

2023 Division of Nursing Services Nurse of the Month: March

CDR Sharlene Todicheeney, RN, is the HIV Nurse Specialist at Gallup Indian Medical Center in the IHS Navajo Area. For several years, she has provided compassionate care to patients with HIV through work in the clinic and at home visits in the community. She coordinates health technician home visit outreach at three IHS sites on the Navajo Nation and manages the patient care database for the entire Navajo Area IHS. This database helps us keep track of patient care quality and justifies funding for our HIV program. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she took on the challenging task of treating patients with sexually transmitted infections while the rest of the team was busy with the COVID response.

CDR Todicheeney initiated and was the lead vaccinator on 95% of JYNNEOS® mpox/smallpox injections at Gallup Service Unit as of August 2022. Another example of her dedicated leadership in providing patient care, CDR Todicheeney collaborated with the interdisciplinary team to make the HIV outpatient clinic visit a “one-stop shop,” resulting in the majority of patients displaying an undetectable viral load. Her exemplary commitment and ongoing clinical care and case management provides a vital service to our Native American HIV population at Gallup Service Unit and the underserved community. And in preparation for annual employee evaluations, she served as staff educator, planning and organizing training materials to maintain pertinent evaluation documents tailored to nursing department staff.

CDR Todicheeney serves as the central point of contact for syphilis cases and coordinated care services supporting USPHS mission-activated Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) notifications in patients’ health records, administering treatments over the last three years while bypassing the Urgent Care/ED to expedite treatment to eliminate syphilis cases.

This past fall, CDR Todicheeney organized a panel discussion and served as a speaker on Overcoming Barriers in TB and HIV Care at the Four Corners TB/HIV Annual Conference, a meeting attended by IHS, tribal, state and CDC workers including doctors, nurses, case managers, and community health workers. She also presented on the GSU HIV program on Indigenous Practices in HIV/HealthCare via the Indian Country HIV ECHO with the University of New Mexico School of Medicine.

Ms Todicheeney has a positive, upbeat attitude that helps bring a harmonious spirit to the HIV care team. She deserves special recognition for her hard work demonstrating kindness and compassion to her patients.