

UNITED SOUTH AND EASTERN TRIBES

A REGIONAL GOOD HEALTH AND WELLNESS IN INDIAN COUNTRY UPDATE

USET REGIONAL UPDATE

GHWIC Background

Between 2014-2019, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will invest over \$78 million in chronic disease prevention efforts through the Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country (GHWIC) initiative. With the support of GHWIC funding, eleven Tribal Epidemiology Centers (TECs):

- Coordinate evaluation activities and data collection to highlight the regional work of GHWIC-funded Tribes and Tribal organizations.
- Provide technical assistance to GHWIC-funded Tribes and Tribal organizations.
- Enhance cross-sector partnerships and strengthen American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) networks across the service region.

Regional Efforts to Prevent and Manage Chronic Disease

United South and Eastern Tribes (USET) coordinates GHWIC evaluation in the Indian Health Service (IHS) Nashville Area. In the past year, USET has supported chronic disease prevention and management in ten Tribes and Tribal organizations by:

1. Engaging Tribal Communities

USET Tribal Nations have engaged more than 3,148 Tribal citizens in local community health assessments (CHA) through surveys, focus groups, and interviews. These CHAs were critical in engaging community members in the program planning process.

2. Building Local Capacity through Guidance and Training

Program planning was not common practice for most USET Tribal Nations participating in GHWIC. USET staff provided guidance and training 228 times to sub-awardees, building sustainable public health capacity at the local level. Tribal Nations are now able to complete CHAs and program planning activities independently.

3. Supporting Program Implementation

Thirty-eight programs have been implemented or planned, focusing on GHWIC's chronic disease prevention and health promotion priorities to improve the health and wellbeing of Tribal Nations. These programs are successful because the community was engaged from the beginning of, and throughout, the program planning process.



Activity Spotlight: Policy to Reduce Exposure to Secondhand Smoke

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians (PBCI) was able to focus on a tobacco cessation program due to the CDC Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country initiative. PBCI utilized funding to conduct a community health assessment. Findings include 82% of the respondents were in favor of smoke-free buildings and prohibiting smoking around those buildings.

This illustrated to the Tribal Council and Tribal leaders that their citizens did not want to be exposed to secondhand smoke and were in favor of policies that would protect them. Subsequently, Tribal Council approved a resolution enacting a policy that prohibits smoking within 100 feet of the Health Center. The success of policy change is encouraging and the mission of the PBCI health department is to one day have a smoke-free reservation.

By the Numbers

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new health promotion policies

Of USET's eight sub-awardees, three have passed a total of five health promotion policies based on activities funded by GHWIC, directly affecting more than 14,000 individuals. Currently, another three sub-awardees are actively working on policies that promote physical activity, increase healthy eating options, or protect the population from secondhand smoke. The remaining two sub-awardees plan on proposing similar health promotion policies within the next year. It is expected that USET sub-awardees will continue to sustain health promotion efforts through lasting policy implementation, helping to protect and promote the health of nearly 35,000 Tribal Nation citizens.

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environmental changes to improve health and well-being

All eight of USET's GHWIC sub-awardees have increased access to healthier environments for their communities. The most common changes include access to safer environments for physical activities such as walking or running, water sports, and field activities for more than 22,000 individuals. Access to healthy eating options have also been expanded to over 16,000 individuals with a major focus on youth. Similarly, more than 20,000 individuals have been directly protected from secondhand smoke by combining educational campaigns with designated smoking areas.

1,454

community members receiving fresh fruits and vegetables

Access to healthy food options is a major determinant of health. When healthy options are available, it is more likely that healthy food choices will be made. The majority of USET GHWIC sub-awardees (75%, or six of eight) have improved not only access to food options, but consumption as well. Through strategic programming, nearly 1,500 Tribal Nation Citizens have increased their consumption of healthy food. Access has been primarily provided through community gardens, farmers markets, and healthier meal program options for elders and youth.

Map of GHWIC-funded Tribes and Tribal organizations in the IHS Nashville Area

