

## 2020 Gary J. Gefroh Safety and Health Award Winner: LCDR Michelle Livingston

LCDR Livingston distinguished herself as leader in infection prevention and control as the Western Oregon Service Unit (WOSU) Infection Preventionist (IP) and Acting Portland Area IP. WOSU is an IHS service unit located in Salem, OR that serves 400 Native American/ Alaska Indian (AI/AN) board school students and over 6,000 AI/AN patients living in Oregon and Washington. The Portland Area IP position serves 6 federal service units and 27 tribes in three states (Oregon, Washington, and Idaho). LCDR Livingston obtained board certification in infection prevention and control (CIC) in 2017.

LCDR Livingston implemented an environmental services (EVS) quality improvement project utilizing the Advanced Model for Improvement (AMI). She led a multi-disciplinary team that standardized all cleaning chemicals utilized and created a master list of facility approved cleaning chemicals. The team created standardized training and annual competencies for all EVS staff, and implemented EVS surveillance utilizing Glo Germ™. The EVS AMI resulted in a 25% increase in cleaning efficiency. These improvements bolstered EVS safety, as evidenced by zero EVS blood borne pathogen exposures or accidents involving cleaning chemicals since implementation.

She was further recognized as an expert and leader in IPC when Portland Area leadership tasked her with standardizing all infection prevention policies in the Portland Area. Her work been shared nationally, and is available for use at all IHS ambulatory care clinics.

LCDR Livingston rose to the challenge in 2020 to meet the WOSU infection prevention needs in response to the SAR-CoV-2 pandemic. In addition to serving on the unit incident command, she has also served as the Chemawa Health Center employee health nurse in 2020, providing the most up to date CDC guidance to supervisors and staff for COVID testing, high-risk exposures and self-isolation. Michelle crafted and implemented the Chemawa HC pandemic policy. She designed and implemented the outdoor screening protocol. Furthermore, she created, implemented and continuously updates all IPC policies and procedures to ensure staff and patient safety during the current pandemic. She collaborated with local and Area staff to secure proper personal protective equipment (PPE) in adequate quantities. She created systems to monitor par levels that ensure our clinic acquires additional PPE before current supplies run out. LCDR Livingston worked with unit supervisors to ensure all staff received training and competency testing on proper donning and doffing of PPE. She oversaw the WOSU respiratory protection program and fit tested the majority of the 50 staff that were fit tested in the last year. LCDR Livingston championed hiring a COVID clinical team consisting of a nurse practitioner, a registered nurse, and two certified medical assistants. This team provided same day respiratory clinic appointments to symptomatic patients, COVID testing, COVID nursing advice, and COVID vaccinations to the WOSU community. The policies, procedures, and systems designed and implemented by LCDR Livingston improved the safety of all WOSU staff and patients, as evidenced by zero high-risk exposures during more than 1100 COVID vaccinations, and 1232 patient COVID tests.

LCDR Livingston demonstrated tireless commitment and outstanding service in meeting the objectives and mission of the IHS. Her efforts have improved healthcare infection control and patient care conditions at both the WOSU and in the Portland Area.