

**Oklahoma City Area Name**  
**Direct Service Tribes Advisory Committee**  
**FY 2023**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Report 2023**

<b>Area Tribal Representatives:</b> Reggie Wassana, Governor Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes	<b>Federal Liaison:</b> Travis Scott, Director Field Operation OCA
<b>Goal 1: To ensure that comprehensive, culturally appropriate personal and public health services are available and accessible to American Indian and Alaska Native people</b>	
<p>In collaboration with the Veterans Health Administration PACT Act enrollment events have been held with the Claremore Indian Hospital, Wewoka Indian Health Center, Pawnee Indian Health Center, Clinton Indian Health Center and the Lawton Indian Hospital during July and August. These events have provide Native American Veterans the opportunity to learn about available resources, file for VA benefits, and complete a VHA Toxic Health Screening. Collectively, over 350 veterans and veteran family members were reached through these events.</p> <p>Federal Service Units increased access to care during this past quarter. The Clinton Service Unit expanded MRI services to include pediatric patients and expanded hours to include additional days of operation at both the Clinton and El Reno locations. The Lawton Indian Hospital hired a third physical therapist at the Lawton location to improve access to post-operative, inpatient, and time-sensitive physical therapy. The expectation is that a third physical therapist will enable timely scheduling for all patients. Also, in June, the Lawton Service Unit completed the installation of a new mammography unit at the Anadarko Indian Health Clinic. This unit will provide increased efficiency in service delivery and expanded capabilities.</p> <p>All six federal service units are promoting health and disease prevention through the national E3 vaccination strategy. The E3 strategy seeks to provide every patient with the opportunity to receive appropriate vaccines that they might need during every visit to the health center. This strategy promotes protecting all ages with routine vaccinations. Vaccinations prevent diseases like Polio, Hepatitis, and Pertussis (whooping cough). Patients are encouraged to complete and can obtain vaccinations throughout all health care delivery department locations in all federal facilities. All patients who visit Optometry, Dental, Physical Therapy, Behavioral Health, and Audiology will be offered an opportunity to receive vaccinations.</p> <p>The Wewoka Indian Health Center collaborated with the Seminole Nation Diabetes Program to promote health and wellness within the community. During this past quarter, collaboration included the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Senior Games and a 5K fun run. The Senior Games were held on May 26, 2023. Thirty-one elders from Wetumka, Holdenville, Wewoka and Seminole competed in the events. The 5K Fun Run/Walk was held at the Mekesukey Mission. The event documented 75 participants.</p>	
<b>Goal 2: To promote excellence and quality through innovation of the Indian health system into an optimally performing organization</b>	

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Staff within the Quality departments of all federally operated facilities within the OCA completed the Institute for Healthcare Improvement online course, "RCA2: Improving Root Cause Analyses and Actions to Prevent Harm". The course is designed to provide tools and strategies to address healthcare safety vulnerabilities with sustainable actions to prevent future harm.

The Haskell Health Center's Diabetes program implemented a virtual prevention program to reach an otherwise unreachable audience. The program is beginning with thirteen participants from remote and distant locations. Through virtual technology, the health center is attempting to bring preventive services to the patients.

The Lawton Indian Hospital received Bronze (Level 3) Pain and Addiction Care in the Emergency Department (PACED) accreditation. PACED is an American College of Emergency Physicians-governed national accreditation program, which seeks to improve pain management for patients in the emergency department.

The Anadarko Indian Health Clinic laboratory underwent a successful accreditation survey by the College of American Pathologists (CAP). CAP accreditation is a rigorous process that recognizes high performance standards and excellence of care in the laboratory.

The Clinton Service Unit's metabolic clinic began in 2021 and at the end of this quarter reported a total loss in pounds for all participants as 6,313. The average weight loss is 23.3 among participants with an average A1C of 5.4 for 75% of patients seen. The average A1C of participants in the program has continued to decrease from the initial 9.2% baseline data (2022). Currently, there are 314 adult participants in the program and three (3) pediatric patients. The program is planning for its third year of operations in 2024 with modified goals and an added focus to advance pediatric care and outreach with continued growth in adult care services.

Claremore Indian Hospital Dental Department hosted the *Composite Course*, providing 32 hours of instruction with the CIH Chief of Dental Services serving as an instructor. Staff from the Claremore Indian Hospital and the Wewoka Health Center attended the training and are ready to complete the 40 restorations required (minimum) to perform as an expanded function dental assistant. Through expanded dental assistant functions both sites will increase patient access to dental services.

Pawnee Indian Health Center is adding Care Manager and Case Manager positions to help improve responsiveness and patient throughput for our Purchase Referred Care services. The Pawnee Purchased Referred care program is a vital resource to our patients that need "out of house" care. The additional staff will help ensure that patients will be able to access outside care services quicker and will help reduce patient wait times.

The Pawnee Diagnostic Imaging Department developed a new process to help reduce reimbursement denials due to prior authorization documentation issues. The Imaging Department met with the Pawnee medical providers and devised a series of questions for each type of exam that requires prior authorization documentation. When ordering an imaging study, the provider must answer pertinent

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questions justifying the need for the imaging study. The department has seen a significant reduction in the number of reimbursement denials for prior authorization since enacting the new process.

Wewoka Indian Health Center was received \$10,000 for a colorectal screening project through the Health Promotion/Disease Prevention program. The project's purpose is to increase the number of completed colorectal cancer screenings and ensure timely follow up for those with positive screenings. Proper patient education is a focus so the project is creating a 3-4 minute PSA video to promote the importance and guidance on accessing screening resources for colorectal cancer.

**Goal 3: To strengthen IHS program management and operations**

The Oklahoma City Area IHS in July hosted the Area Director's I/T/U Awards Ceremony. This annual event is an opportunity to recognize the great work and staff across the area I/T/U health care systems. The awards ceremony was held on July 21, 2023 and the IHS Director, Ms. Tso was in attendance. Ms. Tso also toured the El Reno Indian Health Center, the Anadarko Indian Health Center and the National Supply Service Center during her visit to Oklahoma.

Clinton Service Unit is exceeding collection goals for FY23. Collections at the end of June 2023 reflect a 40% increase (\$20.1 million FY23 vs. \$14.3 million FY22) from this time last year. The FY 2023 end goal of \$20 million was met at mid-year with a projected increase of an additional \$6 million by the end of the fiscal reporting year. This is attributed to the Medicaid Expansion in Oklahoma with Medicaid identified as offering the highest reimbursement for health care expenses.

The Lawton Indian Hospital Finance Team held Finance 101 classes for all employees involved in the purchase card or purchase requisition process. The classes were intended to provide education to make the processes more efficient and reduce delays.

The Lawton Service Unit Patient Benefit Coordinators began actively reaching out to patients whose eligibility and enrollment in Medicaid may be affected by the Public Health Emergency Unwinding. Their goal is to assist with maintaining coverage or to connect patients with alternate coverage options. Between April and June, the patient benefit coordinators performed 5,063 patient contacts by mail, phone, or in-person to assist with screening and re-enrollment.

A collaborative agreement was established between the Pawnee Indian Health Center and Meridian Technology Center in Stillwater, Oklahoma. The Agreement provides for clinical education of Meridian Technology students in the health programs. The technology center provides accredited professional education in multiple disciplines including: certified nurse assistant, phlebotomy, pharmacy technician, medical coding, practical nursing and radiology technology. As part of this agreement, the health center will provide clinical experiences for students on a regular basis.

The Claremore Indian Hospital hosted the Kids Summer Safety Festival on June 3th, 2023 from 9am-12:30 pm. The event was geared towards school-aged children and families. The event included games that were educational learning activities that were created by Claremore Indian Health Hospital staff, local agencies, and community businesses. The event was Safari Themed (based from a contest held hospital wide once) and once

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the attendees filled their passport, they received a safari hat as a “thank-you” from the hospital that were purchased from the Employee Association. The event hosted 32 vendors like the Shriners, Operation LifeSaver, Oklahoma Blood Institute, Cherokee Nation Community Health, Tulsa Safe Kids, Oklahoma Geological Foundation, and many more. The event saw approximately 250 people that day.

Pawnee Indian Health Center staff participated in SO/GI (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Gender Expression) training as a part of our facility quality plan for 2023. The overall goal is to create a safe and welcoming space for all patients regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. The facility adapted its forms and policies to appropriately document two-spirit status and gender identity data, i.e. intake forms, patient rights, etc.

Wewoka Indian Health Center purchased a 35 foot walk-in mobile medical vehicle (MMV) in June. The vehicle is a walk-in van type vehicle with two exam rooms, laboratory and a seating area. In collaboration with Seminole Nation, the outside of the mobile unit features a wrap with a culturally appropriate design. This MMV will expand service delivery by traveling to remote underserved areas of the service unit’s rural population. As of the end of June, the MMV has been utilized one time; a public showcase for a VA event in Seminole, OK. It is scheduled for a Back to School Bash Immunization Clinic in July and for sports physicals in August.

Wewoka Indian Health Center continues to plan for the expansion and remodeling of the facility. The proposed project includes the addition of a 10,000 square foot building essentially connecting the administration wing and the existing clinic while offering diverse use to include physical therapy, community health, behavioral health, and meeting space. Once completed, work would then commence on the existing clinic and see an extensive remodel and renovation to include a drive thru pharmacy, expanded dental, medical exam rooms, and parking. This expansion is only possible through partnership with the Seminole Nation.