

## **August 2022 Nurse of the Month: Venita Yawakie-Lucero, RN**

I nominate Venita Yawakie-Lucero, RN for her attention to detail, empathy towards patients, and for providing the highest quality of care for our patients at Albuquerque Indian Health Center. As Case Manager, she leads a Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) that focuses on our emergency and urgent care follow-ups in order for patients to receive continuity of care. The goal was to get 50% of patients seen in emergency or urgent to also have a follow up appointment, and the baseline was 36%. As of today, Venita and her team surpassed this goal by reaching 65% of emergency or urgent care patients by providing them with follow up care. Surpassing this goal motivated her to increase this percentage to 75% and she is on track to reach this.

Not only has she taken the lead with this quality care project, she has also been willing to cover Nurse Case Management duties for 28 months since her arrival in January 2020 and she continues to do so until the position is filled. She is the team lead for the red team, which consists of five nursing staff and two permanent providers and specialty clinics such as rheumatology, podiatry, nephrology, and GYN/colposcopy. She is the main contact person for the team and communicates with patients, caretakers, outside facilities, and insurance providers daily. She receives from 40-60 phone calls a day, which can be anything from a med refill to continuity of care for a patient obtaining an organ transplant at another facility.

Venita is always willing to lend a hand and stay over if the clinic is running behind or pitch in when under staffed. She leads by example and has improved the red teams' morale and teamwork in order to provide the best quality of care to our patients.

I am pleased to nominate Venita Yawakie-Lucero for the DNS IHS headquarters Nurse of the Month. Venita is fully compliant with all requirements of federal service employees. Venita is a superb nurse and leader.

Theresa Treas-Cornelius  
Acting Director of Nursing, Albuquerque Indian Health Center