American Indian/Alaska Native Culture Card
A Guide To Build Cultural Awareness
(PART 2)

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Culture Card – An idea is hatched…

• Concept was inspired by the Iraq Culture Smart Card developed by the Marine Corps Intelligence Agency for the military deploying to Iraq.
• The idea was to develop a “pocket guide” for non-Indian PHS Officers deployed to Indian Country in response to tribal suicide clusters.
• In August of 2006 I assembled an ad hoc workgroup who volunteered their time over the next 2 years to develop content and review materials.
AI/AN Culture Card - Core Workgroup
(2006-2008)

Indian Community Members
• Shannon Crossbear (Lake Superior Ojibwa)
• Carol Iron Rope Herrera (Oglala Lakota)
• Terry Cross (Seneca)
• Vicky Oana (Chamorro)
• Constance James (Turtle Mountain Chippewa)

PHS Commissioned Officers
• CAPT Lemyra DeBruyn
  – CDC
• CAPT Andrew Hunt (Lumbee)
  – SAMHSA
• CDR Laura Grogan
  – HRSA
• CAPT Jean Plaschke (Lumbee)
  – SAMHSA
• CAPT Stacey Williams
  – Walter Reed Behavioral Health Dept
• CDR Betty Hastings
  – IHS
Purpose

- …provide basic information for federal disaster responders and other federal health providers who may be deployed or otherwise assigned to provide or coordinate services in AI/AN communities

- Intended to serve as a **general briefing to enhance cultural competence** while providing services to AI/AN communities. (cultural competence is defined as: the ability to function effectively in the context of cultural differences.) A more specific orientation or training should be provided by a member of the local community in any particular AI/AN community
Guiding Questions for the Workgroup to drive the content

• For the AI/AN Community members:
  – “What are the important things for an outsider to know about your tribal community/culture before they came to work as a helper?”

• For non-Indian PHS Officers/providers:
  – “Looking back at your tribal deployment experience, what are the things you wish you would have known about the culture or community before you arrived?”
AI/AN Culture Card – Development Process

• Agree on categories/topic areas (16)
• Develop content that was not too generalized as to reinforce stereotypes, but not too specific as to be irrelevant to differences among the 560+ tribes
• Focus on practical information for non-Indian providers
• Keep it strength-based
• Review and decide on the format and graphics
• Seek funding and approval to print
• Spread the word and disseminate
AI/AN Culture Card - Workgroup effort

• Members take responsibility for writing specific sections, get feedback from constituents and e-mail content to project lead
• Project lead edits, condenses and re-drafts language for consistency and e-mails drafts to group for review
• Monthly, or bi-monthly group conference calls to discuss each iteration of the draft
• Individual calls and e-mails to address feedback members get from their constituents and make additional edits
• Get feedback from informal focus groups at various AI/AN conferences and make necessary edits
The Final Product

• Over 300,000 copies have been distributed since 2008.
• An average of 4,111 copies are ordered each month, which does not include digital downloads of the pdf
• Copies have been distributed throughout all 50 states and in many tribal/urban Indian organizations
• Some tribes are taking the framework of the Culture Card and developing community-specific versions
Questions and Comments?

- The Culture Card can be obtained for **free** through SAMHSA’s Publication Clearinghouse.
- Order Publication No. (SMA) 08-4354:
- By phone at 1-877-SAMHSA-7
Thank you

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