

Elder Mental Health & Wellbeing at the St. Croix Indian Reservation

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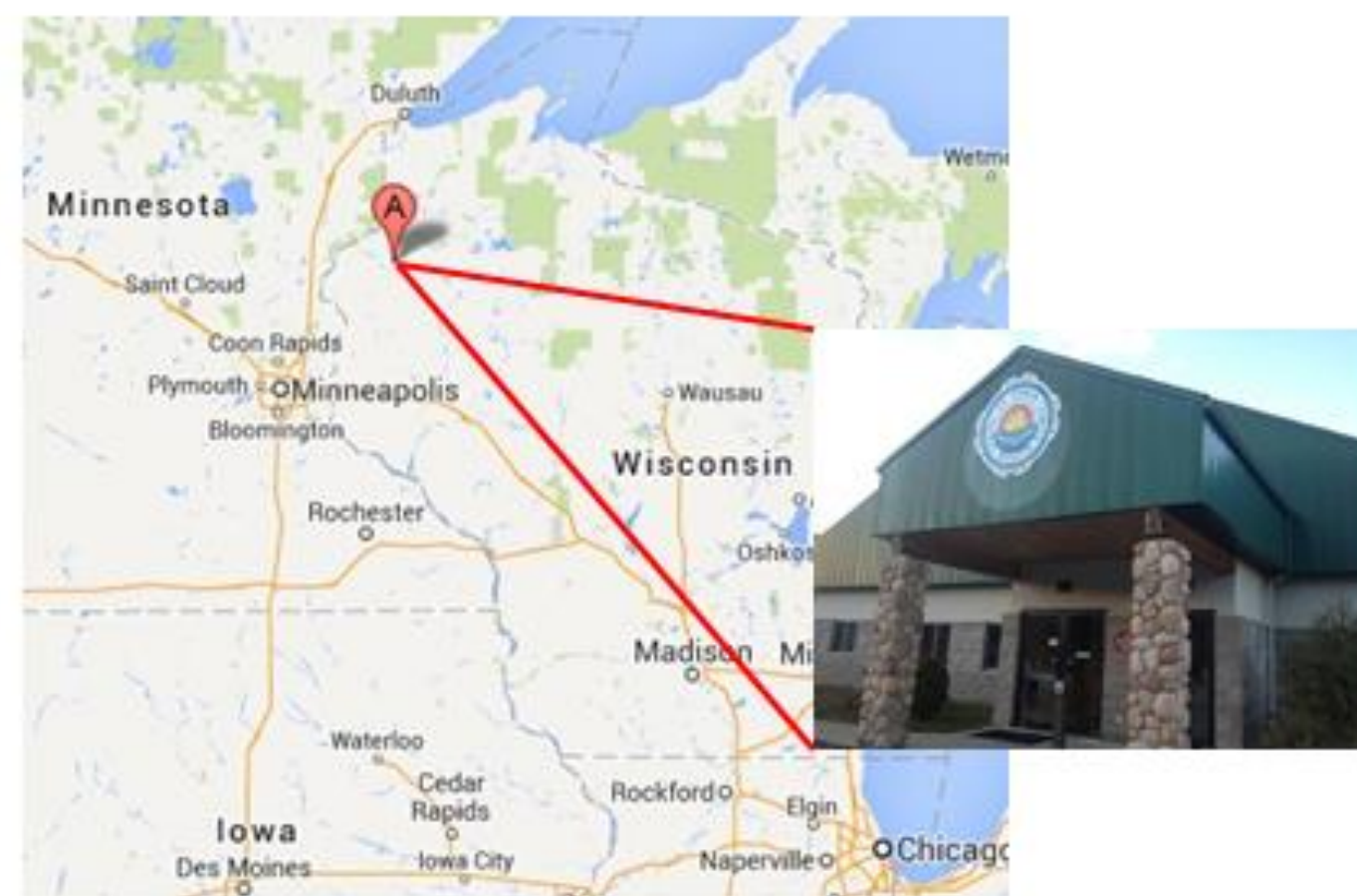
St. Croix

The Reservation:

- 1,054 registered tribal members
- >2,000 acres spread across 5 counties in WI and MN
- Employs 2,500 people (gaming, lodging, agriculture, health)

St. Croix Tribal Health Clinic (SCTHC):

- Medical
- Behavioral Health & AODA
- Dental
- Pharmacy
- Optical
- Community Health
- Diabetes/Healthy Heart



Daily Activities

- Elder home visits with Community Health Nursing staff
- Medication management
- Diabetic foot checks
- Blood pressure checks
- Participated in AODA counseling sessions with patients

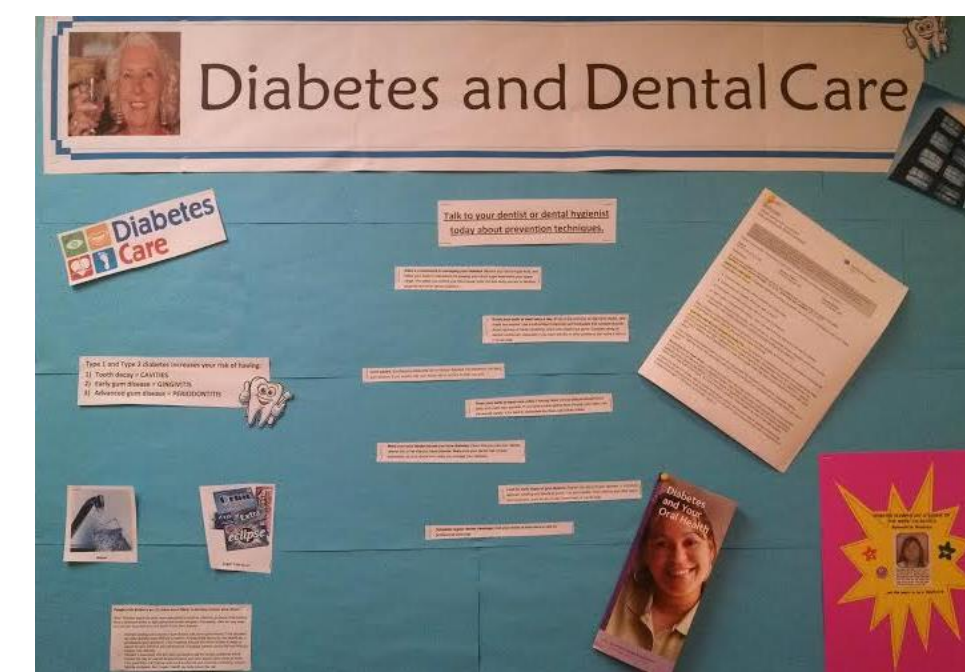


Traditional bear grease – supplied to elders for relief of joint pain

- Joined clinic events, like the Diabetes Support Group



- Created educational posters:



Outcomes & Impacts



Example: Grief vs. Depression Pamphlet

Educational materials will be distributed at SCTHC and health fairs by nursing and AODA staff

- Information is tailored to the community and its needs
- Medium works well for a population with limited internet, phone, and car access.
- Tribal clinic staff does not have the staff or time available for the creation of educational materials, making this a project well suited for volunteers/interns.

My Project



- Collaboration with the St. Croix Tribal Health Clinic
- Spend every Wed. at Clinic during PCC rotation
- Creation of educational materials tailored for the tribal elders
 - Dementia
 - Grief vs. depression
 - Mental Health Crisis hotline pamphlet
- Gain cultural competency
- Shadow and meet with clinic health professionals to better understand their needs.

Gaining Cultural Competency

- Met with Russell FourEagles, local Oneida medicine man who utilizes herbal remedies for treating conditions like cancer and Lyme disease.



Loose leaf tobacco we gave to Russell FourEagles as it's a traditional gift given to elders.

- Learned about Intergenerational trauma via SCTHC staff and videos/materials on whitebison.org
- Learned about the "Well-briety" movement – a grass roots sobriety program specific for Native Americans
- Followed St. Croix Facebook page and other social media

Lessons Learned:

- Important to *understand* a community before attempting to serve it. You must connect with individuals rooted in the community.
- Gained knowledge about Native American culture and history, particularly specific to the St. Croix Chippewa tribe
- Pamphlet writing skills: brevity and accessibility

Miigwetch!

- Caitlin Rublee, B.S., MS3
- Sarah Cormell, Health Director of St Croix Tribal Health Clinic
- Laurel Stusek, Healthy Heart Project Director & RN
- Bob Kovar, Health Educator with Marshfield Clinic
- Shelley Hammes, Clinical Supervisor/Counselor
- Susan Merchant, Dental Hygienist
- Julie Steiner, Community Health RN
- Pam Nichols, Certified Diabetes Educator, RN
- Stephen Holthaus, MD and Lori Remeika, MD - WARM
- Darcy Vanden Elzen, Healthy Lifestyles Program Manager with Marshfield Clinic

Resources & References

- National Resource Center on Native American Aging <http://nrccnaa.org/>
- National Indian Council on Aging <http://nicoa.org/>
- American Indian Health: Elder's Health http://americanindianhealth.nlm.nih.gov/elders_health.html
- Wisconsin Alzheimer Institute (WAI) www.wai.wisc.edu
- WeRNative.com – IHS sponsored website for American Indian Youth
- WhiteBison.org
- National Institute on Aging: "Building Trust and Using Technology to Reach Out to American Indians"
- Indian Health Services <http://www.ihs.gov/bemidji/>
- St. Croix Tribal Health Clinic <http://www.stcciw.com/schclinic/>
- Alzheimer's Disease Education and Referral Center <http://www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers>
- American Psychiatric Association <http://www.psych.org/depression>