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FALL BEGAN WITH SUCCESSFUL WHALE HUNTS in Kaktovik, Nuiqsut, and Barrow; congratulations to all of the successful crews in these villages. When a whale is landed, and the work begins with the celebration, it is an open house in the successful whaling Captain’s home. Most of us who are a part of this activity know that it is going to be several days of “feel good” hard work, because there is satisfaction in serving the community. We rejoice because there will be whale meat and maktak for the Thanksgiving and Christmas feasts in our villages.

In the same way, our employees have put in “feel good” hard work in opening the new hospital. We celebrate having the first year completed, which began on September 21, 2013. It took hard work and dedication to pass the inspections that come with opening a new facility. Some of our accomplishments include passing the Joint Commission Survey for patient care delivery, the College of American Pathologists for the operations of the new Laboratory Department, and OSHA for safety within the new hospital. These inspections ensure that we are following national standards for patient care.

In these modern times, many of our residents travel to unexpected places around the world. When there is an outbreak like the Ebola virus, we do pay attention and talk about the likelihood of the disease reaching the northernmost community within the United States. Although the risk is very low, we take them seriously and examine our preparedness for an event that may never happen, but we want to be prepared so we participate in table talks and walk through the process we would follow as recommended by CDC or other agencies involved.

Enjoy the start of winter. For me, it is a few days of cross country skiing. Find something you enjoy to make the season more enjoyable for you and your family.

Best Wishes,
Marie Carroll, President/CEO

VILLAGE DENTAL PREVENTION PROGRAM AWARDED COMPETITIVE GRANT

LAST YEAR, SSMH DENTAL received a competitive grant from the Indian Health Service (IHS) for a school-based prevention program. We are happy to announce that we have been awarded an additional grant this year to expand the program.

SSMH Dental has received nearly $20,000 from the IHS Division of Oral Health to fund a School Village Dental Prevention Program project. This will allow SSMH hygienists to visit the schools within the villages of Atqasuk, Kaktovik, Nuiqsut, Point Lay, and Wainwright, with additional trips to Nuiqsut and Wainwright due to high demand and need for prevention-related activities. Last year, SSMH Dental was only able to provide the program in the villages of Point Lay and Wainwright, so we look forward to expanding the program to the other villages we serve.

The school-based program will include screening and fluoride applications for all students who receive consent from their parents or legal guardians. Students will be seen in the dental clinic (school transportation provided) to receive an exam, cleaning, fluoride varnish and any sealants or temporary restorations that may be needed. This program is available to students in Kindergarten through 12th grade.

SSMH Dental looks forward to working with the teachers, principals, students, and parents in all five villages.

A NOTE FROM MARIE
THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT AND THE ALASKAN
NATIVE AND AMERICAN INDIAN EXEMPTION

Beginning January 1, 2014, every American must demonstrate health care coverage under ACA, but there are special exemptions that apply to Alaska Native and American Indian people.

If you don’t have health care coverage for you and your family, you could be assessed a tax penalty.

Alaska Native and American Indian people are exempt from the requirement to purchase insurance if they can show evidence of:
• Enrollment in a federally recognized Tribe,
• Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) shareholder status (village or regional) or
• Eligibility to receive services from an Indian Health Service (IHS) facility/Tribal health care provider

To qualify for this exemption, Alaska Native and American Indian people will have to apply for the exemption through a paper application process.

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO THE INDIAN EXEMPTION APPLICATION

1ST — GET THE FORM

The exemption form is available and you can pick it up at Samuel Simmonds Memorial Hospital or you can visit:

Print an extra copy of the “Step 2” page from the application of your spouse and each of your children or others in your family who are Alaska Native or American Indian. You will need to complete a separate “Step 2” page for each member of your family you claim on your taxes.

2ND — WHAT TO INCLUDE WITH YOUR APPLICATION

A copy of one of the following for each person you are filing for:
• Tribal Enrollment Card or Letter
• Proof of ANCSA (Regional or Village) Shareholder Status
• Certificate of Indian Blood (CIB) issued by the Bureau of Indian Affairs

If you do not have one of the items above, you can also visit SSMH or your local tribal clinic for a “Letter of Eligibility to Receive Care.”

Send copies only—do not send original cards or documents. These items will not be returned.

3RD — MAIL APPLICATION, KEEP A COPY

Mail your signed application to:
Health Insurance Marketplace – Exemption Processing
465 Industrial Blvd.
London, KY 40741

Keep a copy of the entire signed application and forms for your personal records.

What will happen next?

You will receive an Exemption Certificate Number from the Health Insurance Marketplace that you will put on your federal income tax return.

• This is for your 2014 taxes that you will file in 2015.
• Keep the certificate number in a safe place as it is how you will avoid the tax penalty.

If you do not receive the certificate information, call the Health Insurance Marketplace Help Center at 1-800-318-2596.

HELPFUL HINTS

Please note, if you are applying for the Indian Status exemption, you have the entire year of 2014 to submit the application. However, we suggest you complete the exemption paperwork and mail it no later than November 2014 to ensure it’s processed in time.

For more helpful hints and additional instructions, go to:
http://anthctoday.org/aca/index.html

If you have questions, the following resources are available to you:

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
healthreform@anthc.org

Arctic Slope Native Association
info@arcticslope.org or 907-852-2762

Health Insurance Marketplace Help Center
HealthCare.gov or 1-800-318-2596
TWO NEW PHYSICIANS JOIN THE SSMH PROVIDER TEAM

Please join us in welcoming our new providers, Dr. Mark Klinker and Dr. Jacquelyn Serrano

Dr. Mark Klinker has joined the medical staff at SSMH as Chief of Emergency Medicine. He has experience working in both primary care and critical care settings. Dr. Klinker’s board certification includes Internal Medicine, Cardiovascular Disease and Interventional Cardiology. Prior to joining SSMH, Dr. Klinker worked at Maniilaq Health Center in Kotzebue, Alaska.

Dr. Klinker arrived here in early August, and his primary responsibility will be providing care in the Emergency Room. He will be working with the North Slope Borough Emergency Medical Services personnel to help with training to enhance the quality of care we provide. With Dr. Klinker’s cardiology experience, he hopes to serve as a resource to support our current programs and will assist in developing new strategies for the screening and prevention of heart disease.

Dr. Jacquelyn Serrano earned a Master’s Degree in Public Health from the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. She then continued with her Doctor of Medicine from the Stanford University School of Medicine. Dr. Serrano completed her training at the North Memorial Family Practice Residency Program at the University of Minnesota. She is also a proud veteran of the United States Air Force. Since May 2011, Dr. Serrano was faculty at the Alaska Family Medicine Residency Program in Anchorage.

Dr. Serrano started on August 25. She will practice in the outpatient department and work with the Native Village of Nuiqsut. Dr. Serrano completed training to become our CHAP (Community Health Aide Program) Physician Representative.

Please welcome Dr. Klinker and Dr. Serrano to the SSMH team.

ALASKA SPECIFIC EBOLA INFORMATION

Due to the overall low number of Alaskans who either have family ties to the Ebola-affected countries or who are deploying to these countries from Alaska to offer medical assistance, the risk of Ebola arriving in Alaska is lower than the risk for States with large numbers of people returning from these countries, but the risk to Alaska is real. Ebola can cause symptoms up to 21 days after exposure, which is enough time for an Ebola-exposed person to travel anywhere in the world before developing symptoms.

According to the CDC, the Symptoms of Ebola include:
- Fever (greater than 38.6°C or 101.5°F)
- Severe headache
- Muscle pain
- Weakness
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal (stomach) pain
- Unexplained hemorrhage (bleeding or bruising)

Symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure to Ebola, but the average is 8 to 10 days.

Recovery from Ebola depends on good supportive clinical care and the patient’s immune response. People who recover from Ebola infection develop antibodies that last for at least 10 years.
PHYSICAL THERAPY GROWING, NEW PHYSICAL THERAPIST HIRED

MELISSA BUNSELMEIER started working as a Physical Therapist on August 11. She and her husband Chad both grew up in Delta Junction, Alaska. After graduating from high school, Bunselmeier attended Augustana College in South Dakota. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Exercise Science. Bunselmeier continued with her Doctorate of Physical Therapy from the University of Montana.

Bunselmeier has worked in various clinic locations, including Salt Lake City, Denver, Fairbanks, and Idaho Falls. Her favorite specialties are Outpatient Orthopedics and Neurorehabilitation, which aims to help patients recover from brain and spinal cord injuries. Bunselmeier and her husband are happy to return to Alaska and look forward to an adventure in Barrow. She enjoys outdoor activities, including kayaking, snowboarding, hunting, and camping.

SCHEDULING PROCESS CHANGE

SSMH HAS RECENTLY STARTED having patients contact their Primary Care teams directly for questions concerning their medical care and to schedule outpatient appointments. Previously, patients would call the appointment hotline. The reasons for the change are two-fold: to build and strengthen the relationship between patients and their team, and because the Case Manager Assistant has day-to-day working knowledge of the specific patient and their provider. If the Case Manager has questions, then they can directly ask the patient’s provider.

Part of this transition is to ensure that all patients are assigned with a provider, educated on the new process, and SSMH is providing patient-centered care. Patients still have access to the appointment hotline at 907 852 9156; this also rings to all three Case Managers as well. Please refer to the numbers below if you need to schedule appointments or have questions about health care needs.

PRIMARY CARE TEAM & CONTACT INFORMATION

Dr. Joan Gaela
Case Manager:
Tessa Dixon, RN 907 852 9357
Assistant Case Manager:
Liberty Alcantara 907 852 9397

Dr. Devon Allen & Joyce Sichali, FNP
Case Manager:
Mike Mayberry, RN 907 852 9203
Assistant Case Manager:
Carol Fruean 907 852 9166

Dr. Jacquelyn Serrano
Case Manager:
Lisa Martin, RN 907 852 9380
Assistant Case Manager:
Maria Tuason 907 852 9163

SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK!

Point of Care Surveys

SSMH ADMINISTERS “POINT OF CARE” surveys to help us measure patient experience and satisfaction. The survey is optional for patients and is given upon discharge or after an appointment. The survey team consists of caregivers to allow you to be more comfortable and open with responses. All responses are kept confidential and only used internally to help with patient care.
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mark Your Calendar

NORTH SLOPE HEALTH FAIRS
Here’s the schedule for the upcoming North Slope Health Fairs:
BARROW: Nov 8, 8am–3pm
Piuraagvik Recreational Center
ATQASUK: Nov 14, 3pm–6pm
Meade River School
WAINWRIGHT: Nov 15, 10am–2pm
Alak School
KAKTOVIK: Nov 21, 2pm–5:30pm
Kaveolook School
NUIQSUT: Nov 22, 10:30am–2pm
Trapper School
ANAKTUVUK PASS: Dec 5, 3pm–6pm
Nunamiut School

UPCOMING ASNA HOLIDAYS
INUIT DAY: Nov 7
VETERAN’S DAY: Nov 11
THANKSGIVING: Nov 27 & 28
CHRISTMAS: Dec 24 & 25

In observance of these holidays, ssmh will be closed, including the Pharmacy. There will be no scheduled appointments, only the Emergency Department will be open. Please use the Emergency entrance located at the southeast end of the hospital.

PROVIDER VISITS TO THE VILLAGES
NUIQSUT: Nov 24–26 with Dr. Serrano
KAKTOVIK: Oct 28–30 with Dr. Allen (Diabetes) & Dec 1–5 with Dr. Gaela
WAINWRIGHT: Nov 3–6 with Dr. Allen (Diabetes)

DENTAL VILLAGE TRIPS
WAINWRIGHT:
Hygienist ONLY Dec 8–12
NUIQSUT: Nov 3–7 with Dr. Finkbine
KAKTOVIK: Hygienist ONLY Nov 17–21

Dates are subject to change. To see the dentist, call your village health clinic to ensure your name is on the dental list with your current phone number(s).

SSMH SPECIALTY CLINICS SCHEDULE
ENT/AUDIO: Nov 4–6 & Dec 9–11
SURGERY: Nov 12–14
PEDIATRICS: Nov 18–20
GYNECOLOGY: Dec 2–4

Specialty Clinic appointments are only for those who receive a referral from a Primary Care Provider. For more information, please contact Nicole Thomason directly at 907.852.9284. Or call toll free at 1.888.525.7764.