



Center for
Rural Health



<http://ruralhealth.und.edu>

How To Talk to Your Doctor

Leander R. McDonald, PhD, Richard Ludtke, PhD, Twyla Baker-Demaray, MA, Kim Ruliffson, BA, Ann Miller, Jim LaBelle, MA, George Charles, PhD, Cheryl Easley, PhD, Noreen Mokuau, DSW, Colette Browne, PhD

Prior Lake, MN

April 30, 2008

*Connecting resources and knowledge to strengthen
the health of people in rural communities.*



Center for Rural Health

- Established in 1980, at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences in Grand Forks, ND
- Focuses on:
 - Education, Training, & Resource Awareness
 - Community Development & Technical Assistance
 - Native American Health
 - Rural Health Workforce
 - Rural Health Research
 - Rural Health Policy
- Web site: <http://ruralhealth.und.edu>



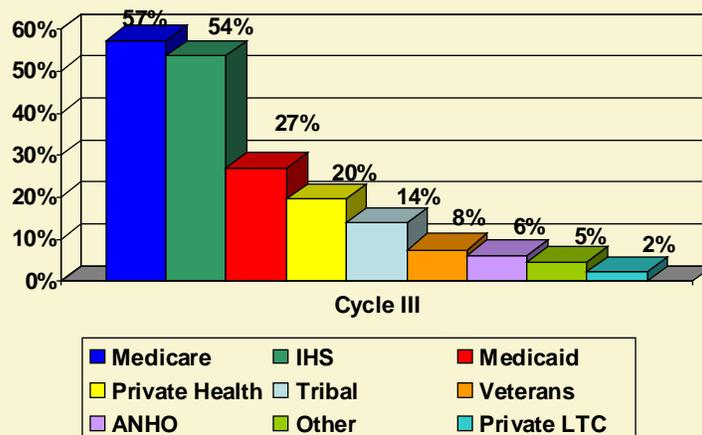
National Resource Center on Native American Aging



- Established in 1994, at the Center for Rural Health, University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences
- Focuses on:
 - Education, Training, and Research
 - Community Development & Technical Assistance
 - Native Elder Health, Workforce, & Policy
- Web site: www.nrcnaa.org

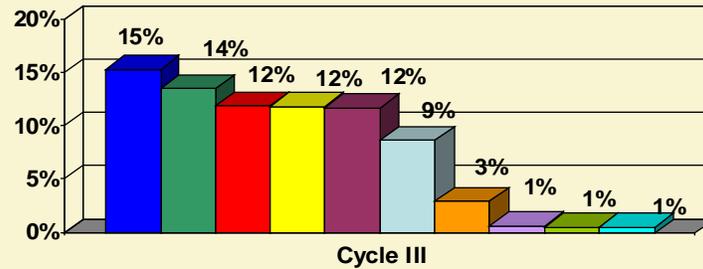


Health Care Coverage: Cycle III

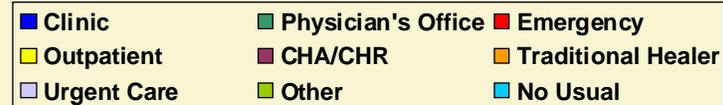
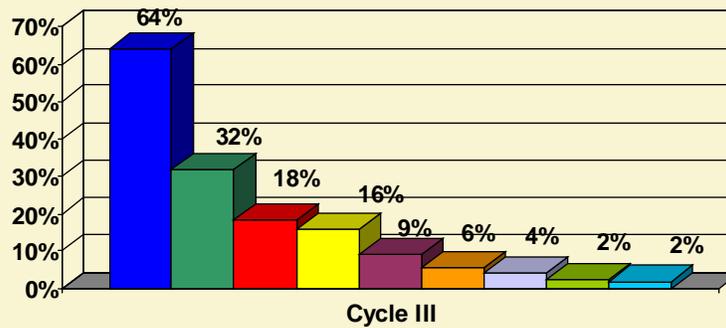




Barriers to Medical Care: Cycle III

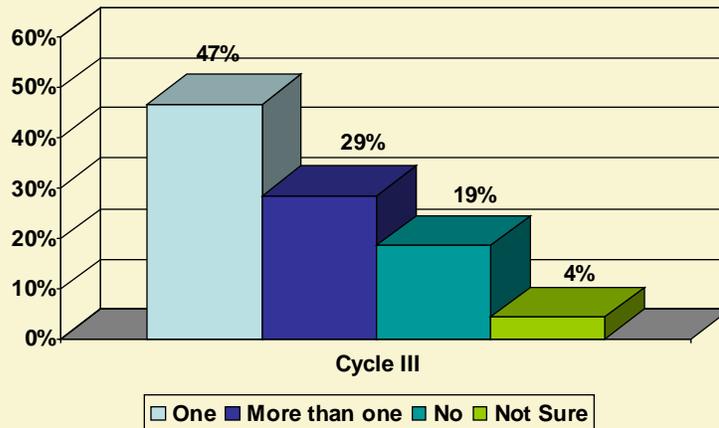


Health Advice: Cycle III





Do you have a personal doctor?



Indian Health Service Concerns

- Funding reduction
- Physician turnover
- Lack of primary provider
- Diagnostic and treatment delays
- Contract care unavailable
- Transportation not available



Provider concerns

- 1) Understand community attitudes such as mistrust, bias, and stereotyping
- 2) Gain knowledge of health disparities, causes, and solutions
- 3) Acquire the skills to improve communicate and negotiate across cultures, languages, and literacy levels.



Take responsibility for your health

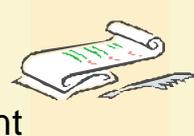
- Know when and how to seek medical care.
- Follow your doctor's advice for taking care of yourself.
- Work with your doctor in making decisions about your health.
- Build a relationship with your doctor; foster good communication and trust.





Best Use of Your Time

- Rank your list of concerns and questions by importance.
 - Talk about the 3-4 most important concerns or questions first.
 - If you have time, you can talk about the other things on your list.
 - Your doctor may not have a lot of time to talk with you. Therefore, it is important for you to stay focused on what you planned to talk about.



If you have a choice, choose a doctor you can talk to

- Decide what you are looking for in a doctor
- Identify several doctors
- Consult reference resources such as Internet
- Talk to office staff about doctors you are considering
- Make a choice





Getting ready for the appointment

- Be prepared: make a list of concerns
- Take information with you
- Make sure you can see and hear
- Consider bringing a family member or friend
- Find an interpreter if you think you'll need one
- Plan to update doctor on what happened since last time



Giving Information

- Share any symptoms
- Give information about your medications
- Tell the doctor about your habits
- Voice other concerns



Getting information

- Learn about medical tests
- Discuss your diagnosis and what to expect
- Find about your medications
- Understand your prescriptions



Making decisions with your doctor

- Ask about different treatments:
 - Are there risks associated with the treatment?
 - How soon should treatment start?
 - How long will it last?
 - Are other treatments available?
 - How much will the treatment cost?
 - Will my insurance cover the cost?



Making decisions with your doctor

- Ask about prevention:
 - Is there any way to prevent a condition that runs in my family?
 - Are there ways to keep my condition from getting worse?
 - How will making a change in habits help me?
 - Are there any risks in making this change?
 - Are there support groups or community services that might help me?



Talking to doctors in special situations

- Asks questions if you are unclear
- Try to write down as much as possible
- Tell your primary doctor if you have seen a specialist, need surgery, or have gone to an emergency room





Practical matters

- Don't hesitate to bring up concerns even if they don't seem to be medically related
- You and the doctor can make better decisions if the doctors knows about troubling non-medical concerns
- If the doctor can't help solve medical concerns, they may know of available resources



Sensitive topics

- Don't hesitate to discuss sensitive topics
- Use brochures or props to introduce topics that feel awkward
- If your doctor doesn't take your concerns seriously, it might be time to change doctors





Remembering the answers

- Ask about anything that seems unclear
- Additional resources for health conditions:
 - DVDs, CDS, cassettes, or videotapes
 - Websites
- Take notes
- Telephone or email doctor or staff for clarification



Provider scenarios

- Questionable interaction
- Appropriate interaction
- Discussion





References

- Talking with Your Doctor: A Guide for Older People, National Institute on Aging, National Institute of Health, NIA Information Center, PO Box 8057, Gaithersburg, MD, 20898-8057
- National Institute of Health
 - <http://nihseniorhealth.gov/talkingwithyourdoctor/toc.html>, last accessed 4.28.08
- Becoming a Partner in Your Healthcare, AARP
http://www.aarp.org/health/staying_healthy/prevention/becoming_a_partner_in_your_healthcare.html, last accessed 4.28.08
- Maintaining a Good Relationship With Your Doctor,
<http://www.healthcarecoach.org/resources/index.php?view=detail&id=123&node=63>



Center for
Rural Health

<http://ruralhealth.und.edu>

For more information contact:
Leander "Russ" McDonald, Ph.D.
Center for Rural Health
University of North Dakota
School of Medicine and Health Sciences
Grand Forks, ND 58202-9037



Tel: (800) 896-7628

Fax: (701) 777-6779



<http://ruralhealth.und.edu>
www.nrcnaa.org



*Connecting resources and knowledge to strengthen
the health of people in rural communities.*