

Growing Together in Community and Health

ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal
Year
2021



**NORTON SOUND
HEALTH CORPORATION**



MISSION

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

VISION

By 2022, we will excel in tribally governed health care delivery systems globally.

- 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.

VALUES

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

Norton Sound Health Corporation Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Report

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Dear Customer Owners and Patients,

In FY21, NSHC along with all health systems in the nation, continued to work tirelessly to mitigate the risks of COVID-19 during the second year of the pandemic. NSHC, in collaboration with its regional partners, kept the region safe through high testing capacity coupled by low infection and death rates and high vaccination rates. Clinical care teams expanded in-person care to ensure health needs previously delayed due to public health restrictions, were met. Although telehealth remained a meaningful way to connect with patients for physical and behavioral health needs, in-person patient care volumes increased from the year prior.

NSHC observed growth in its workforce to 700 employees and maintained a 61% Tribal Hire Rate. The Tribal Training and Development Program continued to support employees and students through on-the-job training and financial scholarships. In an effort to retain longevity staff, the Board of Directors approved a new longevity leave benefit, which rewards employees with 10 continuous years of service with 12 weeks of paid leave. During FY21, 47 employees applied for this new leave benefit.

Through NSHC's robust Patient-Centered Medical Home primary care model, prevention exams were made the priority, and an increase in mammograms, colonoscopies, adult wellness exams, and pap tests were observed from the year prior. The number of advance practice providers working in NSHC's village clinics also grew to compliment the health aide team and to provide relief staffing coverage.

NSHC's annual operating budget grew by \$30 M in FY21 to \$190 M; cash collections from third-party payors for health care services delivered were sustained at \$84M. Over the past decade, annual total collections have grown by \$60M as a direct result of expanding patient care volumes (providing more health care to better meet the needs of our people) and by helping patients apply for health insurance and other benefits.



Angie Gorn
NSHC President/CEO



In FY21, the NSHC Board of Directors approved a \$23.6M capital budget. During the fiscal year, NSHC opened the new Wellness and Training Center, a dream for the past decade. The community of Shishmaref celebrated during a ribbon cutting ceremony to commemorate the new 5500 square foot clinic with expanded exam room space, a dental suite, and more Emergency Room Trauma bays. Progress on the region's morgues continued as new buildings were erected in Wales, St. Michael, Gambell, Savoonga, and Brevig Mission. Construction of a new health clinic for St. Michael began and planning was finalized to begin site improvements and construction for a health clinic and housing quarters in Wales.

The region was blessed in FY21 when the Helmsley Charitable Trust announced a \$20 million grant for improvements to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in rural Alaska, with a special focus on the Bering Strait region. The funding was earmarked to help provide financial matches for

projects in the Bering Strait region already in the Sanitation Deficiency System database and to help establish a regional Community Utility Assistance Program (CUAP). The concept of a regional CUAP had been under consideration for many years among regional partners and Helmsley's donation was the catalyst to kick start the initiative. Kawerak and NSHC held meetings with all community leaders in FY21 to gain input for design and in June 2021, the CUAP pre-development phase began.

"Our city governments have a very tough job," said Preston Rookok, NSHC Board Chair. "They have to keep the system running smooth in rural Alaska with some of the harshest weather conditions with shoestring budgets. We want them to know they are not alone. The co-op will provide support, and we will move forward together."

NSHC is optimistic about FY22 and the opportunities to continue to meet our patients' needs and preferences. The tribal leader call is still going strong and has provided an avenue to not only disseminate important COVID-19 information, but has offered a way for customer owners and patients to provide timely, critical feedback about all programs and services for prompt resolution. The organization is preparing for its tri-annual Joint Commission Survey. With the opening of new wellness center, planning continues for expanded behavioral health programs. A new suicide prevention program, Intergenerational Native Understanding and Abundance (INUA) Program was started this fiscal year and proved to be successful through its variety of community outreach activities. As the organization continues to deliver Tribal health from the heart, qiyanna to the region for choosing NSHC to meet your health care needs.



Berda Willson
Native Village of Council



Cassandra Ahkvaluk
Native Village of Diomede



Frederick Murray
Native Village of Elim



June Walunga
Native Village of Gambell



Martin Aukongak
Chinik Eskimo Community



Robert Keith
Kawerak, Inc.



Heather Payenna
King Island Community



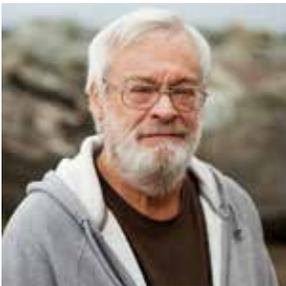
Rosemary Otton
Native Village of Koyuk



Carol Ablowaluk
Mary's Igloo



Kevin Bahnke
Nome Eskimo Community



Stan Andersen
City of Nome



Alice Fitka
Native Village of St. Michael



Preston Rookok
Native Village of Savoonga



Matilda Hardy
Native Village of Shaktoolik



Molly Ningeulook
Native Village of Shishmaref



Elizabeth Johnson
Village of Solomon



Jean Ferris
Stebbins Community Association



Jenny Lee
Teller Traditional Council



Tony Haugen
Native Village of Unalakleet



Joanne Keyes
Native Village of Wales

FY2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive Committee

Chair: Preston Rookok
2nd Vice Chair: Matilda Hardy
Treasurer: Tony Haugen
Exec. Member #1: Elizabeth Johnson
Exec. Member #3: Vacant

Vice Chair: Heather Payenna
Secretary: Berda Willson
Asst. Sec./Treas.: Mary D. Charles
Exec. Member #2: Frederick Murray

Not pictured:
Frieda Southall
Native Village of Brevig Mission

2021 Board Members of the Year:
Anthony Haugen
Heather Payenna
Berda Willson



Mary D. Charles
Native Village of White Mountain

Service to the Board

NSHC wanted to bring attention to some special individuals who spent years with the Board of Directors, making decisions critical to the healthcare services offered to the region, as well as to the wellness of patients and employees.



June Walunga
Native Village of Gambell
Years of Service: 1995-2021

Served on: Clinical Services Committee, Compliance Committee, Research Ethics Review Board, Site Planning & Construction, and Water & Sewer Committee

During June's tenure, she saw the hospital's construction from start to finish and the construction of the new St. Lawrence Island clinics from start to finish.



Martin Aukongak
Chinik Eskimo Community
Years of Service: 2013-2021

Served on: Clinical Services Committee, Finance & Audit Committee, Hire & Development Committee, Site Planning & Construction Committee, and Water & Sewer Committee

Martin was instrumental in implementing the Board of Director's Youth Coalition initiative, where high school youths from around the region attend board meetings and learn about the Tribal health care system.



NSHC Remembers

In August 2021, NSHC lost a valued staff member and friend to many. Sean Penetac worked for NSHC since 2017, most recently as a housing coordinator in the Corporate Housing department.

He was quick to show appreciation and respect for others and quick to volunteer. Sean was a member of the King Island Native Community and was active as an EMT with the Nome Volunteer Ambulance Dept.

Sean was born and raised in Nome and graduated from Nome-Beltz High School in 1993. He attended college

(Left) Sean takes part in a CPR challenge in June 2021. (Right) As a member of NVAD, Sean helps carry out a pretend patient during an active shooter drill at the hospital in December 2016.

at Alaska Pacific University and Fort Lewis College. He joined the U.S. Marine Corps in 1997 and completed two tours overseas. He then joined the Alaska Army National Guard in 2002 and served for seven years and completed a tour overseas. Sean is survived by his parents Sylvia and Raymond Paniataaq, his son Brandon, his seven siblings, and other family members.



NSHC serves the entire Norton Sound/Bering Strait region. Based in Nome with the Norton Sound Regional Hospital, NSHC has local clinics in each of the 15 outlying villages. NSHC's Board of Directors is comprised of a Tribal representative from each of the region's 20 Tribes along with a representative from NSHC's sister organization Kawerak, Inc. and the City of Nome.



NSHC Facilities and Directory

Nome

- Norton Sound Regional Hospital..... (907) 443-3311
 - Nome Primary Care 443-3333
 - Acute Care/Inpatient Unit.....443-3200
 - Emergency Department443-3203
 - Audiology 443-3297
 - Dental.....443-3309
 - Eye Care 443-3235
 - Health Information Management..... 443-3212
 - Laboratory.....443-9641
 - Patient Advocate.....443-4567
 - Pharmacy.....443-3319
 - Rehabilitation Therapy Services.....443-4513
 - Social Services443-4541
 - Quyanna Care Center..... 443-3357
- Wellness and Training Center
 - Behavioral Health Services 443-3344
 - CAMP.....443-3365
 - Health Aide Training.....443-3404
 - Tribal Healing443-9004
 - EMS Training443-3306
- Nome Operations Building
 - Office of Environmental Health.....443-3294
 - Sanitation 443-9570

Brevig Mission.....	(907) 642-4311
Elim.....	(907) 890-2253
Gambell.....	(907) 985-5031
Golovin.....	(907) 779-2272
Koyuk.....	(907) 963-2410
Little Diomedes.....	(907) 868-2210
Saint Michael.....	(907) 923-2334
Savoonga.....	(907) 984-6756
Shaktolik.....	(907) 955-2430
Shishmaref.....	(907) 649-2127
Stebbins.....	(907) 934-2332
Teller.....	(907) 642-2113
Unalakleet.....	(907) 624-3535
Wales.....	(907) 664-2319
White Mountain.....	(907) 638-2023

10 Years of Growth

growing together in community and health

a snapshot of 10 years of data

	Total Employees	Total Service Encounters
2012	492	82,587
2021	707	152,128

	2012	2021
Nome-Based Employees	467*	522
Village-Based Employees	151*	185
Native Hire Rate	57%	61%
Local Hire Rate	88%	68%

(* = 2013)

Employee Support

NSHC's support for its employees keeps growing. Investment in loan reimbursements, employee training, and employee referral bonuses has outpaced workforce growth. In the last decade, NSHC implemented subsistence leave and wellness days for its employees.

Education Support

NSHC continues to support growth for regional residents through education funding. Scholarship amounts awarded increased 280% from \$103,500 in 2012 to \$393,250 in 2021. The nursing program, in partnership with University of Alaska, has graduated 15 local nurses and retained 8 as employees.

By the numbers...

NSHC service encounters reflect shifts in focus and patient trends

Encounter Type	2012	2021
Nome Primary Care	11,274**	15,999
Village Clinic Encounters	32,338	37,683
ED Visits	11,247*	5,323
Acute Care Admissions	597	935
Deliveries	75	86
Dental Visits	10,167	8,108
Eye Care Visits	4,363	2,479
Flu Shots Administered	2,542	4,240
Audiology Visits	3,258	2,533
Lab Tests	49,455	182,470
Telehealth Visits	1,159**	8,263

(* = 2013; ** = 2015)



Making Big Things Happen

Unique Patients Served

6,249
(2013)

12,607

Total Operating Revenue

\$74.9 M

\$216.2 M

Talk about big changes...

NSHC's largest growth came from a wide array of services

Encounter Type	10-Yr Growth
Inpatient Psychiatric Encounters.....	16200%
Depression Screening and Follow-up	2224%
BHS Additional Client Services.....	590%
Tobacco Use Screening.....	756%
Telehealth Visit	613%
Swing Bed Patient Days.....	400%
Colonoscopies	292%
Physical Therapy Visits	281%
Laboratory Tests	222%
Colorectal Cancer Screening.....	217%

	2012	2021
Indian Health Service	\$32.8M	\$87.1M
Patient Services	\$27.9M	\$84.2M
Grants	\$6.7M	\$18.4
Other	\$7.5M	\$26.5

Incoming Revenue

Operating revenue has increased across all categories - IHS, patient services, grants and other. Cash collections from third-party payors were increased by \$60M, or 217%, in the last 10 years. This can be attributed to expanded patient care volumes and helping patients apply for health insurance and other benefits.

Medicaid Enrollment

Medicaid enrollment increased from 3,543 in 2012 to 5,205 in 2021. This was due in large part to the state's Medicaid expansion in 2015.

Village Clinic Funding

NSHC's village clinic funding changed from Village Built Clinic Lease funds, which were steadily decreasing, to 105(l) Lease funds, which bring over 10 times the amount of money in for clinic operations.

MEDICAL STAFF

Medical Staff

Total FY21 Patient Encounters: 33,220

NSHC Medical Staff consists of physicians and mid-level providers, including physician assistants and nurse practitioners. Medical Staff provides high quality medical services for the region in a compassionate and sensitive manner.

In FY21, Medical Staff continued its stable staffing

in Norton Sound Regional Hospital departments and village clinics.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continued, NSHC took on 90-100% of the contact tracing of positive cases in the region. During this time, routine physician visits to regional communities picked back up to pre-pandemic frequency.



Board Chair Preston Rookok presents Dr. Mark Peterson with the National Indian Health Board 2021 Local Impact Award.

Dr. Peterson was recognized with the NIHB's annual award for his outstanding service that impacted health care on the local and Tribal level. His leadership throughout the COVID-19 response was based on preventative care, excellent communication, and actionable response. NSHC is grateful for his role as incident commander during the COVID-19 response and as medical director.

Dental

FY20 Patient Encounters: 6,511

FY21 Patient Encounters: 8,108

NSHC provides a vast array of dental services. These include preventative cleanings, exams, sealants, and fluoride treatments, in addition to more advanced services such as crowns, root canals, orthodontics, and oral surgery. Dental sees walk-in emergency patients and provides services to elders free of charge.

General dentists, dental health aide therapists, specialty dentists, and dental assistants regularly travel to all villages. In FY21, COVID-19 testing was required for dental patients, which allowed Dental to safely provide services and continue village travel as planned. In order to offer and complete COVID-19 testing, great efforts were made from multiple departments, including: Lab, Point of Care testing, Cough and Cold Clinic, Village Health Services, and Materials Management. Many people helped ensure dental services would be offered during the pandemic.

DENTAL



FY21 Highlights:

- Dental welcomed general dentist Dr. Erin Medina
- 70% of dental staff are full-time and local residents
- Zenas' Pratt (assistant) received her Expanded Functions Dental Health Aide Certification
- Normal schedules continued despite COVID-19 with available vaccines and testing

HOSPITAL SERVICES

PRIMARY CARE

FY20 Primary Care Appointments: 13,983
FY21 Primary Care Appointments: 15,999
FY20 Specialty Clinic Appointments: 1,053
FY21 Specialty Clinic Appointments: 1,249

NSHC Primary Care provides multifaceted outpatient care on a team-based model for the Bering Strait region. The past two years brought continued challenges for protecting communities and employees from COVID-19, and yet, Primary Care continues to provide

a high level of care. The Cough and Cold Clinic makes available a provider and point of care testing for patients with respiratory complaints separate from the clinic. Temperature screening continued for patients, visitors and employees who entered Norton Sound Regional Hospital. Employee and community testing in the Nome Operations Building provided daily testing for travelers and those experiencing symptoms. The same team provided hundreds of tests for hundreds of local and visiting school children who participated in athletic programs.



Primary Care Clinic staff poses for a kuspuk day photo during Nurses Week in 2021.

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

FY20 Patient Encounters: 6,053
FY21 Patient Encounters: 3,903
FY20 Nurse Call Line Calls: 3,749
FY21 Nurse Call Line Calls: 2,630

Rebecca Horton, ED Technician, greets patients with a smile.

The NSHC Emergency Department is a Level IV Trauma Center that provides around-the-clock care for the region. All ED nurses have multiple credentials to provide the best and safest care for the community, whether the patient is a walk-in with simple needs or a multiple trauma that requires coordination with the medevac team for advanced care. Patients coming to the ED have shorter wait times and are released faster than the national averages. The ED also manages the Nurse Call Line, with dedicated nurses to assist in after-clinic-hours patient needs. NSHC is one of the only Tribal Health Organizations in the state to use local clinicians for this type of service.



ACUTE CARE

The inpatient unit, NSHC's Acute Care Clinic, has two labor and delivery beds along with 16 beds for psychiatric and medical care. The COVID-19 period required some changes in how healthcare delivery was done to include use of air filtration and adding negative pressure into rooms to protect staff and other patients. Consideration for adding other patients in the event of patient census greater than 18 was made to include use of semi-private rooms and use of other departments for patient care. The COVID patient load never grew to that level thanks to the efforts made in community vaccinations and readily available testing and screening.



Nursing student Marie Balamou cares for Norbert Snowball.

FY20 Inpatient Admissions: 656

FY21 Inpatient Admissions: 773

FY20 Deliveries: 88

FY21 Deliveries: 89

LABOR & DELIVERY

NSHC's Labor and Delivery nurses are specially trained in assisting the laboring mother and assessing and stabilizing the newborn. Regional patients are provided with prenatal care in the village clinics and the Maternal Child Health nurses in Primary Care as the pregnancy proceeds. The laboring mother now has the option of self-administered nitrous oxide, which is the same inhaled anesthesia used in dental procedures to assist in mitigation of pain of the labor process. Lastly, NSHC is expanding its educational process to provide more nurses with the clinical experience and education needed for care of the laboring patient.

INFECTION PREVENTION

The Employee Health and Infection Prevention program is responsible for environmental safety of all remodeling and construction within the hospital, to screen and ensure all staff have acquired the required vaccinations. The infection prevention nurse also monitors patients for hospital acquired infections, develops protocols

for mitigation and prevention of patient infections, and reports any identified infections to the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention. Finally, all required employee vaccinations are provided by, monitored, and reported by the Employee Health Nurse.

QUYANNA CARE CENTER

An 18-bed, longterm care center, QCC has been home to many of the region's respected elders. NSHC believes as patients age, staying connected to their culture is as important as receiving first-class health care and living assistance. With that in mind, the staff of QCC strives to maintain residents' quality of life in a safe, home-like environment and incorporates traditional ways of living into different aspects of the residents' care.



QCC staff joins elder residents for a stroll outdoors on a sunny June day.

ANCILLARY SERVICES



Pharmacy Technician Rena Sparks enters in medication information to the Pharmacy system.

RESPIRATORY THERAPY

Respiratory Therapy specializes in the promotion of cardiopulmonary function, health and wellness. The respiratory therapist identifies, treats and prevents acute or chronic dysfunction of the cardiopulmonary system.

LABORATORY

The NSHC Laboratory is accredited by the Joint Commission. The laboratory holds dear NSHC's value of always learning and improving. It has a well established career ladder to employ entry-level employees who can achieve certifications at four levels, post-high school graduation. It also accepts students from the University of Alaska system for clinical rotations and internships within the laboratory. Management strives for excellence with a progressive laboratory to remain competitive with the best possible test menu and makes updated equipment available for the region. The NSHC laboratory continues to support local businesses and corporations by providing drug screening services.

Lab Manager Rolando Garcia-Morales, Marie Katchatag, and Kyle Scott showed their gratitude for a pizza donation.

PHARMACY

FY20 Prescriptions: 82,003

FY21 Prescriptions: 82,687

Pharmacists play an important role on the healthcare team through their knowledge of medication and the information they can provide. They are responsible for dispensing medication, monitoring the patient's health, and optimizing the response of drug therapies. As a member of the care team, a pharmacist is available to provide full-time services for drug-related questions, to make recommendations, and to provide patient counseling at the time of a primary care appointment.

In FY21, Pharmacy was able to truly collaborate with the village clinics to ensure that COVID-19 vaccines were available throughout the region. With interregion travel being a risk for transmitting COVID, the Pharmacy was able to get vaccines out to all communities. With the help of CHPs, providers and additional staff, NSHC was able to provide 13,795 COVID vaccines in FY21. The collaboration continued for the influenza season, and NSHC provided 4,240 flu vaccines.

FY20 Patient Encounters: 1,116

FY21 Patient Encounters: 1,221

FY20 Laboratory Tests: 141,284

FY21 Laboratory Tests: 182,470



EYE CARE

FY20 Patient Encounters: 2,526

FY21 Patient Encounters: 2,479

NSHC's Eye Care department provides comprehensive services to all patients, beginning at age 6 months, in Nome and at least once annually to each village in the region. During FY21, as part of NSHC's 50th anniversary celebration, Eye Care was included in some special discount offers throughout FY21 -- with 50% off glasses and contacts. A major focus in the department was shifting to electronic health records. The department started this process in FY21, which made records more accessible and made for less bulk to carry on village trips.

REHABILITATION AND THERAPY SERVICES

The Rehabilitation and Therapy Services department offers physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy services. The department works together to evaluate and treat a broad range of conditions for patients of all ages. They work with individuals who may be experiencing difficulty walking, balance impairments, weakness, and pain.

AUDIOLOGY

NSHC audiologists provide comprehensive audiological services to patients in Nome and surrounding communities both in-person and through the use of telemedicine.

FY21 Highlights:

- Audiology student extern Ashley Earp, AuD, officially joined the department.
- Charche Wolf, administrative support, celebrated a one year anniversary with Audiology.
- The Audiology team took advantage of NSHC's well established telemedicine infrastructure to continue to provide timely care to regional residents, with over 50% of encounters conducted via telemedicine.
- Audiology worked with multidisciplinary teams, including the ENT specialty clinic, primary care referrals, and collaboration with Rehab & Therapy Services and the Infant Learning Program.

RADIOLOGY

Radiology offers a variety of radiology services across the region, including X-ray, CT scans, ultrasound, DEXA (bone mineral density exams) scans, mammography, and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). In FY21, Radiology passed its American College of Radiology review, and the Mammography program passed its FDA facility inspection.

FY20 X-Rays/DEXA Scans: 3,427

FY21 X-Rays/DEXA Scans: 3,597

FY20 Mammograms: 455

FY21 Mammograms: 515

FY20 Ultrasounds: 1,447

FY21 Ultrasounds: 1,308

FY20 CT Scans: 1,400

FY21 CT Scans: 1,673

FY20 MRI Scans: 382

FY21 MRI Scans: 471

FY20 Patient Encounters: 3,514

FY21 Patient Encounters: 3,141

FY20 Patient Encounters: 2,866

FY21 Patient Encounters: 2,533

In 2021, Samantha Robler, AuD, was recognized by the American Academy of Audiology with the Early Career Audiologist Award. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she made significant contributions to the field by sharing her knowledge of telemedicine and remote patient management solutions and volunteering to assist many audiologists get their clinics functioning during lockdowns.



NUTRITION SERVICES



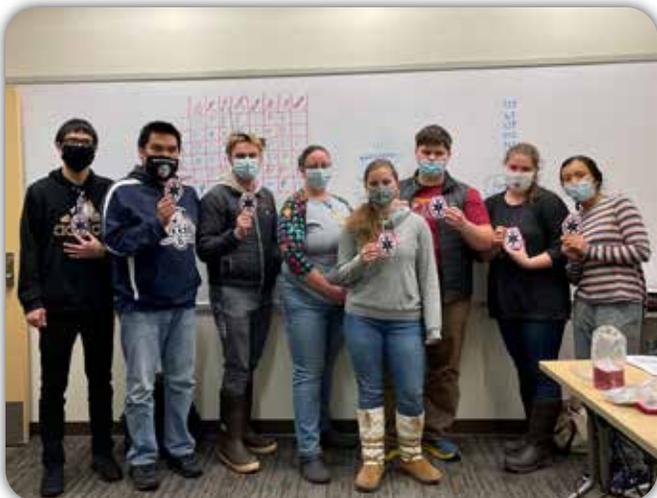
The Nutrition Services department provides daily meals for Acute Care patients and Quyanna Care Center residents, as well as on-site catering services. All staff members are certified food handlers or food protection managers. The public is welcome to enjoy meals at Norton Sound Regional Hospital's Fireweed Cafe, which is open weekdays for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Food Service Worker Leona Silook hands over warm lunch meals, fresh from the kitchen, to Quyanna Care Center staff. Food temperature is measured for quality control before being served to residents.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

The EMS department provides safe and rapid transport of critical patients to a higher level of care. An EMS trainer provides training for 10-11 months of the 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.

EMS offers different levels of training throughout the year. In April 2021, a class of Emergency Trauma Technicians was completed.



FY20 Air Ambulance Calls: 387
 FY21 Air Ambulance Calls: 401
 FY20 Ground Ambulance Runs: 292
 FY21 Ground Ambulance Runs: 293



Amy McNulty, EMS Trainer, takes part in the CPR Challenge in June 2021. Employees performed continuous CPR on a mannequin for one minute. Their performance was measured on rate, depth, and chest recoil to judge effectiveness. Greg Walls, EMS Manager, takes note of Amy's performance.

PATIENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The Patient Support Services department operates multiple programs that

provide social support to NSHC patients, including the Medical Social Work program, the In-Home programs, the Patient Hostel and Pre-Maternal Home, language translators, volunteer chaplains, and Patient Housing. These programs assist patients and their families in understanding and coping with their health conditions, and in connecting to resources and support in the community that can assist with their emotional, financial and social needs.

FY21 Highlights:

Social Services

- Began hosting a live video session with the Fairbanks Social Security Administration twice monthly, so that patients can receive live assistance with their needs.
- NSHC continues to provide Bereavement Assistance programs to assist those regional beneficiary families who have had a death in the family, with additional benefits potentially available for those whose loved one requires the services of a funeral home in Anchorage.

Patient Hostel/Pre-Maternal Home

- The Pre-Maternal Home was moved from the hostel's east wing to an off-site apartment in April 2020 and remains in Sitnasuak's 10-Plex building. This temporary move, which was permitted by the State, allowed the east wing of the hostel to provide COVID-19 isolation lodging.
- The Patient Hostel's west wing provided COVID-19 quarantine lodging, as well as patient medical travel lodging.

In-Home Support Program

- The program continues to offer "consumer directed" personal care services, with enrolled patients choosing their own personal care attendant worker. The program is working with the University of Alaska system to offer PCA training classes, with the first classes offered in February 2022.

Social Services

Total Patients	FY20: 1,168	FY21: 1,199
Patient Encounters	FY20: 5,834	FY21: 6,802
Served for Interpersonal Violence	FY20: 211	FY21: 300
Bereavement Assistance	FY20: 206	FY21: 181
Bed Nights at Patient Hostel	FY20: 7,606	FY21: 6,622
Bed Nights at Nome Hotels	FY20: 532	FY21: 2,034

In-Home Support Program

Patient Encounters	FY20: 1,878	FY21: 1,525
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In-Home Care Coordination Program

Patient Encounters	FY20: 64	FY21: 524
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In-Home Support Program Personal Care Attendant Kristy Kuzuguk and Manager Tierra Austin assist Helen Simon with paperwork.

Patient Housing (also known as Quarantine Resources Team)

- The team coordinated the efforts of NSHC departments in order to provide patient lodging for isolation and quarantine and contracted with local Tribal and public organizations to provide COVID-19 related lodging in a number of apartments in Nome and in isolation facilities in each village. NSHC provided isolation lodging to all families who requested it in FY21, as well as food support for families who were isolating in regional villages and in Nome. While initially able to support all families who were in quarantine due to travel, etc., the program switched to supporting mainly those patients who were isolating due to being positive for COVID-19. The team has manned a 24-hour call line for COVID-19 related information and support needs.
- The program served more than 1,100 patients and more than 220 households in Nome during FY21. It served more than 316 households in regional villages. It provided food support to every household during outbreaks in the communities of Brevig Mission, Gambell, Savoonga, Shaktoolik, Stebbins, St. Michael, and Teller.

COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES

VILLAGE HEALTH SERVICES

FY20 Village Clinic Visits: 37,683

FY21 Village Clinic Visits: 31,470

Village Health Services operates NSHC's 15 village clinics and its administrative offices in Nome and Unalakleet. The majority of employees within VHS are community health aides, who are local residents who have been trained at NSHC's Health Aide Training Center. VHS is also comprised of clinic travel specialists, who are in charge of scheduling appointments for CHAs and traveling providers, arranging travel for patients, and other office duties. VHS serves as a critical link between Medical Staff in Nome and patients in the villages, therefore minimizing the need for patient travel.

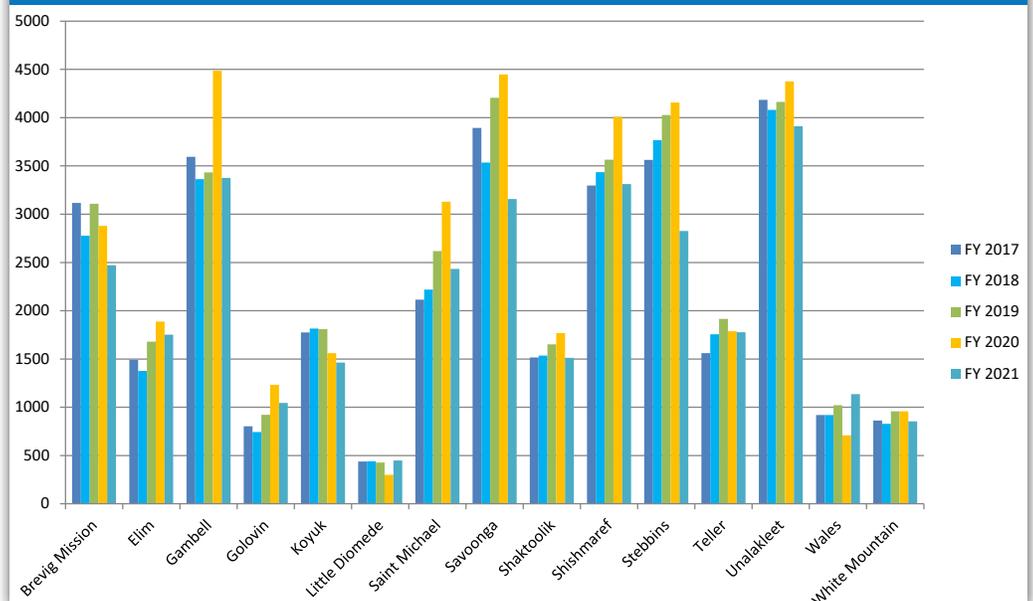
FY21 Highlights:

- TOPHAT Interactive Training Program:** Terri Douglas, VHS Assistant Director, and Amy McNulty, EMS Trainer, worked closely to learn more about and implement this new training program. TOPHAT is an interactive online learning program that allows students to participate in training from their home clinic. VHS, HAT, and EMS combined resources to create courses in ETT and EMT, continuing education, and health aide training sessions into this learning format. The goal of online learning was to keep health aides safe from travel risks and maintain adequate staffing while allowing continued education essential for job performance. Students are able to access the material at any time for reference with the goal of improving critical skills support. Student pass rates for Session-I, ETT, and EMT bridge classes have shown a combination of online and face-to-face education is successful for NSHC's rural clinics. Future TOPHAT planning will include a goal of monthly education to help staff increase competence,

equipment usage knowledge, and improved patient care needs. VHS is able to provide more education to staff while practicing in their own communities.

- Itinerant NP/PA Pool:** The VHS itinerant NP/PA pool continues to be a huge asset to VHS. In FY21, VHS has 16 itinerants on various rotation schedules, ready to cover short-staffed village clinics. The pool provided much needed coverage, raised the number of provider visits and helped relieve some of the on-call burden in short-staffed clinics. In FY21, nine of 15 villages had a full-time village-based nurse practitioner or physician assistant. NSHC's goal is to have a provider in every village, so NSHC continues to seek and secure housing in the remaining six villages.
- COVID-19:** In FY21, one year after VHS locked the clinic doors to reduce foot traffic and limit exposure to staff and patients, VHS reopened those doors. Triage of patients continued to minimize the spread of new COVID variants as travel re-opened in the region. The clinic staff worked with the COVID response team in Nome to manage new COVID-19 cases and outbreaks in the villages.

Patient Visits by Clinic



HEALTH AIDE TRAINING

Basic Training Attendees	FY20: 21	FY21: 39
Preceptorships Completed	FY20: 3	FY21: 2
Continuing Education Workshop Attendees	FY20: 24	FY21: 9
Re-entry Evaluations	FY20: 2	FY21: 3

Health Aide Training consists of a training center, located in Nome, and 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 patient care through basic training sessions, clinical preceptorships, evaluation of re-entering health aides, continuing education workshops, and recommendations for standing orders.

FY2021 was a period of major change for the training center as four vacant trainer positions were filled, a new administrative specialist was hired, the department moved into the new Wellness and Training Center in May 2021, and COVID-19 continued to impact the training being delivered. Due to a surge in COVID cases in Nome, the skills refresher training scheduled in December was canceled, and HAT trainers assisted with contact tracing. The continuing education workshop normally conducted in Nome in October for community health practitioners was canceled due to travel quarantine policies and clinic coverage challenges in the villages. The next semiannual continuing education workshop in March was done as a Zoom meeting, rather than face-to-face in Nome.

The new training center facility at the Wellness and Training Center is a big improvement, with more offices for staff, an additional exam for clinical training, more storage space, a much larger classroom, and close proximity to the main NSHC building across the street.

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Health Aide Trainer Lisa Ryan, PA, teaches a group of Session III health aides in one of the first classes held in the new Wellness and Training Center building.



Village Health Services Training Coordinator Phyllis Farrell meets with pre-session health aides. VHS trains pre-session students to acquaint them with the program and give them the basics of their job duties, whereas HAT trains each session afterwards.



Health Aide Training Coordinator Dan Thomas, PA, can be seen leading a tour through the HAT department's new location in a virtual tour. Find the tour on Youtube, under "NSHC Wellness and Training Center Virtual Tour."

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

Behavioral Health Services, a Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)-accredited program, provides integrated services for people with mental health and/or substance use concerns. Dedicated to offering person-centered care where the clients direct their 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 emotion.

In May 2021, BHS made the move to the new Wellness and Training Center, including all of its staff and Day Shelter programming. Along with the new building came the opportunity to expand substance use disorder services including an intensive outpatient program, partial hospitalization program (20+ hours of services per week), and intensive case management. BHS planned for the incorporation of traditional activities to these services by ensuring there was space for carving and sewing craft rooms.

While the COVID-19 pandemic affected the department in many different ways, one was at the Anvil Mountain Correctional Center, where group meetings of the Reentry Coalition were restricted. Those restrictions were lifted during FY21, and groups were able to meet again, leading

BHS Patient Encounters	FY20: 7,320	FY21: 6,963
Additional Client Services	FY20: 2,109	FY21: 1,695
Telehealth Encounters	FY20: 1,731	FY21: 1,369
Psychiatric Encounters		
Outpatient	FY20: 1,716	FY21: 3,478
Inpatient	FY20: 1,426	FY21: 163



NSHC Reentry Case Manager Ronda Burnett meets with two clients David Graham and Steven Topkok, who both say they've received help through BHS services.



BHS partnered with NSHC's IñUA program, a suicide prevention program, to host a regionwide Walk for Life. Teller residents held up a hand-painted banner during the event.

to better outcomes for reentrants still in prison.

For the first part of FY21, the Day Shelter was still located at the City of Nome's Mini Convention Center. When it was relocated to the new Wellness and Training Center, guests were impressed by being given an unused, brand new space to gather. The space includes showers and laundry facilities for the guests. Recovery coaches operate a shuttle every hour to pick up guests from designated locations.

In 2021 an Outreach committee was formed which includes multiple NSHC and Kawerak departments (BHS, IñUA, Native Connections, CAMP, Public Relations, Kawerak Wellness, and Child Advocacy Center). Events organized included the Suicide Prevention Color Run, Indigenous Drumming and Dancing, Cultural Camp, Child Abuse Awareness Color Run, Mental Health Awareness Rock painting, as well as many others.

WELLNESS DEPARTMENT



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, the State of Alaska Tobacco Prevention and Control Grant, Tribal Injury Prevention Cooperative Agreement Program (TIPCAP), Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country (GHWIC), and the Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) grants.

CAMP's Goals:

1. Provide quality diabetes care and treatment through an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach.
2. Reduce the risk of complications related to diabetes through medical nutrition therapy.
3. Increase the number of screenings for individuals within the Norton Sound region who are screened for diabetes and heart disease and receive education about diabetes and heart disease risk factors and how to prevent diabetes and heart disease.
4. Implement youth and community events in efforts to prevent diabetes.
5. Provide early childhood nutrition education and lactation support to prevent diabetes.
6. Work with organizations to implement and enforce tobacco-free campuses and/or events.
7. Promote public awareness regarding the health benefits of tobacco cessation and resources for tobacco cessation.
8. Support injury prevention efforts within the Norton Sound region.

Total Nutrition Appts	FY20: 533	FY21: 545
Diabetes Appts	FY20: 133	FY21: 270
Health Screenings	FY20: 9	FY21: 127
Tobacco Cessation Appts	FY20: 61	FY21: 132
Health Fair Attendees	FY20: n/a	FY21: 110
Youth Registered for Summercise	FY20: 120	FY21: 152
Lactation Support	FY20: 162	FY21: 101
Produce Market Participants	FY20: 57	FY21: 768

FY21 Highlights

- CAMP maintained the promotion of health through its award-winning Summercise program, monthly wellness challenges, physical fitness activities, health screenings, produce markets, food demonstrations, and more.
- CAMP now has two staff members for the Tobacco Prevention and Control Program. The Tobacco Program Coordinator is also certified in urban poling and offers walking sticks and classes to residents in Nome and the surrounding region.
- CAMP developed and promoted injury prevention efforts, including offering low-priced safety supplies to the region and traveling and offering community education at schools and events on safe injury prevention practices.
- TLC: The Lactation Club, a virtual support group for pregnant and breastfeeding women in the region is offered on the second Tuesday of every month via Zoom.
- CAMP Produce Markets continue to be a success. CAMP provides low-cost produce to diversify offerings in the communities.

WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN

NSHC WIC serves families including women, infants, and children by providing nutrition education and supplemental food benefits. NSHC WIC program strives to promote maternal and child health in the region by educating about benefits of subsistence foods, encouraging families to drink more water and decrease sugary beverages, recommending playtime and physical activity daily, and promoting breastfeeding as the gold standard nutrition for infants. Staff members receive ongoing training to provide early childhood nutrition education, nutrition education for pregnancy and postpartum, and breastfeeding support and counseling. The WIC staff continue to work diligently to process incoming applications and provide our clients with WIC food benefits, nutrition education, and breastfeeding support.

As a result of increased funding by the America Rescue Plan Act and continuing resolutions, WIC increased fruit and vegetable cash value benefits (CVB) from \$9 and \$11 to \$24 and \$43-47 for children and women, respectively. This opportunity allowed more Alaskan families in this region to obtain more fruits and vegetables to feed their families. WIC also introduced Balto Boxes, an online and phone benefit ordering program, to villages with no authorized WIC vendor, including Golovin, Savoonga, and

Obesity Rate (Children 2-5 Years Old)	FY20: 45%	FY21: 46%
Breastfeeding Initiation Rates	FY20: 86.2%	FY21: 83.7%
Breastfeeding Duration Rates at 6 Months	FY20: 61%	FY21: 60.2%
Breastfeeding Duration Rates at 12 Months	FY20: 44%	FY21: 45.8%
Annual Avg Participation Completed Lessons at WIChealth.org	FY20: 536	FY21: 572
	FY20: 37	FY21: 75

Little Diomed.

FY21 Highlights:

- Provided remote services in response to pandemic.
- Traveled to nine villages, including Savoonga, Golovin, Stebbins, Brevig Mission, Gambell, White Mountain, Teller, and Wales, despite travel interruptions.
- In collaboration with CAMP, continued the virtual pregnancy and lactation support group TLC on Zoom.
- Promoted the use of the WIC Shopper App to assist families with shopping with their eWIC card.

TRIBAL HEALING

NSHC established the Tribal Healing program in 1997 at the request of the people of the Norton Sound region and was approved by the Board of Directors. Tribal Healing has been a traditional practice used by the Native people before Western medicine was available. Tribal Healers massage sore muscles and joints and manipulate some internal organs to provide traditional hands-on treatment remedies.

The Tribal Healer program provides traditional and culturally based alternative therapies at the patient's request. The Tribal Healing program moved to the new Wellness and Training Center (WTC) across from the hospital in June 2021. Appointments are now available at the new WTC, the Primary Care Clinic, as well as during village travel at local clinics. Tribal Healer Maria Dexter moved to Golovin in FY20 to become a village-based healer. She serves the communities of White Mountain, Golovin, Elim and Koyuk, and continues to reside in Golovin to be able to serve more village patients in this capacity.

FY20 Total Treatments: 496
 FY21 Total Treatments: 1,008



Tribal Healers were invited to give a demonstration at a wellness camp, located at the newly renovated Camp Nuuk in 2021.

INFANT LEARNING PROGRAM

The Infant Learning Program (ILP) provides services and supports for babies and young children (birth to 3 years of age) with developmental delays and disabilities and their families. Some children and their families may face special challenges and need extra help. Most services are provided primarily in the home but might also happen in other community settings, e.g. a child care center or clinic, if preferred by the family. Evaluation services, completed in the preferred language(s) of the family, are done in the following areas to determine eligibility for ILP services: physical, cognitive (pay attention, solve problems), communication (talks, understands), social or emotional, and adaptive (eating, dressing self). All eligible children will have a Family Service Coordinator. The FSC assists the family in gathering information that includes needs, priorities, concerns, and daily activities. They help have the child evaluated and develop an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). Information and support services provided to parents and other caregivers

FY20 Service Provider Contacts: 1,099

FY21 Service Provider Contacts: 838

might include link ups with behavioral health providers, pediatric physical therapy, occupational therapy, and/or speech-language pathologists.

During FY21, ILP services were primarily provided by telepractice due to the continued COVID-19 pandemic. During the summer, a few weeks of in-person services were provided, but then changed back to telepractice services when the regional numbers of COVID-19 cases increased. The ILP staff kept up with all requested services including increased telepractice paperwork. The State of Alaska DHSS cyber attack, which eliminated all ILP database records since April 2020, became another unprecedented challenge.

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

One of the most important determinants of human health is the environment that they live, work and play in. Environmental health focuses on how the built and natural environments can impact health, both positively and negatively. OEH works with the people and organizations of the Bering Strait region to identify, evaluate, and ultimately prevent environmental health issues.

FY21 Highlights

- The OEH Drinking Water Lab gained State certification in Feb. 2021 to analyze specific bacteriological water samples from community public water systems.
- The Drinking Water Lab was granted full certification in June. OEH was able to assist 9 communities with completing their annual drinking water quality reports.
- OEH completed an on-site environmental health and safety survey of the Teller Clinic as a training trip for new Environmental Health Specialist Alicia Reitz.
- OEH helped submit suspected rabies carcasses to the State for testing. Of 25 submitted carcasses, 15 were confirmed cases of rabies.
- OEH began establishing harmful algal bloom monitoring program with a baseline phytoplankton study and identified water sample collection locations.
- OEH partnered with the State's Air Quality Division to sponsor an air monitoring device in Nome.



Volunteers with the Anvil City Science Academy joined OEH organizers for a Nome community clean-up in July 2021.



Emma Pate, environmental coordinator, holds up the first water sample analyzed in the OEH lab.

ENGINEERING AND FACILITIES



Shishmaref Board Director Molly Ningeulook gives remarks before the new Shishmaref Clinic ribbon cutting on September 10, 2021.

The Engineering and Facilities department encompasses all NSHC capital projects, maintenance, environmental services, real estate, and regionwide sanitation.

In FY21, several major capital projects were completed and several more moved forward.

1. The Wellness and Training building was occupied and in service in June 2021.
2. The Nome Operations Building was occupied in October 2020.
3. Paug Vik contractors began the third and final phase of the parking lot expansion at Norton Sound Regional Hospital.
4. The new Diomedede Clinic was occupied in October 2020, but the clinic did not include the fixtures, furniture and equipment intended for the building

because of a missed barge landing. The barge did not attempt a landing in 2021 due to weather, but crews are prepared to install all the equipment when it does make it to the island.

5. The new Shishmaref Clinic opened to the public on August 30, 2021. A grand opening ceremony was held on Sept. 10, 2021.
6. The new St. Michael clinic remained on schedule, and by the end of FY21, Paug Vik carpenters had completed layout and construction of glu-lam beams and the floor.
7. Designs were completed by Architects Alaska in July 2021 for the new Wales Clinic, which will use the Shaktoolik clinic as a template.



The Wellness and Training Center, a two-story, 25,000-square foot building, opened in May, 2021.



The final phase of the NSRH parking lot expansion created parking space to the west of the hospital.

SANITATION AND ENGINEERING

The Sanitation and Engineering department was created in FY2020, as it separated from the Office of Environmental Health in order for the department to focus on the unmet needs of sanitation in the region. The Sanitation department oversees the region's Remote Maintenance Worker program that provides on-site and emergency assistance to water and sewer operators, training for operators, and community assistance with determining

water and sewer sanitation project needs. The sanitation engineer helps vet planning projects, works with ANTHC and Village Safe Water project managers to implement capital projects, and provides technical assistance when necessary. Providing water and sewer to the five unserved communities and water and sewer to those homes still unserved is the primary goal of the Sanitation department.

COMMUNITY UTILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Community Utility Assistance Program is closely tied with NSHC's Sanitation department. While the CUAP is a partnership between NSHC, Kawerak, Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation, Engineering Ministries International, the Helmsley Charitable Trust, and Rasmuson Foundation, NSHC staffs several of the key positions.

At the end of 2021, the NSHC Board of Directors approved the 2022-2027 CUAP Business Plan, which was developed by NSHC Administration and Sanitation staff members.

The concept of establishing a utility collaborative has been under consideration since 2017. Tribal leaders expanded engineering and environmental services at NSHC and governance and training services at Kawerak to improve sanitation in the region's communities. In June 2021, the Helmsley Charitable Trust awarded the region



a grant of \$20 million, which will be managed through Engineering Ministries International. This generous gift was the catalyst for the business formation of the CUAP through a pre-development grant. In addition to this grant, the NSHC Board of Directors and the NSEDC Board of Directors both pledged \$500,000 on an annual basis to support the ongoing efforts of the CUAP, with the goal of directly supporting each village in the CUAP.

CORPORATE HOUSING

Corporate Housing manages leases for housing of new employees and their families when they arrive in the region or for employees undergoing training in Nome. Corporate Housing works with landlords to maintain leases for the availability to NSHC employees.

FY21 Highlights:

- The department is fully staffed
- Corporate Housing added leases to meet increased demand throughout the height of the pandemic, currently at 77 leases

- The department continue to allocate costs to departments to directly to employees via payroll deductions as applicable
- A Housing Agreement Form was implemented during FY21 to ensure professional employee conduct in housing
- The Corporate Housing policy was updated to reflect correct deduction timeline information and include security deposit and excess cleaning fee information

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 oversees the facilities maintenance of all Nome-based structures, including the hospital and its grounds, Quyanna Care Center, Nome Operations building, Wellness and Training building, Patient Hostel, and the Community Health Services building.

VILLAGE FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Village Facilities Management is comprised of maintenance technicians in each NSHC village and a Nome-based team that travels around the region to assist with preventive and responsive maintenance. The department was developed in 2015 when NSHC recognized the need to be more proactive in caring for the facilities where health care programs were operating.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES/ LAUNDRY

The Environmental Services/Laundry department is on the front lines of infection control within NSHC, consisting of dedicated employees, who undergo extensive training to provide services in housekeeping and laundry to patients. About half of the EVS staff have become CHEST (Certified Healthcare Environmental Services Technician) certified. EVS/Laundry is proud of the services it provides to NSHC to keep patients, visitors, and staff safe and comfortable.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continued, EVS and Laundry continued to work diligently. This included cleaning quarantine housing and laundering reusable gowns. The Environmental Services team also includes all village-based environmental services workers who also worked hard in the battle against COVID-19 and are much appreciated.

FY20 Pounds of Laundry: 257,744
FY21 Pounds of Laundry: 270,872



Nome Emergency Shelter Team staff members thank NSHC Laundry staff members for their partnership in laundering the heavy blankets used by NEST guests.

INFORMATION SERVICES

The Information Services department maintains the electronic health record and Cerner connection, ensuring patient health records are kept accessible and secure. It also maintains computers and other equipment, keeps data secured, and makes sure phone lines remain open. The department, which consists of several Help Desk technicians and various systems admin support staff, keeps track of needed repairs, problems and issues and is available to help employees around the clock, 24/7. The department has worked to keep itself fully staffed, which it has recently been able to accomplish.

The IS department also works to keep the surrounding villages connected and up-to-date, installing new servers, wifi systems, and getting new clinics up and running, which was most recently the Shishmaref clinic. Support staff often fly out to the villages for in-person staff training and maintenance of the network and computer systems.

In FY21, IS handled over 3,200 work orders. Continuing activities during the pandemic included remote services and support for those employees working remotely, adding video conferencing equipment where needed, and adding more mobile devices to assist in the communication needs of both employees and patients. IS also supported the technical needs of the COVID testing centers at various locations including the Nome airport and Nome Operations Building, and ensured they were kept running and secure.



IS personnel travel to the village communities to set up the communications rooms in clinics. In Shishmaref, the team connected the new clinic to the rest of NSHC through its state of the art server system.

IS also supports the opening and continued operations at the new Wellness and Training Center, providing much needed speed and reliability of the network infrastructure to the various departments that occupy that space.

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. Many of the full-time uniformed officers and all supervisors are certified through the International Association for Healthcare Security and Safety.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Security department's front entrance greeter helped keep face masks stocked for people entering the hospital and reminded people to wear the masks indoors.

FINANCE

ACCOUNTING



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

FY21 Source of Operating Revenue (\$Millions)

I.H.S Patient Services Grants Other

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 provides medical record services and supports patients, providers, and departments.

PATIENT FINANCIAL SERVICES

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

PATIENT TRAVEL

NSHC Patient Travel books medical travel, including airfare and lodging, for IHS beneficiary patients. If patients are insured by Medicaid, the State Travel Office or Conduent Medicaid will book their airfare and lodging, but NSHC's travel office will help ensure they get their itinerary and all arrangements. ANTHC has a Nome-based Liaison, Jackie Crisci, located at Norton Sound Regional Hospital. Jackie is a resource for patients traveling to ANMC.

MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

Materials Management purchases all material, supplies and equipment for NSHC and manages inventory and Central Supply. This department ensures purchases meet both quality and cost requirements. Materials Management oversees the Patient Driver, which operates 7 a.m.-7 p.m. Monday-Friday and 8 a.m.-12 p.m. on Saturday. The Patient Driver can be reached through the main hospital line at (907) 443-3311 or directly at 434-2718.

HUMAN RESOURCES



Charlie Cross, HR director, recognizes his staff member Ivis Hobel with the 2020 employee of the year award.

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

FY21 Highlights:

- HR implemented Hard-to-Fill hiring bonuses for positions vacant for 90 days or more.
- HR implemented the following career ladders: EVS/Laundry services, Sanitation, CAMP, Personal Care Attendants, and Direct Care Attendants.
- NSHC expanded SHARPS 3 loan repayments to nurses in FY21.

TRIBAL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Tribal Training and Development focuses on NSHC's vision of supporting and developing the region's youth to pursue higher education and health care careers to ensure there is future tribal leadership. The program oversees NSHC scholarships, including general scholarships, employee scholarships, and vocational scholarships, which were new in FY21. Tribal Training and Development also manages NSHC's summer internship program and works with regional partners to provide the College JumpStart Program and "Behind the Wheel" Program.

In an effort to "grow our own," Tribal Training and Development works with UAF Northwest Campus to provide training programs in the region for people interested in pursuing a healthcare career. UAF Northwest Campus now has three training programs, where participants get on a track to employment at NSHC: the Personal Care Attendant, Certified Nurse Assistant, and Nursing programs.



In FY21, NSHC had a total of nine summer interns. NSHC's internship is open to Nome-based and village-based positions. Pictured is Sierra Anderson, Talia Cross, Samantha Wade, Ana Karmun, Alex Morgan, and Maggie Lyon, who all worked in different departments across NSHC.

ADMINISTRATION



Members of Administration dress up for "vest day" during a spirit week occasion.

Administration at NSHC works to carry out NSHC's mission and vision in tandem with Board governance to meet the needs of the people. The team continuously strives for performance improvement by listening to better understand the health care concerns of NSHC's customer-owners and patients, as well as its workforce. This feedback is used to influence positive change to strengthen programs and services delivered and to make NSHC the best place to work. Our strength remains our people.

Since the health care environment is highly regulated, senior leadership must stay abreast of the hundreds of compliance standards that keep NSHC an accountable, high-quality health organization. Some of those agencies include Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA), the Joint Commission, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). NSHC adheres to strict financial accounting principles and is audited annually.

Below: Staff members of Administration and Shishmaref help serve refreshments during the Shishmaref clinic ribbon cutting ceremony.



In FY21, Administration said a heartfelt goodbye to Balla Sobocienski, who had worked at NSHC continuously since 2008, and first started in 1992. For years, Balla coordinated the details of every board meeting, from minutes and board packets to travel accommodations and event planning. With ample notice of her future resignation, Balla was able to train her successor, Nina Hanebuth. Although Balla passed the baton through a very smooth transition, her hard work and years of dedication will never go unnoticed.



Administration and the Board celebrated Balla's service at a special full board meeting.

Noteworthy accomplishments in FY21 include:

- Continued regionwide COVID-19 risk mitigation, resulting in high testing volumes with low infection, death, and hospitalization rates
 - Hosted over 100 regionwide Tribal Leader Calls
 - Passed Longterm Care CMS Survey, Joint Commission Laboratory Survey, and HRSA Survey for Primary Care
 - Initiated a Community Utility Assistance Program (CUAP) and partnered with Kawerak to meet with every community to facilitate set-up
 - Initiated a new Suicide Prevention Program called INUA
 - Completed the Wellness and Training Center building and the Shishmaref replacement clinic

COMPLIANCE

The NSHC Compliance department was established to provide a systematic process aimed at ensuring that NSHC, its employees, contractors, vendors, and agents comply with applicable laws, regulations, and standards.

In FY21, the Compliance department's top priorities were to focus on enhancing the monitoring and planning of NSHC systems for improvement in the quality of care with customers, staff, and service unit.

Patient privacy is of the utmost importance to NSHC, and the Compliance department provided training and education to employees regarding Patient and Resident Privacy. Privacy concerns can be reported to the Compliance Officer or NSHC's anonymous hotline EthicsPoint at www.nortonsoundhealth.ethicspoint.com or toll-free at 1-855-541-4193.



Cameron Piscoya, NSHC Compliance Officer, received the Alaska Primary Care Association Coho Award in 2020 for his outstanding work in health policy and advocacy.

The Compliance department is the point of contact for all human subject research-related activities for the Norton Sound Service Area.

PATIENT ADVOCATE

The Patient Advocate is a point of contact for all customer-owners and patients at NSHC to navigate the tribal health system. In FY20, an Anchorage-based Patient Advocate was added to the team to help NSHC patients navigate the system there.

In Nome, Wendy Deering fills this supportive role. She can also help connect people in need with the Make a Patient Smile Fund. The fund provides monetary support to those who encounter unexpected medical expenses. Wendy can be reached at (907) 443-4567 or padvocate@nshcorp.org.

In Anchorage, Jason Harrell was hired in November 2019. He is stationed within Alaska Native Medical Center and is able to help traveling patients. He can be reached at (907) 434-2844.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Public Relations department shares the message of NSHC Administration and its programs and services. The PR team uses different avenues to make sure to reach all residents of the region. Additionally, PR helps organize special events and supports partnerships with other organizations.

FY21 Highlights:

- The PR team of three continued to share COVID-19 guidance and response updates with the region, including vaccination availability and new case counts in daily press releases.
- Held several regional prize drawings for people who received COVID-19 vaccinations.
- Produced a second special COVID-19 edition of the

Reba Lean and Sarah Richards promote a vaccination prize drawing from the Nome Post Office.



Kaniqsirugut Newsletter.

- Helped coordinate and advertise the distribution of CARES Act funding purchases, including food, around the region.
- Attended Tribal Leader Calls to answer questions and take suggestions from regional residents.
- Helped collaborate with regional partners to support and coordinate events.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT & RISK MANAGEMENT

NSHC strives to provide the best quality of care to all patients. FY21 was a time of preparation and incorporating recovery with the ongoing pandemic planning. Quality Improvement and Risk Management played a key role in the COVID-19 preparation and response as well as keeping other systems functioning in a compliant and patient-safe manner. The Quality team prepared and submitted applications for all of NSHC's primary care sites to be recognized in 2021 as Patient Centered Medical Homes by the National Center for Quality Assurance. The team is involved in regulatory survey preparation and completed many surveys/inspections in 2021, including with HRSA, Joint Commission (for Lab), Medicare/Medicaid for QCC, and CARF for BHS. The Quality team led multiple successful grant initiatives recently, including

two grants from the CDC, two awards from the American Heart Association, one grant through FCC, one grant through ASHNHA, one grant through CMS, seven awards through Health and Human Services, and one private community impact award.



HRSA awarded NSHC with four community health quality recognition awards in honor of achieving clinical quality measures, including a silver-tier status as a Health Center Quality Leader.

SELF-GOVERNANCE

NSHC continued to advocate for its state and federal priorities during FY21. A common thread for both state and federal asks included significant funding increases for water and sewer funding and changes to current policies which govern this funding.

State Priorities:

1. Continue Medicaid Coverage to the 5,100 residents in the Bering Strait region: Although NSHC receives compact funding from the Indian Health Services, it only supports 30% of NSHC's operating budget. Medicaid billing is imperative for increasing access, expanding services, and addressing significant health disparities that affect Alaska Native people.
2. Continue to fund Health Professional Housing Grants to support village-based housing: NSHC was awarded funds to build housing in St. Michael and Savoonga in the past and will continue to apply for funds to support housing infrastructure in other communities.
3. Increase water and sewer project funding to meet needs -- \$277,400,000 in total sanitation project needs: An estimated 451 homes in the Bering Strait region do not have running water and sewer. Six communities (Diomedes, Gambell, Shishmaref, Stebbins, Teller, and Wales) remain with unserved homes and the current CIP allocation system does not serve unserved communities.
4. Fund preliminary engineering reports for remaining unserved communities: Little Diomedes, Shishmaref, and Wales are three unserved communities in the region that do not have a path to service under the current State-Federal sanitation allocation system.

5. Preserve the Power Cost Equalization (PCE) Fund: The PCE is vital to help rural residents afford electric utility costs.

Federal Priorities:

1. Expand Behavioral Health Funding: Increase funding for behavioral health social detoxification programs through the Preventing Alcohol Related Deaths (PARD) under the Snyder Act or through the creation of a Special Behavioral Health Program for Indians, similar to the Special Diabetes Program for Indians.
2. Mandatory funding of contract support costs and 105 (L) Lease Agreements: Move contract support costs and 105 (L) lease costs out of the annual discretionary budget and over to the mandatory funding, and reform the 105 (L) lease program to include the leasing of sanitation facilities by Tribal Health Organizations to support and carry out the delivery of quality, compliant water programs.
3. Address funding and policy inequities in IHS sanitation funding.
4. Increase funding for the small ambulatory clinic fund and expand to include staffing quarters to assist Norton Sound Health Corporation for its Wales replacement clinic and housing triplex for staff.
5. Increase funding for the Joint Venture Construction Program and designate funding for a youth treatment facility in Alaska.
6. Advanced Appropriations for IHS to facilitate efficient budget planning, purchasing, hiring, and innovation for Tribal Health Organizations.

FY21 in Pictures



1. Carol Seppilu poses with Teller Mayor Blanche Garnie at the start of the first-annual Nasqaghmii Run, named after Carol. 2. Michael Toolie of Savoonga receives his first COVID-19 vaccination from Steve Albrich, PA. 3. Martina Leedy enjoys a Native foods potluck at the Fireweed Cafe. 4. Alex Bahnke showcases the lab's new cobas 6800 system, which was used to run high numbers of COVID-19 tests.

5. Unalakleet residents took part in an NSHC-sponsored Trunk or Treat event on Halloween. 6. Valerie Fuller, physical therapist, and daughter sport new colors after the Nome Color Run, hosted by BHS.



Photo highlights from around the region



7. Stephanie Stang, Wellness Director, helps serve up foods during Savoonga's Umyuuwaqegsillegput Games in July 2021. 8. Dr. Joseph Sem, NSHC dentist, serves up pizza at the Diomedede school at the end of his Dental visit. 9. Wellness and Training Center staff pose outside their new building shortly after their departments moved in.



2021 Employee Awards



January Employee of the Month - Shauna Seetot, VHS Brevig Mission



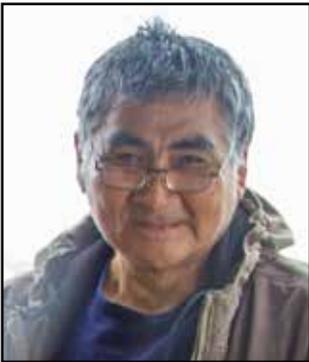
February Employee of the Month - Nikki Hukill, Nome Specialty Clinic



March Employee of the Month - Wesley Komonaseak, VFM Wales



April Employee of the Month - Edward Jackson, VFM Shaktoolik



May Employee of the Month - Alfred Ningeulook, VFM Shishmaref



June Employee of the Month - Chelsea Hubert, RN



July Employee of the Month - Cecilia Nassuk, VHS Koyuk



July Employee of the Month - Christopher Harmon, Radiology



August Employee of the Month - Hilary Fello, WIC



September Employee of the Month - Hae "Angela" Kim, Nutrition Services



October Employee of the Month - Jodie Scarlett, LPN PCC



November Employee of the Month - Jerry Kowchee, Nutrition Services



Nome-based Employee of the Year - Alex Bahnke, Lab



Village-based Employee of the Year - Travis Kulowiya, VHS Savoonga



Manager of the Year - Stephanie Stang, Wellness Director



Manager of the Year - Reba Lean, Public Relations



PRIDE Value Award
Ronda Burnett, BHS



PRIDE Value Award
Daniel Stang, Facilities



COMPASSION Value Award
Keith Morrison, BHS



TEAMWORK Value Award
Roberta Castel, Quarantine Resources



ALWAYS LEARNING & IMPROVING
Value Award
Brittany Oxereok, VHS Wales



CULTURAL SENSITIVITY & RESPECT
FOR TRADITIONAL VALUES Value
Award
Shannon Klescewski, BHS



INTEGRITY Value Award
Richard Kuzuguk, Sanitation

Not Pictured:
December Employee of the Month -
Rochelle Davison, VHS Elim

Outside Recognition in FY 2021

January 2021: Samantha Robler, AuD, received the Early Career Audiologist Award through the American Academy of Audiology for her significant contributions within the audiology profession or hearing sciences.

June 2021: Helmsley Charitable Trust announced a \$20 million grant for improvements to water, sanitation, and hygiene in rural Alaska with a special focus on the Bering Strait region. NSHC was chosen to partner with the trust and its grant manager Engineering Ministries International to work on establishing a tribal community utility assistance program.

August 2021: Federal Communications Commission awarded a \$400,000 grant for COVID-19 Telehealth to NSHC.

August 2021: Four NSHC staff members were honored by the Alaska Primary Care Association as Community Health Center Superstars: Stephanie McMillin, LPN, Kelly Thrun, Procedure Technician, Dolly Kiyutelluk, CHP, and Marina Koonooka, CHP

September 2021: The American Heart Association recognized NSHC for meeting several quality goal achievements, including the “Target: Type 2 Diabetes” Gold Status, the “Check. Change. Control. Cholesterol” Gold Status, and the “Target: BP” Silver Status.

September 2021: The Human Resources and Services Administration awarded NSHC four community health quality recognition awards in honor of achieving clinical quality measures: Silver-tier Health Center Quality Leader, Access Enhancer, Health Disparities Reducer, and COVID-19 Testing recognition.



**NORTON SOUND
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Share Your Feedback

NSHC Ethicspoint Hotline: Call 855-541-4193 or visit www.nortonsoundhealth.org and click on the "File a Concern" link

Contact the Patient Advocate: Call 907-443-4567 or email padvocate@nshcorp.org

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