

## BENEWAH MEDICAL & WELLNESS CENTER

This memorandum is to provide information regarding the medical and community health services provided by the Coeur d'Alene Tribe through a federally qualified health center (FQHC) in rural Idaho. The Coeur d'Alene Tribe and the city of Plummer collaborated in a joint venture to address the health care needs on the Coeur d'Alene Reservation and in 1987 planned and developed a community-based rural health outpatient care delivery system. A commitment was made by the Coeur d'Alene Tribal Health Authority and the Coeur d'Alene Tribal Council to provide health care services to both the Indian and non-Indian population and the clinic would serve all persons in the community regardless of their ability to pay.

The Coeur d'Alene Tribe opened the Benewah Medical Center in 1990 on the Coeur d'Alene Reservation. Construction of the medical center was financed by a combination of tribal and community resources, including federal, state, community, and grant funds. While the tribe owns the facility, it is governed by the Coeur d'Alene Tribal Health Authority. The Coeur d'Alene Tribal Health Authority was established by the tribal council and has its own set of bylaws. A nine-member board of directors is appointed by the tribal council, two of which may be nontribal community members. The nontribal community members are nominated by the cities in the area served and approved by the tribal council. In 1994 the medical center expanded to provide additional examination rooms, a dental wing, increased pharmacy space, mental health counseling, administrative offices, conference rooms, and community health programs.

Medical services include treatment for general health care needs, including diabetes, arthritis, and high blood pressure; other health care treatment services relating to adult, geriatric, women's health, pediatric, and obstetric care; physicals, family planning, minor skin procedures, spirometry/audiometry, lab, x-ray, breathing treatments, and pharmacy counseling; and urgent care treatment and referrals.

The tribe provides certain public health services on the reservation as part of their Indian Health Service (IHS) P.L. 93-638 Compact. In addition, a small part of the funding received from the Health Resources Service Administration (HRSA) Community Health Center Program relates to public health. The medical center's Community Health performs inspections, home health nursing, public health surveillance, nutrition counseling, and health education. Other community health services include environmental health; chronic illness monitoring; nursing assessments; diabetes prevention; maternal-child health care; school health services; transportation for the elderly and disabled to medical appointments; foot

care; tobacco cessation counseling; and women, infants, and children nutrition program.

To expand the tribe's focus from acute and chronic illness care to prevention, wellness, and health maintenance, the tribe constructed a \$5 million wellness center in 1998 and changed its name to Benewah Medical & Wellness Center. The wellness center was built debt-free from a variety of funding sources, including federal, state, private, and medical center funding. The wellness center is a department of the Benewah Medical & Wellness Center and operating costs are paid by memberships and the medical center. Memberships are provided as a benefit to tribal, casino, and Benewah Medical & Wellness Center employees. In addition, the tribe pays the membership fee for any tribal member who chooses to use the facility.

In October 2010 the Coeur d'Alene Tribe was awarded an \$11.8 million capital development grant by the HRSA through the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, for the construction of a new medical center on six acres owned by the tribe about one mile from the existing facility. The total cost of the project is \$17.3 million and additional funding sources include a \$3 million pledge from the tribe and \$2.5 million contributed by the Benewah Medical & Wellness Center. The new facility is expected to open in the fall of 2012.

The Coeur d'Alene Tribe and the community, through the tribal health authority, have received funding from many sources, including:

- HRSA/Bureau of Primary Health Care (Public Health Service Act 330(e) funding);
- IHS P.L. 93-638 Compact funding;
- Department of Housing and Urban Development block grants;
- Fee-for-service revenue;
- Bureau of Indian Affairs Indian business development grant;
- Corporate support for specialized projects and equipment; and
- Private foundations, such as the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Murdoch Foundation.

The Health Resources Service Administration-supported health centers are community-based and patient-directed organizations that serve populations with limited access to health care, including, among others, the low income and uninsured. The Benewah Medical & Wellness Center is located in Benewah County in the Panhandle of Idaho. This county has the highest number of minorities of any county in the state. The Benewah Medical & Wellness Center has obtained a medically underserved population designation from the Idaho Governor's office and acceptance from the United States Public Health Service Division of Shortage Designation. Almost

one-third of those served are below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines. Approximately 50 percent of the clinic's patients are Indian and 50 percent are non-Indian. Approximately 40 percent have no insurance. Funding for the Benewah Medical & Wellness Center from the HRSA Bureau of Primary Health Care, as part of its Community Health Center Program, has allowed the medical center to provide care on a sliding fee scale basis to the non-Indians in the region.

Information published by the Benewah Medical & Wellness Center for fiscal year 2011 indicates 54.4 percent of its revenue was derived from the federal IHS through its compact. Other sources of revenue included patient revenue (27.3 percent), other revenue (11.8 percent), interest income (.3 percent), and other federal sources (6.2 percent), including various federal and IHS grants and HRSA primary health care funding. The Benewah Medical & Wellness Center has an annual funding agreement with IHS and third-party revenues are provided by

Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance. Funding generated by the Coeur d'Alene Casino allows the tribe to buy health insurance for casino and tribal government employees. Indian Health Service P.L. 93-638 Compact funds allow the Benewah Medical & Wellness Center to serve uninsured American Indians at no charge.

Idaho has seven independent health districts that work closely with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare and other state and local agencies. Each district has a board of health appointed by county commissioners within the region. The Coeur d'Alene Reservation is part of the Panhandle Health District in northern Idaho. The tribe partners with the Panhandle Health District in areas of public health where it lacks expertise such as emergency preparedness. Except for occasional grants for projects or for flood protection or homeland security, the tribe does not receive any ongoing support for public health services from the state.