

GOCADAN

In partnership with Medstar Institute in Washington, D.C., NSHC is now in its second year of a five-year research project. The purpose of this project is to determine whether a genetic factor predisposes Alaska Natives to heart disease. Native Alaskans are becoming more susceptible to heart disease as their traditional lifestyle is influenced with western habits.

GOCADAN staff conducts exams on study participants in the region. The exam includes drawing blood for genetic testing, taking body measurements and blood pressures of arm and leg, an electrocardiogram, and other tests.

During the year, we:

- Hired a community recruiter in Unalakleet.
- Transferred one Nome-based GOCADAN position to Unalakleet.
- Secured office space in Unalakleet for the GOCADAN staff.
- Purchased a four-wheeler.
- Saw 259 patients. We need to see 941 participants in the next two years.

exposure treatment.

- Trained rabies vaccinators in five villages.
- Vaccinated 290 animals.

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING

Public Health Nursing focuses on positive health practices and early detection of disease.

During FY01, we:

- Met and exceeded our goal by 7.9 percent for EPSDT (Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment, a Medicaid-funded screening for children) evaluations, completing 563.
- Started a postpartum follow-up program called Arctic Babies are Cool. Public Health nurses are now doing home visits to new moms and babies in Nome and the villages.
- Did a presentation at the Bering Strait School

Ryan McLane, Public Health nurse, gives an immunization to Percy Agloinga III in White Mountain with the help of the baby's mother, Frances Kunayak. McLane and others offered immunizations in several villages and Nome in connection with the Serum Run in March 2001.



District orientation in Unalakleet in August 2001 to teach teachers about Public Health, tuberculosis (TB) and our programs.

- Made seven trips to conduct village-wide TB sweeps, and also did a first-time Nome sweep. Provided education to all children prior to TB screenings. There were 28 cases of active TB and 52 of inactive TB.

- Boosted our immunization rate from 78 percent to 79.2 percent, administering 1,438 more vaccinations in the region than last year for a total of 8,438.

- Provided almost twice the number of family planning contacts as last year—95 as compared to 50.

- Started a Teen Pregnancy Prevention Group.

- Hired a family nurse practitioner for the Nome Health Center.

We were pleased to be rated the highest among all NSHC programs in the customer survey done this year.

TRIBAL HEALER PROGRAM

The Tribal Healer Program was developed in 1997 to provide patients a traditional health care alternative. Once a thriving tradition, this method of care is indigenous to the Bering Strait region and was only provided by people naturally skilled in helping with their hands. Their hands were used to massage sore muscles and joints and to manipulate some internal organs. They treated sores and cuts and prescribed natural plants on occasion.

During FY01, the Tribal Healer Program:

- Treated 184 patients in villages and 149 in Nome.
- Purchased an exam table.
- Treated more “walk-ins” in Nome.
- Treated search and rescue volunteers in Golovin.
- Regularly visited Quyanna Care Center.
- Traveled to nine villages.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES UNIT

The Behavioral Health Services Unit coordinates all mental health and substance abuse programs at NSHC.

During FY01 we:

- Were awarded 16 grants, including funds for a