

**Navajo Area IHS
Direct Service Tribes Advisory Committee
FY2023 4th Quarter Report
July 2023 – September 2023**

<p>Area Tribal Representatives: Buu Nygren, President, Navajo Nation Germaine Simonson, Delegate, 25th Navajo Nation Council</p>	<p>Federal Liaison: DuWayne Begay, Area Director CAPT Brian K. Johnson, Acting Area Director Marquis Yazzie, Director, Office of Tribal Partnerships</p>
<p>Goal 1: To ensure that comprehensive, culturally appropriate personal and public health services are available and accessible to American Indian and Alaska Native people</p>	
<p><u>Crownpoint Service Unit, New Mexico</u></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Crownpoint Service Unit South Quarters Repair-by-Replacement Design contract was awarded in August 2021. The scope of work for this project is to complete a design for the replacement of 33 quarter units. The existing quarters units were built in the 1950s and are well-beyond their useful lives. New quarters will be energy-efficient and modern. Project design includes the evaluation of existing infrastructure, the evaluation of the replacement of infrastructure if needed, and a complete design package for the construction of 33 new quarters units. Updated quarters will aid in recruitment and retention for the Crownpoint Hospital. • During the design investigation, a breached berm (i.e., water retention dam) located south of the old quarters was discovered. The Navajo Area Indian Health Service will discuss repairing the berm with the Navajo Region Bureau of Indian Affairs. IHS Headquarters would like assurances that the berm will retain water, so that the new quarters will be protected against future flooding. • All funding for the project is available and we anticipate the construction project to go out for bid in the summer of 2023 - once the berm issue has been resolved. 	
<p><u>Chinle Service Unit, Arizona</u></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Tsaile Heath Center Quarters Project has been selected to receive \$21,500,000.00 in non-recurring expense funds (NEF) to construct approximately 30 new quarters units as well as all required supporting infrastructure. The Program Justification Document for Quarters (PJDQ) and the Program of Requirement for Quarters (PORQ) show a total need of 98 new quarters to house staff at the Tsaile Health Center. New quarters units will contribute to the recruitment and retention of health professionals. An IHS Engineering Services project manager has been assigned, and the project is proceeding. • The Engineering Services Project Manager has advised the team that the updated budget estimate has grown to \$26,259,200.00 – an increase of \$4,759,200.00. Additional meetings will be scheduled with IHS Headquarters and Tsaile Health Center staff to discuss strategies to secure additional funds to support the project. 	
<p><u>Pueblo Pintado Health Center, New Mexico</u></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Staff Quarters Request for Contract is scheduled to be issued in March 2024 with a Design-Build contract expected to be awarded by December 2024. Design of the Staff Quarters is anticipated to take six months from contract award followed by actual construction. All work is scheduled to be completed by September 2026, which is the same time as the projected completion of the new health center. 	

Navajo Area IHS
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FY2023 4th Quarter Report
July 2023 – September 2023

- Work on land withdrawal and land lease is in progress with the assistance from the Pueblo Pintado Steering Committee for the three parcels that will house the new health center, sewer lagoon and connection corridor. The Real Property team from IHS Headquarters will also work with the Navajo Nation Land Department and the Resource Committee for review and approval.

Gallup Service Unit, New Mexico

- Phase II of the site selection process for the GIMC Replacement Facility is nearly complete. In order to incorporate new 500-Year Floodplain Guidance from IHS Headquarters, the completion date will be delayed from the initial estimate of August 31, 2023. Phase II includes an in-depth assessment of the top-rated site, a legal land survey, flood plain analysis, soils reports, archaeological and historical data collection, and an environmental assessment. The Navajo Nation wants to choose a site that will support future expansion and economic development. The IHS continues to collaborate with the Navajo Nation to support future phases of the GIMC Replacement project. The Program of Requirements (POR) and the Program Justification Document (PJD) will be updated once a contract is awarded.
- On June 16, 2023, the Gallup Service Unit Public Health Nursing (PHN) department received funds from IHS Headquarters for \$209,500.00 to support Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) field-testing using Chembio medical equipment, which enables rapid testing for HIV and Treponema pallidum. Beginning July 2023, Public Health Nurses have started testing patients in local communities. The Chembio project is the first and only Food and Drug Administration-approved Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services - Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments-waived HIV-Syphilis rapid test. The rapid test will improve patient care by delivering results within 15 minutes.

Kayenta Service Unit, Arizona

- The Kayenta Alternative Rural Health Center and the Inscription House Health Center were each recently awarded \$8,200,000.00 to construct 19 new quarters units. Once funds are transferred to the Navajo Area Office, a Request for Contract action will be submitted for a design-build contract. This project will help in the recruitment and retention of health professionals for the Kayenta Service Unit. Project Managers from IHS Headquarters and Navajo Area Indian Health Service have been assigned to manage this project.
- Kayenta Service Unit (KSU) is expanding its care for our community by establishing inpatient services in a remote and resource-limited environment. KSU has historically been an outpatient facility where patients requiring hospitalization were transferred to other locations to receive care. Creating a medical inpatient unit at KSU will reduce the number of transfers, increase the level of care provided locally, and allow more patients to remain near their families while receiving the care they need. The process of becoming a modern hospital has been long and taxing, but the Kayenta Health Center has now been approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to begin admitting patients.

Shiprock Service Unit, New Mexico

- The Four Corners Regional Health Center (FCRHC) plays an important role in providing mental health services, suicide and crisis prevention, mental and emotional intervention, and educational programs to community schools. Across the nation, many schools are experiencing the need for mental and emotional support for

**Navajo Area IHS
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FY2023 4th Quarter Report
July 2023 – September 2023**

students. School-based mental health services have become a critical function of student support programs. When needed, the NNMC Mental Health Team has a response team that can be deployed to assist FCRHC.

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

Chinle Service Unit, Arizona

- The Pinon Health Center (PHC) Podiatry Clinic continues to go above and beyond in providing quality patient care services. As of May 2023, Pinon Podiatry Clinic initiated the Extracorporeal Shockwave Therapy (ESWT) for our patients. ESWT is available for plantar fasciitis, Achilles tendinitis, retro calcaneal bursitis, peroneal tendinitis, neuromas, neuropathy, and wound care. This treatment methodology promotes regeneration and healing of the muscles, ligaments, tendons, and other soft tissues. The average rate for improvement in pain relief is 60 percent. The plan is to expand the ESWT to other providers (Primary Care and Physical Therapy). We are the only center in the IHS at this time to have this procedure available.
- The Chinle Health Center Mobile Health Unit program continues to improve access and connect communities to primary and preventive care services. The mobile unit now has a regular schedule that brings care directly to 10 of our 16 chapters. The mobile unit team works closely with Navajo Nation Community Health Representatives to coordinate and deliver care.
- The Public Health Department and Public Health Nursing Department have worked diligently with internal and external partners to create a robust Sexual Infection Prevention Program in response to the ongoing syphilis outbreak. The interdisciplinary team aims to make testing and treatment easy and accessible. To this end, the mobile health clinic has been conducting visits to Diné College to provide sexual and reproductive health care services. There is now new quick point of care syphilis testing on the mobile health unit and school-based teen clinics. An express testing and treatment clinic, in collaboration with the Pharmacy Department, aims to start in the summer of 2023.

Gallup Service Unit, New Mexico

- The Gallup Service Unit (GSU) Division of Clinical Services has hired a part-time cardiologist who is working with the IHS Office of Innovations to make sure all patients with heart failure are provided appropriate medications. To aid in this effort, GSU has purchased equipment – including a new CT scanner -- that identifies heart attacks early on when patients come in with chest pain. The CT scanner is to arrive in September 2023.
- Over the last several months, the GSU has undertaken some significant and exciting changes. Among these changes are: 1.) The installation of a new modular building in which a 14-bed Emergency Department (ED) will be housed; 2.) An expansion of the existing ED; and 3.) Planning for the acquisition of a mobile endoscopy unit and a mobile medical unit. The combined impact of these changes will be more modern and efficient health care services and overall improvements in patient care.

Kayenta Service Unit, Arizona

- The Kayenta Service Unit (KSU) location is beautiful and unique. However, its remote and isolated location presents recruitment challenges for professional staff. The KSU Nurse Recruiter has participated in career fairs and has posted KSU nursing positions in local newspapers, professional journals, and government websites.

Navajo Area IHS
Direct Service Tribes Advisory Committee
FY2023 4th Quarter Report
July 2023 – September 2023

Additionally, the Nurse Recruiter is working with local universities to provide information on nursing positions, benefits, incentives and student loan repayment programs. We are aware our own Diné nursing students are attending these universities and colleges and want them coming home to provide health care services to our Diné people. Future plans include visiting college career fairs and showing more visual recruitment information on billboards and marquees. KSU nurse vacancy rates have decreased in two departments -- the Ambulatory Outpatient Services and Inscription House Health Center. The KSU Nurse Executive Committee, Nurse Recruiter and Human Resource staff are working diligently to increase full-time permanent nursing staff and decrease the use of costly contract nurses. The KSU offers competitive salary, recruitment and re-location incentives in most cases, including housing to nursing applicants.

Shiprock Service Unit, New Mexico

- Emergency Room Triage and Supertrack Services: The Federal Government announced that on May 11, 2023, the COVID-19 national emergency and public health emergency (PHE) declarations would expire and hospitals have to prepare to return to normal hospital operations. As a result, the Northern Navajo Medical Center (NNMC) began closing down outdoor COVID-19 operations, and the ER triage service needed to be relocated indoors. The ER triage process prioritizes patients based on the severity of illness or injury. A plan was devised to transform the former Monoclonal Antibody treatment room into the ER triage intake office while converting the room next to it into the triage room. At the same time, several rooms in the ER were converted into Supertrack treatment rooms for less serious illness and injury. The NNMC team adapted and stayed on the mission to ensure that screening and treatment will function efficiently for patients and employees.

Goal 3: To strengthen IHS program management and operations

Navajo Area Office, Arizona

- On June 21, 2023, IHS Director Roselyn Tso issued a Dear Tribal Leader Letter announcing the selection of Mr. DuWayne Begay as the new Director of the Navajo Area Indian Health Service. Mr. Begay has more than 31 years of experience working with federal agencies, tribes, and local governments. He began his IHS career in 1992, serving in a number of acquisitions positions. Since that time, he has served in multiple leadership roles within the Navajo Region Bureau of Indian Affairs as a supervisory contract specialist, regional budget officer and deputy regional director between 2014 and 2020. Mr. Begay returned to the IHS in 2020 and served as Chief Operating Officer and acting Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the Gallup Service Unit, before transitioning to Area Executive Officer of the Navajo Area IHS from 2022 to 2023.
- Naloxone Memorandum of Understanding: On May 11, 2023, the Navajo Nation and the NAIHS entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) related to the distribution of the lifesaving, opioid-reversal medication Naloxone. The MOU details the procedures by which NAIHS pharmacies will provide training on Naloxone administration and Naloxone itself to Navajo Nation law enforcement officers. As the United States continues to experience very high rates of opioid overdose deaths, the hope is that greater availability of Naloxone will save lives.

Chinle Service Unit, Arizona

- The Tsaille Quarters Project was selected to receive \$21,500,000.00 in non-recurring expense funds (NEF) to construct approximately 30 new quarters and all required support infrastructure. The Program Justification Document for Quarters (PJDQ) and the Program of Requirement for Quarters (PORQ) show a total need of 98

Navajo Area IHS
Direct Service Tribes Advisory Committee
FY2023 4th Quarter Report
July 2023 – September 2023

new quarters needed to house staff of the Tsaile Health Center. This project will help in the recruitment and retention of health professionals. An Engineering Services project manager has been assigned, and the project is proceeding.

Crownpoint Service Unit, New Mexico

- CDR Daryl Dineyazhe-Toya was appointed as the new CEO of the Crownpoint Service Unit. CDR Dineyazhe-Toya is an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation and has over 25 years of experience working with Federal agencies, Tribes, and local governments. Her maternal clan is Kinyaa'áanii (the Towering House Clan), paternal clan is Sun, maternal grandfather's clan is Tsénjikiní, and paternal grandfather's clan is Fire. She began her IHS career in 1998 as a staff pharmacist with the Zuni-Ramah Comprehensive Health Center in Zuni, NM. From 2000 to 2014 she served in multiple pharmacy positions, including Chief Pharmacist at the Albuquerque Service Unit in Albuquerque, NM. From 2014 to 2015 she served as Director of Professional Services at the Hopi Health Center in Polacca, AZ and transitioned to Chief Operations Officer from 2015 to 2016. She transferred to the Navajo Area IHS in 2016, serving as Special Assistant to the CEO of the Gallup Service Unit. In 2020, CDR Dineyazhe-Toya was selected as the Health Systems Administrator for the Inscription House Health Center which is located near Shonto, AZ. From 2022 to present, she served as Acting CEO of the Crownpoint Service Unit.

Gallup Service Unit, New Mexico

- As a required element of Gallup Service Unit's (GSU) Primary Care Medical Home (PCMH) certification, the GSU must have a process for patients to make contact with a Registered Nurse for health concerns or questions. The Nurse Advice Line went online in November 2022. As of June 1, 2023, the total number of telephone calls completed is 5,815. The top three reasons patients call this service is for general information, advisement, and to obtain test results. The significance of having the Nurse Advice Line is that patients can call 24 hours a day to speak with a Registered Nurse.

Kayenta Service Unit, Arizona

- The Inscription House Health Center Pharmacy has identified a need to focus on processing Point of Sale prescription claims to decrease lost revenue and increase potential revenue for the future of the Health Center. One source of reimbursement losses is due to refilling medications before their official due dates. However, through concentrated efforts, we have sought to remedy this. From April to June 2023, Inscription House Health Center Pharmacy resubmitted rejected claims -- over 1000 in total -- recovering an additional \$190,000.00 for our facility. If these claims had not been resubmitted, this amount would have been lost.

Shiprock Service Unit, Arizona

- CAPT Katrina Leslie-Puhuyaoma was appointed as the new CEO at the Shiprock Service Unit. CAPT Leslie-Puhuyaoma, an enrolled member of the Hopi Tribe, has more than 27 years of experience working with Federal agencies, Tribes, and local governments. Her clan is Parrot clan and she is originally from Tewa Village of First Mesa in Polacca, Arizona. She began her career with the IHS as a general dentist and eventually specialized as a pediatric dentist. Previous to her time with the Navajo Area IHS, she worked as a staff dentist at Phoenix Indian Medical Center. She also served as Chief Dentist at the Port Gamble S'Klallam Health Center in Kingston, WA and at the Skokomish Health Center in Shelton, WA. From 2006 to 2017 she served in multiple capacities within the

**Navajo Area IHS
Direct Service Tribes Advisory Committee
FY2023 4th Quarter Report
July 2023 – September 2023**

Navajo Area IHS, including Area Regional Pediatric Dental Specialist and Dental Director at Northern Navajo Medical Center in Shiprock, NM. From 2017 to present, she served as the Navajo Area Regional Dental Consultant and Acting Clinical Director at the Kayenta Health Center and Northern Navajo Medical Center.