



RECOVERY ^{to} *Renewal*

A Journey Toward Excellence in Tribal Health



**NORTON SOUND
HEALTH CORPORATION**

Fiscal Year 2022 Annual Report



**NORTON SOUND
HEALTH CORPORATION**

Mission

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

Vision

Excellence in Tribal Health: Our people are thriving in mind, body, and spirit.

Values

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

Norton Sound Health Corporation Fiscal Year 2022 Annual Report

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Dear Customer Owners and Patients,

In FY 2022, NSHC celebrated the 10th anniversary of the new Norton Sound Regional Hospital's completed construction. So much growth has taken place in the past decade -- our workforce has nearly doubled from 490 in 2012 to 800 employees today, with a 7% increase in the employee Native hire rate. NSHC continues to prepare residents and employees for health care careers; over \$3.4 million in scholarship funding has been contributed to support students since 2012. The local nursing program graduated 17 nurses since it began. Care delivery has expanded region-wide, and the number of unique patients seen at NSHC grew from 6,249 in 2012 to 12,607. The level of annual healthcare encounters nearly doubled from 82,587 to 152,128.



Angie Gorn
NSHC President/CEO



NSHC Administration provided support in Golovin after Typhoon Merbok flooding

FY22 was a very positive year for the organization; at mid-year it was apparent that the pandemic was indeed unwinding. Although the public health emergency was not over quite yet, patients were able to access in-person care, providers and health professionals routinely traveled to our communities to deliver services, and many in-region celebrations and events put on hold for several years, were once again taking place. For the first time, our region felt a sigh of relief. However, this respite was interrupted when Typhoon Merbok hit the region hard at the tail end of the fiscal year. Our resilient communities worked together to recover and rebuild.

NSHC continued to focus on recruitment of hard-to-fill positions. Cash collections exceeded prior year-to-date volumes due to sustained patient care volumes and payor-mix. NSHC continued to make improvements to its Nurse Call Line, which transitioned to the Provider Care Line in FY22; staffed by nurse practitioners and physician assistants, which has proven to increase the quality of care delivered. Only 40% of the calls received require an emergent visit to the health clinic to be seen by a provider.

The Joint Commission reaccredited the Norton Sound Regional Hospital, and NSHC was recognized by Health Resources Services Administration

(HRSA) as a leader among health centers in the nation. NSHC was recognized with five awards in honor of the organization's improvement achievements in the areas of overall quality, access, health equity, and COVID-19 public health emergency response. NSHC is among 27 health centers in Alaska that recognized for quality achievements in 2021. Of those Alaska health centers, NSHC is among only three to receive an overall quality award and to receive five or more awards.

The Capital Projects department remained busy, checking projects off the list. The St. Michael Clinic was completed and a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held. The new Wales Clinic and triplex housing unit was started. A renovation of the former Nome-based Community Health Services Building into patient lodging was designed. A design to expand the current Quyanna Care Center nursing home from 18 to 30 beds was approved and in progress. A village-based housing plan was approved, which included the purchase of the former Shishmaref health clinic to convert to a duplex to house providers and traveling health professionals.

Sanitation services at NSHC continued to make progress with the development of the Community Utility Assistance Program (CUAP); a new Administrator for the project was hired. Both Stebbins and Wales have been included with Infrastructure Bill funding for new piped water and sewer projects. Indian Health Services visited the region twice during FY22 for the purpose of water and sewer.

The NSHC Board of Directors and staff participated in strategic planning in April 2022 and Administration looks forward to making progress with these priorities and goals.



Administration and Sanitation leaders met with IHS officials to discuss regional funding needs



Berda Willson
Native Village of Council



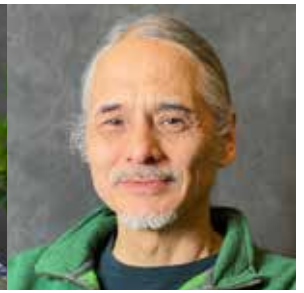
Leticia Milligrock
Native Village of Diomede



Frederick Murray
Native Village of Elim



Charlie Brown
Chinik Eskimo Community



Robert Keith
Kawerak, Inc.



Heather Payenna
King Island Native 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 Shaktolik



Molly Ningeulook
Native Village of Shishmaref



Elizabeth Johnson
Village of Solomon



Jenny Lee
Teller Traditional Council



Tony Haugen
Native Village of Unalakleet



Joanne Keyes
Native Village of Wales



Mary D. Charles
Native Village of White Mountain

FY2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive Committee

Chair: Preston Rookok
2nd Vice Chair: Matilda Hardy
Treasurer: Elizabeth Johnson
Exec. Member #1: Molly Ningeulook
Exec. Member #3: Kevin Bahnke

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

Not pictured:
Frieda Southall
Native Village of Brevig Mission

Rodney Ungwiluk Jr.
Native Village of Gambell
Morris Nashoanuk
Stebbins Community Association

2022 Board Member of the Year:
Berda Willson
Native Village of Council

NSHC *Remembers* losses from FY 2022

Congressman Don Young



Congressman Don Young died March 18, 2022. Always willing to meet with NSHC leaders to discuss regional priorities, Congressman Young remained a champion and steadfast advocate of the people of Alaska. NSHC is deeply grateful for his efforts to secure critical sanitation and transportation projects and honoring the government-to-government relationship with tribes by his support of tribal health programs. With 49 years of service in the U.S. House of Representatives, Congressman Young's contributions to the state tally beyond measure. NSHC will remember the congressman for always lending an ear and his tireless support.

Gabriel Ercolino

NSHC Emergency Medical Services department lost its valued member Gabriel (Gabe) Ercolino on March 21, 2022. Gabe became a member of the flight crew family in April 2016. In his duties as a Flight Paramedic, Gabe helped countless individuals in the region and across the state of Alaska. Gabe was an excellent paramedic and a great friend to the flight crew members. He will be forever missed by the flight crew and by everyone he worked with and encountered throughout the region.



Sean Lee

Sean Lee passed away in October 2022. In his two and a half years with NSHC, he made an unforgettable impact through his work around the entire region. His hiring kicked off the creation of the Sanitation department, with a sharp focus on improving access to water and sanitation in the region. He was extremely passionate about his work and knew the ins and outs of funding, reporting, and water and sanitation systems themselves. He worked closely with Tribal and community leaders, grant funders, regulatory agencies, local water operators, and his team. He is missed.



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 Department 443-3203
 - Audiology 443-3297
 - Dental 443-3309
 - Eye Care 443-3235
 - Health Information Management 443-3212
 - In-Home Support 443-9677
 - Laboratory 443-9641
 - Patient Advocate 443-4567
 - Pharmacy 443-3319
 - Rehabilitation and Therapy Services 443-4513
 - Social Services 443-4541
 - Quyanna Care Center 443-3357
- Wellness and Training Center
 - Behavioral Health Services 443-3344
 - CAMP 443-3365
 - Health Aide Training 443-3404
 - Tribal Healing 443-9004
- 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 Diomed..... | (907) 868-2210 |
| Saint Michael..... | (907) 923-2334 |
| Savoonga..... | (907) 984-6756 |
| Shaktoolik..... | (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 |

70 YEARS in the new Norton Sound



The old MMM Hospital was built in 1948



Bill Dann, NSHC's first CEO, stands center at the celebration of the opening of NSRH in 1978



Marsha Jobuk signs the hospital's final steel beam to be placed in 2010

Nome has been home to several hospitals since the start of the 20th century. However, the Norton Sound Health Corporation's original hub hospital got its start in 1948 when the Maynard-McDougall Memorial Hospital opened its doors. The MMM hospital was built in response to the loss of a hospital that had burned the year prior, and it was run by the Methodist Church.

When the Norton Sound Health Corporation was incorporated in 1970, it opened an office in the MMM Hospital. It began taking over the operations of the hospital, and the board of directors started planning for expansion of services and facilities.

In 1977, NSHC bought the building, and in 1978, it celebrated the opening of the first Norton Sound Regional Hospital, which included the original MMM Hospital as well as a large addition.

As the years passed, it became clear that an even larger hospital was needed. In 1988, NSHC opened a 12-bed Quyanna Care Center long-term care home, which was an addition to the 10-year-old hospital.

in the hospital as services expanded. Longtime employees still remember the cramped quarters as every square foot of storage was filled to capacity, parking was hard to come by, and the many building additions made for a confusing and inefficient layout.

Planning for a brand new hospital ramped up in the 2000s. A design was commissioned in 2005, and a project development team began working with the Indian Health Service in 2007 to advance the project.

The project's challenging funding aspect presented an opportunity, when, in 2009, the project's progress was at the right spot at the right time. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provided the funding for IHS to award a \$90.5 million building contract for the shovel-ready new hospital. The stimulus funding also provided a sizable amount to an expanded staffing package for the new facility.

In 2010, construction was underway on the 144,000-square-foot facility. With three main levels and a maintenance penthouse, the region's hospital tripled in size.

The new hospital features large waiting rooms and a

Norton Sound Regional Hospital



A piling is welded outside where the ER entrance was built



Gary Hartz of IHS and Emily Hughes, former board chair, cut the ribbon during grand opening festivities in 2012

central main stairway with ample space for visiting with friends and regional residents, art displays with artwork from around the region, an ambulatory surgery clinic with an endoscopy suite, and expanded space in nearly every department.

A ribbon was cut in celebration of the new facility on November 14, 2012 during a three-day-long grand opening event. Departments slowly made the move to the new location at 1000 Greg Kruschek Avenue from the old hospital, and the new Norton Sound Regional Hospital officially opened to the public on March 5, 2013.

Now 10 years old, the hospital is not only a healthcare location but a gathering space for community events and a symbol of successful tribal governance.



MEDICAL STAFF

Total Patient Encounters
FY21: 34,948 FY22: 35,988

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

In FY22, the COVID-19 pandemic shifted into its endemic phase, and the Medical Staff team turned its focus back to the basics of clinical performance. During the pandemic, the region saw no deaths from the Omicron variant, and hospitalizations remained at low levels, compared to other areas in Alaska and the nation.

In July 2022, Medical Staff took charge of the former Nurse Call Line, and its name was changed to the Provider Care Line. Still with the intent to provide after-hours care, the call line is now answered by advanced practice providers

when clinics have closed for the day. The APPs and their medical knowledge have enhanced the service, and patients are able to receive care right over the phone in some cases.



Wanda Lewis, FNP, answers the Provider Call Line



Elsie Pelowook, DHAT-P

Patient Encounters
FY21: 8,108 FY22: 7,881

Dental

For the FY22, the Dental department had a total of 7,881 patient encounters. A

new dental director was appointed, Sarah Luce, DDS. She has been working as a full-time dentist in Nome since 2012. Mark Kelso, DDS, former dental director, was director for over 30 years. Dr. Kelso remains in Nome and is still a staff dentist. Elsie Pelowook, a dental health aide therapist in Savoonga, obtained her DHAT-P certification. She is the first DHAT in the region to obtain this achievement. The DHAT Practitioner title is the highest level of certification that a DHAT can achieve, and it is given to those who have worked in the dental field for over six years, working independently and continuously providing quality dental care, meeting the standards detailed by the community health aide board. Jana Schuerch, dental office manager, graduated from the ANTHC Pathways to

Leadership program. Robert O'Sullivan, general dentist, joined the team and moved to Nome from the midwest. Dr. James Arneson retired after five years with NSHC. He mainly traveled to the villages in the region and is remembered for his service to Unalakleet. Longtime dental assistant Deborah Ivanoff, best known as "Tweety," also retired from NSHC after 18 years. Finally, the new dental space in St. Michael opened and is being put to good use.



Dr. Joseph Sem poses with Elin clinic staff

HOSPITAL SERVICES



Rebecca Horton, CNA



Mary Ruud-Pomeroy, RN

Emergency Department

Patient Encounters

FY21: 3,903 FY22: 5,235

Nurse Call/Provider Care Line Calls

FY21: 2,630 FY22: 4,104

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.



ER Staff stand ready for action

Primary Care

Primary Care Appointments

FY21: 15,999 FY22: 17,209

Specialty Clinic Appointments

FY21: 1,249 FY22: 1,424

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.

Emergency Medical Services

Air Ambulance Calls

FY21: 401

FY22: 424

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.

Acute Care

Inpatient Admissions

FY21: 773

FY22: 819

Deliveries

FY21: 111

FY22: 90



Chelsea Hubert, RN, and Richelle Stasenko, RN, review a chart in Acute Care

The inpatient unit, NSHC's Acute Care Clinic can accommodate 18 patients. The nursing staff is trained and equipped to look after a variety of patients -- from newborns to the elderly, including medical or psychiatric care. The Acute Care team uses a holistic care approach and takes pride in delivering safety, quality, and compassion.

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 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.

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.



CNA Joyce Ozerna tends to a QCC resident

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.

Ancillary Services

Pharmacy

Prescriptions

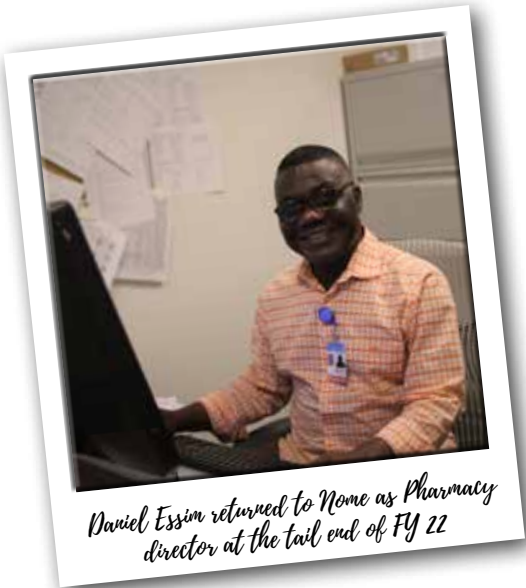
FY21: 82,687

FY22: 67,521

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.

FY22 Highlights:

- Pharmacy focused on obtaining and dispensing COVID therapeutics to patients when approved by Medical Staff.
- Pharmacy continued COVID vaccinations, including booster doses and vaccinations for children down to 6 months old.



Laboratory

Laboratory Tests

FY21: 182,470

FY22: 130,358

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.

Radiology

X-Rays/DEXA Scans

FY21: 3,597

FY22: 4,169

Mammograms

FY21: 455

FY22: 298

Ultrasounds

FY21: 1,308

FY22: 1,403

CT Scans

FY21: 1,673

FY22: 1,791

MRI Scans

FY21: 471

FY22: 571

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.

Eye Care

Patient Encounters

FY21: 2,479

FY22: 2,466

NSHC's Eye Care department provides care for patients of all ages. Examinations include contact lens fittings, glasses prescriptions, dilated examinations, as well as care for glaucoma, macular degeneration, diabetes, and dry eye treatments.

With the help of Administration, the Eye Care and Audiology departments have added the Pediatric Fund, which provides assistance to qualifying children who are unable to pay for specific medical products in these departments.

During FY22, the department successfully scanned all village health records into the electronic health record for better accessibility and less bulk during village travel. Abby Timmerman, OD, transitioned to the interim director of Optometry.

Audiology

Patient Encounters

FY21: 2,533

FY22: 2,517

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

FY22 Highlights:

- The Hearing Norton Sound study was published in the Lancet Global Health journal. The study showed that telemedicine is key to faster follow-up for rural students who receive school hearing screenings.
- A follow-up article from the Hearing Norton Sound study was published in the Ear and Hearing journal, showcasing the correlation between a lack of running water and ear infections in children in Western Alaska.
- The Pediatric Fund, which provides financial assistance for hearing support for qualifying children, was implemented in May 2022.

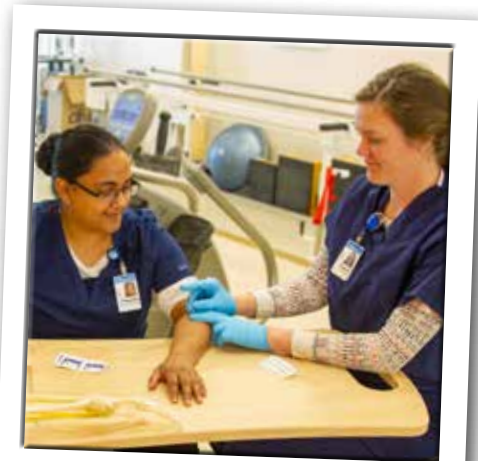
Rehabilitation and Therapy Services

Patient Encounters

FY21: 3,141

FY22: 3,415

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.



Physical Therapists Chandra Preator and Valerie Fuller demonstrate dry needling

Respiratory Therapy

Patient Encounters

FY21: 1,221

FY22: 1,613

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.

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.

FY22 Highlights:

Social Services

- The program continues to host 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 ones requires the services of a funeral home in Anchorage.

Patient Hostel/Pre-Maternal Home

- The former Community Health Services building has been undergoing renovation in order to be converted to a second Patient Hostel location. This will allow increased flexibility with patient escorts once it is opened, as the off-site Pre-Maternal Home (currently located at the Sitnasuak 10-Plex) will be moved to this new location.
- The Patient Hostel received all new furniture this past year, with some arriving in July 2022 and the rest in January 2023.

In-Home Support Program

- In October 2022, the program hired a registered nurse to supervise the personal care attendants, which allows the program to now offer "agency-based" personal care, where a PCA is assigned to care for a patient. The program continues to also offer "consumer-directed" personal care services, where enrolled patients can choose their own PCA worker. Having agency-based services increases the training offered to PCAs, as well as specific care abilities being offered to patients. The program continues to also work with the University of Alaska system to offer PCA training classes, with classes taught in February, May, and December of 2022, and May of 2023.

Social Services

Total Patients

FY21: 1,199 FY22: 1,346

Patient Encounters

FY21: 6,802 FY22: 5,875

Served for Interpersonal Violence

FY21: 300 FY22: 287

Bereavement Assistance

FY21: 181 FY22: 262

Bed Nights at Patient Hostel/PMH

FY21: 6,622 FY22: 11,394

Bed Nights at Nome Hotels

FY21: 2,034 FY22: 856

In-Home Support Program

Patient Encounters

FY21: 1,525 FY22: 2,293

In-Home Care Coordination Program

Patient Encounters

FY21: 524 FY22: 499

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 contracted with local tribal and public organizations such as Sitnasuak, regional IRAs, the State of Alaska, and the National Park Service to provide COVID 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 FY22, 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.

COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES

Village Clinic Visits
FY21: 31,470 FY22: 30,280

Village Health Services



Terri Douglas, NP, and Carol Charles led VHS as assistant director and director in FY22.

Village Health Services operates NSHC's 15 village clinics and its administrative offices in Nome and Unalakleet. These village clinics are supported by staff including community health aides, clinic travel specialists (CTS), clinic managers, supervisor instructors and itinerant and

village based advanced practice providers (APPs). The Nome office includes staff that support the village clinics, including the assistant director, clinical field instructors, an administrative assistant, an education and training coordinator, electronic health records specialist and CTS supervisor. All of the staff work closely to provide training, education, and support which allows VHS to provide excellent health care to more than 6,000 people who live in the region, outside of Nome. VHS serves as a critical link between Medical Staff in Nome and patients in the villages, therefore minimizing the need for patient travel.

and Field Training Requirements, in turn meeting our certification requirements within 90 days of completing training. Prior to this, some CHAs waited for several months before a Supervisor Instructor could travel to their village to work with them. CFIs are APPs (physician assistants or nurse practitioners). Another benefit to having CFIs is that CHAs can demonstrate any allowable advanced skill and be signed off on procedures that include urinary catheter changes and pessary care. CFIs collaborate with HAT trainers after session to complete PSLNs, FTRs, PEF reviews, etc. All of this work enhances patient care in the villages.

Village Based and Itinerant APPs

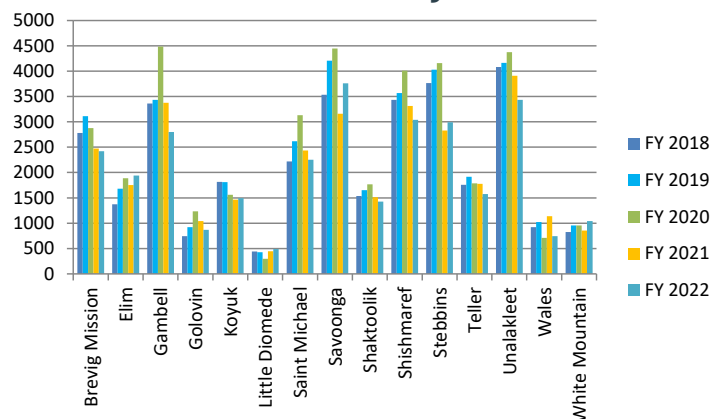
The VHS Itinerant APP pool continues to be a huge asset to VHS with the increase of CHA vacancies post COVID. In FY22, VHS had 11 itinerant and locum APPs on various rotation schedules ready to cover our short staffed villages. In addition to that, VHS had 10 of 15 villages that had a village based APP. The pool has provided much need coverage, raised the number of provider visits and help relive some of the on-call burden in short staffed villages. The CHAs appreciate having village based APPs to help them through more complicated encounters and emergencies. NSHC will continue with its goal to have a village based APP in every village.

FY 22 Highlights:

Clinical Field Instructors & Collaboration with Health Aide Training

In FY22, VHS employed four clinical field instructors (CFIs). CFIs play a critical role in ensuring that community health aides (CHAs) are signed off after completing a training session at the Health Aide Training (HAT) Center and are practicing within their scope of practice. This means that as soon as a CHA completes a session, CFIs travel to their villages and work with them in their own clinic setting to sign them off on their Post Session Learning Needs

Patient Visits by Clinic



Health Aide Training

Basic Training Attendees

FY21: 39 FY22: 25

Preceptorships Completed

FY21: 2 FY22: 7

Continuing Education Workshop Attendees

FY21: 9 FY22: 15

Re-entry Evaluations

FY21: 3 FY22: 1

Biennial Skills Evaluation

FY22: 8

Village Skills Training

FY22: 13



Emmaleigh Sagoonick and Shawn Bergamaschi practice splinting on Ada Harvey.



Kelli Breuker, NP, presented at the NWC commencement ceremony



Helena Otton and Beverly Nakarak earned their certificates in Community Health in 2022

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.

A new training activity started by Health Aide Training this year has been Biennial Skills Evaluation, a process mandated by the IHS Community Health Aide Program Certification Board which ensures that Health Aides maintain their skills. All NSHC Health Aides are now required to demonstrate their basic patient care skills every two years in order to renew their Health Aide certification.

FY2022 was a period of short staffing as two trainers left their positions. However, HAT was able to keep up with NSHC's regional Health Aide training needs as listed above.

As trainers gain experience, HAT has increased village trips to deliver other types of training besides the Basic Training Sessions conducted at HAT in Nome. Some Nome classes in the first and third quarters were canceled due to COVID concerns and lack of available students. Instead, HAT delivered training to Health Aides at their village clinics.

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.

FY22 Highlights:

- In May 2022, Kira Eckenweiler, former IñUA (intergenerational native understanding and abundance) Prevention Planner, was hired to replace Lance Johnson as Administrative Director of BHS. Johnson stepped down from the role after 11 years at the helm of BHS.
- BHS promoted Barrett Hesson, former SUC Clinical Lead and Supervisor, to BHS Clinical Director in September 2022.
- In May, NSHC's longest serving employee, Elvina Turner, retired after 40 years. Turner worked as a village-based counselor and field supervisor in Unalakleet.
- BHS added six new groups to its group services, which allows its members to seek services in a setting amongst their peers -- be they adolescents, parents, men, or women, or healing from grief and loss, seeking anger management, or working toward recovery.

BHS Patient Encounters
FY21: 3,597 FY22: 5,850

Telehealth Encounters
FY21: 1,308 FY22: 931

Outpatient Psychiatric Encounters
FY21: 1,673 FY22: 3,607



Ben Jack leads carving lessons as a BHS cultural arts instructor



Yuka Unguiluk, Village Based Counselor, serves in Gambell



Hannah Schnaidt throws color during a BHS color run event in Nome

Wellness Department

CAMP

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-



CAMP staff members hosted produce markets from the hospital in Nome

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.
9. Work with food vendors, distributors, and producers to enhance healthy food procurement and sales.
10. Increase the number of places for safe and accessible physical activity by collaborating with partners on community design.

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Total Nutrition Appointments | |
| FY21: 545 | FY22: 469 |
| Diabetes Appointments | |
| FY21: 270 | FY22: 179 |
| Health Screenings | |
| FY21: 127 | FY22: 84 |
| Tobacco Cessation Appointments | |
| FY21: 132 | FY22: 148 |
| Youth Registered for Summercise | |
| FY21: 152 | FY22: 165 |
| Lactation Support | |
| FY21: 101 | FY22: 64 |
| Produce Market Participants | |
| FY21: 768 | FY22: 254 |
| Group Fitness Classes | |
| FY21: 0 | FY22: 90 |

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 also offers the support groups when they travel to villages. Topics change monthly and stories are shared from women in the region.
- CAMP Produce Markets continue to be a success. CAMP provides low-cost produce to diversify offerings in the communities.

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

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 Little Diomed.

FY22 Highlights:

- Provided remote services in response to pandemic.
- Traveled to 10 villages, including Savoonga, Elim, Unalakleet, Stebbins, Saint Michael, Gambell, Teller, Koyuk, Brevig Mission, and Shaktoolik.
- In collaboration with CAMP, continued the virtual pregnancy and lactation support group TLC on Zoom.
- Promoted the use of the WIC Shopper App, Balto Boxes, and WICHealth.org online nutrition lessons to modernize the WIC experience.
- Hired Alayah Kunnuk as the WIC Health Educator-in-training in June 2022.
- WIC coordinator Hilary Fello traveled to Anchorage to complete Child Passenger Safety (CPS) training to be certified as CPS technician, to provide education and assistance with the installation and use of car seats.
- Congress's Continuing Resolution extended the additional funding for fruit and vegetable cash value benefits and in September announced an increase in amounts due to inflation, increasing fruit and vegetable cash value from 2021 amounts, \$9 for children and \$11 for women, to \$25 for children, \$44 for pregnant and post-partum non-breastfeeding women, and \$49 for breastfeeding women.

Obesity Rate (Children 2-5 years)

FY21: 46% FY22: 39%

Breastfeeding Initiation Rates

FY21: 83.7% FY22: 75.3%

Breastfeeding Duration Rates at 6 Months

FY21: 60.2% FY22: 61.1%

Breastfeeding Duration Rates at 12 Months

FY21: 45.8% FY22: 45.1%

Annual Average Participation

FY21: 572 FY22: 532

Completed Lessons at WICHealth.org

FY21: 75 FY22: 117

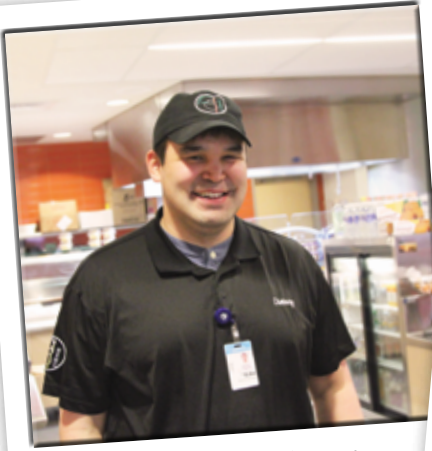


WIC has a staff of two

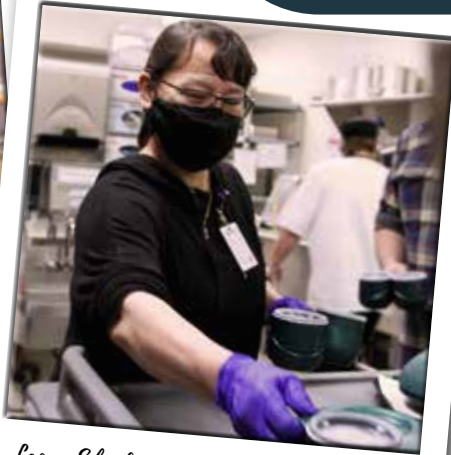


WIC had an informational booth at the Nome bike rodeo event

Nutrition Services



Food Service Worker Willis Pate is a friendly face in the Fireweed Cafe.



Leona Silook prepares lunch for Quiyanna Care Center residents

The Nutrition Services department provides daily meals for Acute Care patients and Quiyanna 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.

Total Treatments
FY21: 1,008 FY22: 700

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 operates out of the new Wellness and Training Center (WTC) and the primary care clinic in Nome.



Etta Tall works out of the WTC building



Maria Dexter is the manager of Tribal Healing and is based in Golovin



Evelyn Karmun worked with trainee Renee Cooper

Infant Learning Program

Service Provider Contacts

FY21: 838

FY22: 1,238

The Infant Learning Program (ILP) is a program designed to help children with delayed development or disabilities and their families make the most of the first 3 years of life. These services are provided at no cost to families. Children from birth up to age 3 can be evaluated in all areas of development. For example: movement or motor skills, communication, social, emotional and behavioral, early thinking or cognition, and self help (like eating and dressing). ILP helps families identify needs and links to community resources. In-home specialists help parents each their children. Specialized in-home therapy for eligible children can be provided. The ILP helps parents and children plan for future needs when children are over 3 years old.

ILP services were primarily provided by telepractice (virtually) in FY21 during the COVID-19 pandemic. During FY22, in-person services were eventually started again. Hybrid (a combination of virtual and in-person) services will continue to be provided as needed.



Simeon Kitsick and mom Janelle play peekaboo during virtual ILP services.

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.

OEH focus areas are: drinking water quality, institutional environmental health, rabies prevention and control, environmental planning, healthy homes, and solid waste management.

FY22 Highlights

- The Environmental Health Drinking Water Lab provided services to 14 water systems and analyzed 240 compliance samples. It provided urgent lab services for Boil Water Notices in six communities. It worked with 11 communities to complete annual water quality reports.
- OEH completed health and safety surveys for 12 village health clinics and the Health Aide Training Center.
- OEH partnered with the State of Alaska to provide rabies vaccination supplies to the region's lay vaccinators. It trained and certified 14 new LVs. It also coordinated Alaska Native Rural Veterinary's services for no-cost vet care in eight communities.

- OEH investigated 54 animal bite reports.
- OEH contracted with Houdini's Bed Bug Service for bed bug

management in homes. In three communities, 30 homes received heat treatments. OEH provided bed bug elimination kits to 17 homes in nine communities.

- OEH worked collaboratively with the region's Tribal Environmental Programs to build tribal capacity to implement and manage environmental programs.
- OEH continued program development to address harmful algal blooms in marine waters. During a HAB event in the summer of 2022, OEH helped disseminate information and provided local education outreach.
- OEH began providing solid waste management services to offer classroom trainings, technical assistance, and solid waste site assessments.
- Alicia Reitz, environmental health specialist, became a commissioned corps officer of the U.S. Public Health Service.



Alicia Reitz compliments a dog on a job well done during lay vaccinator training

ENGINEERING AND FACILITIES

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

In FY22, several major capital projects were completed and several more moved forward.

1. The new St. Michael clinic was completed, tripling the size of the community's old facility. The 5,350-square-foot building has room for a large reception area, three exam rooms, a trauma room, a specialty exam room, a laboratory, dental space, a village-based counselor office, a conference room, a sleeping room for visiting staff, and several large offices.
2. Work on a replacement clinic and a new staff housing triplex in Wales began, as a building pad was completed during the summer of 2022. The clinic's construction is expected to be completed in the fall of 2023, and its design is the same as the clinic built in Shaktoolik in 2019.
3. In Shishmaref, NSHC came to a ground lease agreement with Shishmaref Native Corporation, and it bought the old clinic building from the City of Shishmaref to turn the building into staff housing.
4. The designs for two staff housing duplex units in Gambell were finalized, using Savoonga's duplex as a template.



The St. Michael Clinic was completed and opened in 2022



A renovation of Camp Nuuk's buildings and outbuildings was completed.

5. Furniture in Quyanna Care Center and the Patient Hostel was upgraded during summer 2022. Significant coordination was required with QCC and Hostel staff to make sure access was provided and disruptions were minimized. NSHC held a furniture sale for the public with the old pieces of furniture.
6. A renovation of Camp Nuuk was completed in the summer of 2022. The year prior, a contractor was hired to work on the four buildings at the campsite, including the main hall, mess hall, and two bunk houses. In 2022, NSHC outfitted the buildings with new furniture and fixtures, and the camp's schedule was open for use, especially for youth and subsistence education activities.

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, Camp Nuuk, and several corporate housing facilities. Plant Operations also oversees fleet and grounds maintenance.

FY22 Highlights:

- Plant Ops completed 6,414 work orders between all Nome facilities.
- Plant Ops maintenance technicians repaired a major water outage in the main supply line in February 2022.
- Plant Ops worked with Capital Projects on plans to expand QCC.
- Plant Ops has been making upgrades and improvements to the maintenance assets.



Sean Lee explains local water and sanitation needs in a community during a regional IHS tour in June 2022



George Otter, Stebbins water operator, points out a heat recovery system



Regional water operators attend a training on equipment in Nome

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.

In 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 FY2022 Theresa Miller supported CUAP development for six months through West Monroe's Fischer Global Service Fellowship program. During her time consulting with the Sanitation Department, she established an emergency response plan template for community water system operators, designed 6 boil water notice remediation plans, and conducted a feasibility analysis of 4 operator certification paths.

She also published a series of 15 best practice score dashboards (available on your community's CUAP website), proposed a centralized grant governance strategy, designed a home sanitation needs assessment, and supported the execution of 4 engineering assessments and 5 engineering/technical assistance reports. We want to thank our partners for supporting Theresa's work in the Norton Sound region.

FY2022 highlights:

- Contracted with JW Industries to complete financial audit for the city/utility and provided a report of recommendations for improvement and training to 14 CUAP members in FY2021/2022. Those recommendations are to help the city improve their Best Practice Scores.
- Contracted with MK Consulting to complete engineering assessments which helped create the community's deficiencies and critical spare parts list to the 14 CUAP members. The goal is for communities to apply for grants to obtain these parts.
- Updated the Preventative Maintenance Plans (PMP's) (which will help improve the community's Best Practice Score).
- Identified a need for a Regional Infrastructure Plan, Regional Broadband Plan, Regional Recycle Plan.
- Kawerak, Inc. through a grant from EMI create 2 Municipal Assistant Specialists to provide financial technical assistance to communities. The goal is to improve each community's Best Practice Scores.



NSHC staff and board members accompanied IHS officials on a 3-community tour to survey sanitation needs

Sanitation

The Sanitation and Engineering department was established in FY2020 to focus on 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 projects needs. The sanitation engineer helps vet planning projects, works with ANTHC Project Managers and Village Safe Water Program project managers to implement capital projects, and provides technical assistance when necessary.

FY2022 highlights:

- Sanitation and the Remote Maintenance Worker Program (RMW) with technical assistance from the Office of Environmental Health held Small Water Treated Course in Nome in May and August.
- RMW's provided a total of 26 on-site training and technical assistance visits to all 15 communities in the region.
- RMW's provided significant over the phone assistance to 4 communities (Elim, Gambell, Koyuk and St. Michael).
- RMW's provided over the phone assistance to all 15 communities with a total of 656 calls.
- RMW's attended 5 Community or Council meetings (Shishmaref, Diomed twice, Wales twice and Teller).
- The Sanitation Engineer and the RMW's reviewed designs and Preliminary Engineering Reports (PER) for 5 projects in Golovin, Unalakleet and St. Michael.

Assisted with the completion of the Wales Preliminary Engineering Report.

- A RMW and 4 water Plant Operators attended Fats, Oils, and Grease training (Elim, Shishmaref and Gambell)
- With the University of Texas, Austin drafting a Utility Leak Pilot Project.
- Reviewed operator certification options including AMOSS.
- Nome Rotary District 5010 (A l a s k a) donated to NSHC Self-Contained water plant system for emergencies that can be air dropped. It includes a pump system, 300-gallon water storage tank and the supplies to test and disinfect to create safe drinking water for community members.
- Board donations projects completed: 1 Boiler in Diomed, 2nd will be installed in FY2023. 1 Per at 65% completed and ANTHC took charge to complete it.



Nome Rotary Club gifted NSHC a portable water plant system for emergencies

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.

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.

Environmental Services/Laundry

Pounds of Laundry

FY21: 270,872

FY22: 266,702

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.



The NSHC Board approved a career ladder for EVS and Laundry workers, allowing for career advancement



Mabelene Wougitilov, EVS worker, enjoys a Native foods potluck at the cafeteria

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.

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

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.

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.

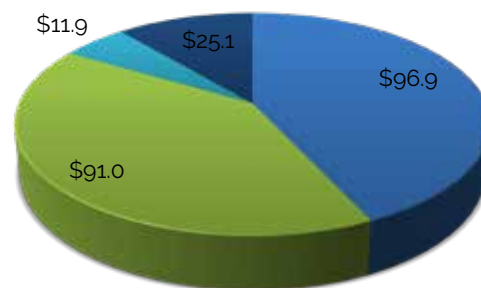


The NSHC Patient Driver sports a new red van

Accounting

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

FY 2022 Source of Operating Revenue (\$Millions)



I.H.S. Patient Services Grants Other

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.

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-Saturday and 9 a.m.-6 p.m. on Sunday. The Patient Driver can be reached through the main hospital line at (907) 443-3311 or directly at 434-2718.

HUMAN RESOURCES

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.

FY2022 highlights:

- HR recruiters attended the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses convention, Emergency Nurses Association conference, AFN convention, and American Speech-Language-Hearing Association convention for recruitment purposes.
- NSHC implemented a revision to its Employee Referral Bonus that increased the amount for

successful employee recruitments, with additional amounts available for "hard-to-fill" positions. Hard-to-fill positions are positions that remain vacant for 90 days or more.

- HR implemented a career ladder that allows for advancement of HR Associates and Professional Recruiters within its department.



Margaret "Sister" Olson retired from NSHC after nearly 17 years of service

Tribal Training & 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. 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 FY22, NSHC began hosting the Northwest Allied Health Education Centers position, run by Vincent Villella. The AHEC program partners with regional school districts and other organizations and works to introduce healthcare careers to interested parties.



Erika Paucar from Nutrition Services teaches NACJEC food service students



Irvin Barnes and Vincent Villella present at a MyCache Scholars banquet

ADMINISTRATION

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.



NSHC Admin team members traveled to St. Michael for the clinic opening

In FY22, Administration continued to work on the following goals:

- Increase access to Nome Primary Care appointments & strengthen Nome Primary Care coordination
- Increase level of documented Behavioral Health Visits and Strengthen Day Shelter Program Delivery
- Empower managers to improve efficacy of managing resources (budget and personnel), strengthen policy enforcement, and reduce barriers to providing optimal service and care to meet the needs of patients.
- Implement and manage a NSHC guided mentoring program for employees.
- Build a home health program which expands care delivered outside the clinic setting through the existing personal care attendant program, by starting a palliative care program and by increasing the level of in-home health aide and provider visits.
- Improve recruitment and retention
- Improve customer service in all departments by showcasing what is being done well once a month
- Increase management awareness about fiscal responsibility to ensure NSHC "grows smart"
 - Increase NSHC's visibility of positive outcomes and success on a monthly basis through a "program spotlight"
 - Track and monitor progress of identified goals
 - Administration also coordinated the transition of the nurse call line to a provider care line, opened the new St. Michael Clinic, and participated in a strategic planning session with the Board of Directors.



Administration and other leaders set goals for NSHC



NSHC leaders worked on a strategic plan during FY22

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.

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.

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 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.

FY22 Highlights:

- Continued COVID-19 guidance and response updates with the region, through press releases, Weekly Updates, and the weekly Tribal Leader Calls
- Produced two issues of the biennial Kaniqsirugut News newsletter
- Organized employee recognition and community events
- Took part in strategic planning with Administration and other key NSHC leaders
- Traveled to several different regional communities to help coordinate and document events



Sarah Richards greets the community at the St. Michael clinic grand opening



Reba Lean addresses employees during a Halloween all staff meeting

Quality Improvement & Risk Management

NSHC strives to provide the best quality of care to all patients. In FY22, as the COVID-19 pandemic moved into the endemic stages, the Quality Improvement and Risk Management team focused on helping all service areas return to full compliance and restore improvement projects. The team worked across the corporation to prepare for surveys with Joint Commission and Centers for Medical Services. Quality Improvement and Risk Management have played a key role in COVID-19 preparation and response as well as keeping other systems functioning in a compliant and patient-safe manner.

FY22 Highlights:

- Implemented a new incident reporting platform that uses a modern analytics platform for review of reported incidents and the ability to trend the data to better prevent and respond to incidents.
- NSHC's QCC nursing home received a 3-star overall rating from CMS and a 5-star rating for quality.
- The Joint Commission survey for critical access hospital designation was very successful. With limited findings, NSHC was able to remediate all issues swiftly.



Director of QI/RM Megan Mackiernan, PA, studies healthcare quality data

Self-Governance

NSHC continued to advocate for its state and federal priorities during FY22 for the year ahead.

State Priorities:

1. Continue to meet the long-term care needs for residents in the region
2. Address the lack of housing in Nome and villages for healthcare employees
3. Address the lack of patient lodging available in Nome to support patients in need of healthcare services and long-term behavioral health residential treatment
4. Implement cost-based reimbursement for Tribal residential supported living program
5. Continue to maintain existing Medicaid coverage, eligibility, and services. Medicaid Expansion has increased coverage to an existing 1,400 residents in the Bering Strait region
6. Increase the level of funding for the Sanitation Remote Maintenance Worker Program

Federal Priorities:

1. Remove IHS Sanitation Deficiency System "cost caps." These arbitrary caps determine a project's feasibility prevents a path to service in unserved communities. The increase cost of doing business in Alaska makes many projects ineligible for IHS funding
2. Recognize Alaska Native communities as Native communities in the IHS Sanitation Deficiency System, eliminating the notion of ineligible costs for sanitation projects.
3. Increase funding for behavioral health social detoxification programs through the Preventing Alcohol Related Deaths (PARD) program under the Snyder Act or through the creation of a Special Behavioral Health Program for Indians, similar to the Special Diabetes Program for Indians
4. Amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to make newly constructed behavioral health centers eligible for staffing package funding and third-party billing authority
5. Allow behavioral health centers newly constructed during COVID-19, to be eligible for reimbursement through the American Rescue Plan
6. Direct IHS to use American Rescue Plan funds to designate funding for a youth treatment facility in Alaska
7. Provide full funding and advance appropriations for the Indian Health Service
8. Ensure mandatory funding for Contract Support Costs and 105(l) lease payments and clarify CSC provisions

FY22 IN PHOTOS



Sen. Lisa Murkowski chats with NSHC CEO Angie Gorn at a Bering Strait Leadership meeting in April 2022.



Rachel Lee and Ashley Sockpick, NP, unpack boxes of goods for the community of Golovin after Typhoon Merbok flooding.



INUA hosted a traditional gaspek/atikeluk making class in Uvalakleet, taught by Nikki Corbett.



NSHC sponsored several color run events in communities around the region during the summer of 2022. Wales held its run in July.



Nome's BHS color run was held in August 2022.



James Ventress and Jeff Collins of Nome volunteered during the 2022 bike rodeo to assist with bike tune-ups.



NSHC staff attracted applicants at UAF Northwest Campus' 2022 Nome Job and Training Fair in April.



NSHC held staff picnics in July. In Nome, employees and their families enjoyed lunch and games indoors at the hospital.



The NSHC Board approved an extension of its Children in the Workplace Policy, allowing parents to bring their babies to work until 6 months old.



NSHC celebrated employees who accomplished education achievements at the UAF NWC commencement ceremony.

2022 Employee Awards



January Employee of the Month -
Mark Roman, St. Michael PA



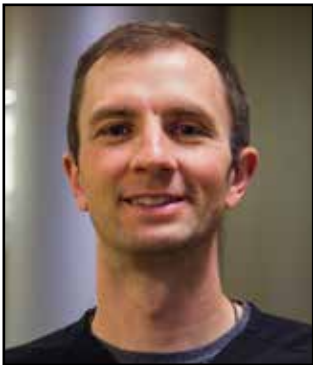
January Employee of the Month -
Joyce Nesby, Primary Care



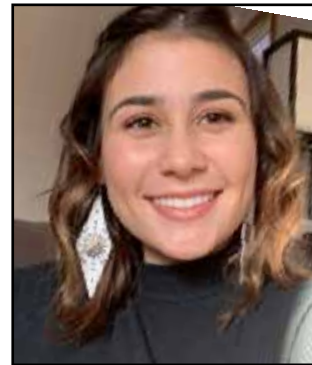
February Employee of the Month -
Digna Andrews, Stebbins Maintenance



March Employee of the Month -
Alicia Niksik, St. Michael CHA



April Employee of the Month - Dr.
Joseph Sem, Dental



May Employee of the Month - Ada
Harvey, Health Aide Training



June Employee of the Month -
Richelle Stansenko, RN Acute Care



July Employee of the Month - Martina
Leedy, Materials



August Employee of the Month - Fel-
ciano Abaa, Environmental Services



September Employee of the Month -
Joel Rose, Maintenance



October Employee of the Month -
Tamara Van Diest, RN Care Coordinator



November Employee of the Month -
James Wade, Radiology Technologist



December Employee of the Month -
Ariel Odinzoff, Stebbins CTC



Nome-based Employee of the Year -
Kyle Scott, Laboratory



Village-based Employee of the Year -
Marina Koonooka, Gambell CHA



Manager of the Year - Beverly Tran,
Medical Staff



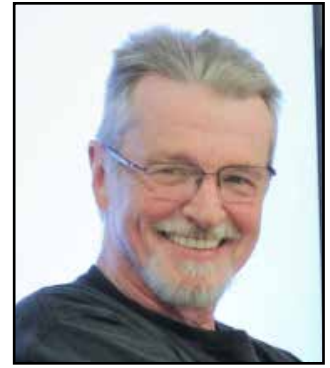
Manager of the Year - Jill Campbell,
Gambell Clinic



PRIDE Value Award
Solomon Booshu, Accounts Payable



TEAMWORK Value Award
Christopher Morris, Materials



TEAMWORK Value Award
Dennis Fast, Corporate Housing



COMPASSION Value Award
Chandra Preator, Rehabilitation and
Therapy Services



**ALWAYS LEARNING & IMPROVING
Value Award**
Karen Tocktoo, Shishmaref Clinic



**CULTURAL SENSITIVITY & RESPECT
FOR TRADITIONAL VALUES Value
Award**
Dr. Marc Levin, Medical Staff



INTEGRITY Value Award
Charlie Cross, Human Resources

Outside Recognition in FY 2022

October 2021: Dr. Mark Peterson became one of 23 to receive a Local Impact Award from the National Indian Health Board. One of the board's Outstanding Service Awards, the honor acknowledges individuals whose work affected change or impacted health care on the local and/or Tribal level.

September 2022: The Human Resources and Services Administration awarded NSHC five health quality recognition awards in honor of achieving clinic quality measures: Silver-tier Health Center Quality Leader, Access Enhancer, Health Disparities Reducer, COVID-19 Public Health Champion, and Patient Centered Medical Home Recognition.



**NORTON SOUND
HEALTH CORPORATION**

1000 Greg Kruschek Avenue
P.O. Box 966
Nome, Alaska 99762

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

**Call: (907) 443-3311
888-559-3311**

Fax: (907) 443-2113

Visit: www.NortonSoundHealth.org

Provider Care Line: 844-586-8773