


THE NURSE'S CAP

NEWSLETTER OF THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE HEROES



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FALL IS HERE!

BY ARDITH ASPAAS, EMSC NURSE CONSULTANT

Welcome to the second edition of the Nurse's Cap! So much is happening this fall season – back-to-school activities, catch-up for childhood immunizations, and continuing to battle COVID-19 across Indian Country. Regardless of your nursing specialty we stand ready to serve and meet the fervor of activity that is happening this Fall.

Grab your pumpkin spice (coffee, donut, candle, etc.) and enjoy the crisp morning air, your cozy sweater and dive in to this edition of the Nurse's Cap.

We have included highlights on the Division of Nursing Services staff activities, important awareness months for back-to-school, spotlights on the first Nurse of the Month selectees, features on wellness, and getting to know the DNS staff.

Leadership Profile:

By Capt, Stacey Dawson, PhD,
IHS HQ Women's Health/APN Consultant

BIG THINGS HAPPENING AT DNS HQ!

· **Nursing Web- Based Training Services** - A contract has been awarded to JE Federal Enterprises to provide online nursing education services. A kickoff meeting was held and an overview of the training platform was hosted the first week in September 2021.

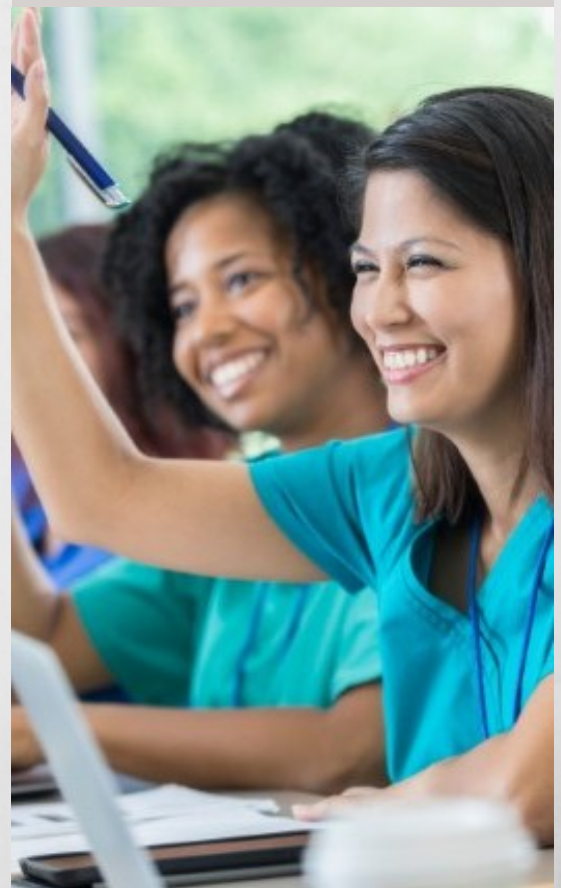
· The **Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC)** Program is working to build up the EMSC network across the Indian health system by establishing a usable listserv to disseminate information from local, state, and federal partners. EMSC is part of a tribal EMS collaborative to leverage our federal partnerships with other agencies and strengthen communication channels. EMSC is considering viable training options to improve Emergency Department (ED) training and education for critical low- volume, high-need clinical skills.

· The **Maternal Child Health (MCH)** program aims to improve maternal safety and outcomes by focusing on the wellbeing of mothers and children both during pregnancy and after birth. The MCH program focuses on health promotion, risk reduction, and improving quality healthcare through training professionals to identify and manage early warning signs. As part of the recent efforts aimed at obstetric safety and emergency preparedness, the MCH program is in the process of purchasing childbirth simulation models for enhanced training and obstetric readiness. A supply of automatic blood pressure cuffs to be used for patient home monitoring will also be purchased and disseminated to identified sites.

· The Indian Health Service (IHS), Office of Preventive Services (OCPS) and DNS are partnering with the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) on **Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation (GEDA)** and the Geriatric Emergency Department Collaborative (GEDC) <https://gedcollaborative.com>. More to come as this develops.

"Coming together
is the beginning.
Keeping together
is progress.
Working
together...is
success. "

Henry Ford
AMERICAN
INDUSTRIALIST, BUSINESS
MAGNATE, FOUNDER OF
THE FORD MOTOR
COMPANY



Leadership Profile

Continued from page 2

The **Pediatric Immunization Improvement Project: *Safeguard Our Future: Protect tomorrow, vaccinate today!*** Pediatric immunization rates have been negatively impacted by COVID-19. Our health care teams throughout the agency need to be able to address getting our pediatric/adolescent population caught up with routine vaccinations. DNS HQ Staff are working with the rest of the Pediatric Immunization Improvement Project team to host monthly webinars in conjunction with the Vaccine Taskforce and the Tele-Behavioral Health Centers of Excellence. Presenters provide strategies, best practices, and tools to implement at the local/area level to improve the immunization coverage rates. Join us for the September webinar: https://ihs.cosocloud.com/e2emoobpfn06/event/event_info.html

Last but not least, let's not forget about the **HQ DNS Nurse of the Month** recognition program! The *Nurse of the Month* recognition program highlights the incredible nurses (registered nurses, advance practice nurses, LPNs, and others) across the IHS health system who are committed to providing quality healthcare through nursing. The *Nurse of the Month* recognition program will feature one individual each month who has been nominated, selected, and will be celebrated as the *Nurse of the Month* on various IHS digital channels. This monthly recognition activity is open to nurses across the IHS, tribal, and urban Indian organization health system and we encourage submissions for the October, "[Nurse of the Month](#)" [recognition program](#). The Division of Nursing Services invites you to nominate a nurse by using the [nomination instructions posted on the DNS website](#). The deadline for nominations for the October 2021 Nurse of the Month is **September 15, 2021**.



The most important thing is to try and inspire people so that they can be great in whatever they want to do.

-Kobe Bryant

AUGUST IS NATIONAL IMMUNIZATION AWARENESS MONTH

By Capt. Thomas Weiser, MD, MPH
Medical Epidemiologist, Portland Area IHS

In May, 2021, IHS launched a National initiative to improve pediatric immunization coverage which was impacted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Over the past 3 ½ months, we have promoted pediatric immunizations through monthly webinars, blog posts and bi-weekly technical webinars. These communication activities have covered a broad range of topics, such as the history of *Haemophilus influenzae* vaccine development, how to address vaccine hesitancy, and best practices used at IHS and Tribal health facilities.

The reach of this educational effort has been extensive with over 1800 viewings so far, yet some have not learned about this initiative, so we want to take this opportunity to tell you more.

Another component of this initiative was to develop a Pediatric Immunization Quality Improvement Collaborative, recognizing the importance of a rigorous application of the Model for Improvement. IHS has adopted this model as the foundation for improving the quality of healthcare in the IHS Strategic Plan. On August 9th, IHS CMO Dr. Christensen, officially invited facilities to enroll in the Collaborative. And we have received a number of applications from IHS and Tribal facilities. We will work with Healthcare Improvement Professionals (HIPs), Area Immunization Coordinators and Office of Quality staff to onboard sites into the collaborative where they will be able to adopt a charter for improvement and a set of measures.

THE NURSE'S CAP

Sites will receive instructions for collecting and posting their data to track the impact of their work and share what they learn with other sites in the Collaborative.

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IHS LAUNCHED A NATIONAL INITIATIVE TO IMPROVE PEDIATRIC IMMUNIZATION COVERAGE

What does this mean for frontline nurses? This Collaborative is designed to help you do what you do every day – provide the best possible care for your patients and save lives by providing routine vaccinations.

We encourage you to speak with your staff and leadership to consider joining this Collaborative.

To learn more, check out our recorded webinars on the Tele-Behavioral Health Center of Excellence site, our OIT-led Town Halls and our monthly blogs.

Please email us with your questions or to request the Pre-enrollment form and On-boarding guide!

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...CONSIDER JOINING THIS COLLABORATIVE...



OCTOBER IS HEALTH LITERACY MONTH

By Alberta Becenti, Public Health Advisor
Health Promotion/Disease Prevention Program

Keeping it Plain and Simple to Support Wellness. Every day we communicate health information to our patients, families, and communities with the anticipation that they will follow a prescribed plan and adopt healthy behaviors. In some situations, the patient may not understand routine health information.

Low literacy contributes to poor health outcomes, increased use of emergency rooms, missed appointments, decreased use of preventive services, and poor self-management of chronic conditions/diseases. People with lower level of education, older adults, minorities, and those who are medically underserved are at higher risk for low literacy.

Since, we do not know the literacy skills of our patients, it is best to use universal precaution with all patients by using every day words, using pictures, or illustration to enhance patient understanding, and providing culturally appropriate written materials they understand.



To support wellness and informed decisions, we must provide and communicate clear information that is useful and beneficial to our patients.

What is health literacy?

Health literacy is not only the ability to read, understand and act upon health information, but also the ability to use basic math concepts (i.e., adding, subtracting, dividing, multiplying) and cultural background that all interplay on how we process health information. Each day, the clinics/hospitals share health information, provide lab results, prescribe medications, make dietary recommendations, and handout written materials with the assumption that our patients will understand the information. The reality is that many patients may not understand the information.

According to the National Assessment of Adult Literacy, nearly 9 of 10 patients have difficulty understanding routine health information.

underserved are at higher risk for low literacy.

In 2020, the Healthy People 2030 initiative included organizational health literacy. Organizational health literacy is the degree to which organizations equitably enable individuals to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.

LOW LITERACY CONTRIBUTES TO POOR HEALTH OUTCOMES.

There are several ways to enhance communication with the patient by practicing universal precautions with every patient.

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**...IT IS BEST TO USE
UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS
WITH ALL PATIENTS...**



What you can do to support Health Literacy?

- Practice universal precautions
- Learn about the teach-back technique to enhance patients' understanding.
- Take IHS Introduction to Health Literacy training
- Use the health factor tab in the Electronic Health Record to assess and document patient level of understanding
- Access Plain Language resources
- Post Let's TALK poster in the clinic
- Learn about how to test messages and materials
- Browse through the National Institute of Health Highlights of Health Literacy Programs and Activities website to generate ideas

NURSE OF THE MONTH

Dedication / Leadership / Teamwork / Innovation



JUNE

On top of Lt. Cmdr Taylor's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, she was selected by the Area Director to implement MD-staff at all six service units for credentialing and privileging. LCDR Taylor worked closely with each CEO, Clinical Director, and administrative staff to fully deploy this system. Her ability to multi- task and coordinate multiple operations at once is unparalleled. In May 2021, LCDR Rachel Taylor led the WOSU team through a successful survey with no reported deficiencies. She is a stellar nurse that has devoted her career to excellence.



JULY

Lori Haas joined the Western Oregon Service Unit (WOSU) as our Public Health Nurse (PHN) in September of 2020. She very quickly became an indispensable member of our team. In addition to her role as PHN, she is also the clinic vaccine coordinator to include the vaccines for children (VFC) program, and the clinic Employee Health Nurse. All these roles are important to the nursing program; however, their importance has been even more vital during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. In particular, Lori has been the driving force behind the WOSU COVID vaccine program.



AUGUST

Lt. Steven Owens is a Staff Development Coordinator in the Quality Management Department at Whiteriver Service Unit, Arizona. He was assigned as the Deputy Operations Sections Chief and worked 12-14 hours a day from March to June with 20-30 direct reports, ensuring laboratory specimens were transported to remote laboratories for processing, that patient screening stations were staffed, and direct patient care units were staffed – including a 13 bed detached medical treatment structure. He developed a virtual orientation process for new hires, adhering to CDC's recommendations for social distancing and group gathering restrictions.



THE WELLNESS CORNER

LET'S TALK ABOUT MINDFULNESS



What is Mindfulness?

Written by Capt, Stacey Dawson, IHS HQ Women's Health/APN Consultant

Many may hear the term "mindfulness" and not fully recognize what it means or how it may be useful for them in daily life. Mindfulness is simply the art of intentionally bringing one's full focus to the present moment. While it is a skill that can be honed with practice, it is not difficult or complicated to learn. The Greater Good Science Center at the University of California, Berkeley describes mindfulness as "maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment, through a gentle, nurturing lens." Through this connection, one can find physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual healing.

Some easy mindfulness techniques for beginners include:

- 1.) Connecting with your breath- close your eyes for a moment, clear your negative thoughts and take slow, deep breaths
- 2.) Taking a walk outdoors- focus on the sounds and smells as you walk amongst nature
- 3.) Coloring-Use a coloring book, or let your creative side take over on a blank page
- 4.) Journaling-Put thoughts and feelings to paper to help clear your mind, or keep a gratitude journal to record positive thoughts to reflect back on when needed
- 5.) Unplugging the electronics- Studies have shown that while social media can increase interpersonal connections, it can also lead to feelings of anxiety and depression in comparing one's self to others. Unplugging from electronics can also be a surprising time saver!

There are various free resources available online if you are interested in learning more. Here is a link to a video on the impact of mindfulness from basketball great, Kobe Bryant: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E78y66GEPvs>

THERE IS GOOD IN EVERYTHING, ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS FIND IT!

"If you concentrate on finding whatever is good in every situation, you will discover your life will suddenly be filled with gratitude, a feeling that nurtures the soul."

-Rabbi Harold Kushner



MOVE WELL WITH YOGA

Brought to you by Federal Occupational Health

THURSDAY, SEPT 16, 2021

3:00PM- 3:30PM ET

Description: You are invited to attend a 30-minute Gentle Yoga class. This class incorporates easy to follow yoga, tai chi, corrective exercise and stretching techniques. No experience required as the wellness instructor will cue you through the safest forms of movement. Please wear comfortable active wear clothing, bring an exercise mat or yoga mat and drinking water. Shoes are not required

To participate, fill out the waiver, which will be sent out via email or you may contact Ms. Jolene Tom at jolene.tom@ihs.gov.

Zoom hyperlink:

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81271011165](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81271011165?pwd=UUQrbEpPMGd4VG41QkISUFhHYXcvdz09)
?pwd=UUQrbEpPMGd4VG41QkISUFhHYXcvdz09

Personal Meeting ID: 812 7101 1165

Password: 680980



EAT WELL WITH SMOOTHIES

By Ardith Aspaas, EMSC Nurse Consultant

Summer is over but the temperatures are lingering. Try a smoothie for a refreshing treat. There are various versions of the Green Goddess smoothie, this version is a family favorite.

What you need:

Blender

1-2 cups Spinach

1-1.5 cups Romaine lettuce

1 Banana

1 Celery stalk/rib

1 Apple

1 Pear

1/2 Lemon

2-3 dates (optional)

1 to 1.5 cups Coconut water

Wash everything well. Give everything a rough chop, throw it all into the blender, and blend for 2 mins. You can try adding honey, chia seeds, almond butter, or more fruit or vegetables. Smoothies are quick and easily customizable to your preference.

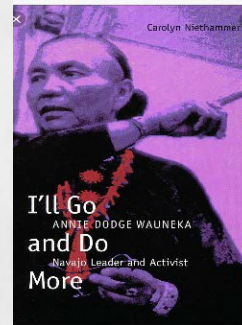
GET TO KNOW DNS STAFF-BACK TO SCHOOL MEANS BACK TO THE BOOKS!

Is there a book that changed your life ?



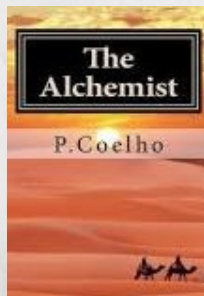
Jolene Tom:
Bless Me Ultima by Rudolfo Anaya

The book reminds me of my late grandmother and her traditional teachings. She was a weaver and used natural vegetal dye to create her rugs. I would accompany her in the early mornings to gather roots, berries and plants to create the natural dye for the wool. There were times she found plants for medicinal use as well, she would explain what each was for.

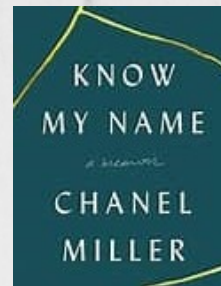


Tina Tah:
I'll Go and Do More by Dr. Annie Dodge Wauneka

Dr. Wauneka became a forceful and articulate advocate for Indian Health Care, education and other issues, working both on the reservation and in the halls of Congress to improve the lives of the Navajos. She is my inspiration for a career in public health and promoting health care for AI/ANs.

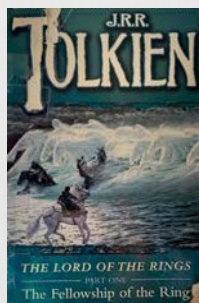


Ardith Aspaas:
The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho
This is a story about a young shepherd's dream that takes him on a life-changing quest for treasure, but not the kind of treasure you think. On the way he encounters hardships, influential people, and learns life lessons. I have read this book many times since my early twenties, and every time I am re-inspired.



Capt. Stacey Dawson:
Know My Name-A Memoir by Chanel Miller

This is a heartbreaking story of triumph after tragedy and a very personal look at a sexual assault survivor's experience. It is a moving story from one woman that will resonate and inspire others in their healing journey. I recommend anyone working in women's health should read this book!



Capt. Carol Lincoln:
Lord of the Rings- Part One, Fellowship of the Ring
I first read this book the summer of 1983 when I was 14. I was overwhelmed by the complexity of the writing and it took me a long time to complete the initial reading. Reservation life was so real and I had so much responsibility at an early age, that I did not have much of an imagination beyond my daily life. This book served as an opportunity to escape and I could not wait to get home each day to continue the adventure. Since then, I've read it well over 200 times – this book opened my eyes to the joy and excitement of reading and I love reading it to this day!