

Ka iqsirugut News

kang•ik'•see•roo'•koot (Iñupiaq): we understand

Spring 2024

The Newsletter of Norton Sound Health Corporation

No. 77



Look inside!

Clinical
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P. d. c. -lla
S. v. d. S. c. ! ..
N. a. l. l. .

Patient Hostel that will provide naloxone for free. With 22 compartments, the machine operates like a system. After a few prompts on the machine's display, a locker opens, allowing the machine to dispense a box containing two doses



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Maintenance keeps NSHC humming

Isabel High School in Teller in May 2012 and started working at NSHC in October 2017. He enjoys subsistence fishing and hunting with his family. Virg-In lives in Nome with Debbie Okback and his three children, Connor, Dylan, and Kylee. He credits Wes Okback and Rose Thomas, the grandparents of his children, with supporting him through school and helping with his kids when needed.

YOUR BEST LIFE

NEWS & VIEWS FROM THE CAMP DEPARTMENT AT NORTON SOUND HEALTH CORPORATION

Breastfeeding best for baby, environment

Registered Dietitian & International Board Certified Lactation Consultant

It is well known that breastfeeding has a vital impact on the health of mothers and infants.

Breastfeeding mothers are praised by many for choosing the best nutrition and for positively impacting the health of their children, but often overlooked is how important breastfeeding is to the environment. In March 2024, the World Health Organization (WHO) released an article recognizing breastfeeding as a carbon of set and urging that breastfeeding be considered when thinking about sustainable food, health, and economic systems.

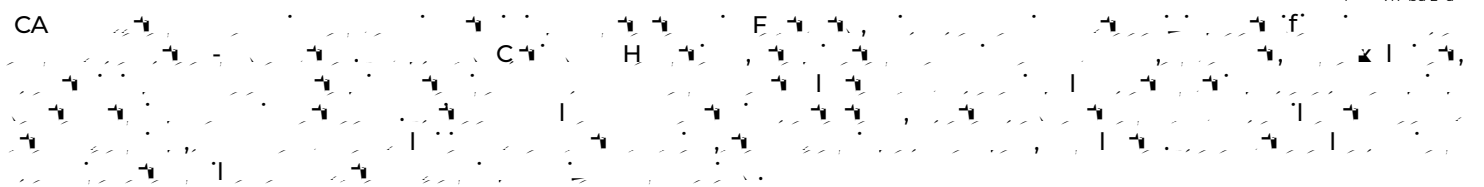
The Norton Sound region and Alaska have the highest breastfeeding initiation rates. We are also leaders in exclusive breastfeeding in infants up to six months.

Breastfeeding has numerous positive health impacts, including being considered the “first vaccine” by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the WHO. Breastmilk is the most nutritious and perfect food for infants.

Here at NSHC, we often refer to breastmilk as “The First Traditional Food” and view it as an important part of our culture and traditions. Breastfed babies are more likely to enjoy their traditional foods later in life.

In addition to great nutrition, we also need to consider the impact on our environment of choosing to breastfeed over choosing to formula feed. Protecting our environment is essential to protecting our access to traditional foods.

According to the WHO, strong sci-



entific evidence shows links between how we choose to feed our infants and environmental harms. Only 22 pounds of infant formula generates around 11-14 kilograms of greenhouse gas and uses more than 5000 liters of water to produce and use in our homes, as well as multiple other harms to environmental health, such as impact on our land for manufacturing, antimicrobial resistance, and air pollution. Meeting breastfeeding goals would lead to far greater reduc-

tions in negative impacts on our environment.

In addition to easing climate change, breastfeeding supports adaptation and builds resilience in the face of emergencies and natural disasters.

NSHC is committed to protecting, promoting, and supporting breastfeeding. NSHC is a Baby-Friendly Designated Hospital, which ensures implementation of the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding. NSHC offers several opportunities for indi-

viduals to get support with breastfeeding, from in-hospital lactation visits to weekly online support groups. The Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program through WIC and our certified lactation educator trainings empower community members to support one another on their breastfeeding journeys within their own communities.

The next time you encounter a breastfeeding mama, please thank her for protecting our environment and our access to traditional foods!

Fresh produce coming your way!

Residents in Bering Strait regional communities besides Nome now have the opportunity to order bundles of fresh produce for a convenient price through the CAMP department.

The community produce delivery program was relaunched this year in order to offer residents in villages a new way to receive fresh produce. Much like in Nome’s produce markets, CAMP places a bulk order for a variety of fruits and vegetables, and the supply is then split up among the village orders.

The produce bag supplies are purchased with Special Diabetes Program for Indians funding, and NSHC Administration funds the shipping

Cowboy Caviar

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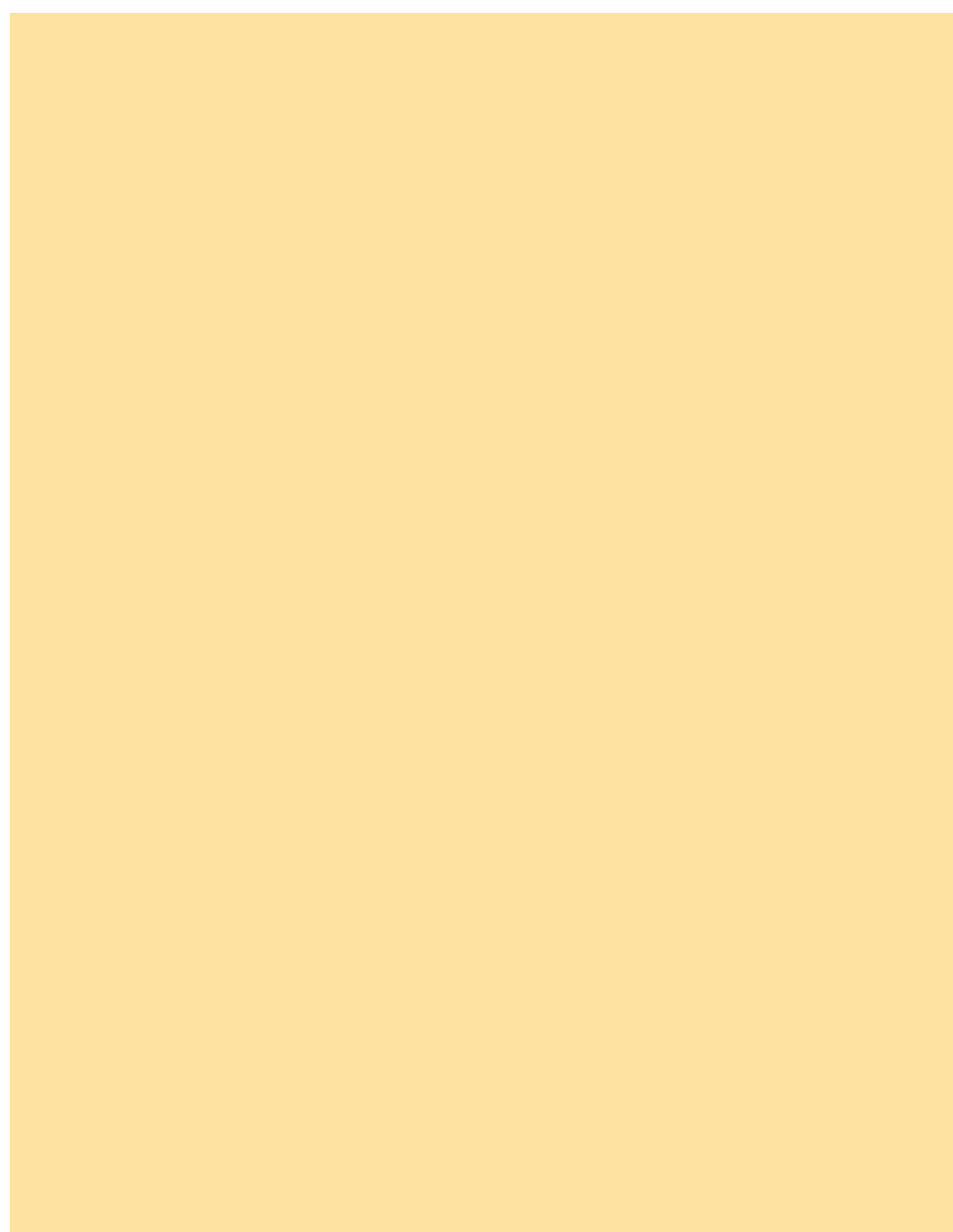
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Work underway across region to improve water and sewer services

Elim, Alaska

The Community Utility Assistance Program (CUAP) sent out a memorandum of agreement with local utility owners in the region. The document has been sent to every city of ce and tribe in the region that participates in the CUAP. The document establishes terms and conditions through which the CUAP will provide technical, financial, and management services for operation and maintenance of the local water and wastewater systems. The goal is to improve each community's best practice score to be eligible for infrastructure funding.

The CUAP will host meetings with local tri-organizations to go over the document, address any questions or concerns, and ultimately get the document signed by the city (utility owner) and the three main partner organizations (Norton Sound Health Corporation, Kawerak, and Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation).

Elim, Alaska

In partnership with Rural Alaska Community Action Plan (RurAL CAP) and Engineering Ministries International (EMI), the CUAP traveled to Elim to conduct a housing assessment. CUAP staff hopes to determine and assess water and sewer repairs for homeowners.

The CUAP hosted a community dinner at the Aniguiin School on Wednesday, May 8 where staff members explained the home assessment and gave an update on CUAP projects, goals, and upcoming projects.

The project assessed 35 homes. The project will address in-home repairs such as new toilets, arctic box repairs, plumbing issues and more.

Chester, Alaska

In 2021 and 2022, the CUAP contracted MK Consulting LLC to conduct engineering assessments in each water plant in the region. The assessments identified critical deficiencies, potential upgrades, and essential repairs to improve the functionality of water plants. Upcoming projects will address these items and provide redundancy and prevent freeze-ups.

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Regional students supported by NSHC scholarships

Norton Sound Health Corporation offers a general, non-competitive scholarship to higher education students aiming for health-related fields but may be awarded for non-medical-related studies if the degree can help further NSHC's mission and vision. Priority is given to Indian Health Services beneficiaries from our region who commit to returning to the region and possible employment at NSHC. NSHC's Scholarship Committee approves the award amount each year. It is currently \$1,500 per semester for full

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Partners in regional leadership for over 45 years

SHC

2023 NSHC STAFF AWARDS

NSHC Values Awards

TEAMWORK – KOYUK CLINIC TEAM The Koyuk clinic team is impressive all around. They show up on time and regularly and are all extremely helpful. They go beyond their typical duties to make providers and patients comfortable. When there is a traumatic incident, they work together to make sure patients are cared for, regardless of who is on call.

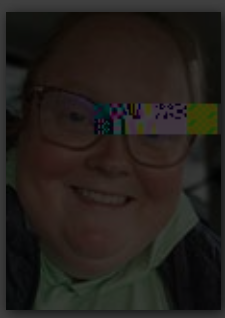


TEAMWORK – NIKKI HUKILL Case Manager Assistant, Nome. Nikki is a vibrant part of Primary Care Clinic. She is dedicated to her role and the patients NSHC serves. She goes out of her way to make sure patients are seen by their providers, sometimes calling multiple times to convince patients to be seen. She follows up with patient travel needs reminders for village patients, and she is even willing to step in and help prepare patient rooms when nurses are falling behind.



CULTURAL SENSITIVITY & RESPECT FOR TRADITIONAL VALUES – BENJAMIN JACK Cultural Arts Instructor, Nome. Ben is an important part of Behavioral Health Services and the effort to improve wellness through revitalizing cultural activities. He works well with patients and knows when to offer help or provide space. He is positive, kind, and always willing to travel to share his knowledge in other communities. Ben's skills enable him to provide cutting edge healing activities that allow people to

make beautiful things and feed their spirit.



CULTURAL SENSITIVITY & RESPECT FOR TRADITIONAL VALUES – HANNAH SCHNAIDT SAPTA Project Director, Nome. Hannah works hard to promote healing through preventative activities, many of which involve cultural arts. She is constantly planning events and activities to reach people young and old in the hope to improve wellness. Hannah takes her role seriously and uses all the resources within reach to maximize her program's impact.



ALWAYS LEARNING AND IMPROVING – SCHEMELL WEECH Emergency Dept. Nurse Manager, Nome. Schemell was chosen for this award in part because of her support for staff members furthering education within the emergency department. Schemell is a leader who fosters a culture of ongoing learning and stays informed about the latest updates and current topics in health care. It would be easy for her to fall into the daily

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH



OCTOBER - JANE HOLMES

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

NSHC chose the Patient Hostel
for the location of the machine for its

was shipped to Nome using funding in part from tribal opioid settlements from opioid distributors. The settlements from the litigation require the tribal health organizations to use the funds for the abatement of the opioid epidemic and prevention of further opioid use. The same settlements are providing units of naloxone to NSHC.

Located next to the front desk at the hostel, the dispensing machine will ask users if they are experiencing an emergency. If the user tells the machine they are in an emergency, it will pop open a door and immediately begin playing a video demonstration of how to use the naloxone. If the user is not in an emergency and wants to keep the naloxone on hand for potential future use, the digital prompts will take them through a series of data collection questions to support the SAPTA grant efforts.