

February 2018

Spotlight: Nicole Gurneau

[Headway Emotional Health Services](#) provides emotional and mental health programs to Native families in Minneapolis, MN. The organization provides outpatient therapy, case management services, in-school therapy, and other services.

[Nicole Gurneau](#), a member of the White Earth Band of Ojibwe, is the Infant Parent Support Specialist for Headway's Family Spirit program, which provides free transportation, emotional support, and resource referrals to Native parents.



"Family Spirit is a program developed by Natives for Natives. I talk to moms from a culturally sensitive approach and non-judgmental way. Parenting takes a lot out of you, *and if you're feeling empty and unsupported, it trickles down to the children.* Our goal is to help parents feel empowered."

– Nicole Gurneau, Infant Parent Support Specialist, Family Spirit, Headway Emotional Health Services

When Family Spirit launched, Ms. Gurneau attended health fairs, handed out gift bags, and connected with families to establish trust. Today, she visits parents and provides assessments. If families do not have health insurance, Ms. Gurneau refers parents to Indian Health Service (IHS) clinics and Minnesota's health insurance marketplace—MNsure—navigators, who discuss programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program.

"Positive reinforcement is very important. Family Spirit helps connect Native moms with each other and form support groups. Many moms see me as a friend and someone they trust."

SUPPORT
when you
need it.

If your family is suffering because of alcoholism or drug addiction, health insurance can help. Insurance covers treatment, counseling, and more to help your family heal.

You may qualify for free or low-cost care through Medicaid. Learn more at go.cms.gov/nativehealth or call 1-800-318-2596.

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Your family can heal. Find help for alcohol and drug #addiction through free services offered through #insurance. Video: https://youtu.be/w_3uS_qsdK4 #Nativehealth

Brochures and PSAs

The [Behavioral Health Brochure](#) (PDF, 2 MB, 2 pp) provides examples of behavioral health services covered by the Medicaid, Medicare, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and insurance plans purchased through the Marketplace.

[Medicaid & CHIP for American Indians/Alaska Natives pocket card](#) (PDF, 336 KB, 2 pp) explains health care protections for American Indians and Alaska Natives.

[Health Matters to Mothers](#) is a PSA video that features Umatilla Tribe dancer Acosia Red Elk explaining the importance of health insurance for mothers like her. Share CMS's collection of [Health Matters videos](#) on your social media channels or air them in your waiting room.



Download the brochure and pocket card or order copies of these resources on the [Tribal Products Ordering Page](#). Please allow 2 weeks for your order to be completed.

Additional Resources

Curing Hep-C in Indian Country

Across Indian Country, tribal health providers are taking on hepatitis C. Through concerted efforts by tribes like the Cherokee Nation and organizations like the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (NPAIHB), more American Indians and Alaska Natives are being tested for hepatitis C, treated, and cured.

The Cherokee Nation has [screened more than 40,000 tribal members](#) for hepatitis C. That's more than 50% of its population. Of those screened, 740 have been treated for hepatitis C. The goals are to test all tribal members ages 20 to 72 and eliminate the disease.

The Cherokee Nation's high level of screening is made possible by the commitment of tribal leaders, partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and a coordinated electronics record system that tracks patients entering the Cherokee Nation health system at multiple levels, said Dr. Jorge Mera, Cherokee Nation Health Services, Director of Infectious Disease. If a patient hasn't been tested, a reminder will pop up in the system to tell staff the patient needs to be screened. Testing takes place in multiple settings, including urgent care, the emergency room, routine clinic visits, the dental clinic, and behavioral health visits. "It's everybody's responsibility to screen," he said.



NPAIHB uses this mask, representing hepatitis C, in its educational materials. Health care providers wear pins of the mask to start conversations about testing for the disease.

Dr. Mera said hepatitis C is a high health priority for the tribe because it is the number 1 killer in the United States of CDC-reportable diseases. He added American Indians and Alaska Natives have a higher rate of the disease and higher mortality from it than other races or ethnic groups.

Unlike other chronic diseases, hepatitis C can be cured. Treatment can be expensive, but it is available to every Cherokee Nation member who needs it, Dr. Mera said. Most patients' treatment is covered by a third-party payer like Medicaid or private insurance. Uninsured patients can often be covered by pharmaceutical companies' patient assistance programs. For other patients, the Cherokee Nation pays the bill.

NPAIHB's [Hepatitis C Project](#) works with Indian Health Service, tribal, and urban Indian clinics and health care providers to increase capacity to diagnose and treat hepatitis C.

NPAIHB hosts a monthly virtual "TeleECHO" clinic to discuss hepatitis C with health care workers from tribes across the country. About 50 tribes participate in this program. Providers discuss everything from case management to how to pay for treatment. Since NPAIHB's project launched 1 year ago, participating providers have recommended hepatitis C treatment for more than 145 patients.

NPAIHB also provides free clinical training, information about accessing hepatitis C medications, and educational and promotional materials for health care workers and the public.

Funding Opportunity: Tribal Practices for Wellness in Indian Country

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is accepting applications for grants to support tribal practices to reduce risk factors for chronic disease among American Indians and Alaska Natives by building resiliency and connections to community, family, and culture.

Eligibility is limited to federally recognized tribes, American Indian or Alaska Native tribally designated organizations, and urban Indian organizations that have current Title V Indian Health Care Improvement Act contracts with the Indian Health Service.

Recipients will address these strategies:

- connect cultural teachings to health and wellness
- develop seasonal cultural practices that support health and wellness
- develop social and cultural activities that promote community wellness
- build collaborations that strengthen wellbeing
- provide intergenerational learning that supports wellbeing and resilience
- promote traditional healthy foods
- promote traditional and contemporary physical activities

Deadline for applications: 5 p.m., Feb. 20, 2018

[Learn more.](#)

Learn how Native leaders address health issues

The 2017 National Tribal Health Conference showcased presentations on topics such as Medicaid expansion in Alaska, Medicaid waivers, Zika prevention, tribal home visitation, and suicide prevention. The conference included over 40 breakout sessions and over 80 speakers. [View and download presentations](#) to learn from public health professionals throughout Indian Country.



Calendar of Events

CMS Indian Health Service, tribal health programs, and urban Indian health trainings

These trainings are for business staff, benefits coordinators, medical records staff, and patient registration staff. They cover CMS Tribal Affairs updates, Medicare, Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, the Health Insurance Marketplace, state-administered programs, Social Security, and Veterans Affairs. Each training lasts 3 days. The third day, hosted by Indian Health Service, focuses on how to maximize access to third-party resources and improve access to quality health care.

[Trainings in 2018](#)

- March 13–14 in Gallup, NM
- March 20–22 in Denver, CO

- April 3–4 in Seattle, WA
- April 17–19 in Sacramento, CA
- April 23–24 in Albuquerque, NM
- May 8–9 in Dallas, TX
- May 10–11 in Chicago, IL

2018 Native Women and Men’s Wellness and Diabetes Prevention Conference

March 25–28, 2018

New Orleans, LA

[Learn more](#)

The American Indian Institute at the University of Oklahoma conference offers presentations by national speakers, continuing education, networking opportunities, and resources to enhance diabetes prevention services.

Native American Child and Family Conference

March 12–15, 2018

Las Vegas, NV

[Learn more](#)

This conference will provide training opportunities related to Head Start, Early Head Start, and child care programs.

2018 Healthy Kids! Healthy Futures! Conference

April 17–18, 2018

Albuquerque, NM

[Learn more](#)

This conference is for public health professionals who want to learn how to improve children’s health in their community. It is sponsored by the Notah Begay III Foundation, a national nonprofit organization committed to addressing Native children’s health issues.

2018 Population Health Research Summit

April 17–18, 2018

Sioux Falls, SD

[Learn more](#)

The Collaborative Research Center for American Indian Health and the Center for Health Outcomes and Population Research have partnered to host this summit. Researchers, tribal members, and health professionals should register for this event to network and participate in this educational workshop.

Webinar: Developing a Sexual Assault Response Team in Indian Country

April 18, 2018

Online

[Learn more](#)

Bonnie Clairmont, Victim and Advocacy Project Specialist with the Tribal Law and Policy Institute, will present the challenges, successes, and importance of developing practices and protocols responsive to the immediate needs of adult victims of sexual assault. Continued medical education credit is offered.

2018 Tribal Self-Governance Annual Conference

April 22–26, 2018

Albuquerque, NM

[Learn more](#)

2018 National Tribal Public Health Summit

May 22–24, 2018

Prior Lake, MN

[Learn more](#)

The National Indian Health Board is hosting a summit for public health professionals, elected leaders, advocates, and researchers. The conference theme, “Balance, Harmony, Culture, Health,” will feature solutions for Indian Country. Topics include:

- health promotion and disease prevention
- public health policy, infrastructure, and capacity
- substance misuse and behavioral health
- climate change and environmental health

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- cancer prevention and treatment

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About the Newsletter

Covering Indian Country is published by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Division of Tribal Affairs to share resources, success stories, and best practices with the people who connect tribal communities to health insurance.

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