

ROCKY MOUNTAIN TRIBAL LEADERS COUNCIL EPIDEMIOLOGY CENTER

A REGIONAL GOOD HEALTH AND WELLNESS IN INDIAN COUNTRY UPDATE



GHWIC BACKGROUND

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

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

REGIONAL EFFORTS TO PREVENT AND MANAGE CHRONIC DISEASE

Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council Epidemiology Center (RMTEC) coordinates GHWIC evaluation in the Indian Health Service (IHS) Billings Area. RMTEC supports chronic disease prevention and management in 11 Tribes and Tribal organizations through:

1. Promoting Smoke-Free Powwows

In an effort to address the pronounced utilization of commercial tobacco at cultural events, Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council (RMTLC) GHWIC began promoting smoke-free powwows in the spring of 2019. By approaching powwow committees, GHWIC was able to encourage powwow leadership to adopt smoke-free powwow policies, including vendor declarations for vendors to agree to not sell tobacco or tobacco related products. Three urban indoor powwows have been included in these cessation efforts thus far, with plans to extend efforts to reservation based outdoor powwows in late summer 2019.

2. Indigenous Evaluation

RMTLC GHWIC began incorporating indigenous evaluation methodologies into their practices in the fall of 2018 in response to increased community interest in evaluation. Basic tenets were included in three evaluation trainings offered by the organization, and staff were able to delve deeper into the topic during a site visit to the Urban Indian Health Institute (UIHI). As a result of this partnership, RMTLC GHWIC hosted a training by a UIHI indigenous evaluation expert in Summer 2019. 35 people attended the two-day training, which was highly regarded. One attendee shared "I love the Indigenous approach! It helped my brain/mind to deconstruct Western evaluation and think more about it with my Indigenous mind frame."

3. Food Sovereignty Network

Carrying forward momentum from the successful food sovereignty conference in 2018, RMTLC GHWIC was able to expand the regional food sovereignty network and increase partnerships with grassroots organizations on the Northern Cheyenne, Crow, and Blackfeet reservations. These organizations are working on a wide array of vital food sovereignty topics – from food code development to food pantries. With continued effort, these communities are bound to change reservation food systems in Montana.



BY THE NUMBERS

12

Number of new or enhanced partnerships with Tribes and/or Tribal programs

114

Number of instances of technical assistance or consultative support

89

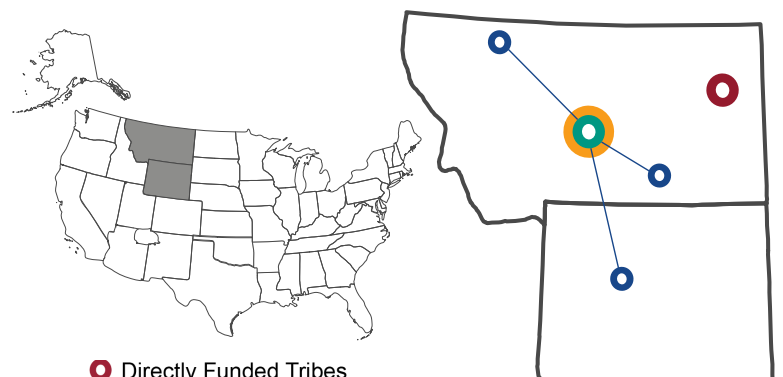
Number of people directly influenced through policy, systems, and environmental changes

ACTIVITY SPOTLIGHT: COMMERCIAL TOBACCO CESSATION

In January 2019, tobacco prevention specialists (TPS) from the American Indian Montana Tobacco Use Prevention Program (AI MTUPP) presented results from the American Indian Adult Tobacco Survey (AI ATS) conducted by RMTLC in 2017. This survey was unique in that it collected information at the Tribal level, which had not been previously done in the area. Results included prevalence of commercial and traditional tobacco use along with patterns of use, knowledge of policies, and related health conditions. In conjunction with these results, the TPS highlighted the importance of commercial tobacco policy development, implementation, and enhancement to the Tribal leaders of the Rocky Mountain region. In response, the Tribal leaders passed a commercial tobacco free policy. The importance of the survey results continues to be utilized to enact change at the community level, with further statistical analyses undertaken to highlight correlations between various data points, such as desire to quit and receiving medical advice to do so. Data visualizations were developed to make results more accessible to the general community. With future funding, this vital work to decrease prevalence of commercial tobacco use will continue.



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



- Directly Funded Tribes
- Directly Funded Tribal Organizations
- Directly Funded Tribal Epidemiology Center
- Regionally sub-awarded Tribes or Tribal Organizations