Culturally Appropriate Alternatives: Traditional Healing in Primary Care

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65,000 voices
Where We Are From
Vision
A Native Community that enjoys physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellness

Mission
Working together with the Native Community to achieve wellness through health and related services
Goals
Shared Responsibility
Commitment to Quality
Family Wellness
Customer-Ownership
Leadership Principles

Operate from the strength of Alaska Native cultures and traditions of leadership.

Own will stand in the gap to align and achieve the mission and vision.

Nurture an environment of trust that encourages buy-in, systematic growth and change.

Encourage ownership of responsible, calculated risk taking.

Expect and grow the skills of future generations to drive initiatives and improvements.

Share and listen to personal life stories in order to be transparent and accountable.

Embrace people in by creating a safe environment where spiritual, ethical and personal beliefs are honored.

Improve for the future by learning from the past, giving away credit and celebrating achievements.

Practice and encourage self-improvement believing there is good in every person.
Operational Principles

Relationships between customer-owner, family and provider must be fostered and supported.

Emphasis on wellness of the whole person, family and community (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellness).

Locations convenient for customer-owners with minimal stops to get all their needs addressed.

Access optimized and waiting times limited.

Together with the customer-owner as an active partner.

Intentional whole-system design to maximize coordination and minimize duplication.

Outcome and process measures continuously evaluated and improved.

Not complicated but simple and easy to use.

Services financially sustainable and viable.

Hub of the system is the family.

Interests of customer-owners drive the system to determine what we do and how we do it.

Population-Based systems and services.

Services and systems build on the strengths of Alaska Native cultures.
Core Concepts

Work together in relationship to learn and grow
Encourage understanding
Listen with an open mind
Laugh and enjoy humor throughout the day
Notice the dignity and value of ourselves and others
Engage others with compassion
Share our stories and our hearts
Strive to honor and respect ourselves and others
Objectives

- Define key elements of traditional healing
- Describe how SCF coordinates traditional healing practices with western medicine to incorporate Alaska Native values
- Examine culturally appropriate alternatives
Overview

Healing the mind, body and spirit
Traditional Healing Clinic

- Modalities
  - Counseling
  - Physical
- Appointments by referral for eligible beneficiaries
Traditional Counseling

- Culturally relevant, holistic
- Identifies needs and customer-owner goals
- Healing Touch
- Individuals and Families
- Referral needed every six months
Traditional Physical Healing

- Healing Hands
- Healing Touch
- Services vary depending on Tribal Doctor’s skills
Who Can Make a Referral?

- Primary Care Clinics
- OB-GYN
- Pediatrics
- Behavioral Health
- Internal Medicine
Why Do Customer-Owners Come to Traditional Healing?

- Pain
- Learn about illness
- Root cause discovery
- Alternative to medicine
- Chronic conditions management
- Unexplained symptoms
- Grief
- Traditional support
- Holistic support
- Emotional support
- Substance abuse support
- New diagnosis
Reasons People Were Referred

- Pain: 54%
- Behavioral Health and Counseling: 26%
- Customer-Owner Request: 7%
- Other/Not Specified: 5%
- Other Medical: 8%
Other Traditional Services

- Traditional Healing Garden
- Information and awareness on the importance of plants in the history of Traditional Healing
- Women’s Talking Circles
How We Built Traditional Healing

- Customer-owner feedback requesting Alaska Native perspectives
- SCF Board of Directors and Executive Leadership support
- Culturally relevant space integrated with Anchorage Native Primary Care Center
- Creation of Elders’ Advisory Council
- Development of Tribal Doctor job description
- Definition of Traditional Healing Services
- Referral based from Primary Care Provider
A Tribal Doctor must meet a number of criteria, including certification by the Traditional Healing Elders’ Advisory Council.
Why is Traditional Healing Important?

- Offers cultural and traditional options to customer-owners as they seek wellness
- Primary care providers view traditional healing as a valuable service
- Customer-owners asked for it and appreciate it
- Honors Alaska Native healing practices
- Integrates spirituality into healing
How Important is it to Bring Culture and Traditions Into Your Health Care?

Data from SCF customer-owners (n=269) collected at the 2016 SCF Gathering
Primary Care Providers View Traditional Healing as a Valuable Service

From a survey of Primary Care Providers (providers (n=69), 42% primary care providers, 34.8% RN/Case Managers, 14.5% BHC, 8.7% other)
Overall, I am satisfied with my visit
My culture and traditions were respected
I would recommend my provider to family and friends
I was involved in the decisions about my care
Large visit decreases after Traditional Healing Clinic treatment for more complex customer-owners

- People in top 10% of utilization
  - Average changes in post-period
  - 12 fewer specialty visits
  - 4 fewer ED visits
  - 6 fewer ambulatory visits
  - 7 fewer PCC visits
Decreased Visits After Being Seen in Traditional Healing

Percent with a visit to location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ED</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambulatory</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCC</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>74</td>
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</table>
Behavioral Visit Patterns Changed

- Customers engaged in behavioral services
- Significantly less depression and anxiety visits

Percent with a visit

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BSD visit</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol-related visit</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression or anxiety-related</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug-related visit</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-emergent ED visit</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“This morning I brought my mind, body, soul and spirit, of course, because you cannot separate them. I brought my whole person because if I plan to be – one, to be healthy, it has to come from these four units; mind body soul and spirit”

“Respect for each other, respect for health, respect for knowledge, respect for health care. It’s all built in as part of the program.”

“I feel like when I come here I feel it’s my family, the women’s health circle and my sisters, my family. The providers treat us as family; they greet us, they’re glad to see us, they look at us, smile at us, and ask we’re doing, ask about our pets.”

“We talk about food, we talk about Native dancing, we talk about our people – I think it’s really important that the people that you have in you have are really connected to our culture and to the various cultures throughout Alaska.”

“It works and it makes a difference”

“It’s changed my life and enriched my life.”

“A program and a way of life... It’s really, really needed here.”
Questions?
You are invited to join us for a tour of our Healing Garden at the Primary Care Center from 12:15-12:45!

We will meet in the lobby and walk over together.
Thank You!

Qağaasakung
Aleut

Mahsi'
Gwich’in Athabascan

Quyana
Yup’ik

Igamsiqanaghalek
Siberian Yupik

Háw'aa
Haida

Quyanaa
Alutiiq

Awa'ahdah
Eyak

T’oyaxsm
Tsimshian

Chin’an
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Thank You!