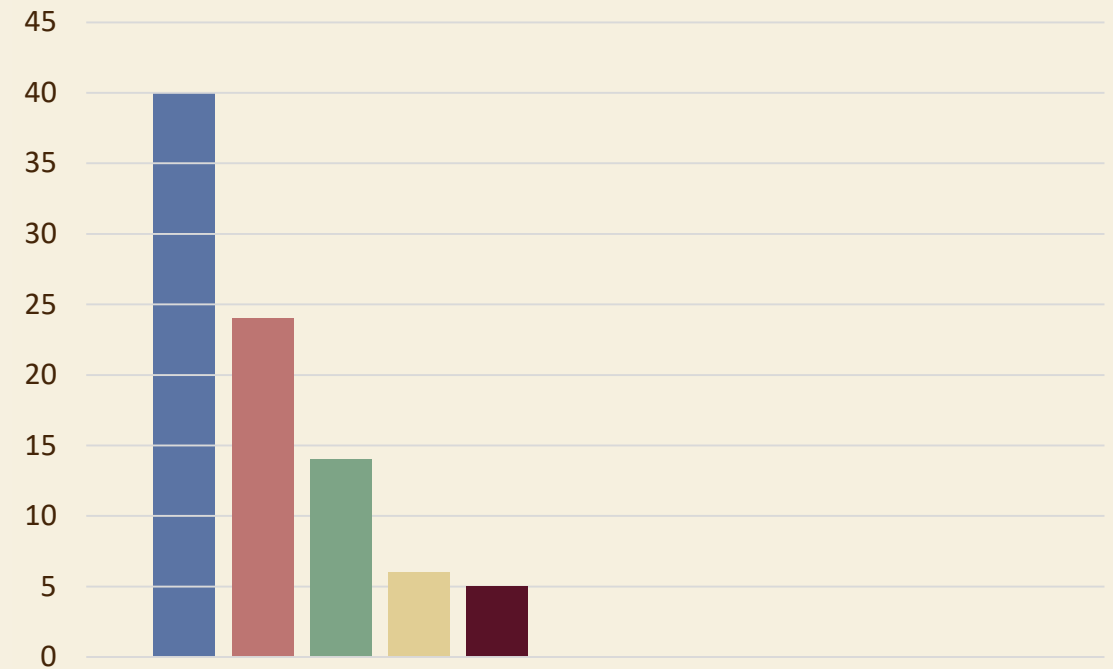
Level of interest in pursuing a CHAP career



Level of Interest

- Very Interested
- Somewhat Interested
- Neutral
- Somewhat Disinterested
- Very Disinterested

Level of interest in creating a career pathway for individuals to become a CHAP



Level of Interest

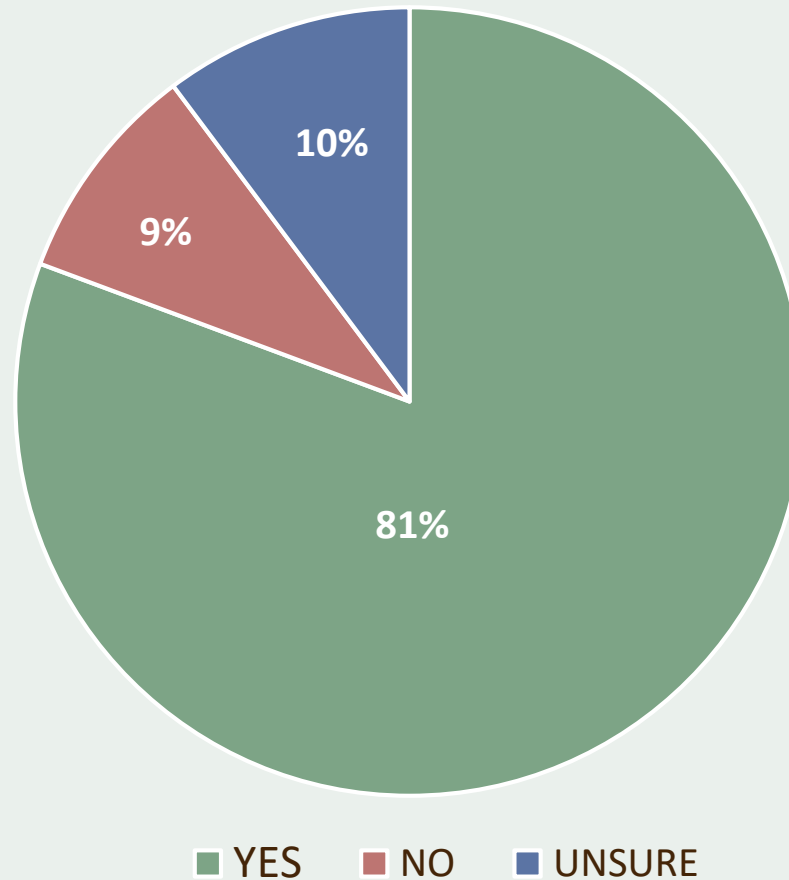
- Very Interested
- Somewhat Interested
- Neutral
- Somewhat Disinterested
- Very Disinterested



➤ CHAP Survey Findings: Clinic Staff

(n=88)

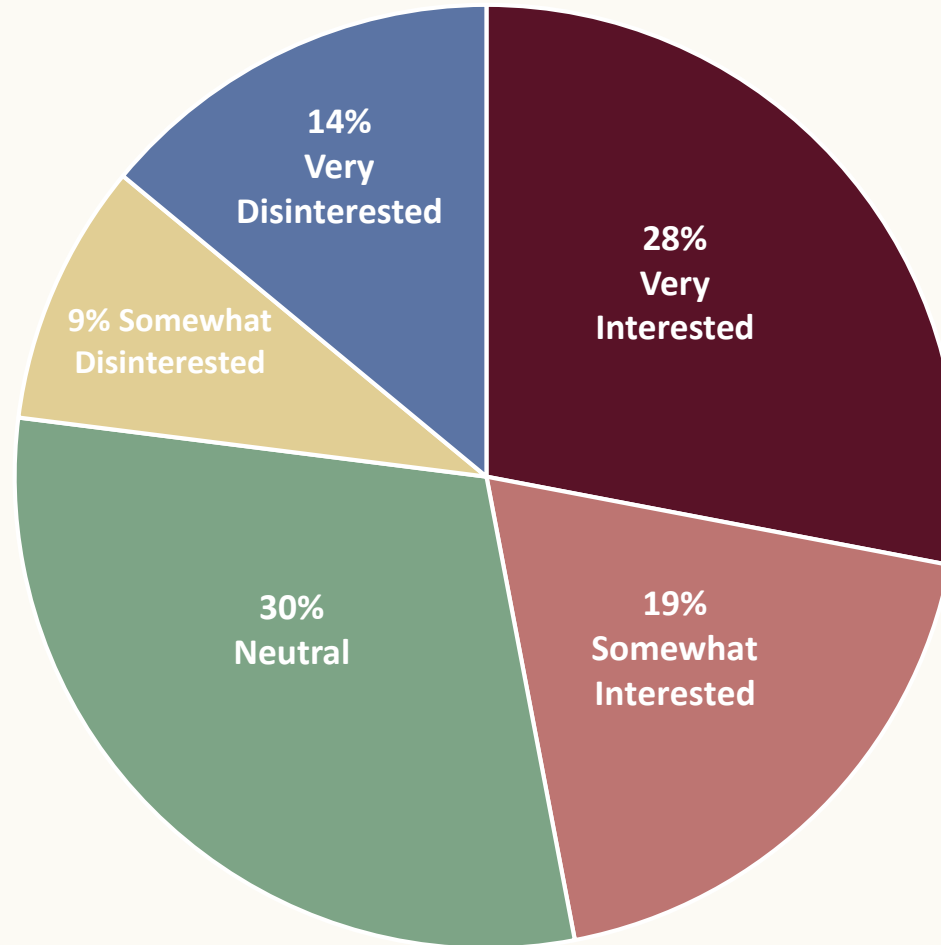
Do you think creating a pathway to CHAP would positively impact Tribal communities?



➤ CHAP Survey Findings: Tribal Members

(n=204)

Level of interest in pursuing employment in primary, dental or behavioral healthcare



47% - nearly half were very interested or somewhat interested



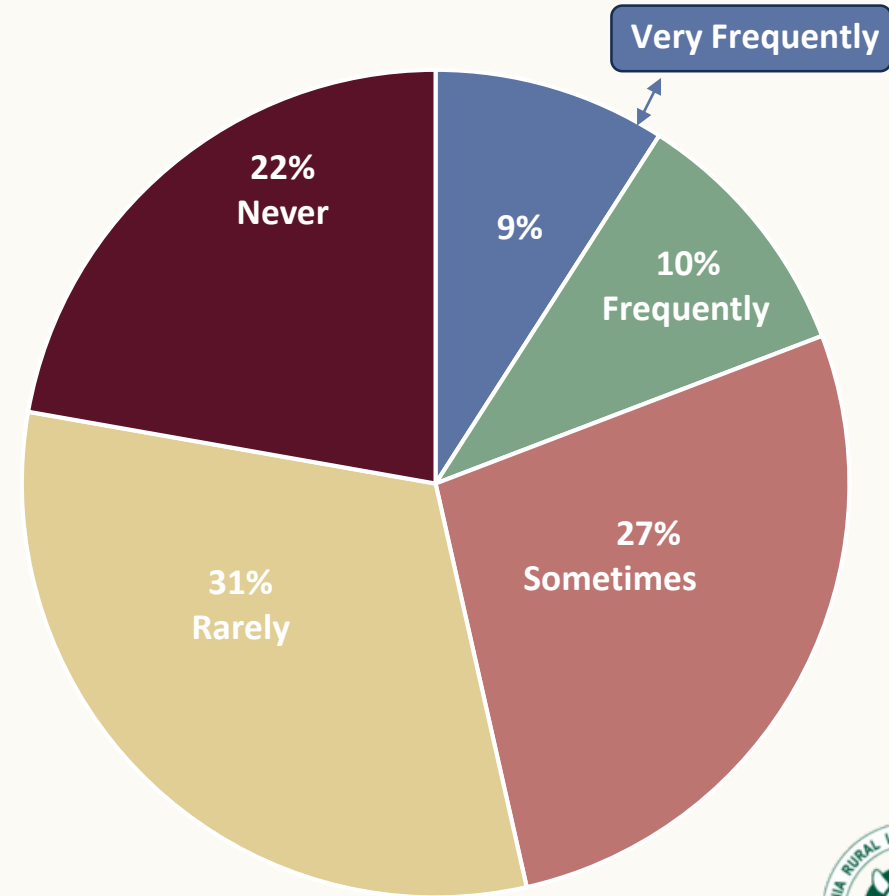
➤ CHAP Survey Findings: Tribal Members

(n=202)

The most common barriers marked as either high impact and/or some impact on tribal member's ability to access primary, dental or behavioral health services in their community:

- ✓ Lack of financial means to pay for healthcare services
- ✓ Long wait time to get appointment with healthcare provider
- ✓ Uninsured or underinsured healthcare coverage

Frequency of experiencing barriers when accessing healthcare services



➤ CHAP Survey Findings: Workforce

Clinic Vacancies

All respondents stated that their clinic had experienced labor shortages in the past year. Four respondents provided information on their respective clinic vacancies.

The most common vacancy was a medical doctor or registered nurse (n=7), or positions that were at the executive level (e.g., CFO) or administrative support staff (e.g., CFO assistant, patient services, etc.) (n=5).

Vacant position	n	%
MD/RN	7	25.9
Executive/Admin	5	18.5
Counselor/LCSW	4	14.8
Nutritionists/ Dieticians	3	11.1
Dental	2	7.4
Transportation	2	7.4
Medical Coder	1	3.7
Medical Assistant	1	3.7
CHR/CMA	1	3.7
HR	1	3.7
Total	27	100

➤ CHAP Survey Findings: Focus Groups

Four in-person focus groups were held in September 2023

There were 30 total participants across all four groups.

Participants were asked about barriers to obtaining an education in healthcare, accessing healthcare for Tribal community members, and obtaining employment in the healthcare field.

Common challenges across all three topics include:

- Financial constraints
- Childcare
- Transportation

Theme	Quote
Financial Constraints (e.g. limited insurance coverage for certain services; inability to take time off work)	"... it's hard for patients to hear there's just no specialty that'll take your insurance or we have to send people down to Sacramento - and that's a really hard push for some people - to go that far to see a specialist on an ongoing basis."
Financial Constraints (e.g. high costs of training or education to employment; income can disqualify individuals for assistance)	"It discourages some employees from returning to further their education."
Financial Barriers (e.g. lower pay in Tribal clinic positions compared to county or state; high cost education and completing externship without income, difficulty accessing grants or scholarships due to lack of knowledge or resources)	"Sometimes your Indian people go to school and when you return trying to get a job, they won't give it to you." "If I would have known how much I was going to get after the (Medical Assistant) program, I don't think I would have gone because it was only a 25-cent raise."
Availability and Quality of Healthcare Services	"There's a huge shortfall of mental health providers."
Cultural Competency and Sensitivity	"...I think that when people are hired here... they need to be reminded that they're working for all these tribes - or you're here working for our tribe - even though you're not a tribal member..."



QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU!

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