



Christian Health Care Services

## Rehoboth McKinley Christian Health Care Services (RMCHCS) Indian Affairs Committee Meeting August 6, 2021

### Background

- RMCHCS is an independent, non-federal health system in McKinley County
- Over 60% of the people served are Native American.
- Approximately 53% of employees are Native American.
- RMCHCS accepts patients from surrounding hospitals—Gallup Indian Medical Center, Zuni Hospital, Crownpoint, Fort Defiance.
- For years provided residential addiction treatment services, but due to finances and safety issues ceased operations this past May and are actively looking for a partner organization to run the program.

### The Pandemic

In the spring of 2020, Gallup and McKinley County, along with the Navajo Nation, was at the epicenter of the pandemic:

- Staff worked tirelessly to care for patients despite challenges such as shortage of PPE, supplies, equipment, nurses, etc.
- Over 1160 COVID patients were hospitalized at RMCHCS. Approximately 68% of these patients were Native American, 84% of all patents were able to go home, 11.3% were transferred for higher levels of care, and 4.7% (55) patients passed away.
- Worked closely with community partners, including Gallup Indian Medical Center, McKinley County, NM Department of Health to care for COVID patients, meeting weekly and more frequently as needed.
- Helped set up and staff an alternative step down facility at Miyamura High School in Gallup for COVID patients.
- Were active participants in the motel isolation shelter program for COVID positive, unsheltered individuals and families needed a place to quarantine. The Hospital Foundation...Western Health Foundation... accepted donations and covered the cost of s clothing, non-medical supplies, transportation, etc. This program served over 1,600 individuals.
- Administered thousands of COVID tests and over 15,000 vaccines

### Medical Education

- On July 1, 2021 launched an independent, accredited **Rural Family Medicine Residency program**. The mission of the program is to train family medicine residents to provide the highest quality accessible culturally competent care while inspiring them to serve New Mexico's rural and Native American population.

- In the summer of 2021 began serving as Burrell College of Osteopathic Medicine's **Four Corners Hub** bringing five third-year medical students to complete a full year of medical school training here in Northwest New Mexico. Students will spend time with RMCHCS' clinic and hospital physicians, as well as with other physicians stretching from Zuni to Farmington.
- Are working with the Center for Health Innovation in Silver City, NM to design and implement Forward NM, a **community-driven health careers program** for students in grades 6 – 12 and in degreed programs from McKinley County, NM and the Four Corners region.

### **Progress and Improvements**

- Developing a Covid Survivor's Clinic, a multidisciplinary approach to care for post-COVID patients who are suffering from long-term physician and mental effects of COVID.
- Created a Patient Advocate & Cultural Affairs Liaison position to ensure that RMCHCS is meeting the needs of its Native American patients.
- Hired a Vice President of Quality and Risk Management as well as a Vice President of Compliance to enhance and grow our efforts in these areas.
- Are implementing a new EMR system that will bring all our facilities under one system for greater efficiencies, patient safety, etc, to go live at the end of 2021.

### **Organizational and Board changes**

RMCHCS has been under a great deal of financial stress for a number of years. We are grateful for the federal funds we received to help us get through the pandemic, but now those funds have been used up. RMCHCS is needed in the community, but struggling to make it. Not an unusual scenario for rural hospitals.

- The Board of Directors renegotiated its contract with McKinley County
- Included was a decision to reorganize the Board Structure
- Board to be a smaller, more professional board....with 7 members, plus one non-voting County representative
- Have filled 5 of the 7 seats...
- Conducted a thorough organizational assessment in the Fall of 2020.
- Developed a plan that is currently being implemented to help strengthen and stabilize the organization.
- In May the Board signed a 3-year management agreement with Community Hospitals Corp, Plano, Texas

### **Needs moving Forward**

- Enhanced Medicaid reimbursement rates for non-Indian Health Services hospitals adjacent to tribal lands.

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