

**Bemidji Area
Direct Service Tribes Advisory Committee
FY2022 2nd Quarter Report
October- December 2021**

<p>Area Tribal Representatives: Mr. Leroy Staples Fairbanks III District III Representative Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Tribal Council</p>	<p>Federal Liaison: Larry Patnaude, Deputy Director – Field Operations, Bemidji Area Indian Health Services</p>
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Goal 1: To ensure that comprehensive, culturally appropriate personal and public health services are available and accessible to American Indian and Alaska Native people

Cass Lake:

- Selected to serve as 1 of 4 pilot sites for a collaboration with the VA for access to patient records to improve continuity of care. Blue Team trained to retrieve patient information from the VA platform. Initially, providers will have access for patients who receive care through the VA system.
- Six providers are now e-prescribing with 95 prescriptions submitted.
- CEO Instituted standing weekly meeting with new Tribal Health Director.
- Participated in collaborative meetings with Sanford Emergency Department and Inpatient leadership to address concerns to improve quality of care, communication, and transfers.
- Selected as partner site for Rural Maternity and Obstetrics Management Strategies (RMOMs) HRSA grant with Sanford and Red Lake
- Medical Staff received education regarding Veterans Administration services available for Native Veterans.
- CEO attended Twin Cities Local Indian Council meeting in Minneapolis on 30 November 2021 with and at request of Tribal Chairman.

White Earth:

- Added another Primary Care Team to the Medical Home at the White Earth Health Center. This team is staffed by a Full time Internal Medicine physician and a full time Family Nurse Practitioner. The team sees patients empaneled to them for acute or chronic health care needs. The internal medicine and family medicine services they offer are delivered face to face and through the latest virtual telemedicine technology. This is Bemidji Area’s first telemedicine primary care team staffed by full time IHS providers.
- WESU ELT/Tribal meetings occur every Friday with the Tribal Health Administrator and staff. These meetings are very beneficial and both parties agree in order to discuss items, including each other’s Covid-19 operations.
- The CEO, WESU, participates on the White Earth tribal RBC meeting each month via in person.

Red Lake:

- Emergency Department Boarder Status. Created novel service, policies, and workflows to improve patient safety during increased ED lengths of stay. A total of 9 patients were boarded in Dec 2021.
- Completed rehabilitation services expansion to include Occupational Therapy and Speech therapy for inpatient skilled nursing capacity and expanded integrated pain management in outpatient physical therapy. Workflows and documentation requirements updated. Full implementation anticipated in January 2022.
- The Hospital continues representation on four tribal Community Opioid Response team committees to address the 200% increase in opioid overdoses and alarming increases in mortality events compared to pre-pandemic levels. The Hospital is collaborating to support opening and referrals for residential treatment in the Red Lake Obaassing Treatment center.
- Mobile Medical Unit delivered November 2021 to provide preventative services in the community. The clinic will also support opioid harm reduction services, restore community access to syringe exchange services, and support the delivery of women’s health services in community settings.

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Goal 2: To promote excellence and quality through innovation of the Indian health system into an optimally performing organization

Cass Lake:

- The CLSU, in partnership with the LLBO, is nearing the completion of the design of the Phase 2.2 expansion, which includes a new building allowing for expansion of the Dental, Clinic, PT / OT, Optometry, Audiology, and Radiology Departments. This project is currently funded in excess of \$30M in NEF funding and other sources for the construction of the Phase 2 Building Plan and is incorporated into the Public Law 638 Construction Contract as well. This design started in 2019, but was put on hold during much of 2020 in response to Covid-19. Temporary radiology department remodel started in November and was completed at the beginning of FY22 Q2. This will allow for full construction to begin in the spring of 2022.
- COVID response funds in the amounts of \$286,331 for M&I and \$432,442 equipment have been obligated and spent providing for much needed facility modifications and medical equipment. The largest of these items were the dental department remodel, inpatient waiting room, and OmniCell replacements.

White Earth:

- Initiated a 38,000 sq. ft. expansion project to provide further access to care, including but not limited to a drive through pharmacy refill lane, larger physical and occupational therapy department, a dental suite and larger primary care departments. Included in this expansion project are five areas of the existing facility slated for renovation. The 38,000 sq. ft. expansion project continues to progress with a tentative/partial move-in date around set now for May or June 2022 for dental, pharmacy and PT/OT – this is far beyond this initial move in date of August 17, 2021. Severe delays have been experienced by the construction contractor.
- Construction on the NTW Joint Venture is well underway. The Joint Venture project offers additional services the current NTW Health Center is lacking; such as Pharmacy drive thru services, Physical and Occupational Therapy, and Radiology, to name just a few. As a result of increased services, the third party revenue acquired from it will not only further support self-sustaining health care programs but also lower health care costs overall. Conceptually, as more patients are able to seek care, the need to seek emergent care is reduced.

Red Lake:

- Secured \$290,000 in additional FCC COVID funding to expand telehealth services. Funding will be used to purchase a tele-health cart to improve tele-ED consultation for trauma, nephrology, cardiology, and behavioral health crisis services.
- Secured \$20.4 million in construction funding to expand outpatient services, revise Property and Supply, and build a helipad. Planning discussions are complete; design discussions are ongoing.

Goal 3: To strengthen IHS program management and operations

Cass Lake:

- PRC Departmental corrective action plan is actively being resolved with development of processes, workflows, and protocols for day-to-day administrative, finance, clinical, and acquisition components of the program. All denial reports up-to-date, many Catastrophic Health Emergency Funds (CHEF) cases identified, and tribal and patient relationship much improved. Many accounts brought-up-to-date and aged pending payments >36 months released to vendors.

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- Clinical Laboratory surveyed by The Joint Commission (TJC) on 11-12 November 2021. Hospital submitted response for 60 day evidence of standards compliance on 16 December 2021. Note: hospital received full accreditation on 6 January 2022.
- Walk-in Clinic Services: In Q1, FY 2022 there were 1085 visits compared to 517 in Q1, FY 2021, a 50% increase.
- Dental program production above national goal for productivity.
- Relative Value Units (*Levels of Care 1-5 Custom RVU Report*) - dentists = **5,084**
 - National IHS goal = 3,546
 - ↑ 43.4% above IHS national goal
- # of Dental Services (*Levels of Care 1-5 Custom RVU Report*) - dentists = **3,525**
 - National IHS goal = 2,254
 - ↑ 56% above IHS national goal

White Earth:

- ACF Technologies - Goal is to acquire a third party Workflow Database system that could be initiated within the pharmacy, and include the capabilities to be expanded for use throughout multiple departments within the White Earth Service Unit, including the satellite clinics of Naytahwaush, Pine Point, and Rice Lake.
- A third party workflow database system, such as ACF Technologies, would offer many benefits, including improving patient flow, decrease patient congestion in the clinic, minimize patient wait times, improve customer service and confidentiality, provide quality care, up-to-date patient care systems, and deliver more automated extensive data for tracking and quality control purposes, including patient satisfaction surveys.
- Pharmacy Primary Care Clinic (PPCC) is receiving positive feedback from the medical staff.
 - Started scheduling a Clinical Pharmacy Specialist as teams would like increased access to the pharmacist (PPCC pharmacists' schedules are now mostly full with patient visits).
 - Working closely with billing and coding on reimbursement opportunities with over 470 visits

Red Lake:

- Hosted Whole Health Initiative to increase capacity for peer-led wellness groups. Training participation was diminished due to COVID; however, a proof of concept was developed and a curriculum for outreach groups has been drafted.
- Secured sub-award grant funding from the Sanford HRSA Rural MOMS project. Includes pilot program for tele-OB services and Centering Pregnancy Group Therapy.
- Submitted proposal to secure IHS ED Pain and Addiction Care Opioid Pilot Program funding to improve substance use disorder outcomes within the acute care setting.