The Alaska Community Health Aide Program

August 11, 2014
Victorie Heart, MS, RN, Director, CHAP/Rural Health
CSG National and CSG West Annual Conference

Hitting the Health Care Trifecta
CHAP History

1950s
Chemotherapy Aides (Volunteers)
- Direct Observed Therapy for TB patients

1960s
Formal Training/Federal Funding 1968

1975
Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (PL 93-638)

1998
CHAPCB Standards and Procedures Authority:
Act of November 2, 1921 (25 U.S.C. § 13, popularly known as the Snyder Act) pursuant to 25 U.S.C. § 1616l (Section 119 of Public law 94-437, the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, as amended)

2005
Dental Health Aides Certified

2009
Behavioral Health Aides Certified

2013
eCHAM launch

Dr. Walter Johnson, MD
http://jukebox.uaf.edu/CHA/htm/wjohnson1.htm
Community Health Aides and Practitioners (CHA/Ps)

- Local people
- Initially described as “the eyes, ears and hands of the physician”
- Major role in provision of primary services
- Includes emergency, acute, chronic, and preventive health components
- Training is “skills” based
  - Does not include differential diagnosis
- Under medical supervision of a licensed physician
Community Health Aides and Practitioners (CHA/Ps)

- 550 CHA/P Providers
- 26 Tribal Health Organizations
- 200,000 patient encounters/year
- Employed by THO then trained
- 4 sessions of training with certification at each level
- 3 Training Centers and a Distance Learning Network

“The program was designed with the understanding that there be a close and collegial working relationship between a health aide and her/his referral physician. That way a level of trust and confidence can be built. That is how it was designed to work.” Don Kruse, MD 1994
Alaska Tribal Health System

Community Health Aide/Practitioner Village Clinics

Typical Referral Patterns
The Community Health Aide Program is a vital, successful, and culturally acceptable health care delivery system in Alaska Native villages.
Victorie Heart, MS, RN  
Director, CHAP/Rural Health  
Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium  
4000 Ambassador Drive  
Anchorage, Alaska 99508  
Phone: 907-729-3642  
Email: vheart@anthc.org  
Web: www.akchap.org | www.anthctoday.org