

**Portland Area Office
Direct Service Tribes Advisory Committee
FY2022 1st Quarter Report
July - September 2021**

Area Tribal Representatives: Greg Abrahamson	Federal Liaison: Rena Macy
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Goal 1: To ensure that comprehensive, culturally appropriate personal and public health services are available and accessible to American Indian and Alaska Native people

Colville Service Unit (CSU) has successfully interviewed and selected an ARNP for the Colville Service Unit with a start date of October 12, 2021. Interviews have been completed for the vacant Purchasing Agent. The other vacancies are announced on USA Jobs. To increase the needs for dental care the FY 2022 budget includes a second staff dentist and a Dental Health Aide Therapist. Three disciplines are increasingly difficult to fill those include Dental Assistants, Medical Assistants and Nurses. The CEO has reached out to partner with the Tribal TERO office to establish training opportunities for these much needed disciplines.

Fort Hall Service Unit (FHSU) Collaborated with Shoshone-Bannock Tribal Health and Human Service Department (THHS) and to expand drive up/no appointment COVID-19 testing at the Fort Hall Indian Health Service for community members.

Working with Shoshone-Bannock Tribes to get messaging out to community about hospital crisis standards of care implemented in Idaho along with health education messaging encouraging patients with chronic disease to adhere closely to medication and diet recommendations due to lack of hospital bed availability.

Worked with local hospitals with infusion capability to make monoclonal antibody therapies more readily available to our patients. Actively screening all new COVID-19 patients for potential candidates for monoclonal antibody treatment.

EHR CAC provided a presentation during the community Tobacco Cessation Training. She displayed the process of placing an EHR referral to the Tribal Health Education Program for tobacco cessation counseling and treatment.

Hired new pharmacy aid to act as facility “runner” between the screening tent and the rest of the clinic to help mitigate risk of exposure to patient and staff to COVID-19 and other communicable diseases; curb side pharmacy service. And hosted two Idaho State University pharmacy students who’s experience on-site enhanced departmental productivity

Dispersed 50 doses of J&J and 162 doses of Pfizer vaccinations to the Sho-Ban Community Health Clinic.

Warm Springs Service Unit (WSSU)

Although Warm Springs SU seen an increase in CoVID-19 cases in July, August and September, we continue to offer both virtual and in-person visits to our community members. Medical, Dental and Optometry remain in phase 2 reconstitution.

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WSSU is working to improve access to care through our Accelerated Model for Improvement project. The scheduling team is working with one provider to identify appointment types that will be prescheduled.

Recruitment Report for FY 2021: Total Vacancies: 53
Filled: 25, Remaining: 28 (pending 4 hires)
120 Total Positions / 28 Vacancies = 23% Vacancy Rate

Wellpinit Service Unit (WSU)

WSU currently has: one LPN, one Lab Tech (both contractors) one Contact Tracer, one Environmental Services, one front desk and one biller all Schedule A temporary hires for COVID; and pending start dates for one Computer Tech and one MSA Door Screener. The additional staff allowed the primary care teams to return to primary care focus, rather than rotating schedules to fill the COVID screening and vaccine clinics. Primary provider capacities have increased from 49% to averaging 65-70% since we have made this change.

Clinic provider staff now has 3 of 4 providers waived to prescribe Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) at point of care in our clinic. Clinical Director and CEO worked closely with Spokane Tribe of Indians (STOI) Mental Health/Behavioral Health as their prescribing Psychiatrist retired. Clinic staff are able to cover the gap until STOI MH/BH fill locum and eventually permanent positions. A clinic policy implemented and in practice which delineates the procedure to obtain access, prescription and ongoing treatment, as a collaborative with STOI MH/BH. A weekly development/implementation/case management meeting was established, bridging MH/BH services even further

Provider capacity is monitored weekly. Nursing staff utilize icare reports to identify high risk patients with minimal encounters during the COVID Pandemic. Patients are scheduled for provider visits through in clinic or telehealth access. As mentioned, capacity has increased from 49% to 70% with the additional COVID Response Team

Western Oregon Service Unit (WOSU-Chemawa)

Chemawa is committed to recruiting and retaining quality staff. The Western Oregon Service Unit is proud to announce the hiring of a new FNP, to join Team Eagle. In addition, WOSU welcomes a new clinical pharmacist.

WOSU continues to operate in phase 3, with all clinical services returning to normal operational status. With the return of the Chemawa Indian School (CIS) students, WOSU staff are working to meet the needs of both the CIS students and community patients.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, WOSU has maintained a COVID Incident Command System. This team has led the response to include providing external screening to all staff and patients prior to entering the building. As a priority to keep our Chemawa community safe, WOSU prioritized community vaccination and clinical care. Chemawa has maintained an external COVID team with the recruitment of a COVID FNP to support our COVID RN and CMA. WOSU also hired a one year term integrated behavioral health counselor to assist with the COVID-related challenges our patients face. The Chemawa Indian School leadership provided exceptional collaboration in establishing the CIS gym

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as a mass vaccination location. This partnership has allowed Chemawa to provide over 5,160 COVID vaccines and boosters to all eligible patients. Chemawa continues to offer Moderna, Pfizer, and Janssen vaccines. The team works to encourage vaccination and will continue to support this critical step in ending the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Chemawa Laboratory is fully moved into their renovated space. The team has worked hard to expand in-house testing services offered to include same day testing of HIV, TSH, B12, folate, vitamin D, and COVID antigen testing with the new Vitros 5600. This will enhance the care provided to patients and expand access to quality health care services, promoting the health needs of the Chemawa community.

We are excited to announce that Chemawa is in final construction of a new isolation room. This will allow clinical staff to safely see patients with a known or suspected infectious disease in a negative pressure exam room. In addition, our dental renovation is underway with a scheduled completion date of February 2022. This renovation includes a new sterilization room and updated countertops. This will drastically improve infection prevention measures and modernize WOSU's Dental department.

Yakama Service Unit (YSU) offers starting in October 2021 Monoclonal Antibody treatments for identified and eligible patients as part of its response to the COVID pandemic and its effects on the patient community. The service is available to patients from a local hospital which is 25 miles or more away from the clinic. The administered treatment will be implemented using a pharmacist based treatment team coordinated with the Medical department under a collaborative practice agreement. The goal is to increase patient access to COVID-19 therapeutics and assist in reducing morbidity and mortality.

YSU has conducted two Saturday flu vaccination clinics; and has offered various days of extended hours for patients to access both COVID and Influenza vaccinations.

As of October 5, 2021, YSU has provided 9,246 COVID vaccinations (4,681 1st dose; and 4,272 2nd dose). Additionally, they have provided 283 3rd dose vaccinations.

Goal 2: To promote excellence and quality through innovation of the Indian health system into an optimally performing organization

Colville Service Unit (CSU) is engaged in two intensive PRC Aimi projects. The first focus will be on Patient Registration, with the second to address the referral process. A collaborative activity was done between the Service Unit and Area Office to develop a Frequently Asked Question fact sheet. It is intended to use this document to continue to educate patients and providers on the PRC process. The second project is in early process for development. A comprehensive update can be expected next quarter.

To address the COVID-19 Pandemic, CSU staff have worked to streamline testing and vaccination for the Colville Tribal Community. The Service Unit offers testing daily to patients and community members. In addition, the vaccine clinics have remained constant in attendance this quarter. Early

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discussions with the Colville Tribal leadership to a vaccine campaign are underway. The Target ages of 19-39 being the focus as they are currently the lowest percentage of vaccinated patients.

Fort Hall Service Unit (FHSU)

Prepared for and passed Joint AAAHC recertification including Patient Centered Medical Home status. Completely revamped and modernized facility COOP/EOP documents to include a number of lessons learned during COVID-19 pandemic as well as best practices identified since last iteration of those plans. Collaborated with tribal and health district teams to generate more comprehensive all-hazards analysis and response plans that are better integrated with those of the surrounding entities.

To assist our facility in delivering health care during the COVID-19 pandemic, HIM staff continue to help with the pharmacy courier tasks during times when other staff are not available. To streamline documentation, EHR CAC updated flu vaccine templates and created a documentation how-to guide for staff.

Quality Assurance Coordinator is participating in the Healthcare Improvement Professional (HIP) program. Completed contract for Scriptpro hardware, software and security upgrade. Update scheduled for 10/22-10/24.

Acquired 160 doses of Narcan for dispensing to patients and the community; it is currently available to patients that feel they or someone around them may benefit from having it.

Warm Springs Service Unit (WSSU)

Warm Springs SU had ASHP reviewers complete the pharmacy residency reaccreditation survey virtually on September 1 and September 14, 2021. LCDR Jessie Casberg and LCDR Andrew Portier met with the surveyors to answer all questions about pharmacy and residency operations. Overall, the survey was a success, with no areas of noncompliance and 21 areas of partial compliance. The two officers are currently working on the response to the surveyors' report. The survey preparation and response periods are time-intensive activities; LCDR Casberg and LCDR Portier worked many off-duty hours to ensure a successful survey and to address areas for improvement for the current and future residency years.

CEO assigned HR POC – R. Nua to start tracking dates for each phase of Recruitment from resignation to Report Date (aka EOD). Goal is to have all the dates and Recruitment Package turn-around time minimized to approximately 15 days for a package to be ready for HR Specialist.

Our business office reports that the entire team has completed the basic IHI Basic Safety and Quality training courses, additionally; all of the contact reps (and PR) now have access to Availity.com to check eligibility of private payers. Finally, Patient Registration is getting much better about collecting insurance information and removing it as necessary from RPMS.

Wellpinit Service Unit (WSU)

Quality Innovations Telehealth and BIA Corrections Facility project successfully completed. Team was asked to do an additional change package utilizing Telehealth services, rather than virtual Telemedicine. Clinic staff continues to work closely with BIA Corrections to improve access and preventive care to our

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incarcerated patient population. Clinic and Correction Facilities communicate weekly through a case management call to determine healthcare needs of inmates, including primary and secondary.

Western Oregon Service Unit (WOSU-Chemawa)

The Chemawa team has strengthened their partnerships by providing the Chemawa Indian School leadership with recommendations on increased COVID precautions in the dorm and academic setting. While prioritizing students' return to in-person learning on campus, leaders met on measures and processes to promote the health and safety of our students.

The IHS Office of Quality has selected the Western Oregon Service Unit as one of their Innovations Project 2021-2022 sites. Together Team Bear and our PHNs' proposal entitled: *Addressing Social Determinants of Health to Decrease Obesity Rates at Chemawa Indian Health Center* met the criteria to be a successful and sustainable Innovation project. This award includes \$100,000 to be used in support of this project. (Congratulations!)

Yakama Service Unit (YSU)

The YSU has been able to provide services under a Phase 3 reconstitution level. This has allowed for improved access for patients to the services of the clinic: pharmacy services, dental services, medical services, laboratory and optometry services. Triaging of patients and COVID testing services are currently conducted outside of the clinic facility. Process changes for medication dispensing and implementing safety measures has provided a safe care environment.

The Yakama Service Unit has been awarded a grant from the Indian Health Service. The grant project will transform current efforts at YSU to screen and treat obesity through a coordinated multidisciplinary, Tribal-Federal IHS partnership which addresses social determinants of health and adopts materials from a proven curriculum developed by the Department of Veterans Affairs called MOVE!. The partnering programs include Pharmacy, Health Heart, Medical and the Yakama Nation programs of Nutrition, and WIC.

YSU under its Pharmacy Residency program completed the rotation of a Pharmacist Resident, Rozita Zandkargar and continued with a new Pharmacist Resident selection of Emily Castle who has been working at the Yakama Service Unit since August 2021.

Goal 3: To strengthen IHS program management and operations

Colville Service Unit (CSU) had the mock-survey site visit in August to provide added feedback in preparation for the upcoming AAAHC survey later in the fall or early winter. The review assists the Service Unit to address any elements that if not addressed could result in partial or non-compliance. The Service Unit is targeting to have all elements addressed by mid-October, the majority of these were either updating or writing policies at the local level.

Fort Hall Service Unit (FHSU)

Fort Hall Service Unit Governing Board was conducted with an emphasis on budget and acquisitions completed; Fort Hall Business Council Chairman participated as he is very supportive of the federal service unit's work; especially with the COVID-19 pandemic response.

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Developed new internal tracking system for service contracts and budget change requests to make these processes streamlined and more transparent for departmental supervisors.

Gained access to hospital status calls at the district and state levels to improve situational awareness as Idaho entered a new COVID-19 surge. Various employees volunteered as needed to provide patient screenings at the clinical entrance and support for other COVID-related duties. Optometry Technician also continues to assist the lab with in-house COVID-19 testing, coordination, recording and reporting. The HIM staff strive to maintain a good working relationship with providers within the clinic and with outside facilities to ensure that documents needed for patient care are accessible, organized and complete. They strive to scan incoming documents as soon as possible; a process that improves quality patient care by having reports more timely accessible.

Warm Springs Service Unit (WSSU)

Human Assets: Working w/ Nursing Chief to get new FY2022 Retentions in place, for these hard to recruit and market competitive positions. CEO requested that the Employee Appreciation Committee be revitalized to help with announcement and formal recognition of staff, and celebrate the good work we are doing.

WSSU pharmacy filled a total of 5,047 in September, with 4,578 filled locally and 469 filled via Consolidated Mail Outpatient Pharmacy (CMOP). The overall prescription volume slightly less than September 2020 when 5,169 prescriptions were filled,

The pharmacy has operated a curbside delivery service in addition to processing prescriptions and continuing all clinical services via phone or in-person patient appointments since ICS started in mid-March 2020.

Wellpinit Service Unit (WSU)

CEO attends weekly meeting with STOI COVID Incident Management Team. Weekly updates including COVID testing, positives and vaccination rates are reported to Tribal Business Council for review and distribution.

Collaboration with Wellpinit School in provision of 3rd doses to WSD teachers, COVID testing and vaccines for staff and students; prepared for EUA for 5-11 year olds to receive vaccine.

Collaboration of vaccine efforts with CSU – they provided us with Johnson and Johnson. The supply/demand for this vaccine is high, we appreciate the teamwork. Public awareness communication with STOI and Spokane Reservation residents to promote COVID vaccine availability.

Archival of paper charts dating 2015-2018 completed, packaged and prepared for the Federal Records Center. Pending approval – still on hold due to COVID.

Facilities upgrades include: Exterior clinic painting and soffit repair completed. Vinyl flooring scheduled for bi-annual maintenance. Proposal for permanent COVID vaccine drive thru facility with multi-

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purpose room for overflow. Working with OEHE to complete gap analysis and 10 year plan. FY22 budget includes facility bathroom renovation to include touchless faucets, touchless drinking fountains, and replace worn, dated tile and fixtures. Portland Area Wireless project submitted. ARPA IT/Telehealth funds utilized to keep wireless project moving forward.

Western Oregon Service Unit (WOSU-Chemawa)

The Chemawa team continues to focus on streamlining processes that support program management. The WOSU procurement team successfully awarded all fourth quarter procurements. This included unexpected COVID-specific procurements as well as planned program requirements. Upon the request of the Portland Area, Western Oregon's Deputy CEO, LCDR Kenneth Stearns and Purchasing Agent, Allan Gaerlan assisted on processing procurements to neighboring sites. Their willingness to step up to support other service units in the Portland Area is a great example of meeting the IHS mission.

The WOSU has deployed all new IT workstations in WOSU's dental department. In addition, WOSU's IT Specialist, is making preparations to deploy over 30 laptops and 16 PCs as part of the ARPA COVID Telehealth funding. This includes consulting with Portland Area IT to review WOSU's current network infrastructure to assure a seamless transition. This will allow Chemawa to provide additional telehealth services and further meet the needs of our patients. Furthermore, a new PA overhead paging system was recently installed at Chemawa, allowing for departments to page overhead for patients and staff by different zones.

HIM Supervisor, Deidra Jackson and team were recently recognized by the Area Director for a best practice in coding and coding compliance. Ms. Jackson was asked to provide a presentation on their improvement efforts to the Portland Area Chief Executive Officers. This shared experience was very valuable to the Portland Area leaders in promoting strong operations within the HIM program.

Yakama Service Unit (YSU)

The YSU has hired a physician to serve as the Clinical Director of the service unit. Dr. Rex Quaempts, ABFM started his role as Clinical Director in August 2021 and CDR Michelle Womack serves as the Deputy Clinical Director. Both Dr. Quaempts and CDR Womack have experience serving as Clinical Directors. This change will provide experienced professionals with high level credentials in the leadership of the clinic.

In September 2021, the YSU completed an accreditation survey by the AAAHC. The summary closeout report was positive regarding the staff, facility and care provided at the Yakama Service Unit. The service unit is awaiting the final report. The Medical Laboratory obtained laboratory accreditation as a COLA certified medical laboratory, maintaining the status as an accredited medical laboratory.