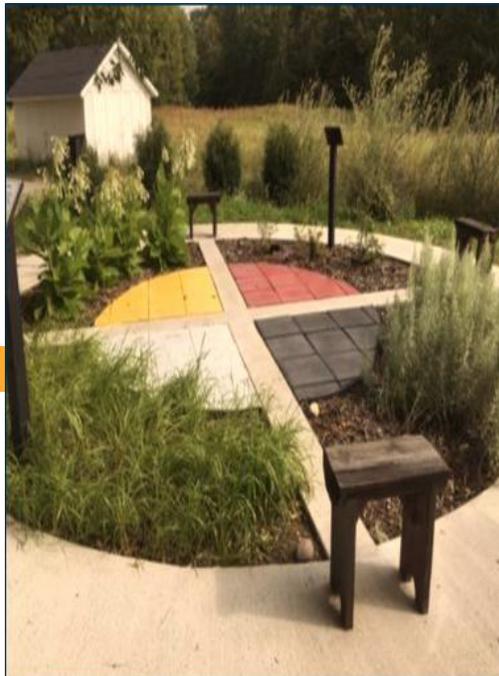


Optimizing Tribal EHR Systems-Improving Health

Summary:

In 2019, the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan's (ITCM) Three Fires CCC Program tribes reported difficulty in retrieving accurate Electronic Health Record (EHR) data and information necessary for programming and reporting.

The ITCM worked extensively with participating tribes to determine the cause. ITCM then collaborated with Program Evaluators at the MPH in order to locate and select an EHR technical assistance expert with a knowledge of tribal health systems.



ITCM's Three Fires CCC Sample EBIS:

- ✓ *Client Reminders* - identifying who is due or overdue for cancer or health risk screenings.
- ✓ *Provider Reminders* - alerting the provider via EHR prompt that a patient is due or overdue for cancer screening.
- ✓ *Provider Feedback Loops* - tracking a provider's patient screening rates (such as colorectal cancer screening) and reviewing these rates with providers on a regular basis.

The Need:

Health Information Technology (HIT) is essential to support high functioning EHR systems for health care in tribal health clinics.

A solid EHR not only improves patient care through appropriate timely screenings and referrals, but also ensures provider reimbursement while supporting programming and reporting, resulting in better care and healthier communities¹

Many of the ITCM's Chronic Disease and Health Education Department programs include Evidence-Based Interventions (EBIs) in their project work-plans such as those EBIs included in The Community Guide².

The ITCM's Three Fires CCC project selected EBIs which are in the Library of Indicators and Data Sources (LIDs)³ and which also met the needs of the tribes.

Sources:

1 Reclaiming Tribal Health, Indian Health Service Fiscal Year Budget-April 2020

2 The Guide to Community Preventive Services [Community Guide] (<http://www.thecommunityguide.org/index.html>)

3 Comprehensive Cancer Control Resource Depository May 2020, <https://www.ccnationalpartners.org/resources/search>

The Challenge: Insufficient Capacity

Many tribes utilize the Indian Health Services’ (IHS) current EHR system, the Resource and Patient Management System (RPMS). **iCare**, the interface to RPMS creates personalized groupings of patient data (patient panels) to inform programming, reporting, and improved patient care. For example, a panel of females, of child bearing age, and who smoke, could be used to support EBI: A Tobacco Education and Cessation Mass Media Campaign, focused towards women of child bearing age. Due to the chronic underfunding of the IHS, which provides support, training, and TA to iCare, the utility and benefits of this system is greatly underutilized. Tribes requested TA to address **lack of capacity** in utilizing iCare to support project EBIs while successfully recording screening rates, smoking status, quit attempts, and referrals.

The Solution: Increasing Capacity through Expert Technical Assistance

ITCM contracted **Health Solutions I.Q.** an expert in RPMS, GPRA, and iCare to provide remote and on-site education and technical assistance to tribes. Tribes have strengthened knowledge and abilities to enter patient health data and to pull monthly health data (through GPRA and iCare reports) supporting EBI and objectives. Technical assistance evaluation survey results shown below.

