

## I.H.S. Nurse of the Month Nomination

It is with great pleasure that I would like to recommend Diana DeLeon, PhD, MPH, and RN for the 2021 I.H.S. Division of Nursing Services Nurse of the Month Award. Dr. DeLeon came to the Kayenta Service Unit to serve as our Director of Quality Management in December of 2016.

Dr. DeLeon has been in the healthcare field, both in the private sector and in the federal healthcare system for more than twenty-five years. Dr. DeLeon performs her job at an exemplary level and demonstrates an extraordinary commitment to the Navajo Area Indian Health Services.

Dr. DeLeon keeps the Kayenta Service Unit in compliance with quality assurance and accreditation standards with the Joint Commission and CMS. During the outbreak of the 2020 COVID-19 on the Navajo Nation, the Kayenta Service Unit was deemed to be a hotspot for the pandemic. COVID-19 positivity rate was at 29% for the Kayenta Service Unit. Dr. DeLeon demonstrated an exceptional devotion, dedicated work and selfless responses in supporting the service unit to achieve the objectives of being an Incident Commander and guided the ICS team to execute COVID-19 safety plans for staff and patients. Dr. DeLeon worked long hours and often times had to respond and mitigate events with the ICS Team on weekends or after hours. With the extensive working knowledge and experience (in nursing practices, quality assurance, healthcare accreditation), Dr. DeLeon mitigated and implemented 200+ ICS policies & procedures, facilitated/coordinated training for all clinical staff, assist in developing plans on preventing infections, provided guidance on deploying education materials to staff/patients, and ensured that COVID -19 safety protocols were implemented for the staff and patients. By implementing the COVID-19 policies and procedures , Dr. DeLeon and the ICS Team demonstrated dedication and became the subject matter experts in executing preventative measures that saved lives and minimized losses from the COVID-19 virus.

In leading the ICS Team, Dr. DeLeon's guidance has mitigated and assisted our service unit to work together with the community and decrease the positivity cases for COVID-19. By the end of May 2021, the COVID-19 positivity rate was 0%. Kayenta Service Unit demobilized the ICS and called off the code green status for the service unit. By July 2021, the positivity COVID-19 cases began to uptick gradually from 4% to 11%, and the service unit had to re-activate the ICS Team on August 11, 2021. The fore front of the mitigation team was Dr. DeLeon who once again took the role of the Incident Commander and is leading the ICS Team to coordinate and deploy plans to increase COVID-19 vaccination rates; and, to have COVID-19 testing be readily available for community members of Kayenta Service Unit. Despite the challenges of the ongoing fight against the COVID-19 virus, Dr. DeLeon demonstrates exceptional innovation and initiates action plans that achieve results and meet the goals set forth by the Navajo Nation President – which is to vaccinate 80% of the user population within Navajo Area Indian Health Services.

Dr. DeLeon has consistently demonstrated the highest level of leadership and guides the nursing staff, as well as the Executive Team of the service unit, to align with the mission of the organization by raising the health status of the community in the Kayenta Service Unit. Dr. DeLeon has the resiliency and always willing to adapt to changes that strives to achieve positive results by meeting the delivery of care, prevention of infection and keep patient safety at the forefront.

Through this difficult time of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. DeLeon has made significant difference at our service unit and exemplifies the mission of the Indian Health Services. Dr. DeLeon has positively impacted the people of the Kayenta Service Unit, as she is always willing to lend a hand and assist. Base on her reputation with her nursing practices and quality management, she is highly sought after to assist Navajo Area with accreditation and CMS standards. Dr. Diana DeLeon deserves to be the Nurse of the Month.

I highly recommend Dr. Diana DeLeon for the 2021 I.H.S. Division of Nursing Services Nurse of the Month Award. Thank you for your consideration.

Mariva Plummer, CEO  
NAIHS-Kayenta Service Unit

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