Fort Peck Community College Awarded $1.5 Million Dollar Five Year Grant to Drive Down Chronic Diseases on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation

New program addresses tobacco, obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and stroke in Indian Country

Today, the Fort Peck Community College was awarded a grant of $317,000 each year for the next five years to develop a comprehensive worksite wellness program within the Fort Peck Community College, Fort Peck Tribes and Poplar School District.

The Comprehensive Approach to Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country awards are part of a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) initiative to support public health efforts to reduce chronic diseases, promote healthier lifestyles, reduce health disparities, and control health care spending. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will administer the grants, which will run for 5 years, subject to availability of funds.

Overall, HHS awarded $11.2 million in 22 grants to prevent heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and associated risk factors in American Indian tribes and Alaskan Native villages through a holistic approach to population health and wellness. Grantees will work to reduce commercial tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke, improve nutrition and physical activity, increase support for breastfeeding, increase health literacy, and strengthen team-based care and links between community resources and clinical services.

Half of the awards will support tribes directly and the other half will support tribal organizations to provide leadership, technical assistance, training, and resources to tribes and villages in their Indian Health Service Administrative Areas. The program is financed by the Prevention and Public Health Fund of the Affordable Care Act.

Adriann Ricker, FPCC Health and Wellness Coordinator and the principal writer of the grant states, “We appreciate the opportunity to expand health knowledge and improve overall health outcomes on the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Reservation made available through the funding opportunity P14-1421PPHF12. The grant will provide a unique opportunity for our institution to be a vessel of change for our reservation and for that we are extremely grateful to the CDC and the 2014 Prevention and Public Health Funds”

Specifically, the work that FPCC will be doing includes developing a comprehensive worksite wellness program that will promote healthy lifestyle changes in the area of nutrition and physical activity. In addition to programming, there will be some policy review and modifications suitable to the objectives of the grant. Lastly, health information dissemination will be a critical aspect.
Compared with the general U.S. population, with some regional exceptions, American Indian and Alaskan Native people have higher rates of tobacco use, obesity, and physical inactivity and lower consumption of fruits and vegetables—important risk factors for chronic diseases.

To learn more about FPCC’s prevention and wellness projects, visit www.fpcc.edu

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