

Navajo Area Indian Health Service

24th Navajo Nation Council
Report
Fall Session
October 2022



Navajo Area Indian Health Service Navajo Nation Council – Fall Session October 17, 2022

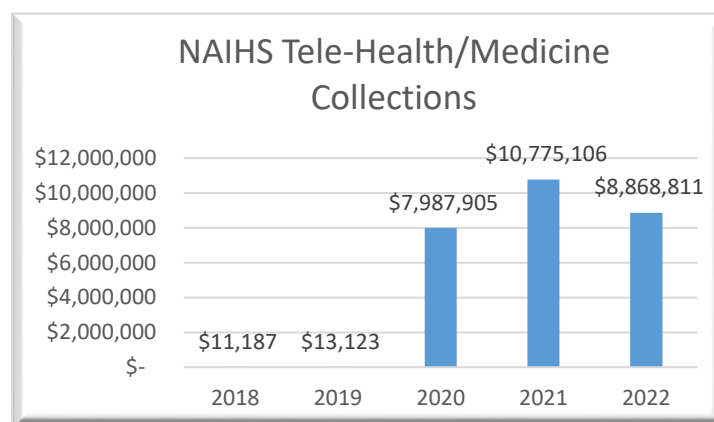
This report provides general Indian health information, updates, and summarizes significant activities of the Navajo Area Indian Health Service (NAIHS) for the months July, August, and September of 2022. The NAIHS truly appreciates the continued relationships with Navajo Nation and San Juan Southern Paiute leaders and looks forward to our continued partnerships in improving the health status of the Native Americans and Alaska Natives served.

AREA OFFICE

Leading Change: *This core management element involves the ability to bring about strategic change, both within and outside the organization, to meet organizational goals. Inherent in this element is the ability to establish an organizational vision and to implement it in a continuously changing environment.*

- The Navajo Area Office of Public Health worked diligently to control and prevent human transmission of COVID-19 and Monkey Pox and addressed other public health threats by communicating with patients. The Navajo Area Office (NAO) team hired contact tracing staff and delegated additional public health-related tasks and topics to the contact tracing team, including colorectal cancer prevention, sexually transmitted infections (STI), and COVID-19 and Monkey Pox therapeutics and counter measures to support health equity for Navajo Nation community members and patients. The Navajo Area contact tracing workforce is the only workforce in the country to communicate in the Navajo language, reduce disease transmission, and ultimately save lives. The contact tracing team reduced the public health strain on federal and tribal healthcare sites by helping educate and guide patients about current COVID-19 guidelines. The team provided nursing resources and education to patients thereby saving over \$1 million in unnecessary visits. The contact tracing team worked in collaboration with federal, tribal and urban sites through the use of a common database to share vital information with all healthcare facilities on the Navajo Nation.
- The Navajo Area Office of Public Health trained and administrated Ocular Acupuncture to Navajo Area providers and others who were interested in the acupuncture technique. The technique involves the gentle placement of up to five small, sterilized disposable needles/beads into specific sites on each ear, which provides a sense of calmness and relief from stress. The training provides individuals an extra tool in coping, discovering inner strength, and healing from trauma; especially from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Dr. Kevin Gaines, Chief Medical Officer, NAIHS, reports that new avenues for delivering vaccines to patients were developed during the COVID-19 pandemic which improved and expanded patient flow. Local federal and tribal health facilities are working to permanently incorporate some of the vaccine delivery mechanisms into their routine care delivery processes.

- In an effort to ensure the NAIHS Acquisition program is able to meet Fiscal Year 2023 projected contractual needs for each health care facility, the acquisition leadership team reviewed existing policies and updating them accordingly. The updates include ensuring internal policies support streamlined processes and align with the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and the Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) Acquisition Regulation guidelines. The actions include rescinding outdated policies, revising existing policies, and establishing new policies as needed. The goal was to ensure the NAIHS Acquisition Team is equipped and supported to complete work within policy and in a streamlined fashion.
- The Navajo Area IHS Acquisition program completed an Acquisition Management Review in Fiscal Year 2021, which resulted in a corrective action plan to improve specific program areas. The findings primarily focused on content development in contract file documentation and minor areas of the federal procurement process not completed according to regulations. In the corrective action plan, the Acquisition Leadership Team identified action items to provide continuous informal trainings and compliment the informal training with formal contracting courses through the Defense Acquisition University. The NAIHS Acquisition Leadership Team also identified a need to revisit its contract file checklist and revise certain document templates. The revisions were completed in Fiscal Year 2022 and were implemented with formal policies.
- NAIHS health care facilities were not optimizing the use of telehealth/telemedicine visits prior to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE). During the PHE some health care services were canceled or reduced for COVID-19 infection prevention purposes. The cancelled or reduced services included elective surgeries, ancillary services, and routine primary care services. This situation provided an opportunity to strengthen telephonic and tele-health services during the pandemic. The NAIHS telemedicine visits increased from 137 visits with approximately \$13,000 in collections for Fiscal Year 2019 to 21,213 visits in Fiscal Year 2020 with collections totaling \$7,987,905. Fiscal Year 2021 had the highest telehealth/telemedicine collections in the amount of \$10.7 million. Moving forward, the NAIHS plans to further strengthen telehealth/telemedicine services to improve the quality and access to care.



- The NAIHS Division of Finance had a successful FY 2022 year-end close out. Area Office Finance staff conducted monthly meetings with service unit staff on various topics such as accounts payable, accounts receivable, travel, and finance cut-off dates. These sessions provided technical assistance, best practices, job aids, and guidance for service unit staff. For year-end FY 2022, earlier finance cut-off dates were established, which allowed adequate time to correct any issues during year-end processing. This same approach will be used for future year-end processing.
- The Gallup Regional Supply Service Center (GRSSC) Director worked with the GRSSC staff to continue using the lean concept to ensure the warehouse is well organized for optimal health care supply process flow. The GRSSC staff has begun assessing space and shelving utilization, reducing clutter, and removing unnecessary equipment from the building. A clean and organized warehouse helps improve work efficiency. Examples of this work include: additional workstations are now available in the loading dock area where the staff can immediately account for incoming shipments; the designated Receiving Area has made the segregation of incoming shipments more visible; the Receiving team can better distinguish which supplies to inventory; and all relevant purchasing files are centralized in the Receiving Area for improved information retrieval and enhanced management of the receiving process. The GRSSC staff will continue its workplace improvement activities to provide optimal services for the health care facilities served, which ultimately supports improved patient care.
- The NAO Clinical Applications Coordinator (CAC) and Navajo Area Database Administrator continue to work with Navajo Area Federal, Tribal and Urban sites to enhance Resource Patient Management System (RPMS) applications through Alpha and Beta testing new patches.
- The NAO Division of Information Technology (DIT) staff continue technical support for NAIHS staff teleworking via Virtual Private Network (VPN). In addition, support is provided for staff at the Area Office.
- In Fiscal Year 2022, the Navajo Region Human Resources Office conducted 42 training sessions with approximately 3,000 attendees. The trainings targeted supervisors responsible for managing employees returning to the workplace after the 2020 onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The trainings addressed Workplace Flexibilities, Leave Administration, Overtime, Timekeeping, Worker's Compensation, and Employee/Labor Relations. These trainings followed requirements of the IHS' Special General Memorandum No. 22-03.

Leading People: *This core management function involves the ability to lead people toward meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. Inherent in this element is the ability to provide an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others, facilitates cooperation and teamwork, and supports constructive resolution of conflicts.*

- The NAO Office of Public Health researched, developed, and circulated COVID-19, Monkey Pox, Syphilis, and other public health messages that are culturally sensitive and appropriate for the Navajo Nation. The NAO Public Health Team continues to partner

with the Navajo Nation, Navajo Epidemiology Center and Tribal Health Organizations to support collaborative public health surveillance and community responses.

- Dr. Kevin Gaines, Chief Medical Officer, NAIHS, announces the successful recruitment of three new Clinical Directors within the Chinle and Kayenta Service Units. More specifically, Clinical Director positions have been filled at the Chinle Comprehensive Health Care Facility, the Kayenta Health Center, and the Inscription House Health Center. Dr. Gaines recently met with two of the new directors to provide orientation and mentorship in their new roles.
- The NAIHS Chief Medical Officer is developing a Medical Leadership Course (MLC) for NAIHS physician leaders. The training will be coordinated with a commercial physician leadership training vendor, the Office of General Counsel, and other IHS Area's physician leaders. The MLC will provide much needed guidance and direction for today's physicians interested in becoming tomorrow's physician leaders.
- The NAO Office of Public Health implemented and evaluated the Navajo Wellness Model Prevention Curriculum for upcoming community trainings. The Navajo Wellness Model is an annual prevention training (winter season) that teaches a holistic and culturally relevant way of living in balance. During the off-season, the team implements the "Bee Iina doo Nanitin hane" preventive health series that provides wellness topics within a culturally relevant framework for the community.
- The NAIHS Acquisition program continues to work to recruit local community members into the Acquisition Contract Specialist Intern Program. The Intern Program allows for recruitment of Contract Specialists in the Federal Contract Specialist job series at the entry level, then develop professionally in the General Schedule (GS) Grade pay scale as they meet identified program milestones. The Intern Program is available at all NAIHS medical facilities within the NAIHS Area Regions. The Chinle Service Unit recently hired three new Contract Specialists, the Kayenta Service Unit has hired one new Contract Specialist, the Gallup Regional Supply Service Center hired one new Contract Specialist, and the Gallup Indian Medical Center hired one new Contract Specialist under the Intern Program in the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2022. In Fiscal Year 2022, 11 new Contract Specialists were recruited through the Intern Program.
- NAIHS Facilities Management and Engineering Divisions continued to experience delays in construction projects due to a long-standing IHS policy that restricted Area-level procurement of construction services to \$150,000. In working with IHS Headquarters, the NAIHS recently received an increase in the Area-level procurement threshold from \$150,000 to \$300,000. This increase created an opportunity for the NAIHS Acquisition Team to create a cohort of contract specialists which will work exclusively with experts in the procurement of construction services. It is the mission of the cohort to assist the NAIHS Facilities Management and Engineering staff complete construction projects that have been pending completion and to ensure there are no future delays for projects under \$300,000.
- The NAIHS Business Office Managers and Area Office have established several standardized reports that are used to monitor revenue cycle operations at Federal Service Units. Development and maintenance of these manual standardized reports are a

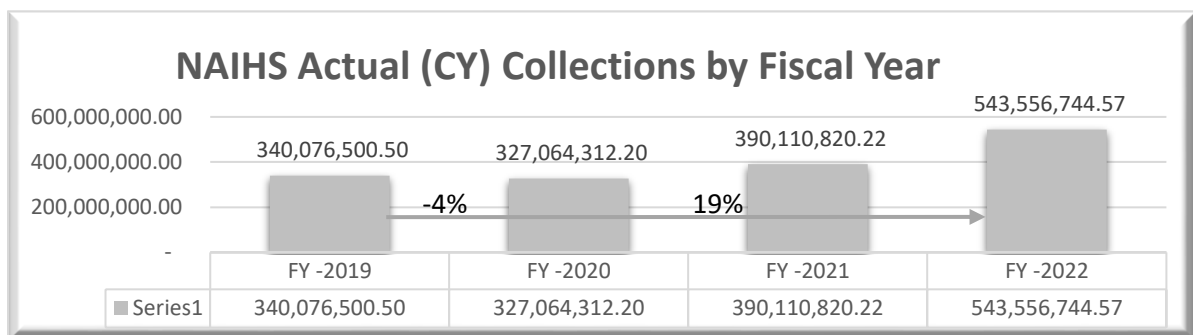
necessary and a time consuming process and it is estimated that staff spend approximately 50% of their work week compiling reports. In the spring of 2022, IHS Headquarters and the NAIHS partnered on a project titled “The Navajo Area Revenue Cycle Pilot Project”. The goal of this project is to eliminate manual compilation of reports by replacing them with a dashboard that will be automatically updated with the revenue cycle oversight information on a daily basis. The dashboard will eliminate the requirement to compile reports manually and allow staff more time to maximize revenue analysis, technical assistance, training and capacity building.

- The NAO Information Security Systems Officer (ISSO) provides continuous support to Federal health facility sites to mitigate on-going information technology security vulnerabilities. Pursuant to Binding Operational Directive BOD-22-01, IHS is required to remediate vulnerabilities before specified due dates.
- The NAO ISSO supports Service Units with the transition to new Integrated Access Management system for all current and new employees.
- The Navajo Area Human Resources Office completes thousands of data entries in the main employee data system. The Notification of Personnel Action form, known as the “SF-50”, is a document containing 50 data fields. However, behind the scenes there are many more data fields which update our organizational and position data, data about each employee, and data about the personnel actions. The Navajo Area Human Resource Office processed 20,567 SF-50s in FY-2022. In addition to monitoring dozens of queries, the Navajo Human Resources staff conducted 24 internal Human Resources training sessions to improve the quality of data. Each year since 2020, Navajo Region Human Resources staff have reduced the overall volume of data errors in the employee data system.

Business Acumen: *This core management function involves the ability to manage human, financial, and information resources strategically.*

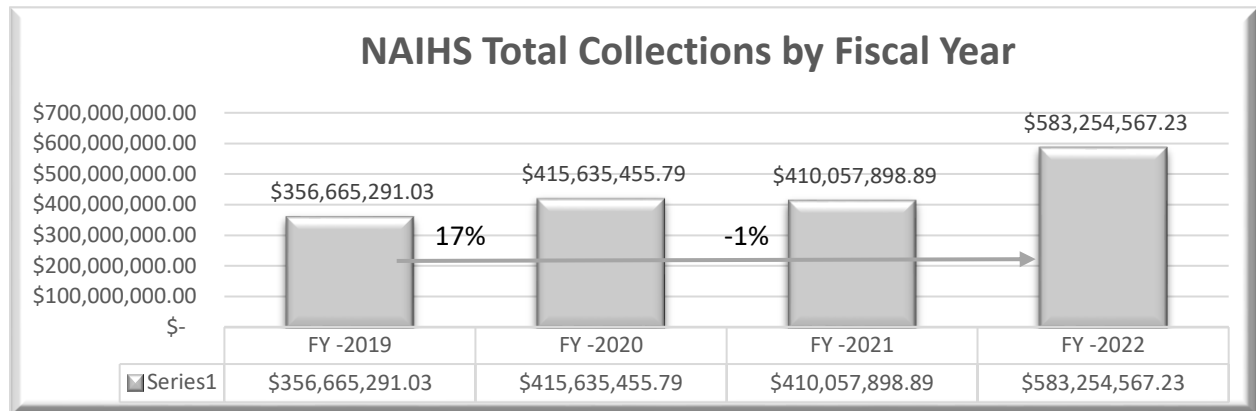
- In Fiscal Year 2022, NAIHS healthcare facilities billed and collected more than in previous years. This development came about while adapting to the COVID Pandemic and subsequent changes in practices that were required to maximally protect both patients and staff.
- Due to healthcare insurance coverage expansion, Purchased Referred Care (PRC) continues to expand covered services for patients as more patients have third-party health insurance coverage with the result of fewer patients relying solely on PRC for referred services.
- The NAO Office of Public Health has planned, implemented, and evaluated Special Diabetes Prevention Initiative (SDPI) activities occurring under the NAIHS SDPI grant. The Office of Public Health completed annual audits, annual progress reports, and continues to support grantees. The NAO SDPI program has trained and hosted SDPI information sessions with Navajo Nation grantees to lend support in successfully preparing their Fiscal Year 2023 SDPI grant applications.

- The NAIHS Acquisition program continues to strive to meet the overall projected spending goal for each fiscal year. In efforts to assist in streamlining, the acquisition team is working to award Area-wide consolidated contracts. The Acquisition team is currently working on two large Area-wide contracts, one for revenue cycle management and another for professional nursing services. The goal is to have these two contracts awarded early in FY 2023.
- The NAIHS Acquisition program continues to strive to meet the fiscal year projected spend goals. In recent years, internal studies and analyses were performed concerning the supply versus demand ratio. In this report, supply is defined by the number of Acquisition staff within the NAIHS Acquisition Program and the demand is the annual projected spend goal each service unit and Area Office projected for that fiscal year. The overall analyses provides leadership with benchmarks that support the NAIHS in meeting its projected spending goal. For fiscal year 2022, the NAIHS Acquisition Team was short staffed by a third of its overall staffing positions, which resulted in not meeting the projected spending goal. For Fiscal Year 2023, a goal has been established for the NAIHS Acquisition program to fill all program vacancies and work to improve daily spending goals to ensure the FY 2023 projected spending goal is met.
- Navajo Area Ethics staff accounted for gifts from 48 sources in Fiscal Year 2022. Gifts are defined as either In-Kind Travel or donations. The Navajo Area received an estimated value of \$449,000 in Gifts. Not all gifts are approved due to the stringent gift acceptance regulations of the Federal government.
- During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, third party revenue collections were impacted. Collections initially decreased and subsequently increased across the NAIHS. Fiscal Year 2019 actual collections totaled \$340 million and Fiscal Year 2020 actual collections totaled \$327 million, which was a 4% decrease (\$13 million). In Fiscal Year 2021, collections were \$390 million. As compared to Fiscal Year 2020, this was an increase of \$63 million (19% increase). Fiscal Year 2022 ended in total actual collections of \$543,556,744, which is an increase of \$153 million (38% increase) from Fiscal Year 2021.



- The total collections with added stimulus funding is shown by Fiscal Years. The Fiscal Year 2019 total collections were \$356 million and in Fiscal Year 2020, total collections were \$415 million. This is an increase of 17% change from Fiscal Year 2019 to Fiscal Year 2020. In Fiscal Year 2021, total collections were \$410 million and when comparing

to Fiscal Year 2020, this was a decrease of \$5.5 million or -1% change. Our FY 2022 ended in total collections of \$583,254,567 and this is an increase of \$173 million or 42% change from Fiscal Year 2021.



Results Driven: *This core management function involves the ability to meet organizational goals and customer expectations. Inherent in this element is the ability to make decisions that produce high-quality results by applying technical knowledge, analyzing problems, and calculating risks.*

- Monkey Pox vaccine was efficiently and effectively distributed to the highest risk individuals in our patient population. Initially there were a few cases of Monkey Pox on the Navajo Nation, but with Area-wide education and vaccination efforts the cases quickly decreased after 1-2 weeks from the initial cases.
- As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, three NAIHS Service Units (Gallup, Shiprock, and Chinle) were overdue for unannounced Joint Commission Surveys for Hospital and Ambulatory Accreditation; however, they recently completed their surveys successfully. The remaining two Service Units (Crownpoint & Kayenta) continue to prepare for their surveys.
- The Gallup Indian Medical Center (GIMC) Emergency Department Expansion and Renovation project design was awarded September 10, 2021. Notice to proceed was issued on October 4, 2021 and a kick off on-site workshop was held on October 7, 2021. The project is being designed to incorporate the ED Expansion and Renovation project with a new Emergency Department Modular building to ensure both buildings complement each other. The updated design will meet current codes and suggested changes to the layout per GIMC Emergency Department (ED) staff. The GIMC ED is at 95% construction documents. The final design is due October 11, 2022. The project design includes renovating approximately 6,060 building gross square feet (BGSF) and expansion of 2,282 BGSF of new space. The new ED will be approximately 8,342 BGSF. The new renovated and expanded space will help alleviate space deficiencies as they exist today with the ED, Observation Unit, and the Urgent Care Clinic. The renovation /expansion project will increase patient capacity and enhance patient care services.

- The Crownpoint Service Unit South Quarters Repair-by-Replacement Design was awarded in August 2021. The design kickoff meeting was held on September 23, 2021. The scope of work for this project is to complete a design for the replacement of 33 quarters units. The existing Long mark modular units were built in the 1950s and are beyond their useful life. The new quarters will be energy efficient and bring the Crownpoint south quarters into compliance with modern day standards. The project design will include evaluation of the existing infrastructure, replacement of infrastructure if needed, and a complete design package for the construction of 33 new quarters units. The new units will help with recruitment and retention of staff for Crownpoint Hospital. During the design process, the Service Unit collaborated with the local Crownpoint Land Use Planning Committee (CLUPC) to make decisions on building color schemes for the updated look of the community. Crownpoint Service Unit is building coalitions to help incorporate stronger relationships with the community. The project has reached the 100% Construction Documents milestone. In conjunction with the IHS Architectural and Engineering Design Guideline, the review of design has highlighted the energy efficiency and long-term sustainability of the updated Government Quarters subdivision. With the availability of funding, it is anticipated the construction project will go out for bid in the fall of 2022.
- The Tsaile Quarters Project was selected to receive \$21.5 million in Department of Health and Human Services Non-Recurring Expense Funds (NEF) to construct approximately 30 new quarters and all required 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 Tsaile Health Center staff. This first phase of the project will design and construct approximately 30 new quarters. This project will help support recruitment and retention of health professionals for the Tsaile Health Center. Currently, the project is being amended for the type of quarters, from single family homes to apartment buildings and multiplex homes.
- The Sanitation Deficiency System (SDS) listing of projects is reported to the Navajo Nation annually with the most recent SDS report listing dated December 3, 2021. The 2022 SDS report listed 349 water and wastewater infrastructure projects totaling approximately \$543.3 million. A new SDS listing of projects for the Navajo Area is currently under review by IHS Headquarters.
- The Division of Sanitation Facilities Construction (DSFC) staff completed construction project documents for Fiscal Year 2021 funds, which includes \$6.4 million in Housing Support and \$29.6 million in Regular Funds. In addition, the DSFC completed construction project documents for Fiscal Year 2021 IHS ARPA funds, which includes \$1.7 million in Housing Support and \$35.9 million in Regular Funds. The DSFC received \$2.69 million for Fiscal Year 2021 IHS ARPA for the “delivery of potable water” in which the DSFC staff are working on completing construction project documents. Lastly, the DSFC staff is working on completing project documents for Fiscal Year 2022 Investment Infrastructure and Jobs Act (PL 117-58) budgets that includes \$128 million for Tier 1 Project Funding; \$19 million for Tier 1 Design & Construction; and \$4.2 million for Tier 2 & Tier 3 Planning, Design, & Construction, for a total of \$151 million.

- The NAO Office of Public Health's Epidemiology Team tracks and reports record level data for the NAIHS Federal service units and Tribal Health Organization facilities, excluding three satellite clinics under the Albuquerque Area IHS. The Team conducts active surveillance and analysis of COVID-19, Monkey Pox, and other communicable diseases. The data are organized by age, service unit, immunization status, COVID-19 vaccine type, and gender. The NAO Team continues to provide these surveillance data on a daily basis to stakeholders including NAIHS and Navajo Epi Center leadership.
- The NAIHS Acquisition program continues to work toward meeting the small business goals as required by the Federal Acquisition Regulation. This also includes awarding contracts to Indian Owned Small Business firms. The data below reflect percentages achieved for the NAIHS and for IHS nationally:

Category	NAIHS Dollars Obligated Total	NAIHS% Achieved	NAIHS% Goals	IHS% Achieved	IHS % Goals
Small Business	\$108,979,041.19	39%	32.50%	38.95%	41.64%
Small Disadvantage Business	\$44,345,745.62	16.06%	5%	15.98%	20.24%
Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business	\$6,220,414.88	2.29%	3%	2.24%	8.8%
Woman Owned Small Business	\$24,356,979.04	8.72%	5%	8.78%	6.45%
Certified HUBZone Small Business	\$6,884,350.81	2.46%	3%	2.48%	4.25%

- The Navajo Area IHS Acquisition program for FY 2022 was able to achieve three of its five identified small business goals, including: small business, small disadvantage business, and woman owned small business. In addition, the IHS in general was able to award \$30,943,682.00 to Buy Indian and Native Owned Businesses, which included workload contributions from the NAIHS Acquisition Team. In addition, the NAIHS Acquisition program continues to meet competition requirements. In FY 2022 total competition was 3,582 actions at 72% and noncompetition is at 1,421 actions at 28% of all NAIHS reported contracts.

Extent Competed and Non-Competed Report as of September 26, 2022

	# Actions	% Actions	Dollars	% Dollars
Competition	3582	72%	\$ 239,815,971.62	86%
Non-Competition	1421	28%	\$ 38,518,420.53	14%

- The NAO Division of Information Technology is performing IT network assessments for all NAIHS Service Units in anticipation of additional new hires. Network routers and switches will be replaced with the most updated technologies.
- During Fiscal Year 2022 year-end closeout, Navajo Area Finance, in collaboration with the Service Unit Finance and Business Office staff, were able to reconcile the cash

reconciliation variances and decrease our accounts receivable aging accounts. This was accomplished by posting and monitoring our Area's patient bills, receipts and adjustments within the Resource Patient Management System (RPMS) Third Party and Accounts Receivable packages. Each Service Unit ensured their files were successfully transmitted to the accounting system. This close monitoring of files allows service units to maximize third party collections.

- Navajo Area Personnel Security staff process background investigations for employees, contractors, and volunteers. Background investigations are initiated for federal hiring purposes or renewal of Personnel Identity Verification cards. In FY 2022, the Navajo Area Personnel Security staff completed 3,448 determinations for suitability. One-percent of the determinations resulted in an unfavorable or cancelled requests for clearance.

Building Coalitions: *This core management function involves the ability to build coalitions internally and with other federal agencies, state and local governments, nonprofit and private sector organizations, foreign governments, or international organizations to achieve common goals.*

- The NAIHS continued to support close collaboration with the University of California, San Francisco Health, Equity, Action and Leadership (HEAL) Fellowship Program. The Program brings HEAL Fellows to Navajo Nation health facilities to provide patient care. The Program has been very positive on the Navajo Nation as approximately 50% of the Fellows stay with IHS once they complete their Fellowship, which provides NAIHS with one of its most successful recruitment opportunities.
- The Northern Navajo Medical Center is collaborating with the University of New Mexico to start a UNM Family Medicine Residency program. This program will allow our physicians to participate in training future physicians and provide IHS with an excellent physician recruitment opportunity in Primary Care.
- The new Pueblo Pintado Health Care Center design contract was awarded on April 20, 2021 and is presently 95% complete. The NAIHS has included the Pueblo Pintado Steering Committee, the Navajo Nation Department of Health, and the Navajo Nation Health Programs in the design development. The Pueblo Pintado Steering Committee includes members from the communities of Canoncito, Whitehorse Lake, Torreon, Ojo Encino, and Pueblo Pintado. Participation of the NAIHS, Navajo Nation Health Programs, and community members will help design a state of the art health center that is both functional and respectful of the community and its cultural beliefs.
- The NAIHS Division of Sanitation Facilities Construction continued to support the Transitional Watering Points Project, which includes increasing access to safe drinking water and the safe water storage program during COVID-19. Staff continue to support activities with the Navajo Nation, federal partners, universities, and others through the Water Access Coordination Group meetings. At this point, the NAIHS OEHE continues triaging inquires and responding to mission activities associated with this project and IHS Headquarters is still engaged in managing this effort.

- The NAIHS Office of Public Health developed and distributed Syphilis and Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) awareness messaging material and developed a work team to bring STI test kits to local homes and collaborated with the Navajo Nation, Service Units, and John Hopkins University.
- The NAIHS Office of Public Health collaborates with the Navajo Epidemiology Center and the University of New Mexico to provide and share epidemiology strategies, discuss public health initiatives, and share public health best practices during our monthly nationwide Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO) webinar sessions to attendees.
- The NAIHS Acquisition program continues to develop partnerships with various educational institutions, state and federal entities to continue to support professional health care staffing through various methods, including volunteer agreements, interagency agreements and residency programs. In addition to providing health care services, several agreements are established with local entities to provide space for the provision of COVID-19 and Flu vaccinations in each community. For Fiscal Year 2022, the Acquisition program established and renewed a total of 101 agreements, which were all aimed at supporting the mission of NAIHS in terms of providing healthcare professionals and securing space to ensure Navajo Nation communities are vaccinated against COVID-19 and influenza.
- The Division of Finance processed and paid out \$35,912,150 to our 638 and Urban partners during the fourth quarter of FY 2022. This required coordination with the Programs/Hospitals, the IHS Office of Tribal Partnership, Office of Tribal Self Governance, IHS Budget and Finance Department and the Division of Acquisitions. The financial modifications are processed and requests are made to the Budget and Finance Department which are certified and sent to the United States Treasury for payment. These activities take place over several days and requires constant communication between all involved parties to successfully move the funding.
- The Gallup Regional Supply Service Center bases its success on maintaining positive relationships with others. Despite GRSSC's attempt at maintaining optimal supply inventories on a consistent basis, certain supplies are often time unavailable due to manufacturer backorders or due to products not on the formulary to order. Though these challenges exist, GRSSC staff members have been working with various vendors and the General Services Administration (GSA) representatives to resolve issues and will continue to do so to support safe patient care for the health care facilities GRSSC serves.
- In August 2021, over one hundred Medline Medical Surgical Prime Vendor products were transferred to the National Supply Service Center (NSSC) in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. However, at times GRSSC is notified by IHS General Service staff that Medline and the NSSC cannot provide certain products. Therefore, we have been working with various vendors to acquire the products. Allowing the vendors to search for products on our behalf has been tremendously successful. Examples of the products purchased included blood collection sets and normal saline flushes. Building coalitions with key players has saved time for our team and provides much needed patient supplies.

- The NAIHS Division of Information Technology (DIT) staff and Office of Environmental Health and Engineering (OEHE) IT staff collaborated on network assessments for two OEHE field offices. Similar network assessments will be performed to support an increase in staff to support Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act projects.
- Continuity of Operations Planning/Disaster Recovery:
 - a. On September 21, 2022, the City of Gallup and surrounding areas experienced an Internet network outage that impacted all businesses in the Gallup region. Rehoboth Hospital and Gallup Indian Medical Center were both impacted by the outage causing great concern as the outage directly impacted patient care.
 - b. The NAO DIT is spearheading the business needs for hospitals to remain operational in the event of similar network outages that have plagued the region in recent years. (8 events in the last 4 years)
 - c. Coordination with McKinley County Emergency Services, GIMC, RMCHCS, and the City Emergency Responders are all part of the NAO efforts to remedy these events which will also lay the ground work for other communities where IHS clinics are located throughout the Navajo Nation.
- Since 2018, the NAIHS has had more employees separating from Federal service than hired. In FY 2022, the NAIHS Human Resources (HR) staff processed 879 hiring-type actions for permanent employees. The separations of Federal civilian employees was 572. An additional 300 temporary employees were hired throughout the year, bringing the total number of Federal civilian employees to 4,265. The Service Unit leadership team is instrumental in communicating with the HR hiring staff their priorities for filling positions and in assisting the HR Personnel Security staff balance pre-security clearances for Federal employees, Contractors, and Volunteers.

SERVICE UNITS

Leading Change: *This executive management function involves the ability to bring about strategic change, both within and outside the organization, to meet organizational goals. Inherent in this element is the ability to establish an organizational vision and to implement it in a continuously changing environment.*

- Effective January 1, 2023, the NAIHS will begin using the USA Performance fully automated employee performance system to meet government regulations and support performance management best practices for the Federal civilian workforce. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is currently planning the implementation of USA Performance for all IHS employees covered under the IHS PMAP policy. As part of our transition, OPM will create USA Performance user accounts for all employees and schedule training on the new performance system.
- The Chinle Service Unit Purchased-Deferred Care (PRC) staff met with the Chinle Hospital Optometry Department to create a paperless referral process and discuss, brainstorm, and collaborate on implementation. PRC training was provided to ambulatory staff to enhance the knowledgebase of PRC Program processes. Additionally, a meeting was held with Nursing Supervisors on coordination of referrals related to the internal processes and the Electronic Health Record. A meeting was also

held with San Juan Regional Medical Center (SJPMC) staff in Farmington, NM to continue quarterly meetings to streamline communication processes between IHS/PRC staff and SJPMC Business Office staff.

- The Chinle Finance Department is working on converting paper documents to electronic format to enhance the Federal Government's efficiency. This initially requires staff training and software to convert incoming documents to electronic format with necessary fields and signature panels. Additionally, the Finance Department plans to reduce paper copies within the department. Chinle Service Unit has already started using the Invoice Processing Platform where vendors electronically submit invoices, invoices are reviewed electronically by the Contracting Officer Representative or Technical Point of Contact and payment is certified and paid electronically.
- The Tsale Health Center acquired two FEMA trailers for patient care and business office purposes. The staff intend to use one of the units as an enhanced Maternal Health & Pediatric Department. This will offer a sanctuary for patients away from other clinics. The second unit will be used as a new Business Office. The objective with these units is to restore a sense of normalcy; providing specialty patient care in such a way as to help patients feel safe returning to the facility for care for these two specialties. We continue to safely meet our population's medical needs alongside our COVID-19 response efforts. We are presenting awaiting Fiscal Year 2023 funding to relocate the trailers.
- The Tsale Health Center staff is looking toward the future "new norm" in remodeling the center's Dental Department. The Dental Department transitioned from an open theater type department, which was prone to cross contamination, to a five private room department with each room being under negative pressure. The Health Center is also increasing dental services at the Rock Point health facility. Our goal for any future epidemics/pandemics is to continue dental care in a safe manner, including preventative and treatment services to our dental patients. Presently, the facility is securing new chairs and equipment along with new flooring and walls. An electrical upgrade is also planned. The Rock Point facility currently provides services to Rock Point Community schools for school age students. Management plans to expand to more services for the public in the future.
- On July 28, 2022, Pueblo Pintado Health Clinic, a satellite clinic of Crownpoint Service Unit (CPSU), implemented satellite broadband internet service through Starlink. Since the installation of Starlink, the CPSU IT Department has documented an 11% increase in usage, allowing all computers to receive timely security patches without interruption. The Executive Management is reviewing the possibility of installing satellite broadband services at additional sites.
- As part of our efforts to ensure that patients have received diabetes education and annual exams, our Crownpoint SU Diabetes Team is actively updating the Diabetes Registry. Currently, there are 730 patients with diabetes, compared to 721 in 2021. The latest diabetes audit report indicates that approximately 67% of our diabetic patients have received diabetes self-management education and support.
- On July 11, 2022, the Gallup Service Unit (GSU) hired a Health Recruitment Specialist to assist the Division of Clinical Services attract highly qualified providers. The clinical

recruitment position is key to addressing the high volume of vacancies and to conduct outreach at job fairs, and training.

- The Tohatchi Health Center provided sports physicals and back to school events for student athletes and others returning to school. A total of 61 students received their physical exams between July 23, 2022 and August 10, 2022.
- On September 16, 2022, the Tohatchi Health Center successfully hired a permanent Medical Provider. In addition, the health center was able to attain a Contract Nurse and Dental Assistant Supervisor to fill medical personnel gaps.
- Northern Navajo Medical Center has established an Emergency Department (ED) Nursing Residency Program to train new ED nurses within six months to one year. The residents receive didactic education and hands-on training with a preceptor. The program is self-driven and each resident must complete the following Trauma Nursing Core Course, Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support, Emergency Nursing Pediatric Course, Neonatal Resuscitation Program and Pediatric advanced life support. After completion, the residents are to present an evidenced-based practice project. The program has three graduates and three new students are expected to on-board soon.
- In October, Health Literacy Month is celebrated to recognize the use of strategies to design health information to be easily understood and accessible. The Four Directions Health Communications Program uses newsletters, signs, pamphlets, brochures, booklets, posters, videos, social media, radio and TV to communicate healthcare information to patients, communities, schools, and tribal programs. The use of health communication during the pandemic allowed information, such as COVID-19 testing and vaccination sites, influenza vaccination, available non-COVID medical services, and community resources to be quickly and easily disseminated into the community. Videos were aired on social media about the car clinic, ER services, and COVID-19 screening process. Some of the videos were taped using the Navajo Language. The effective use of health literacy strategies may have reduced infection and hospital rates.
- The Department of Health & Human Services Secretary's Advisory Committee on National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives, called Healthy People 2030 Framework, include goals to eliminate health disparities by assisting patients attain health literacy. To support this national initiative, the Four Corners Regional Health Center direct patient care team modified the English version of the *Short Assessment of Health Literacy* (SAHL) tool. The eight SAHL test questions were translated to Navajo. The tool is designed to assess patient's reading level and ability to understand common medical terms. Patients are encouraged to take part in this assessment.
- The Four Corners Regional Health Center (FCRHC) Rehabilitation clinic contracted with Four Corners Limb and Brace to provide on-site prosthetic/orthotic services. The orthoptist holds clinics at FCRHC each third Tuesday of the month to measure, cast and/or adjust prosthetics. Diabetic patients will have access to this service.
- The Dziłth-Na-O-Dith-Hle Health Center Emergency Management Team completed an Infant/Child Abduction drill. All departments participated in an in-service and internal response drill on the plan. The clinic is planning to conduct a full scale-exercise in the fall of 2022.

- The Dziłth-Na-O-Dith-Hle Health Center Lab Department invested in a Cepheid 4 Plex machine to perform real-time tests that can detect and identify COVID-19, Influenza A, Influenza B and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) infections. The machine provides instant test results within 30 minutes.
- The Inscription House Health Center acquired two FEMA/Army trailers in 2021. One trailer will be used for healthcare. The second trailer will be used to support Navajo Nation Health Programs. Our objective is to improve clinical services by expanding the health center footprint and safely meet the healthcare needs of the community as we continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Kayenta Health Center Dental Department has implemented a Denture program (a newly added dental service for Kayenta Service Unit). Dr. Oldroyd, Prosthodontist on-boarded with the health center the early part of 2022. Dr. Oldroyd is the only prosthodontist in Northern Arizona and on the Navajo Nation. Due to limited staffing, the Denture program focuses on serving the communities of the Kayenta Service Unit (KSU).
- The KSU started work on opening its 10-bed Inpatient Unit in 2018, but was delayed for the last two years by the COVID pandemic. The hospital staff are no longer waiting for COVID to pass. The KSU staff is working hard on policies, templates, staffing and new services, such as Nutrition Food Service with a goal to open Inpatient services in November 2022. (This type of conversion from an Ambulatory Clinic to a Hospital Service is a new initiative within the Indian Health Service).
- The KSU Division of Information Technology (DIT) continues to volunteer and participate with the national RPMS team requests for alpha and beta testing sites for RPMS patches. When testing is completed the patches are distributed IHS-wide. Sixteen alpha and beta tests have been conducted. In addition, DIT continues to install Vista Imaging System patch updates.
- The KSU Division of Information Technology (DIT) has deployed 104 out of 120 desktops throughout the facility to replace outdated computers. The deployment involves preparing old computers for excessing by removing hard drives and preparing media destruction documents. The 'cleaned' desktops are then returned to Support Services for final documentation and excessing.
- The KSU Division of Information Technology (DIT) has deployed 80 out of 400 Cisco IP Phones throughout the facility to replace outdated phones. The deployment of updated phones is the first phase to upgrade the KSU voice-over internet protocol (VOIP) system, increasing network speed to local computers, enhanced telephony features, and providing color displays for emergency broadcast notifications.

Leading People: *This core management function involves the ability to lead people toward meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. Inherent in this element is the ability to provide an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others, facilitates cooperation and teamwork, and supports constructive resolution of conflicts.*

- Chinle Service Unit's full-time cardiologist, Dr. Lawrence Gaul, returned to the service unit and will expand services, including, but not limited to consultation, treadmill stress testing, and echocardiograms.
- Effective September 11, 2022, Dr. Christopher Jentoft has joined the Chinle Comprehensive Health Care Facility as the new Clinical Director. Dr. Jentoft comes to us from the Whiteriver Service Unit in eastern Arizona having worked there for 10 years as a Family Medicine / Emergency Medicine Physician.
- Weekly/bi-weekly/monthly huddles with Chinle Service Unit PRC team related to workload reviews, budget activities, Catastrophic Health Emergency Fund (CHEF) and administrative functions of the PRC program are ongoing. The PRC Team participated in the CSU Tapestry of Wellness Refresh sessions, provided Governing Body reports on status of PRC funds for FY 2022, and provided yearly training to CSU PRC staff on coordination of PRC funds related to Current Year and Prior Year funds.
- The Chinle Service Unit Finance Department is working toward a more diverse versatile group, cross training staff into more areas of the department. Allowing staff to participate in all areas of training, senior staff are taking training in more subject areas to provide more depth to the department which is necessary to meet the changing workforce of labor shortages. The goal is for all staff to become knowledgeable in all subject areas of the Finance Department to provide better services due to the ever-evolving workplace.
- In September 2021, the Crownpoint Service Unit (CPSU) re-established a Supervisory Contract Specialist position and on-boarded its newest supervisor in August 2022. As part of the new supervisor's assessment of CPSU's contracting processes, the CPSU is exploring the possibility of joining established contracts with other Federal entities to address our internal contracting requirements. It is anticipated that joining established contracts will significantly reduce the paperwork and time associated with establishing new contracts for the service unit, as well as provide a larger pool of contractors.
- The Crownpoint Division of Nursing is using an evidence-based clinical transition framework titled Vermont Nursing in Partnership (VNIP) to on-board two new nurse graduates. There will be classes for preceptors by the end of the calendar year 2022 that will follow a standardized competency-based approach. This is a framework that emphasizes the importance of workplace culture in recruiting and retaining nurses over the long term.
- On July 28, 2022, the Gallup Service Unit conducted an Active Shooter Drill at the Gallup Indian Medical Center (GIMC) Emergency Department east waiting area. The drill lasted no more than ten (10) minutes to determine our vulnerability should an active shooting occur in our facility. An "after action" plan was prepared with areas of improvement that included staff response, communication plan, and continued training. The Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) will address all areas for conformance to minimize the loss of life in an active shooter situation.
- The Gallup Service Unit Public Health Nursing administered approximately 1,200 COVID-19 booster and influenza vaccines to seven communities/chapters. In addition,

four vaccination events were held from July 30, 2022 to September 24, 2022 for children 6 months to 18 years old for the COVID-19 primary series and influenza vaccine.

- The Gallup Service Unit Public Health Nursing has been assisting with all Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) cases at the service unit since there has been an ongoing vacancy at the Navajo Department of Health. To date, there has been eighty syphilis cases that require the PHN to monitor chart reviews on a monthly basis to ensure coordinated information is provided to the McKinley County Health Department.
- Four Corners Regional Health Center employee wellness and prevention of workplace violence program is kicking off the journey to a workplace that truly supports whole-person wellbeing. Staff were surveyed through various platforms to help gauge monthly conversation themes and teambuilding exercises. Additionally, staff received information on Stress First Aid, Workplace Violence Prevention, and Etiquette and Respect (Iná Nizhóní Standards of Behavior). The goals are to build a culture of wellness and enhance professional fulfillment.
- The Four Corners Regional Health Center Clinician Nurse joint improvement project is documenting patients' health goals. Patient goal setting is a patient-driven activity through which the clinician serves a supportive role in assisting the patient in setting goals that are well defined and achievable. The patient's self-defined goals are captured in the electronic health record, and serve as a location where these goals can be monitored and followed up. Patients visiting FCRHC will have an opportunity to partake in this valuable support service.
- The Dziłth-Na-O-Dith-Hle Health Center Acting Lead Nurse completed the Trauma Nursing Core Course to ensure optimal care to those who are seriously injured.
- The Dziłth-Na-O-Dith-Hle Health Center hired a full-time Nurse Practitioner and Pharmacist during the 3rd quarter of FY 2022 to provide direct patient care services to the community.
- Dr. Sandra Merino-Navarro on-boarded as the Chief Medical Officer with IHHC on August 1, 2022. Dr. Merino was born in Columbia, South America and graduated from Medical School in Barranquilla, Columbia in 1991. She moved to sunny Florida in 2000 and then to Puerto Rico in 2011. On February 29, 2016, Dr. Merino began working with IHS as the Outpatient Provider with Kayenta Health Center. In transferring from Kayenta Health Center to IHHC, Dr. Merino oversees the Division of Clinical Services and is a vital member of the Leadership Team with IHHC and KSU.
- The Dental Department with Kayenta Health Center has implemented an on-site dental assistant training program, a new added training initiative for Kayenta Service Unit. All of the Dental Assistants with the health center have been trained and are competent in providing dental assistant services.

Business Acumen: *This core management function involves the ability to manage human, financial, and information resources strategically.*

- The Gallup Service Unit Division of Finance continues its hard work and determination on behalf of the service unit to complete the year-end close out. GSU hit a revenue milestone for Fiscal Year 2022 as GSU Billings and Collections surpassed target goals set for the month including the annual service unit goal by 27.7%.
- The Gallup Service Unit became a designated site to test an upgrade of the existing Purchased Referred Care software program. This software enhancement allowed the service unit to electronically sign denial letters by the Chief Executive Officer or designee. The Purchase Referred Care Program completed 30,000 referrals for FY 2022. The Deferred program expensed an estimated \$400,000 for eyeglasses, dentures, and hearing aids.
- From FY 2021 to FY 2022, Crownpoint Service Unit (CPSU) increased third party collections by 41%. A total of \$51,160,520.92 was collected by CPSU in FY 2022, exceeding the initial goal of \$35,000,000 which was set at the beginning of the year. During vaccination clinics, CPSU captured patient information and ensured that billing was completed. This contributed to a significant increase in collections. CPSU's Business Office Manager ensured Business Office staff were continuously trained to take advantage of COVID billing opportunities and closely monitored the increase in the all-inclusive rate, the Business Office Manager ensured that retroactive billing was completed to capture the additional funds.
- A condition called diabetic retinopathy is caused by diabetes over time, which damages blood vessels in the eyes. However, in most cases, severe vision loss (blindness) can be avoided through regular examinations, timely diagnosis, and treatment. By using Joslin Vision Network (JVN) technology, it is possible to obtain images of the back of the eyes without dilating them. Upon receiving the images, eye doctors located off-site interpret them and report any abnormalities that require further evaluation and treatment. This program has contributed significantly to a reduction in diabetes-related vision loss and blindness due to improved compliance with standard of care. The CPSU Diabetes Program now offers JVN screening with daily appointments for patient visits. Since August 2022, the CPSU has had 90 patients receive their care through our program.
- In September 2022, the Crownpoint Service Unit (CPSU) on-boarded an Emergency Department Director during a time that we are experiencing a high level of activity in our Emergency Department. The Emergency Department (ED) continues to average over 1000 patient visits each month, with August 2022 being the busiest with 1,390 patient visits and the total patient visits from July to September 2022 was 3,529. Our colleagues continue to work extremely hard to provide quality patient care.
- The Chinle Service Unit welcomed our Joint Commission Survey in July 2022. The Service Unit successfully maintained our accreditation and our Patient Centered Medical Home received high marks, "A+", and compliments from the surveyor.
- Despite a significant equipment failure that disrupted power throughout the Chinle SU facility, we maintained clinical services; our Emergency Department performed

particularly well managing critical trauma patients with reduced lighting and no computer access.

- During difficult financial times brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Tsailie Health Center was able to continue hiring critical employee positions through its efforts at increasing billings and third party collections at the Rock Point Clinic site. The Tsailie Health Center team was able to enhance staffing and facility resources in an effort to maintain high quality patient services.
- The Shiprock Service Unit Patient Advocate Program has a critical role in the patient experience. The program allows management to respond, investigate, and resolve patient grievances and work with supervisors to ensure patient satisfaction. In addition, patients submit compliments to recognize employees delivering positive patient experiences. From June to August 2022, the Northern Navajo Medical Center (NNMC) Patient Advocate received 15 grievances relating to various issues, which were all resolved. During same period, 35 positive comments were received.
- The NNMC Dental Program has fully resumed services. The school-based dental sealant program will begin services to the schools and the pediatric dental clinic will begin seeing patients in the dental clinic and in the operating room. The dental hygienists will continue to provide prevention fluoride application and dental prophylaxis on pediatric patients. Pediatric patients who have completed the care plan are provided appointments for follow up visits.
- The Four Corners Regional Health Center's Health Promotion/Disease Prevention Specialist was selected for the National Health Coach Pilot Project. The program is training health coaches to build a behavior change approach to healthy living for the community. The pilot project will also assist IHS in evaluating the integration of health coaching concepts into other areas like community health and diabetes prevention.
- Four Corners Regional Health Center's Diabetic Management Educator achieved certification in Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialist (ADCES). ADCES focus area is self-management education that is appropriate for successful self-care behaviors. The certified educators are trained to recognize significant risk factors and to make treatment recommendations that are specific to patients' needs; and treatment plans that are culturally sensitive and relevant.
- The Dziłth-Na-O-Dith-Hle Health Center Pharmacy department increased its third-party collections in FY 2022 by creating a new workflow and receiving prior authorization for certain medications.
- The IHHC Leadership Team has implemented a performance improvement project to improve the process on updating patient demographic information with the Patient Registration staff. With the improvement project, IHHC can optimize the billing process and increase third party collections with Medicaid, Medicare and Private Insurance. Also, the training and competencies associated with this improvement project will enhance the staff's working knowledge and supported expanded patient care services within IHHC.

- Kayenta Service Unit (KSU) Division of Information Technology (DIT) helps support the Electronic Dental Records (EDR) system. DIT attends bi-weekly web sessions and call-ins with the IHS Dental team. Sessions are also provided by the Veterans Administration VistA Imaging (VI) leaders, technician and various VA hospital X-ray Departments' PACS (Picture Archiving and Communications System) technicians. These meetings provide technical assistance for sites that may be experiencing issues with VI and provides up-to-date information regarding the VI System.

Results Driven: *This core management function involves the ability to meet organizational goals and customer expectations. Inherent in this element is the ability to make decisions that produce high-quality results by applying technical knowledge, analyzing problems, and calculating risks.*

- The Chinle Service Unit (CSU) Clinical and Nursing Departments were jointly awarded an IHS Headquarters "Innovations" grant of \$100,000 to support an Interpreter Initiative to improve interpreter services at CSU and promote cultural safety within the healthcare environment.
- The CSU primary care clinics, in collaboration with pharmacy, expanded access to Shingrix vaccination (to prevent shingles, a painful and sometimes debilitating skin condition). The Service Unit doubled the number of shingles vaccines given each month.
- The CSU continues the "Test to Treat" model of COVID-19 treatment, with same or next-day treatment with Paxlovid or Monoclonal Antibody therapy for patients with COVID-19 who meet treatment requirements.
- The CSU Public Health Department and clinical staff monitor Monkey Pox very closely. The Public Health staff successfully treated our index patient and provided prophylactic vaccination for all close contacts.
- The CSU "Master Health Plan" suggests the need for a new health clinic in Lukachukai, AZ. The CSU team met with local community leaders to determine the feasibility of pursuing such a facility. The leaders support the notion of a new facility to increase healthcare services capacity in the local service area. The CSU is presently awaiting written support from various Chapter Officials and will continue working on this critical project.
- In August 2022, the Crownpoint Service Unit Laboratory Department underwent a Joint Commission Laboratory accreditation survey. The survey process is designed to ensure that medical laboratories provide reliable/accurate lab services results in accordance with nationally recognized standards. The laboratory received its two-year Accreditation for Laboratory and Point-of-Care Testing award letter in October 2022.
- Crownpoint Service Unit COVID-19 & Influenza vaccination clinic events have vaccinated a total of 1,118 patients with 1,174 total vaccinations given. A total of 11 vaccination events occurred in the communities of Crownpoint, Torreon and Thoreau to increase access to patients. The Vaccination team worked diligently through the process to appropriately staff each event outdoors to avoid large gatherings of patients indoors.

Coordinators of the vaccination events keep in constant communication with local Navajo Nation Council Delegates and Chapter Officials to plan and advertise events in local communities.

- On August 4, 2022, the Gallup Service Unit received official notification from The Joint Commission (TJC) that the Evidence of Standards Compliance was granted to our service unit with an accreditation decision effective May 18, 2022. The official accreditation certificate covers the Gallup Indian Medical Center and Tohatchi Health Center. On August 4, 2022, The Joint Commission (TJC) further provided official notification that effective May 18, 2022, a Certificate of Distinction for the Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Care Model is effective for up to 36 months. The approved application allows the service unit to provide evidence-based practice that will benefit our patients and our community through an integrated, patient-centered approach to care.
- The Gallup Service Unit has been pilot testing the “Any 2080” work schedule that helps address staff shortages for medical providers in the emergency department. The pilot initiative allows flexibility for staff changes to fill in the gaps for adequate coverage for day and night shifts. The medical provider response has been extremely positive and the service unit is advocating us of this work schedule concept to all Indian Health Service Areas and Service Units.
- The Tohatchi Health Center Dental Unit is improving access to dental care. For the month of August, the Dental program was able to provide 57% of patients with routine dental services by providing appointments and completing exams for first time visit patients or completing patient follow-up visits.
- For the month of August, the Tohatchi Health Center Eye Clinic improved to 57% of patients who have their annual Diabetes retinopathy-screening exam to support their Diabetes Standards of Care. Further, as of September 12, 2022, two Navajo Optometrists began rotating at the Eye Clinic and will continue to provide services through July 2023.
- Employees in the NNMC Nutrition and Dietetics Department may go unnoticed as they work in the kitchen to prepare meals for patients and employees. A team of supply clerks, cashiers, food service workers, cooks, dietitians and supervisors work in unison to prepare and serve meals in the cafeteria and on in-patient units. They observe strict health regulations and codes and clean and sterilize the kitchen, cafeteria, and equipment. During FY 2022, the Team prepared and served 102,202 meals. We thank and honor the Nutrition and Dietetics Department during the National Healthcare Food Service Week October 2-8, 2022.
- The Gallup and Shiprock Service Units are actively developing programs to improve healthcare delivery to community members experiencing homelessness. The Navajo Area fully supports and encourages service units to continue improving and expanding services for these underserved and vulnerable populations.
- The Shiprock SU’s Information Technology (IT) Department plays an important role in improving healthcare quality and safety. Over the years, IT has managed automated healthcare systems, such as electronic health records, electronic dental record, ICD-10, insurance exchanges, electronic physician’s orders, electronic sign-out and hand-off

tools, bar code medication administration, patient data management systems, and telemedicine. In the summer of 2022, the IT Department performed the following projects: 380 PC refresh deployments, 70 laptop refresh deployments, VoIP upgrade in progress, VMWare server upgrade, Remote Desktop Server upgrade and participated in RPMS Beta testing. The IT program assures 100% compliance regarding Information Systems Security Awareness training. Also, 14,000 vulnerabilities were mitigated in June of 2022. The IT Department utilizes a Four-Year Life Cycle Plan to keep equipment up-to-date, retire and replace IT equipment.

- Four Corners Regional Health Center achieved 70% of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) measures. The GPRA data include clinical care performance measures, such as care for patients with diabetes, cancer screening, immunization, behavioral health screening, and other prevention measures. This is an outstanding accomplishment due to the hard work of the direct care teams creatively prioritizing work during the pandemic and placing an emphasis on meeting GPRA measures.
- Four Corners Regional Health Center Nursing division continues to schedule patients for COVID vaccines and boosters. The challenge is the COVID-19 vaccination for children age 6 months to 5 years of age as the number of vaccinated children in this age range is extremely low. Efforts continue daily to educate parents and guardians on the importance of immunizations.
- Dziłth-Na-O-Dith-Hle Health Center (DZHC) implemented a patient satisfaction survey to measure patient experiences on DZHC Patient Care Medical Home practices. The results revealed that all patients surveyed either strongly agree or agree to the services provided in the clinic.
- Dziłth-Na-O-Dith-Hle Health Center (DZHC) Public Health Nursing implemented a performance improvement project to improve childhood immunization rate in the following tribal and urban communities: Aztec, NM; Bloomfield, NM; Lybrook, NM and Nageezi, NM. The goal of the project is to improve immunization rates to 85% or better for children ages 3-27 months. The following two communities had an increase in immunization rates: Bloomfield rates increased from 86% to 87% and Nageezi rates increased from 50% to 100%. Such improvement in two communities is a good start and shows that effective strategies can improve immunization rates.
- A newsletter has been initiated for IHHC along with weekly leadership meetings, and daily huddles to enhance and promote communication throughout the health center. Increased communication supports solidarity of purpose and ultimately results in improved patient care.

Building Coalitions: *This core management function involves the ability to build coalitions internally and with other federal agencies, state and local governments, nonprofit and private sector organizations, foreign governments, or international organizations to achieve common goals.*

- Since July 8, 2022, the Gallup Service Unit Acting Chief Executive Officer and the Acting Chief Operations Officer began meeting with the Rehoboth McKinley Christian

Hospital (RMCH) Chief Executive Officer regarding closure of the RMCH labor and delivery unit. Since then, the GSU Clinical and Nursing Divisions developed a Womens Health Unit surge plan to implement a transition of care for RMCH labor and delivery patients who present to GIMC.

- From August 9-11, 2022, the Gallup Service Unit Acting Chief Executive Officer and the Tohatchi Health System Administrator attended the Indian Health Service Direct Service Tribes National Meeting in Flagstaff, Arizona. Several key presentations from federal agencies and health care organizations provided in-depth information to improve the health status for the tribal communities we serve.
- On September 6, 2022 to September 9, 2022, the Tohatchi Health Center attended an Emergency Management Workshop in Farmington, New Mexico. The purpose of the workshop was to build collaboration with local community partners to support an Emergency Community Communications Plan. The health center will coordinate with local chapters and outside agencies to strengthen internal and external resources.
- Since June 2022, one-hour Community Stakeholders Town Hall (STH) sessions have been provided quarterly on the first Wednesday of each month. Virtual meeting invites are sent to chapters, schools, businesses, Tribal departments and health care systems. Information about CSU accessible operations/services and community vaccination schedules were shared by CSU Division Directors and Incident Management Team Leaders. Stakeholders have an opportunity to dialogue about their concerns/needs as well as about vaccinations and protective practices against exposure to COVID and the Monkey Pox virus.
- The Crownpoint Sexual Assault Response/Domestic Violence Team (SART/DV) will be working with the Utah Navajo Health Services Program's newly established Victim Advocates. The Advocates will play a vital role in providing legal advocacy services for victims to include: notifying victims of, and going with them to, court hearings; to educate victims about the court system and domestic violence, assist in filling out applications for restraining orders, and to assist victims in communicating with prosecutors, probation officers, and court officials and safety planning. The SART/DV Team is tremendously grateful for the advocacy work Honorable Navajo Nation Council Delegate Amber Crotty has done in obtaining funding for these critical positions.
- The Crownpoint Nursing Division provides clinical rotations to 15 UNM-Gallup nursing students; thereby, promoting employment opportunities with the Crownpoint Service Unit. The Nursing Division is also working with the Navajo Technical University Nursing Program to help facilitate future educational and clinical opportunities as University develops its Nursing program.
- The NNMC Health Promotion Disease Prevention Program offers a program titled "Red Eagle Challenge Experiential Outdoor Program" for students. The program uses ropes, rafting, biking, rappelling, climbing and hiking activities to teach leadership and teambuilding. A goal of the program is to have the participants connect with their physical environment.

- In 1992, Shiprock Service Unit (SRSU) began the first Just Move It events on the Navajo Nation with just 20 communities and 482 participants. In 2022, SRSU celebrated 30 years of Just Move It (JMI) events and held in-person and virtual events. The in-person events were held at six community sites and had 1,694 participants. The virtual events had 209 participants who walked or ran in their own communities across the United States with participants from New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Colorado, Texas, Florida, North Carolina, Washington, New Jersey and Wisconsin. The goal of JMI is to engage community members to participate in physical and educational activities to improve physical and mental health and understand that physical activity is one of the best ways to stay healthy.
- Red Mesa High School (RMHS), Red Mesa, AZ is committed to implementing Teen Mental Health First Aide (TMHFA), a peer to peer intervention. The program recruits and trains teens in grades 10-12, or ages 15-18 on how to identify, understand and respond to signs of a mental health or substance use challenges among their friends and peers. The Four Corners Regional Health Center Health Promotion Disease Prevention Coordinator assisted RMHS Superintendent and Principals complete a readiness assessment and obtained a commitment letter for the district. In August 2022, 80% of the teachers at RMHS completed the introduction to TMHFA program.
- Dziłth-Na-O-Dith-Hle Health Center Public Health Nursing (PHN) program has an important role in keeping the community informed of the COVID-19. The PHN nurses took a proactive strategy to partner with Huerfano Chapter to provide prevention education on COVID-19 & Hantavirus during food distribution events. Public Health Nurses were able to increase patient contacts to 560 by meeting with community members at the food drive-up event and delivered food to elders in their homes.
- The Inscription House Health Center has collaborated with outside resources to provide affordable denture services for the communities served. The effort is increasing services to a population that is in great need of denture services.
- The Kayenta Service Unit (KSU) Executive Team and Nursing Division is actively engaged with Navajo Area Management Team to build Leadership alliance and partnerships with other service units to assist Kayenta Health Center transition to a hospital with an Inpatient Unit. Much needed support and consultation has been received on Nutrition services, Nursing documentation templates, medication dispensing and Facilities Engineering services. Kayenta Service Unit is committed to achieving Hospital status by the end of Calendar Year 2022.
- The KSU Nursing Division continues to work and consult with the Navajo Area Nurse Consultant to build Nursing alliances and partnerships with other Navajo Area IHS service units. Stronger partnerships support improved collaboration and communication on nursing issues, policies, assists with initiatives to open Inpatient services and maintain Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) certification.
- The KSU Division of Information Technology (DIT), continues to utilize the KSU Facebook site to provide local communities current updates on vaccination schedules, news, trainings and educational postings. There has been a notable increase in sharing SU

posts by the Kayenta Township, Kayenta Unified School District and the Kayenta Chapter House.

Concluding Comments

Navajo Area Indian Health Service staff remain committed to supporting Navajo Nation and San Juan Southern Paiute tribal leaders in their efforts to address Indian Health policy issues, improve the health status of Native beneficiaries, and in development of healthy communities. Please contact the Office of the Navajo Area IHS Director regarding additional information or questions.

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