

2024 Nurse of the Quarter 1: Excellence in Nursing Practice

The [Division of Nursing Services](#) is pleased to announce the recipient of the [Nurse of the Quarter](#) for **Excellence in Nursing Practice** for 2024, first quarter is Cheryl Smith, BSN, RN from [Gallup Indian Medical Center](#) in the IHS [Navajo Area](#).

Ms. Smith has worked for IHS for twenty years as an RN and most recently added Acting Supervisor for the Emergency Department to her responsibilities. Cheryl has grown tremendously in her skills as a nurse and as a leader and the facility and community benefits from it.

Cheryl was detailed to the role of Acting Supervisor of the Emergency Department at Gallup Indian Medical Center in June 2022 and she continues to do this challenging job. Despite her intense efforts, the ED has struggled with coverage. This is especially true when contracts expire. Cheryl can be seen working during the day running administrative roles, meeting with the staff, returning phone calls, and answering complaints. She also works clinically in the ED as a lead nurse. This amount of dedication to the department exemplifies behavior that deserves to be recognized.

In addition, Cheryl continues to work as a Tour Supervisor for our facility. The Tour supervisors are in charge of the flow of the hospital and help and advocate to create the capacity to admit our patients to our own institution rather than transferring them away from their families. There are numerous stories about where she has created capacity by going to the floors, talking to the staff, and cleaning beds/stretchers to make sure our patients can stay close to home. Again, this amount of dedication deserves to be celebrated. When Cheryl works as a lead nurse in the Emergency Department, she is compassionate, and treats patients with respect and kindness, especially our most vulnerable. She treats them with respect and provides the best care possible. She models for the rest of the staff how to treat our patients.

Ms. Cheryl Smith, BSN, RN is a role model for the nursing department and for nurses in the Indian Health Service. She represents the idea of nursing: care, compassion, advocacy and healing. It is a privilege and honor to work with her hand-to-hand.