

## 2024 Nurse of the Quarter 2: Excellence in Nursing Practice

The [Division of Nursing Services](#) is pleased to announce the recipient of the [Nurse of the Quarter](#) for Excellence in Nursing Practice for 2024, second quarter is LCDR Kristina Smith, MSN, RN, APHN from the [Turtle Mountain Service Unit](#) in the IHS [Great Plains Area](#).

LCDR Smith began her nursing career at the Turtle Mountain Service Unit in 2007. She has been a dedicated member of the Turtle Mountain Service unit, advancing professional development and experience in Outpatient, Emergency, as Clinical Director Assistant to Dr Monica Mayor, Public Health Nursing (PHN), as Acting Director of Public Health Nursing, and as Director of Public Health Nursing. LCDR Smith began as Acting Director of Public Health Nursing in June 2021. Prior to Acting DPHN, she was a Public Health Nurse who worked alongside her team. She came into the position with a strong attitude and leadership skills that promoted a positive working environment. LCDR Smith went above and beyond to perform her duties as Acting DPHN and performed direct patient care and assisted staff with mass immunization clinics during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic. In July 2022 she became Director of Public Health Nursing.



LCDR Smith initiated the IHS E3 Strategy at our Turtle Mountain Service Unit. Immunization rates have increased and LCDR Smith has been crucial in these efforts. She ensures staff are up to date with recommendations and standards for immunizations. Quality Assurance Performance Improvement (QAPI) rates have also increased with immunization rates for 3- to 27-month-olds increasing from 56% to 74%, immunization rates for two-year-olds increasing from 54% to 74%, and Adolescent Immunization rates increasing from 56% to 78%. LCDR Smith is diligent and coordinates with local school nurses to ensure the North Dakota immunization exclusion policy is upheld to ensure students are up to date with their immunizations by October 1st of every school year. Along with this, she oversees and works with the PHN School Nurse Coordinator to offer immunizations in the schools to students that are due. Monthly and quarterly immunization reconciliation is assigned to PHN staff, who make calls and also offer immunizations in the clinic and/or at the schools the students attend. LCDR Smith collaborates with the Nursing Department Supervisors to monitor and enhance immunization rates.

Teamwork has increased since she became Director of Public Health Nursing, as she has created a more positive work environment. She constantly praises and motivates the Public Health Nursing Department making it enjoyable to fulfill and perform the duties of a Public Health Nurse. LCDR Smith has proven to have a strong impact on the Turtle Mountain Service Unit and Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation. Her years of service and commitment to the facility, community, and IHS is clearly defined. She is a very kind and admirable person who many staff look up to and go to for information and education. Her admiration and compassion for the Native American Community goes far and is beyond words. Her deep-rooted care for her community and the Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation has been impactful and a resource to public health and literacy.