

**Portland Area
Direct Service Tribes Advisory Committee
FY2022 3rd Quarter Report
January-March 2022**

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- CSU in our reconstitution plan included welcoming patients back into waiting room areas, exercising recommended Social Distancing. CSU leadership participates in State committees on health care delivery operations. CSU also worked with ORAP to assess and make improvements with PRC.

Ft. Hall-

Provided 100% of the COVID-19 nurse case management for the Fort Hall Indian Reservation, calling high risk patients multiple times and each patient at least 1-2 times during isolation.

Coordinated seven after hours children’s vaccine events with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribal Health and Human Services Department, focusing on both COVID-19 and catch-up childhood immunizations. Generated new patient education materials for families that included immunization schedules. Those were distributed both at community locations and sent home with children from the schools on the reservation.

Continued to provide Binax ID Now testing supplies and hazardous waste disposal to the Tribal community COVID-19 testing program, resulting in 11,308 clinical and field-based tests in the community during this quarter. Also established protocol for submission of samples for variant sequencing to the state of Idaho (currently the only facility in Idaho Public Health District 6 submitting samples).

Utilizing deployed USPHS personnel, reached out to all COVID-19 patients from the last 4 months to perform post-COVID-19 functional assessments by telephone.

Participated in community listening session for patient concerns about healthcare on the Fort Hall Indian Reservation. Worked with individual patients to facilitate care and problem solve where appropriate. Made policy and protocol changes such as increasing number of same day appointment blocks in response to community feedback. Continue to support and work on ongoing identified process improvements.

Positively advocated for Tribal representation on Idaho crisis standards of care workgroup, bringing AI/AN voices to that conversation for the first time.

Successfully advocated for Tribal/IHS representation in the Greater Idaho Healthcare Coalition, establishing representation from the Fort Hall Reservation on that board for the first time. IHS employee was authorized by Fort Hall Business Council to provide that representation.

Though our pharmacy temporary staffing assistance concluded, pharmacy ensures that COVID-19 vaccines continue to be administered to everyone who desires them.

Tribal MAT program is efficiently providing opioid addiction treatment with counseling and Suboxone medication.

Optometry continued to see patients for urgent/emergent eye care and routine care on a slightly limited basis to account for the longer exam times and disinfection of room/equipment between exams--we schedule 10-11 routine

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eye appointments per day in our limited COVID mode and work in any walk-in urgent/emergent eye care patients. Optometry also continued to extend/renew prescriptions via telephone for high COVID-19 risk patients where appropriate. Optometry Technician packaged glasses for pick-up at the clinic entrance, which keeps patients from having to enter the facility for that service. Technician also performed many glasses repairs, adjustments, ordering, etc.

Yakama: The Yakama Service Unit expanded hours for Pharmacy services offered to patients. The change to extended hours of service is to increase access for patients. The pharmacy is open for medication dispensing to 6:00 pm Monday through Friday.

The Yakama Service Unit has hired a Dental Hygienist in a position that has been vacant for several years. This will enable dental hygiene services to resume for patients and provide a position to focus on these services. This will allow other dental services to be scheduled with the Dentists.

The Portland Area Behavioral Health Consultant provided Trauma Informed Care training to staff of the Yakama Service Unit.

In January the Portland Area Office and the Yakama Service Unit coordinated to receive assistance in January from (4) deployed Commissioned Officers in response to a rise in cases following the winter and holiday season.

The Yakama Service Unit under low COVID transmission level in the county worked with the Portland Area Office and implemented the approved reconstitution plan initiating steps to see patients in more locations within the facility. For respiratory cases a separate section of the clinic is used to see these patients. Additionally, Public Health Nursing is able to focus less on COVID high risk cases and more on other communicable disease concerns and services in the community.

Warm Springs: As a result of the decrease in transmission rates in Warm Springs, the Dental Clinic is fully re-open again. The dental department continues to request home testing of all patients visits that require aerosolizing treatment. Transmission rates continue to be monitored and operational adjustments made based on Area Leadership guidance and CDC guidelines. We are currently offering all procedures that were offered pre-COVID 19.

Dr. Johnson (pediatric dentist) is working with St. Charles Medical Center to secure more OR time for better access and to work down current caseload.

Our laboratory seated a medical technologist Locum contractor in April to support patient access as our in-person visits begin to climb to pre-pandemic numbers. The lab also worked with HR on position descriptions for recruitment of a couple health technician. Finally, we celebrated "Lab Week" the last full week in April.

As we continue our PCMH journey, somebody from the Team 1 said the other day, "really, the best thing about having these regular 1-hr meetings is the connection, cohesiveness, and problem-solving effect it has on the team." Management encourages each team to commit to a 1-hr huddle (during Admin. Time) to discuss and plan strategies to establish work flows, actualize each person's role and responsibilities within the team and share ideas about ways to address the healthcare needs of the patients on respective panels.

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Western Oregon Service Unit: Chemawa is committed to recruiting and retaining quality staff. The Western Oregon Service Unit is proud to announce the promotion of two Clinical Nurses to Case Management level positions. Congratulations D'Loni Jackson and LT Travis Aborn on your commitment to learning as you further develop your nursing knowledge. You and our entire nursing team are an asset to our Chemawa Community. WOSU also welcomed a new provider, Alexandira Gloor, APRN and a COVID hire, Ryan Hopper to assist in patient registration. Currently, WOSU is recruiting for a new Director of Nursing and a Clinical Nurse. These job postings can be found at www.usajobs.gov.

We also pride ourselves in the retention of our amazing staff. Chemawa employees that have dedicated over 20 years to federal service include: Lehua Landeros, Heidi Collins, Morris Walters, Melinda Puerta, Connie Martin, Jeff St. Louis, and CAPT McLaughlin. Their commitment to the Chemawa community and students are unsurpassed. Chemawa leadership thanks them each for their continued service to the Western Oregon Service Unit and the Indian Health Service.

I am so impressed with the WOSU commitment to the Chemawa community throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. WOSU clinical services have all returned to full access 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. Screening of patients is now being done upon check-in and moved inside the building. Symptomatic patients have access to testing at the clinic, as well as home testing kits that can be provided to family members. Patients with known or suspected infectious disease now can be seen in our new negative pressure isolation room. As a priority to keep our Chemawa community safe, WOSU has focused on community vaccination and clinical care, providing over 6,382 COVID vaccines and boosters to all eligible patients. Currently, 70% of WOSU eligible patients and 95% of WOSU staff are fully vaccinated. The team works to encourage vaccination and will continue to support this critical step in ending the COVID-19 pandemic.

Wellpinit- Reconstitution plan was approved and primary care services are fully operational. Clinical staffing consists of three full time providers, two locum providers, one contracted Women's Health NP. Dental access was expanded to include a contracted Dental Hygienist

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

Coville- CSU CEO conducts a quarterly update to the Colville Business Councils Health and Human Services (HHS) Committee. CSU coordinates the COVID response with the Lake Roosevelt Community Health Centers and the Colville Tribes HHS operations.

Ft. Hall- Successfully passed Idaho/CDC COVID-19 vaccine program audit with no significant negative findings.

Initiated planning phase for implementing pulmonary CT screening scans for patients with a 20 pack-year smoking.

Training session completed with IHS and Tribal Health nursing staff on a variety of topics including diabetes, rapid response, lab specimen handling, infection control, IV placement and documentation.

Yakama:

The Yakama Service Unit selected a Quality Improvement Officer to lead the quality improvement program for the service unit. The position has been vacant and filled by a service unit employee serving in an acting role. The newly hired position is timely as the Portland Area approaches the Quality Symposium in June 2022, and follows the most recent AAAHC accreditation survey in October 2021.

The Yakama Service Unit Medical and GPRA Team coordinated with the hospital in the local area to offer mammography services for eligible patients on Thursday mornings. This dedicated time slot for services allows the clinic to have a staff member receive and coordinate the services for the patients, and provides the patients a local access for mammography services.

The Yakama Service Unit continues training Dental Assistants in the provision of expanded care to develop more expanded function dental assistants (EFDA) within the clinic.

The Yakama Nation and Yakama Service Unit coordinated to offer a patient weight management program developed by the VA: YU'UT [MOVE]. It has been a successful model for veterans to lose weight. The team made slight modifications to make the program more culturally appropriate: YU'UT [MOVE]. The program is based on the Lifestyle Balance curriculum used in the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) and DPP Outcomes Study. The program consists of 16 sessions which focus on healthy eating, physical activity and behavior change. The sessions can be done by phone, video, or in person (individually or in groups). The program is starting with phone and video visits. Sessions are scheduled with patients once a week for about 30 minutes. There has been high patient interest in the program.

Warm Springs: Although there is a lot of work ahead of us coming out of the worst of the pandemic, we see a lot of low hanging fruit around our GPRA measures, so we are strategically communicating with our community to meet the bring them in for screening and max packing visits when and where we can.

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We recently completed a several PDSA cycles to improve our scheduling and now offer improved appointment schedule with patient choice built-in. With a high rate of vacancies, we have an active quality project to reduce the amount of time a recruitment packet takes to process at the service unit. Finally, we have a quality improvement project being ran by our revenue enhancement committee that has proven successful between dental provides and our coding and billing staff. Some great work by these teams around quality improvement here in Warm Springs.

Western Oregon:

The Chemawa team continues to focus on streamlining processes that support program management. The recent hire of the Staff Educator / Infection Prevention nurse is an exciting advancement at Chemawa. Leann Yamanaka has been selected in this position and brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the Chemawa leadership team. As the designated Infection Prevention Officer, Leann works closely with programs to establish safe protocols for patients and staff. In addition, she coordinates with the Employee Health Nurse to assure our staff are provided with the latest guidance and support in healthcare services. This position will also develop a staff development program intended to encourage continuous learning and growth for our team in the respective areas. Leann will provide outreach for opportunities to provide training and resource to our team in maintaining the highest level of healthcare services for our patients. We welcome Leann and are looking forward to the resource she will provide to our Chemawa team.

This quarter the Chemawa IT specialist, Charmayne Ben, responded to a request by the clinical care team for a redesign in the IT set-up in the clinical setting. Charmayne worked closely with clinical leadership and the Portland Area Office IT to deploy approximately 40 laptops within the service unit. This required extensive collaboration, planning, and flexibility amongst all staff. Charmayne provided exceptional customer support within this project while still maintaining day to day IT operational needs.

We are also proud to announce that all of our Environmental Service staff have completed the Certified Healthcare Environmental Services Technician (CHEST) training. This extensive training on infection prevention standards and cleaning practices within the healthcare setting is critical in maintaining the highest level of safe quality care at Chemawa. Led by Jeff St. Louis and LT Tchotchovi Mensah, the team spent a week learning valuable skills within their service. Congratulations on your certification: Didrick Winters, Chris Littlesun, Arden Stabler, Jeremy Russell, and Justin Skinner.

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Goal 3: To strengthen IHS program management and operations

Colville: CSU participated in a Headquarter review of the PRC and Business Office operations. CSU CEO maintains communications for scheduling of the AAAHC survey

Ft. Hall: Recruited new advanced practice provider to our team, returning our medical provider team to 80% staffing.

Pharmacy is working on hiring a technician to staff the main pharmacy window as more patients are coming into the building to get their medications.

Coumadin patients are conveniently checked, monitored, and dose adjusted at the pharmacy. Pharmacy continues to assist with COVID-related clinic-wide functions as needed, such as COVID lab testing,

Clinical Applications Coordinator (CAC) coordinated with Tribal Health Field Nurse to enhance the electronic health record (EHR) template for much more robust and uniform documentation.

We have seen a significant increase in call volumes during the pandemic, particularly during times of significant community transmission. To help alleviate that problem, we implemented the following:

- Added a second staff member to the medical front desk
- Utilizing dental, pharmacy, and radiology staff to augment the COVID-19 hotline as needed

Fort Hall Facility Improvement Projects includes a structural facility modification in the facility. This includes purchases for reinforcement to the lab flooring as needed to support a new 5600 lab analyzer. Employee and patient bathroom renovation was completed and final inspection will follow.

Yakama:

The Yakama Service Unit hired a new Infection Control Officer position under the Nurse discipline. The position has been a collateral duty of a service unit position in the past. This position will focus on Infection Control and Employee Health work for the service unit.

The Yakama Service Unit hired a new Facility Manager experienced in facility management. The position will oversee planned maintenance and improvement projects of the service unit, facility maintenance activities, and serve on the Safety Committee of the service unit.

The following vacant positions were hired for the service unit: Clinical Lab Scientist / Registered Nurse / Medical Support Assistant.

The Yakama Service Unit hosted a Medical Student for a rotation in the clinic. Dr. Quaempts, Clinical Director worked with Washington State University (WSU) to provide this experience and service. This type of opportunity will assist with recruiting efforts for our service unit in a category of need: physicians and medical providers for family medicine.

The Yakama Service Unit hosted its first Medical Lab Science student in January. This was under an agreement with Heritage University, Toppenish, WA which is a local university in the service area of the clinic. A second student was hosted after the first student's rotation ended.

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The Yakama Service Unit hosted (3) other Pharmacy students under agreements with Washington State University and Western New England University.

The Yakama Service Unit is installing a back-up source of electrical power for critical circuits and equipment. The project includes a propane generator, electrical connections, transfer switch and security fencing to provide a back-up electrical system for key locations of the clinic.

Warm Springs: The service unit leadership and tribal partners meet quarterly as part of a joint health commission formed to improve the overall health and wellness of the community. Our meetings focus on current and historical data that supports the health care needs in the community. Founding documents include a joint comprehensive plan and goals based on health risks appraisals, health status indicators and other available resources. We are also responsible for providing an Annual Health Report to the Area Director and Tribal Council, as well as the community.

Western Oregon: Chemawa continues to set the bar high with quality and innovations. The Chemawa team prides itself in leading by five core values, while recognizing staff each quarter exemplifying these mission driven qualities. Congratulations to Trudy Yazzie (Respect), Allan Gaerlan (Trust), LT Travis Aborn (Learning), Naomi Shantz (Compassion), and LCDR Beth Cloos (Willingness). Thank you for representing the Chemawa team with such excellence.

The resiliency of this Chemawa team during the COVID-19 pandemic is unparalleled. I am in awe of their dedication and commitment to serve our Chemawa community each day. As frontline workers they have persevered in providing the highest level of care to our patients. The need for quality healthcare workers is critical across the nation. This quarter, WOSU received a deployment of four Public Health Service (PHS) officers to assist during peak COVID-19 transmission. Chemawa leadership appreciates the service CDR Flack, LCDR Lee, LCDR Broadhead, and LT Mello.

The Western Oregon Service Unit was awarded the IHS Innovation Grant for their project on addressing social determinants of health to decrease obesity rates at the Chemawa Indian Health Center. As part of this project, the team provided patients with a Grocery Store Tour, where patients sampled organic versus non-organic fruits and participated in a scavenger hunt to learn about comparing nutrition facts labels, where to look for healthy foods and how to save money while shopping.

At Chemawa, we strive for balance between Quality in Patient Care and Employee Wellness. With simple redesign and increased communication, WOSU will continue to provide opportunity for sustainable improvements that will positively impact the Chemawa community. ***Every patient and employee is a vital asset of our medical home!***

What WE do matters....Commitment to quality allows us to focus on what is important – ***the patient!***

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