

Honoring the Past... **AND EMBRACING THE FUTURE**



Shaktoolik youth surround NSHC's First Board Chairman William Takak and his wife Mabel



**NORTON SOUND
HEALTH CORPORATION**

Fiscal Year 2015 Annual Report

OUR MISSION:

Providing quality health services and promoting wellness within our people and environment.

OUR VISION:

- We will ensure that all patients receive quality and respectful health care.
- We will educate our patients and communities to be proactive in caring for themselves and promoting wellness.
- We will listen to, honor, and respect our elders, preserve their right to speak, and ensure they receive the best care in gratitude for their leadership.
- We will increase wellness efforts to reduce addictive behaviors and to raise the quality of life among our people and communities.
- We will advocate that our environment (air, land and water) will be clean, and our water and waste disposal systems are safe and affordable, in order to ensure our subsistence way of life.
- We will assert and implement tribal self-governance to achieve our vision through effective leadership.
- We will hire and support our tribal members to deliver and manage our services.
- We will develop state of the art and efficient health care facilities throughout the region.
- We will be financially strong through aggressive, effective and efficient financial management.
- We will support and develop our youth to pursue higher education and health care careers to ensure there is future tribal leadership.

OUR VALUES:

Integrity • Cultural Sensitivity and Respect for Traditional Values • Always Learning and Improving • Compassion • Teamwork • Pride

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter to Customer-Owners	1
Annual Report Dedication	2
Board of Directors	3
Norton Sound Map	4
Hospital Services	5
Primary Care	
Acute Care	
Labor and Delivery	
Emergency Room	6
Emergency Medical Services	
Respiratory Therapy	
Sexual Assault Response Team	
Electronic Health Record	7
Medical Staff	8
Pharmacy	
Dental	9
Eye Care	
Audiology	
Physical Therapy	10
X-Ray/Radiology	
Infant Learning Program	11
Social Services	
Clinical Laboratory	12
Nutrition Services	
Security	
Environmental Services	
Quyanna Care Center	13
Wellness Division	14
Community Health Services	17
Village Health Services	
Health Aide Training	18
Behavioral Health Services	19
Human Resources	20
Information Services	
Administration	21
Engineering & Environmental Health	23
Financial Services	25
Quality Improvement and Risk Management	26
Vital Statistics	27
Employee Awards	28

Dear Customer-Owners and Patients,

NSHC's good work continued throughout FY2015 to carry out our Vision Statement. Our aim to ensure that all patients receive quality and respectful health care was strengthened when NSHC went live with the Cerner Electronic Health Record on October 1, 2014. Clinical, administrative, and support staff planned for the implementation during FY2014. A total of 9,888 unique patients were entered into the Electronic Health Record from the Norton Sound Service Unit in FY2015, improving continuity of care and access to information for decision making.

The Board of Directors and Administration advanced NSHC's vision further to educate our people and communities to be proactive in caring for themselves and promoting wellness when a goal was set to provide a community health fair for each of the sixteen communities that NSHC serves. Through the leadership efforts of the Wellness Division at NSHC, this goal was achieved when over 1845 customer owners and patients were screened, educated, and made aware of important resources during the Health Fairs offered in FY2015.

NSHC reinforced its commitment to increase wellness efforts to reduce addictive behaviors and to raise the quality of life among our people and communities. It continued the strong work of the Wellness Warriors Initiative, integrating behavioral health with primary care services through the Patient-Centered Medical Home model, achieving accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), and completion of the Phase I final design for the Wellness and Training Center. The region observed a reduced suicide rate for FY2015.

The NSHC Executive Leadership team grew in FY2015 to include four Tribal Corporate Officers and Assistant Vice Presidents, carrying out NSHC's vision to hire and support our Tribal members to deliver and manage our services. In addition, two Tribal members born and raised in villages outside of Nome, were locally educated as registered nurses and graduated from the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Nome-based nursing program. The Board of Directors' commitment to develop state of the art and efficient health care facilities throughout the region was memorialized by the completion of the Shishmaref Clinic renovation. A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held in November 2014 to celebrate the long-awaited site planning strategic objective funded by the Denali Commission, to improve the quality of life for the community of Shishmaref. Furthermore, the Wales clinic received a life safety code upgrade, generously funded in part by NSEDC, to restore running water, provide for a covered ramp to safely enter the clinic, and reconfigure the electrical system. Each community received a medication dispensing unit funded by the Board of Directors to optimize medication administration.

NSHC is proud of our fiscal vitality and effective financial management. Revenue Cycle improvements resulted in a total cash collection of \$42,183,916.62 in FY2015, which accounts for nearly half of NSHC's operating budget. However, one of NSHC's greatest assets is its human capital, and efforts were continued to support and develop youth to pursue higher education and health care careers by supporting over \$176,613 in Tribal scholarships and eight youth who participated and attended scheduled NSHC Board Meetings to ensure there is future Tribal leadership of the organization.



Angie Gorn
NSHC President/CEO



Emily Hughes
NSHC Board Chair

In Loving Memory

Helen Mary "Kiksiuq" Pootoogooluk
1956-2015

Norton Sound Health Corporation remembers Helen as a strong leader and positive role model. The quality of life for residents living in the Bering Strait Region was enriched by her devoted and caring efforts.

Helen was an educated woman with a real passion to enhance rural development and improve rural health care delivery. She was an advocate for "Wellness from Within" and helped initiate the Safety Patrol, an annual event which saves lives in the region.

Helen was a longtime and respected employee of NSHC and was well known for her contributions to the new hospital replacement project and the Dental Health Aide Therapist program. Helen was also accepted into the Kaiser Program and spent a year in Washington D.C., assisting with the Indian Health Care and Improvement Act to represent Alaska.

Helen's legacy will long serve as a model of integrity and devotion to tribal health and wellness. It is our hope that future generations understand and appreciate the merit of her cause and the quality of her service to the residents of the Bering Strait Region. We celebrate her noteworthy services.



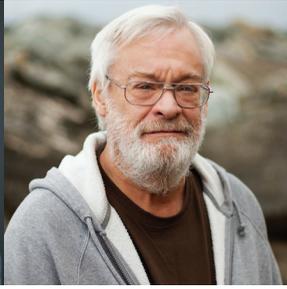
Photos provided by Carol Gales



Carol Ablowaluk
Mary's Igloo



Leonard Adams
Brevig Mission



Stan Andersen
City of Nome



Martin Aukongak
Chinik Eskimo
Community



Allen Atchak
Stebbins Community
Association



Mary Charles
White Mountain



Matilda Hardy
Shaktoolik



Emily Hughes
Region at Large



Brian James
Solomon



Robert Keith
Kawerak, Inc.



Jenny Lee
Teller



Frederick Murray
Elim



Ruby Nassuk
Koyuk



Karla Nayokpuk
Shishmaref



Ruth Ojanen
King Island



Alfred Sahlin
Nome Eskimo
Community



Daniel Richards, Sr.
Wales



Preston Rookok
Savoonga



June Walunga
Gambell



Virginia Washington
St. Michael



Berda Willson
Council



Henrietta Wilson
Unalakleet

2015
NSHC
Board
Member of
the Year:
**Frederick
Murray**

Norton Sound Health Corporation **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

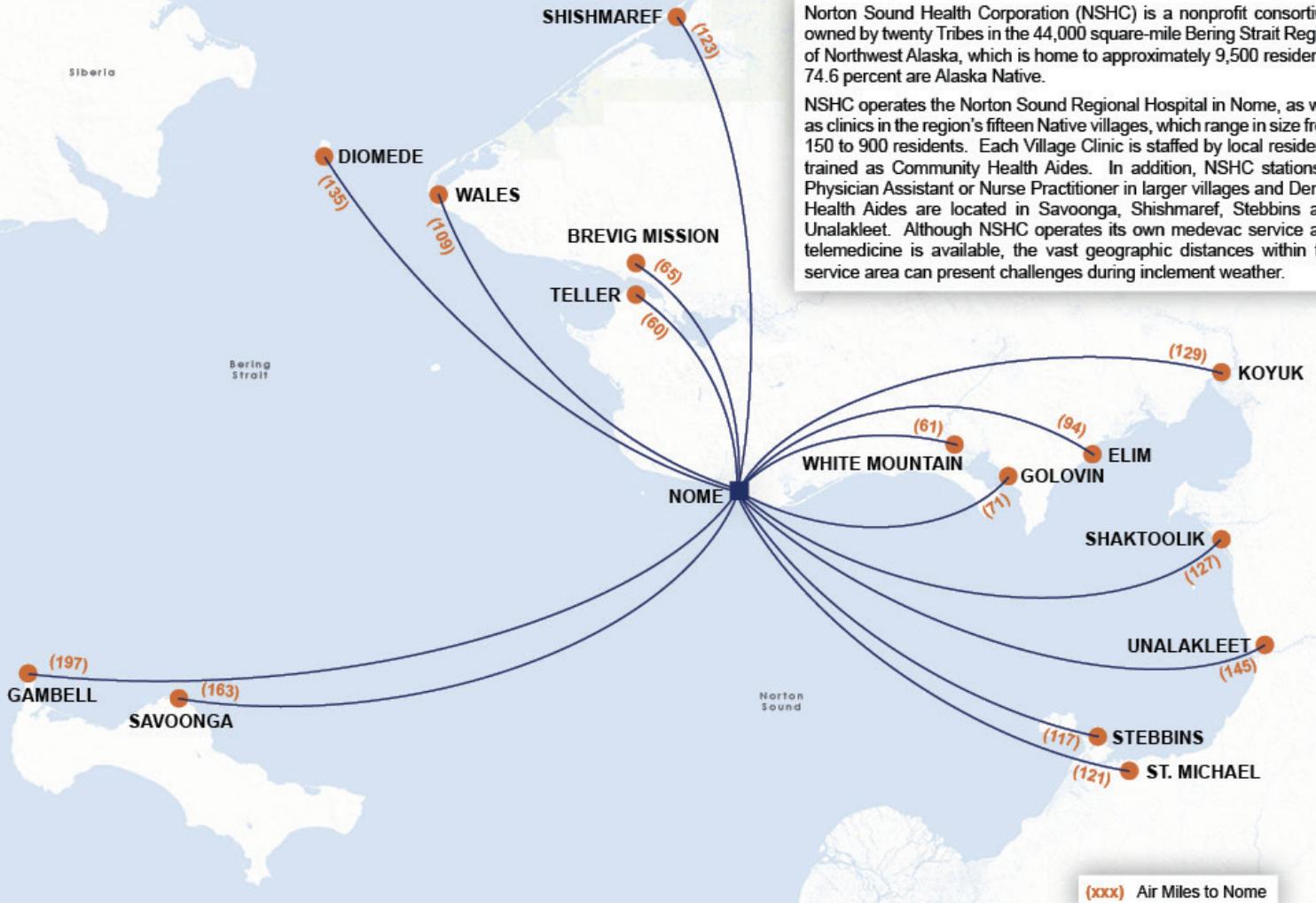
Not pictured: Cassandra
Ahkvaluk, Native Village of Diomedé

Photos by Esther Pederson and Reba Lean

Village Clinics in the Bering Strait Region

Norton Sound Health Corporation (NSHC) is a nonprofit consortium owned by twenty Tribes in the 44,000 square-mile Bering Strait Region of Northwest Alaska, which is home to approximately 9,500 residents; 74.6 percent are Alaska Native.

NSHC operates the Norton Sound Regional Hospital in Nome, as well as clinics in the region's fifteen Native villages, which range in size from 150 to 900 residents. Each Village Clinic is staffed by local residents trained as Community Health Aides. In addition, NSHC stations a Physician Assistant or Nurse Practitioner in larger villages and Dental Health Aides are located in Savoonga, Shishmaref, Stebbins and Unalakleet. Although NSHC operates its own medevac service and telemedicine is available, the vast geographic distances within the service area can present challenges during inclement weather.





The Norton Sound Regional Hospital has earned the Joint Commission's Golden Stamp of Approval.

HOSPITAL SERVICES

Primary Care (Outpatient Clinic)

NSHC provides individualized health care to residents of the Bering Strait Region on an outpatient basis, with a multidisciplinary approach that gives patients excellent care and promotes lifelong health and wellness. In addition to the primary services offered at NSHC, the Primary Care Clinic has specialty providers who visit upwards of 50 times a year to meet the needs of our patients.

Services Include:
 Evaluation and treatment by appointment
 Adult and pediatric case management
 Maternal Child Health



Photo by Reba Lean

	FY14	FY15
Total Clinic Appointments	10,400	12,200

Acute Care (Inpatient Clinic)

Norton Sound Regional Hospital's inpatient unit can accommodate up to 18 patients. We use a multidisciplinary approach to health care, and staff is committed to creating a healing atmosphere while meeting patient needs in a respectful manner. Skilled nurses provide top-level care for everyone from newborns to elders. Family involvement in the healing process is encouraged and guests are welcome during visiting hours.

	FY14	FY15
Admissions	579	465
Deliveries	64	63

Labor and Delivery

NSHC offers a multidisciplinary team approach to expectant mothers, including our Primary Care, WIC and Healthy Start departments. When a baby is ready to be born, the patient and family are welcomed to the Labor and Delivery unit. Physicians and experienced nurses are on hand to promote a safe and comfortable delivery experience.

The Labor and Delivery unit offers private rooms with adequate space for family to be present. We promote family interaction and baby bonding.

Emergency Room

Open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, the NSHC Emergency Room is a Level-IV Trauma Center. It is staffed by physicians, mid-level providers, and specially trained nurses, who can expertly handle the evaluation and stabilization of nearly any injury or illness. They also work closely with the Medevac team and other facilities, such as ANMC, to transport patients from villages and Nome to ensure patients receive the appropriate level of care.

	FY14	FY15
ER Admissions	10,326	10,416
Traumas	45	61



Photo by Greg Watts

In FY 15, Mike Owens, chief paramedic, was recognized by the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) for achieving 30 consecutive years as a Nationally Registered EMT.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

The EMS Department provides safe and rapid transport of critical patients to a higher level of care. Additionally, the EMS Department provides emergency disaster preparedness training throughout the region. An EMS trainer provides training for 10-11 months a year. The EMS Department is instrumental in providing Basic Life Support, Advanced Cardiac Life Support, and Pediatric Advanced Life Support training for the entire region.

	FY14	FY15
Medevacs	399	389

Respiratory Therapy

Respiratory Therapy works throughout the Norton Sound Regional Hospital treating patients with pulmonary conditions, such as asthma, emphysema, and pneumonia, as well as helping patients with cardiovascular disorders and/or traumas.

	FY14	FY15
Treatments	3,472	1,104

Sexual Assault Response Team

The Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) offers services to patients who have experienced sexual assault or interpersonal violence. Nurse examiners work with a multidisciplinary team to provide a compassionate response to victims of violence. For pediatric patients, the team includes the staff of the Kawerak Child Advocacy Center and ensures age-appropriate, sensitive care is provided. The forensic nurses working in SART also provide community outreach, education, and staff training.

	FY14	FY15
SART Patients Assisted	95	103

Hospital Services

Electronic Health Record

At the beginning of Fiscal Year 2015, NSHC went live with its new Electronic Health Record (EHR), Cerner Millennium. Cerner is one of the largest health information technology companies, with products in over 18,000 facilities around the world.

NSHC is a part of a "shared Cerner domain" with other tribal health organizations across the state, including Alaska Native Medical Center and South Central Foundation. This approach allows NSHC care teams to have immediate access to laboratory results, physician notes, vital signs, etc., entered when patients receive care out of the region. On a local/regional level, this means that the health information taken by a Health Aide in a village is immediately available to a physician, who is providing support from Nome, without the need for mail or fax delivery. Ultimately, this promotes more comprehensive, continuous, and effective care for our community.

An EHR team of five people works to provide training and support to staff; manage and implement improvement ideas; troubleshoot errors and issues; pull data to create meaningful reports; and perform a variety of other duties and services as needs arise. The EHR department provides feedback to Cerner when areas for improvement are identified. It also works closely with the organizations on the shared domain to coordinate improvements, manage changes, and strive to make the most of the shared EHR system. Furthermore, the federal government has mandated a series of "Meaningful Use Measures" for hospitals and providers to guide their use of Electronic Health Records, resulting in penalties for those who do not comply. The EHR team supports the organization in implementing, monitoring, and supporting success across all of these measures. All of this

must be accomplished while always keeping the security of patient information the utmost priority.

What we can do with the EHR:

- Give care providers immediate access to health information from across our system
- Automatically check for drug-drug and drug-allergy interactions in real time
- Automated Clinical Decision Support such as checking medication doses and even notifying the care team that a patient may be at risk for sepsis or septic shock
- Electronically mine a variety of health data for an assortment of purposes:
 - Identify preventive care opportunities
 - Support case management across our region and beyond
 - Monitor common diagnoses and reasons for visits
 - Identify population health trends
 - Assist in HRSA compliance and other regulatory monitoring
- Offer patients online access to view their health information such as labs, medications, allergies and chronic problems

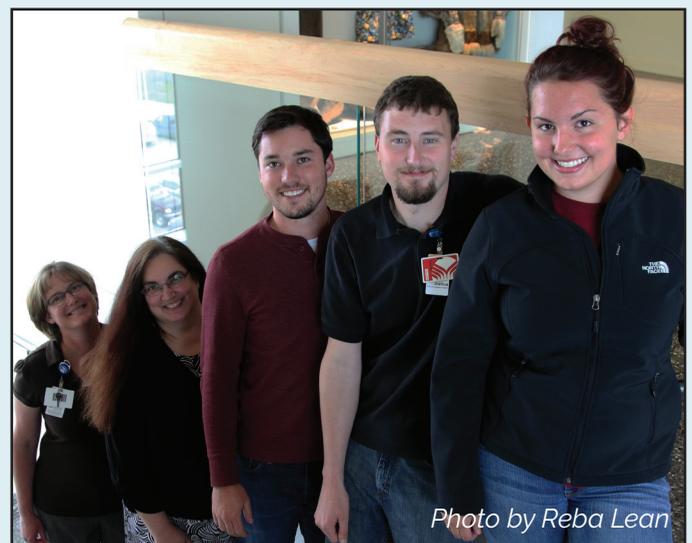


Photo by Reba Lean

Angel Franklin, Elizabeth Coler, Mark Schroeder, Josh White and Amanda Patrick make up the NSHC EHR team.

Medical Staff

The medical staff includes 11 full-time physicians and several mid-level practitioners that work in Nome, village clinics, and Health Aide Training. NSHC appoints over 100 providers on an annual basis for consulting in addition to part-time and full-time providers. Medical Staff are on call 24 hours per day. They staff the Emergency Room, Primary Care, daily radio call for Health Aides, Acute Care, Labor and Delivery, and fly medevacs.



Photo by Reba Lean

PA John Salmon, Shana Theobald, M.D., and Karen O'Neill, M.D., stop for a picture in Primary Care.

	FY14	FY15
Credentialed Medical Staff	178	236



Photo by Reba Lean

Pharmacy

FY15 brought many changes and improvements to the NSHC Pharmacy. When the Electronic Health Record was implemented in October 2014, the Pharmacy had three full-time pharmacists on staff. Throughout the fiscal year, the staff grew to five full-time pharmacists, and the first pharmacist resident started at NSHC.

NSHC Pharmacy installed Pickpoint machines in 13 of our 15 villages. The machines are essentially vending machines for medications that provide several safety features to improve patient care. All prescriptions dispensed are now verified by a pharmacist where drug-to-drug interactions, allergies, and safety are evaluated prior to the patient receiving the medication. The Pharmacy is also able to have better inventory control for village based medications to help ensure that the villages do not run out of needed drugs.

FY15 brought quality to the forefront in the Pharmacy. A full-time pharmacist moved into Acute Care to work side-by-side with providers and nurses to ensure the best quality of care for patients admitted. The Pharmacy also increased village visits to become more accessible to the two-thirds of the population that live outside of Nome.

	FY14	FY15
Outpatient Prescriptions	99,329	118,351

Hospital Services

Dental

NSHC provides a full spectrum of dental services, from preventive and emergency care, to crowns, bridges, root canals, oral surgery, orthodontics, and dental implants. Dental care services are provided in Nome and villages and are supplemented by full-time Dental Health Aide Therapists stationed in Unalakleet and Savoonga. Dentists travel to all villages on an annual basis, with roughly 55 percent of patient encounters occurring in the villages, and 45 percent in Nome.

	FY14	FY15
Patient Encounters	10,274	10,829

Elder Fund

In Fiscal Year 2015, the NSHC Board of Directors contributed \$240,000 in Tribal shares to replenish the Elder Fund -- a special fund for patients 55 years of age and older to support eye glasses, dentures, and hearing aides. Without the fund, patients would pay out-of-pocket for these items.

FY2015 Elder Fund:

- 33 patients received dentures
- 51 patients received glasses
- 9 patients received hearing aides

Eye Care

NSHC's Eye Care Department provides comprehensive services to all patients, beginning at age six months, in Nome and at least once annually to each village in the region.

Services include:

- Annual diabetic exams
- Ocular disease detection and management, including glaucoma and macular degeneration
- Surgical referral and aftercare
- Contact lens fitting
- Vision therapy and rehabilitation
- Education and research on eye disorders and prevention
- Wide selection of eyeglasses, sunglasses, and contact lenses for every budget.

	FY14	FY15
Patient Encounters	3,833	3,714

Audiology

NSHC Audiologists provide comprehensive audiological services to patients in Nome and the surrounding communities both in-person and through telemedicine. The use of telemedicine for Audiological care has reduced patient wait time for the ear/nose/throat (ENT) specialty clinics held throughout the year in both Nome and Unalakleet. Telemedicine has also eliminated the need for patient travel required for evaluation as well as provided for timely direct referrals with ENT physicians.

Services include:

- Comprehensive audiological evaluations
- Vestibular assessments and rehabilitation
- Auditory processing evaluations
- Digital hearing aid evaluations, fitting and follow-up
- Universal infant hearing program
- Industrial, occupational and school hearing screenings
- Community outreach programs on hearing loss prevention

	FY14	FY15
Patient Encounters	3,120	1,629

Hospital Services



NSHC Physical Therapist Valerie Fuller measures the heart rate of a child at the Koyuk Health Fair.

Physical Therapy

The Physical Therapy department employs three full-time physical therapists, who work together to evaluate and treat a broad range of conditions for patients of all ages. The Physical Therapy team focuses primarily on orthopedic concerns such as ankle sprains and back injuries, but also works with patients experiencing difficulty walking, balance impairments, and weakness. The team uses a variety of treatment options including modalities (therapeutic ultrasounds, iontophoresis, dry needling, and electrical stimulation), as well as hands-on treatment (mobilization and manipulation). One of the most important aspects of Physical Therapy is patient education in self-care, including a regular home exercise program. In addition to semi-annual village visits, Physical Therapy services were expanded with an increase of video teleconferencing.

	FY14	FY15
Patient Encounters	1,187	2,665

X-Ray/Radiology

NSHC offers a variety of radiology services across the region. Some services include general X-Ray, CT scans, ultrasound, DEXA (bone mineral density exams) scans, and mammography. A full-time tech works evenings until midnight and call staff is available 24 hours a day.

In March 2015, Radiology's electronic x-ray records were combined with Alaska Native Medical Center. X-rays and reports from both locations can now be viewed by providers from both hospitals. This results in faster and more accurate patient care.

Enhanced mammography services were added with Tomosynthesis-3D Breast Imaging, which detects 40 percent more breast cancers at an earlier age. New radiologists, specialized in breast imaging, were hired to read the advanced 3D images as well as breast ultrasounds.

Unalakleet has a Radiology Technologist on-site and offers both general X-Ray and ultrasounds with 24 hour coverage. Quality coverage is provided by trained Health Aides in Gambell and Savoonga. The service leads to faster evaluation of patients who may require critical care.



Photo by Reba Lean

Throughout FY 15, the Radiology Dept. worked in partnership with Nordstrom to plan a bra fitting event for women of the Norton Sound, especially those who experienced mastectomies. Pictured is Stephanie Joseph of Nordstrom, Millie Katongan of Unalakleet, Stormy Hunt of Nordstrom, Merrilyn Blackmore and Catherine DeAngelis.

	FY14	FY15
X-Ray	3,716	6,427
Ultrasounds	1,605	1,019
Mammograms	613	370
CT Scans	837	898

Hospital Services

Infant Learning Program



Photo by Patricia Olmstead

Pancho and his mother having fun at ILP.

During their first three years, children learn and develop faster than any other time. The Infant Learning Program provides early intervention services to families who have children between ages of birth and 2 years old, who are experiencing delays in development. Services include: evaluations to determine which areas of a child's development need assistance; developing a plan for services; providing special instruction, activities and materials to help the child's development; and making referrals to other services if needed.

	FY14	FY15
Service Provider Contacts	695	790
Family Service Coordination Contacts	254	370
Children Referred	24	37
Children Screened	20	23
Children Evaluation	51	54
Children Enrolled	27	28

	FY14	FY15
Total Patients Served	708	644
Total Patient Encounters	1,696	1,459
Patients Served for Interpersonal Violence	102	108
Burial/Bereavement Assistance	68	73

Developmental Disabilities Program (Rainbow Services)

The Developmental Disabilities Program helps clients develop skills to increase their independence and participation in the community. To be eligible for this program, patients must have a mental or physical impairment that emerged prior to age 22.

Social Services

The Social Services department operates multiple programs that provide social support to NSHC patients, including the Medical Social Work Program, Developmental Disabilities Program (Rainbow Services), and the Patient Hostel/Pre-Maternal Home.

Patient Hostel/Pre-Maternal Home

The Patient Hostel/Pre-Maternal Home provides lodging in Nome to patients from the villages during their medical service visits and while expectant mothers await delivery.

	FY14	FY15
Total Patients/Escorts Housed	2,659	3,065

In FY2015, the NSHC Board of Directors contributed \$105,000 in Tribal Share money to lodge elders in need of medical care.

Hospital Services

Clinical Laboratory

The laboratory at Norton Sound Regional Hospital is accredited by the Joint Commission. We employ Medical Technologists, Medical Laboratory Scientists, Medical Laboratory Assistants, and Phlebotomists, ensuring the hospital's diagnostic needs can be served around the clock. With the transition from the old to the new hospital, the laboratory successfully continues to support the village clinics, Acute Care, Primary Care, specialty clinics, and the Emergency Department. The lab also assists local businesses by serving as a drug-screening collection facility. The Point of Care Laboratory department has expanded village instrumentation to further support on-site in-village testing for patients.



The NSHC Laboratory was accredited by The Joint Commission and by COLA in FY2015.

	FY15
Laboratory Tests	147,910



Nutrition Services

The Nutrition Services Department provides daily meals, on-site nutrition counseling, and community nutrition education. All staff are certified food handlers or food protection managers. The public is welcome to enjoy meals at Norton Sound Regional Hospital's Fireweed Café.

Security

NSHC maintains a 24-hour Security Department at the Norton Sound Regional Hospital. Its mission is to assist, protect and serve patients, staff and guests. The department operates a desk on the first floor of the hospital in order to direct visitors, and it runs the hospital switchboard. All full-time uniformed officers are certified through the International Association for Healthcare Security and Safety.



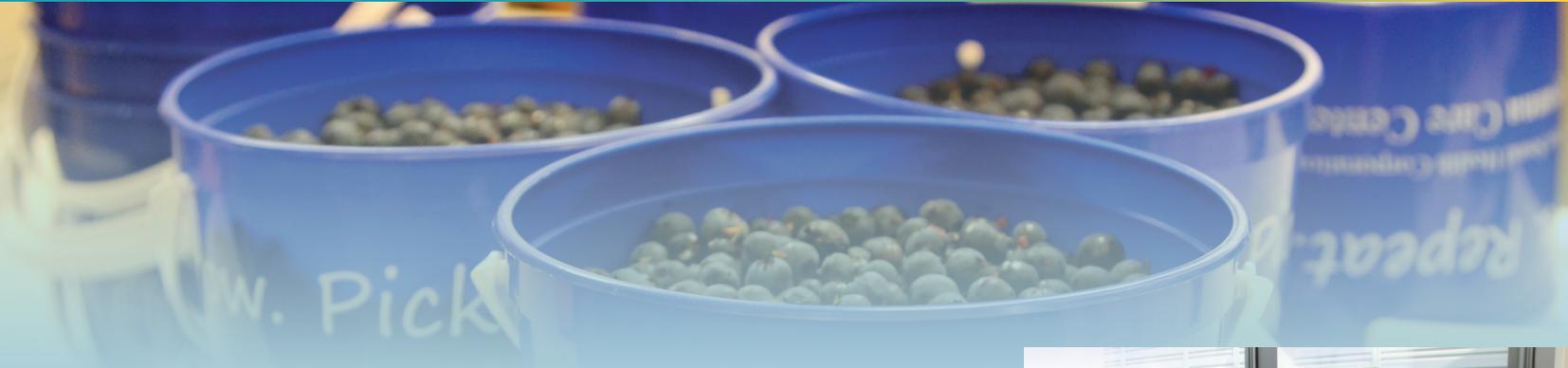
Photo by Reba Lean

Environmental Services

Environmental Services is the front line of infection control within NSHC, consisting of dedicated employees, who undergo extensive training to provide services in housekeeping and laundry to patients, staff and visitors, around the clock, all year long. Environmental Services employees were commended for the cleanliness of the Norton Sound Regional Hospital during the Joint Commission's three-year accreditation survey in July, 2015.

	FY14	FY15
Pounds of Laundry	154,427	166,873

Hospital Services



Quyanna Care Center

Our culture values the wisdom and experience of our elders. This respect drives the philosophy behind Quyanna Care Center. As patients age, staying connected to their culture is as essential as first-class health care and living assistance. Quyanna Care Center offers long-term care to 18 residents from the Norton Sound and Bering Strait region, allowing them to live close to home, while ensuring high quality medical and personal care.



Kirstie Nassuk, Lori Mueller, Amy Charles, Esther Kost and Lovina Steve graduated from the Certified Nursing Assistant program in September 2015.



Eloise Ahwinona smiles as she models a cherry-sprinkled kuspuk apron, made by QCC Nursing Director Mary Ann Bornaschella

During Fiscal Year 2015, QCC solicited donations of traditional foods for its elders, which yielded hundreds of quart-sized bags of berries and dozens of salmon, among other things.

In an effort to bring familiar surroundings to residents, QCC Nursing Director Mary Ann Bornaschella hand made 36 kuspuk-style aprons. The residents wear the beautifully made aprons at meal time.



Photo by Ken Graham

In 2015, Kumin Associates was awarded the Design Excellence Merit Award from the Alaska Chapter of American Society of Interior Designers for the Quyanna Care Center. The jury said it was impressed by the high quality interior spaces and with the connection to the outdoor landscape, giving the tribal elders a feel for their surroundings.

Hospital Services

Wellness Division

Photo by Katie O'Connor



CAMP

The Chronic Care, Active, Management and Prevention (CAMP) Program empowers people and communities to promote healthy lifestyles and improve quality of life for people with chronic illnesses. The CAMP program is funded by the Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI) Community-directed and Diabetes Prevention Initiative grants. Successes include: (1) providing a Health Fair in Nome and all the 15 surrounding villages this fiscal year. (2) Establishing and maintaining a comprehensive diabetes inter-disciplinary team. (3) Maintaining health promotion in the region through the award-winning Summercise program, the 10 in 10 weight loss challenge, physical fitness activities and more. Goals for this year include: (1) increase the number of individuals within the Norton Sound region who receive education about diabetes risk factors and how to prevent diabetes. (2) increase the percentage of youth engaging in healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. (3) provide quality diabetes care and treatment through an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach to improve patients' clinical outcomes.

Services include:

- Diabetes Case Management & Education
- Medical Nutrition Therapy
- Diabetes Prevention & Lifestyle Balance Classes
- Step by Step Program
- Individual screening and counseling
- Community health fairs & presentations
- Tobacco cessation services
- Physical fitness programs

	FY14	FY15
Diabetes Appointments	461	375
Nutrition Appointments	362	421
Tobacco Cessation Appointments	148	236
16wk Diabetes Education Participants	41	46
Step by Step Appointments	546	603
Health Fair Attendees	826	1,757
Youth Registered for Summercise	148	316



Hospital Services

Patient Spotlight



David Alvanna

Teller

David Alvanna stands proudly in front of "Nolan the Colon" during the Teller Health Fair in October, 2014. By getting his colonoscopy, David helped NSHC exceed its colonoscopy screening goal for Fiscal Year 2015.

Remember, if you are Alaska Native, the new screening age is 40 years old. Colonoscopy screenings are proven to detect and prevent cancer early!

Healthy Start Program

The Healthy Start Program is a State of Alaska grant to Norton Sound Health Corporation. Healthy Start's mission is to improve birth outcomes and perinatal disparities in the Norton Sound Region through direct client care and community empowerment. This includes providing services to decrease infant mortality, fetal alcohol syndrome disorder (FASD), tobacco use, depression, and domestic violence during pregnancy. The program aims to increase the delivery of effective, evidence-based services in order to improve maternal and infant health outcomes for Norton Sound families through comprehensive case management, community empowerment and outreach, and health education. The major goals of the Healthy Start Program are: (1) to bring well planned, well executed program of enhanced prenatal care and care between pregnancies, and (2) to improve the system of care for the highest risk pregnant women and families with children ages 0-2 years, and (3) to embed a coordinated system of care.

Services include:

- Case Management
- Home visiting and one-on-one health education sessions
- Interconception - Health Education & Case Management Services
- Depression Screening & Referrals
- Outreach & Health Education Sessions for Pregnant Women and Families
- Breastfeeding support
- Community-based consortium meetings

	FY14	FY15
Families Served by HSP	65	79
Pregnant Women Served	76	101
Children/Infants Served (<25 years old)	86	106
Interconceptional Women Served	77	94
Total Individuals Served	242	209

Hospital Services

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

WIC is a supplemental nutrition program that helps pregnant women, new mothers, and young children eat well, learn about good nutrition, and stay healthy.

In FY 15, WIC hired a new Competent Professional Authority (CPA) to help support the growing number of WIC clients throughout the region. The new CPA helped in processing applications, providing benefits, education and breastfeeding support and promotion to our clients.

Accomplishments:

- Consistently performing above local agency performance standards as well as above the state average in enrollment and participation in the program
- Participated in a Breastfeeding Poster Project that featured two Nome breastfeeding mothers and their babies. The posters were professionally made and distributed throughout the hospital and to each clinic in the region. The posters were created to inspire and instill confidence in Alaska Native breastfeeding mothers
- Hosted a visit from Molly Pessl BSN, IBCLC to train WIC staff, L&D staff and other community members/providers in a two-day training and in-service on breastfeeding

	FY14	FY15
Obesity Rates	49%	53%
Breastfeeding Initiation Rates	84%	83%
Breastfeeding duration at 6 months	29%	61.3%
Breastfeeding duration at 12 months	19%	50%
Average annual WIC benefits issued	8,817	9,295

Tribal Healer Program

Norton Sound Health Corporation established the Tribal Healing Program in 1997 at the request of the people of the Norton Sound region and approved by the Board of Directors. Tribal Healing has been a traditional practice used by the Native people before western medicine was available.

Norton Sound Health Corporation employed two tribal healers in FY 2015.

The Tribal Healer Program has been located in the new hospital since March 2013 at the Primary Care Department, and provides

In FY2015, the NSHC Board of Directors contributed \$65,000 in Tribal Share money to fund the Tribal Healing Program in FY2015.

traditional cultural based alternative therapies at the patient's

	FY14	FY15
Total Treatments	765	918

request. The program is located near the doctors and medical staff for easy access for referrals from medical staff. The Tribal Healers travel to the villages to provide their services at the village clinics.

Tribal Healers massage sore muscles and joints and manipulate some internal organs to provide traditional hands on treatment remedies.

Hospital Services

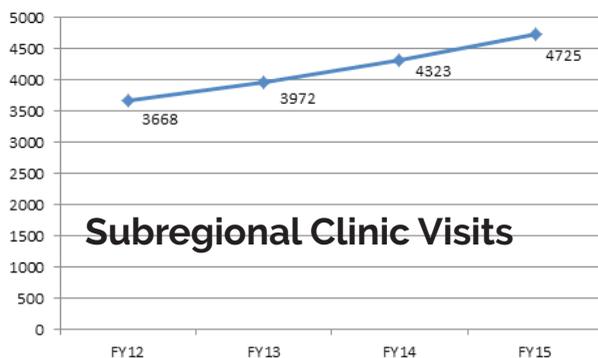
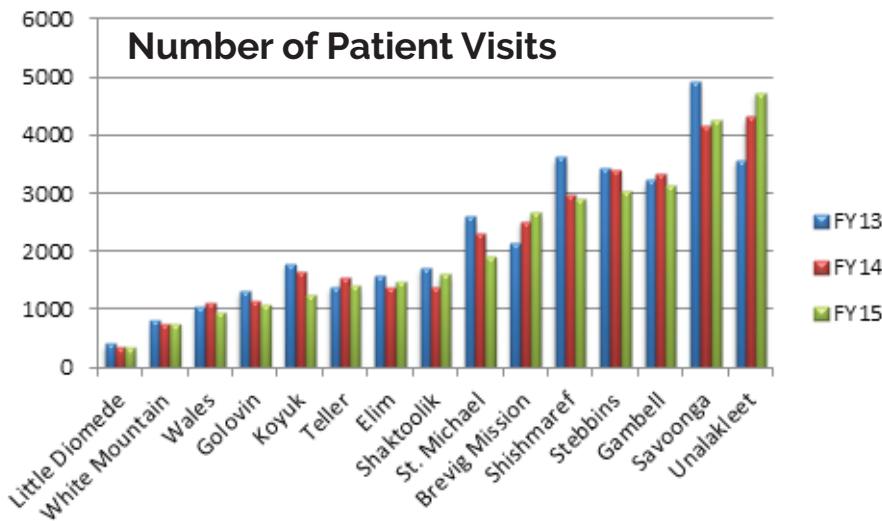
COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES

Village Health Services

Good health starts at home. That's why Norton Sound Health Corporation has clinics in each of its 15 regional villages.

The majority of employees within Village Health Services are Community Health Aides, who are local residents who have been trained at NSHC's Health Aide Training Center in Nome. The health aides are the front line of primary care in the rural communities. They serve as a critical link between providers in Nome and patients in the villages, therefore minimizing the need for patient travel. In addition, many staff members from Norton Sound Regional Hospital in Nome travel regularly to villages to treat patients.

	FY14	FY15
Patient Encounters	32,260	31,455



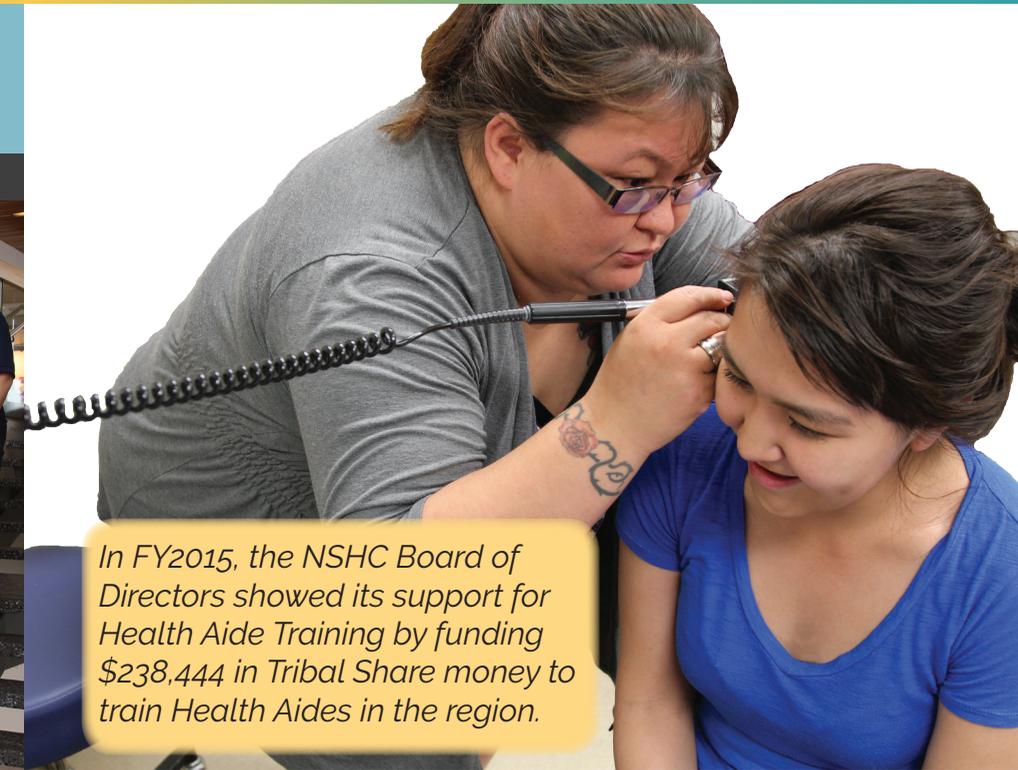
VHS Administrative Assistants/Clinic Travel Clerks came to Nome for a multi-day training opportunity, which included CPR training with the EMS Department.



Photo by Ashley Westbrook

Rita Buck of White Mountain and Channa Koozaata of Gambell train on emergency skills.

A Day in the Life



In FY2015, the NSHC Board of Directors showed its support for Health Aide Training by funding \$238,444 in Tribal Share money to train Health Aides in the region.

Community Health Aides Katrina Raymond and Kristina Apassingok practice ear exams during a health aide training course in Nome in August 2015.



Maasingah Nakak

Community Health Aide

St. Michael

"At work we talk about why we don't see ourselves doing anything else. I'd miss the adrenaline rush of the ER."

Maasingah was raised in Saint Michael and returned to her hometown to become a Community Health Aide in 2013. She joined NSHC with a desire to help her community. Despite the challenges of her field, she can't see herself anywhere else.

"The medical field is always changing, so I'm always learning something new."

Health Aide Training

The Health Aide Training Center, located in Nome, offers classroom and hands-on training to village Community Health Aides, giving priority to NSHC students. The center is one of four in the state of Alaska. Trainers help ensure quality of patient care through Basic Training Sessions, clinical preceptorships, evaluation of re-entering Health Aides, continuing education workshops, and recommendations for standing orders.

	FY14	FY15
Basic Training Attendees	42	47
Preceptorships Completed	2	1
Continuing Education Workshop Attendees	18	12
Re-Entry Evaluations	2	3

Community Health Services

Behavioral Health Services

Behavioral Health Services (BHS) provides integrated services for persons with mental health and/or substance use concerns. Dedicated to offering person-centered care where the client directs his or her treatment, BHS providers facilitate interventions and counseling with individuals, couples, and families in a confidential and healing environment. Through this collaborative approach, people involved in services develop healthier behaviors, relationships, and expression of emotions.

BHS is proud to have a strong presence throughout the region. The Village-Based Counseling Program encourages self-sufficiency in the areas of counseling and prevention based on each village's needs, and BHS is the only rural location in the state accredited by the American Psychological Association with a pre-doctoral internship program.

In addition to the MATRIX-based substance use disorder treatment program, BHS continues to develop the Wellness Center, known as Liitfik, a place of healing and a full continuum of care treatment facility. Liitfik's programs include firm foundations in the healing wisdom of the region's Elders, the involvement of traditional activities in the treatment programs, the guidance of a Cultural Committee, and the use of a validated substance use treatment program for client education, relapse prevention, and sobriety.

Other initiatives in FY15 and ongoing include:

- 1. Integrated Care:** BHS provides staff members in Primary Care five days per week to promote the availability and necessity of the patient-centered medical home model serving to transform the delivery of comprehensive

In FY2015, the NSHC Board of Directors dedicated Tribal Share money to fund \$300,000 for Regional Behavioral Health Services and another \$630,386 to support the Village-Based Counseling Program.

primary care for children, adults, and elders. To further support this need, Dr. Ray Droby, Psychologist, permanently relocated to the sub-regional clinic in Unalakleet in June 2015.

BHS put a clinician on the Acute Care Unit five days per week. This provider interfaces with those who are admitted for behavioral health reasons, and spends time with them while they are on the unit to provide consultation, case management, assessment, and other therapeutic engagements hopefully leading the hospitalized person to a longer-lasting commitment to enroll in services and get the sustainable help he or she needs.

- 2. CARF Accreditation:** Behavioral Health Services successfully completed its Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) survey in June 2015. It received the highest three-year accreditation, recognizing the high quality of service of BHS providers.
- 3. Anvil Mountain Correctional Center (AMCC):** BHS began preliminary work with AMCC to provide case management work to coordinate services for each inmate 90 days before he/she is released and 60 days after. This allows BHS to help establish safe contacts, job coordination, secure housing, and several other services to help once on the outside. The goal is to get the people the services they need while they are incarcerated and to reduce recidivism, the endless cycle of re-entry and re-incarceration.

Community Health Services

	FY14	FY15
Total BHS Visits	6,235	6,115

HUMAN RESOURCES



The Human Resources Department (HR) plays a critical role in the management of NSHC's workforce. HR enforces policies and procedures, manages the employee compensation and benefits programs, as well as the scholarship, internship, and other educational programs in support of Alaskan Native and local hire development, recruitment and retention strategies.

In FY2015, the NSHC Board of Directors dedicated \$180,000 to support education for Tribal students in Tribal Share money.

	FY14	FY15
Total Employees	583	754
Local Hire Rate	93%	78%
Native Hire Rate	64%	63.4%
Voluntary Turnover Rate	23.5%	24.27%
Total Scholarships Awarded	\$185,000	\$242,483
Total Beneficiary Scholarships	\$143,949.00	\$176,612.91

INFORMATION SERVICES

Information Systems (IS) professionals manage electronic records, patient data, computers, and technical equipment. IS staff ensure electronic information is kept secure, lines of communication are open at all times, and all equipment is fully operational and current.

- Successfully updated General Ledger and Inventory software to the newer Meditech Solution.
- Updated Time keeping system from Kronos to ADP.
- Increased bandwidth to each Village Clinic within the Norton Sound Health Corporation to include six villages brought into the Terra Network which are White Mountain, Golovin, Elim, Koyuk, St. Michael and Stebbins.
- Upon completion of the bandwidth increase, deploying the Shoretel Voice Over IP phone system to each of the clinics.

ADMINISTRATION



The Administration Department at NSHC works to carry out the aligned set of goals and priorities during the fiscal year in collaboration with the Board of Directors. During FY16, Administration hired the Public Relations Specialist, the Compliance Officer and General Counsel, and three Corporate Officers. Additionally, two Assistant Vice Presidents were hired and are being mentored.

Self-Governance

NSHC was one of the first Tribal health organizations in the nation to assume responsibility of medical care for the people it serves. We are proud that our Tribally-owned system includes an 18-bed regional hospital, 18-resident Nursing Home, and 15 village-based clinics, all operated through an Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA) Title V compact authorized by our 20 Tribes. Self-Governance is embedded in NSHC's mission and vision. In FY2015, NSHC contracted with Carolyn Crowder to serve as Self Governance Liaison. Carolyn started her career at NSHC in 1981, serving as our President/CEO for nearly twenty years.



Carolyn Crowder was contracted as NSHC's Self-Governance Coordinator in FY2015.

Public Relations

The NSHC Public Relations Department helps coordinate, develop and share community announcements, press releases, advertisements, and newsletters. It is the goal of the Public Relations Department to keep residents of the region up to date on NSHC program offerings and changes.



Public Relations accompanied Indian Health Services representatives on a trip to St. Lawrence Island to visit new clinic sites in August 2015.

Compliance, Legal, and Consumer Relations

In FY2015, the Compliance Department assumed responsibility for taking over insurance renewals for the corporation and managing claims. In addition, the Compliance Officer in tandem with General Counsel, provided in-services to multiple departments on elements of the Compliance Plan and the HIPAA (privacy) Policies.

The Research Ethics and Review Board reviewed and approved a tobacco research study, called the Healing and Empowering Alaskan Lives Towards Healthy Hearts (HEALTHH) Study. The purpose of the study is to identify effective and cost-effective interventions to decrease tobacco use and other cardiovascular disease-related risk behaviors among Alaska Native people in rural villages.

The Patient Advocate assists patients and their families with ancillary issues, such as managing medical bills, travel and lodging arrangements, and coordination of health care. In addition to helping patients navigate the NSHC health care system on a daily basis, the Patient Advocate led several fundraising activities for the Make a Patient Smile Fund throughout the year. NSHC received \$11,000 from the Arctic ICANS in FY2015 to support patients and families coping with cancer.



Having a Say



Liz Johnson

Alternate Board Member
Solomon Traditional Council

Liz Johnson knows the power of speaking up. That's why, when she had a concern about a family member's health care, she went through NSHC's Patient & Compliance Concern Hotline online system. In a short time, she heard back from an NSHC official describing what steps were taken in response to her concern.

"I believe in making things work for my mom, for patients, for me."

ENGINEERING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Office of Environmental Health

The OEH Department continues to ensure the Remote Maintenance Worker Program is administered to train local water and sanitation workers to maintain safe water systems and supply. The Director of OEH collaborated with the Capital Projects Department

to assist with important renovations in the Village Clinics such as boiler replacements, plumbing concerns, morgue installations and other concerns.



Pictured: Teller Washeteria



Kevin Zweifel, Director of the Office of Environmental Health, has been with NSHC for 17 years.

Adequate water and sanitation facilities are critical to protecting public health in rural Alaska communities. Infants in communities without adequate sanitation are 11 times more likely to be hospitalized for respiratory infections and five times more likely to be hospitalized for skin infections. In villages without piped water, one in three infants requires hospitalization each year for lower respiratory tract infections.

The Department continues to aggressively advocate for water and sewer priorities within the region to ensure the five communities without water and sewer have a plan in place to secure this resource in the future.

Plant Operations

Plant Operations works with all NSHC departments to provide quality maintenance and repair services, including managing utilities such as light, heat, air handling, oxygen, and power. The department works rigorously to care for facilities, striving to maintain a pleasant and comfortable physical environment for patients, visitors and staff.



Plant Operations works to maintain the 154,000 square-foot hospital facility, including cleaning exterior windows.

	FY14	FY15
Facility Work Orders	2,927	9,263

Capital Projects Office

In FY2015, NSHC made great strides with Village Capital Improvements. In November 2014, NSHC held a Ribbon-cutting Ceremony with the community of Shishmaref, which marked the completion of their 2,200 square foot renovation. The clinic renovation and expansion project received funding from Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation, the Denali Commission, and the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority. The new clinic includes a dental suite for the local Dental Health Aide

Therapist and Dental Health Aide as well as an office space for the Village-based counselor. The integration of these providers into the primary care setting has strengthened NSHC's ability to carry out the principles of their Patient-Centered Medical Home model.

In addition, the Wales Clinic received a renovation, which restored running water, upgraded the electrical system, and provided a covered ramp to ensure snow and ice would not impede access inclement weather.

NSEDC provided funding for this clinic renovation.

In FY2015, NSHC successfully installed the pilings and completed the site work for both the communities of Savoonga and Gambell as each prepared to build a 5,200 square-foot clinic. NSHC continued to aggressively fundraise during FY2015 for the new clinics.

NSHC continued the efforts of its Village Clinic Improvement Program and worked with several Tribal leaders to assume responsibility and oversight for the village clinic routine maintenance, repairs, including hiring and recruitment of janitors and maintenance workers.

In June 2015, NSHC started the construction of an Alaska Housing Finance Corporation Grant funded Health Professional and Public Safety Triplex in St. Michael.

To prepare the local workforce to secure jobs, NSHC partnered with the Nome Northwest Campus and Kawerak to offer a construction training course. Nine students completed the training course and completed a 12 x 16 shed, located on clinic property to house the community morgue. Six of the nine students were hired to work on the triplex project.



Johnson Eningowuk, June Walunga and Howard Weyiouanna, Sr. cut the ribbon to Shishmaref's newly renovated clinic.



Photo by Mike Kruse

Piles were driven in the summer of 2015 at the sites of the future Saint Lawrence Island clinics in Savoonga and Gambell.

PATIENT FINANCIAL SERVICES

Patient Financial Services

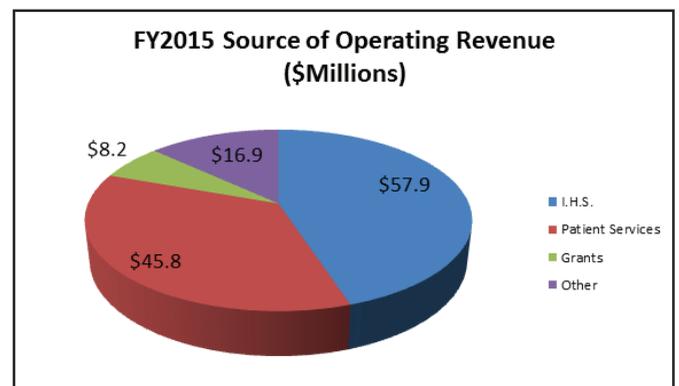
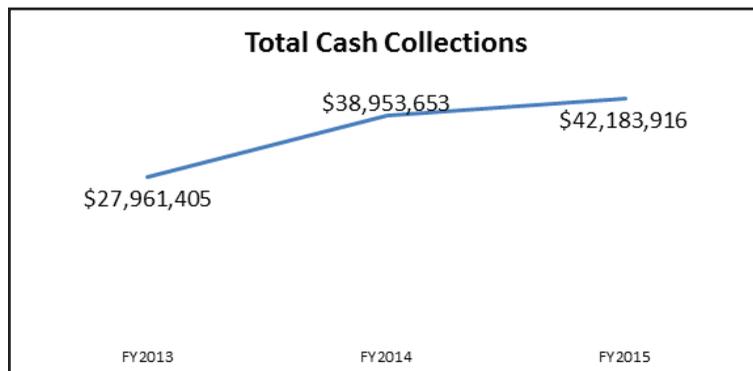
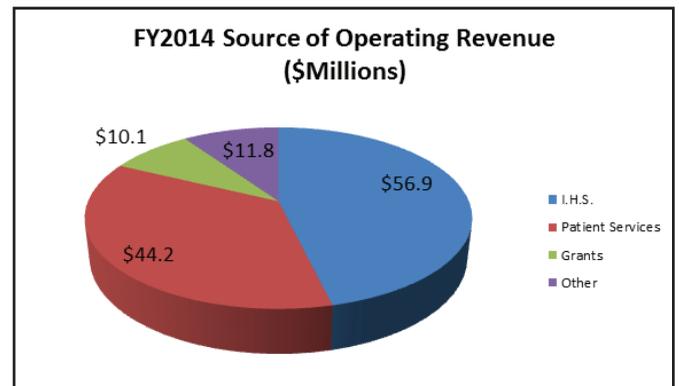
The Patient Financial Services department handles admissions, billing, and collections for NSHC medical services as well as cashiering services for all divisions of the corporation. The department performs outreach to eligible patients to enroll them in benefit programs such as Medicaid.

Photo by Reba Lean
 Patient Financial Services' Victoria Stubbs received her Occupational Endorsement Certificate in Billing from the University of Alaska Fairbanks in May 2015.



Accounting

Payroll, Accounts Payable, Grants Accounting, Budgeting and Financial Statements are all managed by the Accounting Department.



Materials Management

Materials Management purchases all material, supplies, and equipment for NSHC and manages inventory and central supply. The department ensures purchases meet both quality and cost requirements.

Health Information Management

Health Information Management maintains NSHC medical records and manages the corporation's daily needs for health care information. All records are maintained in accordance with strict policies and procedures, as well as applicable laws, including HIPAA. Staff provide medical record services and support patients, providers and departments.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT



Photo by Devynn Johnson
Sen. Lisa Murkowski happily poses with NSHC's Tobacco Cessation Counselor Michelle Poust.

The mission of the Quality and Risk Management department is to ensure that qualified personnel deliver state-of-the-art care and services and that quality care and patient safety is evident in all services

provided to, or on behalf of, those we serve.

NSHC seeks to develop a system to deliver health care that is grounded in the diverse cultures and values of each community we serve. We will provide accessible patient-centered systems that promote safe, timely, effective, efficient, and equitable care that is sustainable.

The Norton Sound Regional Hospital was surveyed by the Joint Commission during FY2015 and performed well; accreditation status has been maintained for the next three years.

NSHC developed more strategies to receive patient feedback in FY2015 regarding their health care experience, by utilizing HCAHPS (Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) and CAHPS (Consumer Assessment of Health Care Providers and Systems).

NSHC's HRSA (Health Resources Service and Administration) Quality Improvement Team set priorities for UDS (Universal Data System) measures to improve the delivery of primary care and focused on the following: tobacco cessation education, family education regarding healthy eating and active living, blood pressure control, colonoscopy screening, and depression screening. NSHC implemented the Patient-Centered Medical Home model and continues to strengthen the case management system.

Other important initiatives carried out in FY2015 include: piloting home visits with Tribal Healers, development of a 72-hour return to clinic policy and procedure, falls reduction, and medication error reduction.

	FY14	FY15
Employee Flu Shots Administered	486	478
Community Flu Shots Administered	2,273	2,102

	FY14	FY15
Colonoscopy Screenings	118	220
Mammograms	613	370
Pap Tests	729	593
Tobacco Cessation Counseling	148	236

Employee Health/Infection Prevention

The Employee Health and Infection Prevention program is responsible for ensuring staff is properly immunized according to Centers for Disease Control and State of Alaska recommendations. All staff is screened upon hire and annually for tuberculosis.

Infection Prevention practices, such as hand hygiene and proper use of personal protection equipment, are monitored for compliance. Monitoring the use of urinary catheters and any catheter acquired infections is an on-going process.

VITAL STATISTICS

Number of babies born: 187

(63 in Nome, 124 elsewhere)

Top five primary care diagnoses:

1. Vaccinations
2. Pregnancy
3. Hypertension (high blood pressure)
4. Routine child health exam
5. Abdominal pain

Inpatient Admissions: 835 (inpatient and observation)

Other clinic visits

Dental: 10,829
Audiology: 1,629
Eye Care: 3,714

Emergency Department visits: 10,416

Traumas: 61

Nome outpatient clinic encounters:

BHS encounters: 6,115
Village clinic encounters: 31,455
Medevacs: 389

Ancillary Services

Lab Tests: 147,910
Prescriptions Filled: 118,351
Physical Therapies: 2,665
Respiratory Therapies: 1,104
Radiology Images: 5,593

Interpretive Services

Top Three Languages: Yupik, Siberian Yupik, Inupiaq

Preventive Tests/Visits

Colonoscopies: 220
Mammograms: 370
Pap Tests: 593
Vaccines Administered: 7,362
Flu Shots Administered: 2,102
Tobacco Cessation Counseling: 236
Health Fair Participants: 1,757

Human Resources

Total Employees: 754
Local Hire Rate: 78%
Native Hire Rate: 63.4%
Voluntary Turnover: 24.3%
Total Employee Training Hours: 22,382.5
Total Employee Flu Shots: 478
Total Scholarship Awards: \$242,483
Total Beneficiary Scholarship Awards: \$176,612.91

Credentialed Medical Staff

(Full-time, part-time & consulting): 236

Health Aides: 65

Members of the Board of Directors: 23

Officers of NSHC's Board of Directors: 5

Financial Information

Operating Revenue (\$M): 128.8
Expenses (\$M): 131.1
Net Profit/Loss (\$M): -2.8

Revenue Source

IHS: \$57,871,796
Patient Services: \$45,796,887
Grants: \$8,184,931
Other: \$16,912,508

Average Monthly Collections: \$3,515,326.33

EMPLOYEE AWARDS



**Anita Helsius, Primary Care RN
PRIDE Value Award**



**Annie Blandford, Primary Care RN
COMPASSION Value Award**



**Theresa Olanna, Acute Care RN
COMPASSION Value Award**



**Jennifer Fast, Laboratory Point of
Care Technician
ALWAYS LEARNING & IMPROVING
Value Award**



**Ashley Frost, Laboratory Manager
INTEGRITY Value Award**



**Cynthia Watters, Primary Care RN
TEAMWORK Value Award**



**Josie Garnie, Teller Village Based
Counselor
TEAMWORK Value Award**



**Rosemary Akeya, Savoonga
Community Health Aide
CULTURAL SENSITIVITY &
RESPECT FOR TRADITIONAL
VALUES Value Award**



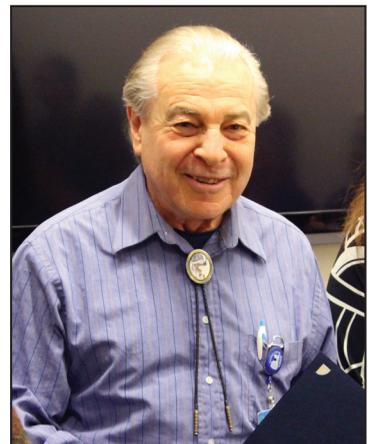
**Doris Angusuc, Cashier
EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR Award**



**Channa Koozaata, Gambell
Community Health Aide
EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR Award**



**Mark Schroeder, Electronic Health
Record Manager
MANAGER OF THE YEAR Award**



**Marv Poyourow, BHS
PHIL HOFSTETTER
HUMANITARIAN AWARD**



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*Honoring the Past and
Embracing the Future*

