

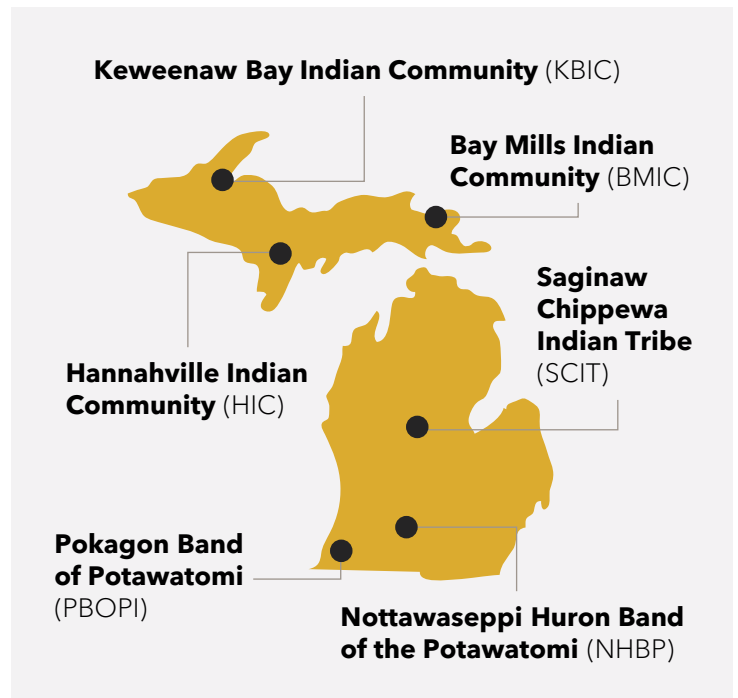
# REACH Journey to Wellness Project

## YEAR 2 HIGHLIGHTS

### INTRODUCTION

Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) Journey to Wellness Project is administered by the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan and engages six tribal communities across Michigan. Those communities include the Bay Mills Indian Community, the Hannahville Indian Community, the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community, the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi, the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, and the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe.

REACH Journey to Wellness aims to improve health, prevent chronic diseases, and reduce health disparities among Michigan American Indians using culturally appropriate evidence-based strategies by increasing local policies and infrastructure that support:



REACH Journey to Wellness Project tribal communities



The uptake of **Healthy Foods** and programming for **Nutrition Education**



Safe and accessible areas that support increased **Physical Activity** among community members



**Commercial Tobacco** use policies and local cessation programs



Increased access and uptake of **Adult Vaccinations**

### YEAR TWO OVERVIEW

Year Two of REACH built on Year One's assessments by acting on the priorities identified in each strategy area. Tribal communities prioritized strengthening commercial tobacco policies and expanding access to fruit and vegetable programs, achieving notable progress. All six tribes completed in-depth assessments of food service and physical activity venues in their communities, which informed targeted improvements. In addition, ITCM and each tribe utilized social media and in-person events to promote nutrition, physical activity, tobacco cessation, and vaccine education. Regular collaborative meetings fostered resource sharing and new partnerships, reinforcing a shared commitment to wellness and tribal communities in Michigan.

# WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED

## COMMERCIAL TOBACCO

### PRIORITIES



**Enhance smoke-free policies** by adding signage



**Establish clinic policies** for screening, referral, and follow-up to tobacco cessation treatment



**Establish e-cigarette disposal policy**

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### 70 Attended Youth GONA

- Held 3-day Gathering of Native Americans (GONA) event with the goal of launching a youth coalition.
- 70 youths and supportive adults representing 9 Michigam tribal communities participated.

#### 3 Tribes Enhanced Policies

- PBOPI revised their *Government's Household Hazardous Waste Policy* to add E-cigarette and vape products for the tribal government building and residential areas.
- BMIC revised policies to prohibit the use of commercial tobacco on campus. Traditional tobacco use for ceremonial purposes is allowed in the designated traditional healing room, and other designated space for ceremony.
- HIC drafted and submitted a *smoke-free campus policy* for the Administration and Health Center building to the tribal council in March 2025.

## ADULT VACCINE

### PRIORITIES



**Identify community vaccine ambassador** to attend ITCM-hosted vaccine trusted messenger training



**Plan and host events** to provide vaccine education and promotion and host adult vaccination clinics

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### Hosted 7 Vaccine Education and 29 Vaccine Clinic Events

- Between September 1, 2024-August 31-2025, ITCM and six participating tribes hosted seven vaccine education events that reached a total of 620 people.
- Educational social media posts on Facebook were seen by 8,000 followers.
- Between September 1, 2024-August 31-2025, ITCM and six participating tribes hosted 29 vaccine events where adult vaccinations were administered to 765 people.

## FOOD SERVICE GUIDELINES

### PRIORITIES



#### **Complete place-specific, in-depth assessments of food service providers**

including:

- Tribally owned convenience stores
- Locations that serve elders, youth, and/or tribal employees
- Locations connected to tribally owned and operated casinos

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### **2 Tribes Adapted Food Service Guidelines for Tribal Elders, Employees**

- Tribes completed in-depth assessments and built relationships with food service venues.
- PBOPI implemented healthier options in vending machines.
- HIC updated their kitchen appliances to be more conducive to healthier food preparation.

## FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

### PRIORITIES



**Establish or enhance** the produce prescription program



**Connect community members** to existing or new fruit and vegetable programs by enhancing screening and referral policies



**Enhance tribally-led produce prescription** by incorporating traditional teachings and foods into education

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### **6 Tribes Established or Enhanced Screening and Referral Processes for Programs**

- 3 Tribes (HIC, PBOPI, BMIC) enhanced the process for providing produce prescriptions at their tribal health clinics for Food Farmacy
- 3 Tribes (KBIC, NHBP, SCIT) newly issued produce prescriptions for Food Farmacy

#### **170 Patients Enrolled in Fruit and Vegetable Programs**

- Between September 1, 2024-August 31, 2025, 170 patients referred to and enrolled in Food Farmacy produce prescription program.
- Between September 1, 2024-August 31-2025, 17 patients referred to other federal programs.

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

### PRIORITIES



Complete place-specific, in-depth **assessments for walkability and safety of places and buildings**, including:

- Tribal Health, Fitness, and Cultural Center
- Pow-wow Grounds
- Tribal Housing

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### Walk Audits at 6 Locations

- 6 Tribes conducted walk audits in August and September 2025.

#### 2 Tribes Improved Trail Safety

- KBIC designed and put up a billboard encouraging dog owners to leash their dogs as a short-term intervention.
- PBOPI walked with community members and identified a lack of places to sit, shade, lighting, and maps as safety concerns at the existing trail at the community center. They ordered materials to temporarily address these safety concerns and are working with other departments at PBOPI on installation, maps, and signage.

## LOOKING AHEAD TO YEAR 3



### Physical Activity

Identify short, mid, and long-term goals and action plans for increasing access to physical activity based on needs identified by community members during walk audits.



### Fruit & Vegetable Programs

Continue to enhance screening and referral pathways for produce prescription programs, and other fruit and vegetable programs.



### Food Service Guidelines

Revisit assessments completed in Year 1 and Year 2, continue to build relationships with food service managers and vendors. Identify short, mid, and long-term goals and action plans to create a healthy food environment.



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