



# Native Aging Visions

A Resource for Native Elders

*A Publication of the National Resource Center on Native American Aging  
located at the University of North Dakota Center for Rural Health  
School of Medicine & Health Sciences*

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## Director's Column

One of the seasons I look forward to is Spring. It is a time of renewal, rebirth, and a special opportunity for new ideas.

The National Resource Center on Native American Aging (NRCNAA) has several new ideas and projects on the front burner this Spring. First of all, we feel a pressing need to address some of the continuing challenges of poor health among American Indian elders with renewed efforts and vigor. We plan on testing the idea of chronic disease management groups and look forward to emphasizing health promotion by providing some training opportunities during the Summer of 2003. We also hope to revamp the "Native Elder Needs Assessment" and develop a second generation needs assessment that helps tribes gain additional information for the strategic planning efforts to address the needs of their elders. Finally, we are cooperating with the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality User Liaison Program to bring tribes and states together in Region VIII (Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, North and South Dakota) and tribes from Nebraska and Iowa to discuss long term care options and innovations. During the aforementioned meeting we hope to unveil the initial draft of a toolkit for long term care planning.

During the Summer of 2003 the NRCNAA will be testing the idea of chronic disease management groups facilitated by American Indian persons with chronic disease. Our

initial efforts will be a collaboration with the Arthritis Foundation in the states of Minnesota, North and South Dakota. We hope to hold 12 such groups, evaluate their benefit, and then provide information nationwide about how to form such groups and provide data as to their benefit.

We are also planning two training sessions on health promotion. One is a "how to" on health promotion; the other will be on coaching healthy behavior. They will be held in August at the University of North Dakota. Please see the advertisement on page 5 for more information.

One of the most significant projects for American Indian country in recent years has been the *Native Elder Needs Assessment* conducted by the NRCNAA. We are working on a new rendition that will provide even more information to tribes for their long term care planning efforts. The assessment is conducted by the tribe and the data belongs to the tribe. Conducting a needs assessment is the first step in developing most projects. How do you know what to do or where you are going without a needs assessment? As is the case with the current needs assessment effort, there is no charge, the major investment for the tribe is administering the questionnaire to their tribal elders.

*(continued on page 2)*

On July 21-23, 2003 we are going to assist with hosting a major tribal/state meeting on long term care in Bismarck, ND. The primary host is the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality User Liaison Program. We, as American Indian people, have so much to learn about the spectrum of long term care. As our population ages, we want to make sure that we are doing the right thing to facilitate healthy aging. This meeting is a great opportunity for us to contemplate all of the aspects of providing care to our elders. We hope to discover what states will support. We also hope states will discover what tribal elders want and need, and we hope that our tribes will have the wisdom to advocate for and meet those needs within the environment and resources available to them. As always, we hope that tribes will be able to describe their superior commitment to elder health and negate the idea that the state and federal government is providing the lion's share of resources.

We've got a lot of work to do at the NRCNAA and we added a new staff member to help. Francine McDonald, of the Spirit Lake Dakota Nation, has joined our team and is currently working on a "toolkit" to help develop long term care plans and efforts by providing a road map to follow.

That's what we are doing! In the meantime, what are you doing? Are you a service

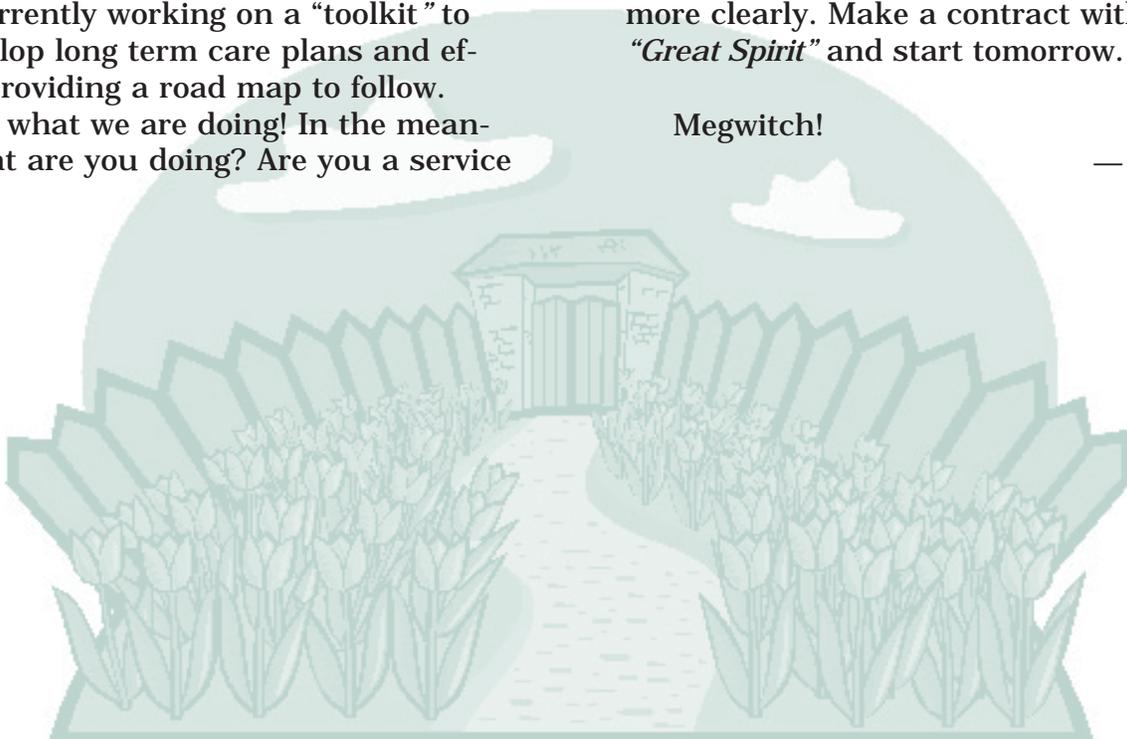
provider, caregiver, or family member of an elder? Are you working with our elders to guide them or counsel them regarding better nutrition and regular exercise? Many of our chronic health problems can be mitigated by better nutrition and regular exercise. How can you facilitate both?

We know that Type II diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, obesity, and stress are some of the major chronic illnesses affecting our elders. Let's do something about it! You can assist by helping an elder start an exercise program. The first step is for the elder to see a physician to determine if an exercise program is appropriate. If the physician gives the go ahead for exercise, then help your elder find a routine that they can adhere to. We know that adherence is the major drawback for most of us. We can help by being supportive and finding ways to exercise with our elders.

Since I turned 55 a year ago, I find that it is never too early or too late to start a new healthy behavior. The challenge is to sustain it so I can get the maximum benefit. Renew yourself and your elders this Spring, you will look better, feel better, and think more clearly. Make a contract with the "Great Spirit" and start tomorrow.

Megwitch!

— Alan Allery



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## New Developments Expand Research

by Rick Ludtke, PhD, Russ McDonald, MA, and Kyle Muus, PhD

The goal behind the needs assessment project "Identifying Our Needs: A Survey of Elders" was to provide local communities with data that would assist them in planning for the future and in securing funding to meet their future goals. Increased participation from the tribes resulted in the expansion of efforts on the part of our research team to provide population projections to assist the tribes in projecting future needs. In support of this endeavor, a recent publication entitled "Projections of Long Term Care Needs in Indian Health Service (I.H.S.) Areas" has been added to our web site.

We have combined the results from the needs assessments with population projections to forecast the future demand for care in each of the I.H.S. Areas. The publication contains tables that provide a picture for the expected growth of the population, the increased levels of functional limitation, and the corresponding levels of care. It also calculates the number of people that would be expected to receive service when national rates of service use are applied. By doing this, one can determine not only how many people will be present with functional limitations, but additionally, how many would under "normal circumstances" be served by formal services. We invite you to view the publication at our web site: <http://medicine.nodak.edu/crh/nrcnaa/pubs>.

Another research effort involves linking the data from the needs assessment to census and to other data in order to expand its use. We will be linking the elder needs

assessment aggregate file with a recently acquired national data base called the Area Resource File (ARF). The ARF data includes medical, population, geographic, climatic and various economic types of data. The linked data file will allow us to include a wide variety of information related to medical services, medical facilities, and other variables in our national analysis. By using this newly created data file, we hope to continue to investigate reasons as to why wide variations in chronic disease and disability are being experienced by the nation's Native American elders.

Finally, we are happy to report that the data are being used at the local and national levels. The National Resource Center is working closely with the User Liaison Program, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, the Administration on Aging, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, and the Indian Health Service in co-sponsoring an American Indian and Alaskan Native long term care policy and planning meeting. The meeting, to be held in Bismarck, North Dakota in late July, will seek to inform tribal and state leaders/policy makers through the presentation of American Indian/Alaskan Native elder research and exemplar programs. The workshop will provide information on the magnitude of emerging needs for long term care infrastructure and of innovative programs successfully providing services in Indian Country. More information regarding this meeting can be found on page 6.

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## American Society on Aging Announces Healthcare and Aging Awards

The American Society on Aging (ASA) will award up to six cash prizes of \$2,500 each to healthcare organizations in recognition of outstanding programs and services in healthcare and aging. One-night's lodging

for one person at ASA's annual conference and a one-year complimentary membership in ASA's Healthcare and Aging Network will also be awarded to each recipient. Deadline is September 15, 2003.

# The National Resource Center on Native American Aging Welcomes Francine McDonald

by Alan Allery, MHA

Francine McDonald has been hired by the National Resource Center on Native American Aging (NRCNAA), located at the Center for Rural Health, University of North Dakota (UND) under a grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration's Office of Rural Health Policy to work on a toolkit for long term care planning in American Indian Country. Francine will also spend part of her time at the Center working on health promotion activities and resources for Native American elderly.



She holds an Associates Degree from Lake Region State College and a Bachelors and Masters from the University of North Dakota. Her field of study is Public Administration.

She has a wealth of experience in working with tribes and tribal entities. Francine comes to us from the UND Upward Bound program where she worked as a Summer Program Coordinator.

Francine has been working on the toolkit since mid-November of 2002 and will have a draft available this Summer. Check out the Center's web site at <http://medicine.nodak.edu/crh/nrcnaa/toolkit> for further information.

Feel free to e-mail Francine at [fmcdonald@medicine.nodak.edu](mailto:fmcdonald@medicine.nodak.edu) to offer your comments on long term care or to give her some words of welcome!

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## Chronic Disease Management - Arthritis

by Francine McDonald, MPA

The National Resource Center on Native American Aging has teamed up with the North Central Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation to bring an Arthritis Leader Training Workshop to Indian Country. The Arthritis Leader Training Workshop will consist of three days of training and will be taught to two people per Indian community, one health professional, and one person living with arthritis. Participants for the workshop will come from six Indian communities in Minnesota, three Indian communities in South Dakota, and three Indian communities in North Dakota. The workshop will be held June 17-19, 2003 at the Dakota Magic Casino in Hankinson, North Dakota.

The workshop will train the leaders to present an Arthritis Self-Help Course within their own communities. Arthritis affects one in every seven Americans so chances are that you or someone you know has a form of

arthritis or a related condition. Self-help courses can help by providing people with arthritis a way to live the most active life with the least amount of pain, fatigue and disability, and to become an active partner in their arthritis care. The self-help program's goals are:

- Identify and teach the latest pain management techniques;
- Teach how to manage fatigue and stress more effectively;
- Discuss the purposes and effective use of medications;
- Help participants find solutions to problems caused by arthritis;
- Identify ways to deal with anger, fear, frustration and depression;
- Discuss the role of nutrition in arthritis management;

(continued on page 8)

# Development of a Long Term Care Planning Toolkit

by Francine McDonald, MPA

In September of 2002, the National Resource Center on Native American Aging (NRCNAA) received a grant from the federal Office of Rural Health Policy at the Health Resources and Services Administration to develop a toolkit for use by tribes in the planning and development of their long term care services.

The purpose of the toolkit is to describe the full array of home, community based, and institutional long term care to assist American Indian and Alaskan Native groups with planning, developing, and implementing their long term care services.

Progress to-date on the grant includes hiring a project coordinator; conducting a focus group meeting using tribal representatives that have a working relationship with American Indian elderly; developing a matrix which shows the services that would be the best fit for the different levels of functional limitations; and doing research to write the first module of the resource book, Health Promotion and Prevention Services.

NRCNAA plans to have the toolkit, in both hard copy and web site form, available by the end of August, 2003.

## Upcoming Training

by Francine McDonald, MPA

The National Resource Center on Native American Aging is pleased to announce the following upcoming training events sponsored by the Center. For more information, please call (800) 896-7628. To register online for Counseling Healthy Behaviors and Health Promotion Director training visit:

<http://medicine.nodak.edu/crh/nrcnaa/training>.

### Counseling Healthy Behaviors

University of North Dakota  
Grand Forks, ND  
August 8-10, 2003

This three-day course examines realistic ways to pull together scientific information, resources, tools and assessment methods using real-life situations that can facilitate positive behavior change. Topics include targeted messaging for behavior change stages to improve nutrition, exercise, and stress management skills and habits. This workshop is open to everyone.

### Arthritis Leader Training Workshop

Dakota Magic Casino  
Hankinson, ND  
June 17-19, 2003

This three-day workshop will train leaders in Indian communities to present an Arthritis Self-Help Course to those people living with arthritis within their own community. For more information, see the related article on page 4.

### Health Promotion Director

University of North Dakota  
Grand Forks, ND  
August 11-15, 2003

This course is designed to equip you with all the tools needed to custom build and implement the most effective health promotion program for your organization – and create an ongoing evaluation plan to measure program success. Workshop topics include program planning, budgeting, needs assessment, marketing techniques, and building top-management support. This workshop is open to everyone.

## Users Liaison Program Focuses on American Indian Long Term Care

*by Russ McDonald, MA*

The National Resource Center on Native American Aging (NRCNAA) along with a number of other aging related organizations are co-sponsoring an American Indian long term care meeting in the Region VIII Area. The meeting, to be held in Bismarck, North Dakota on July 21-23, 2003, is focused on the Midwest due to the lower life expectancy among American Indians in the area and the lack of long term care services in these rural populations. The meeting will give researchers the opportunity to present recent findings, and allow providers from exemplar programs to share how they achieved success in providing long term care services.

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) User Liaison Program (ULP) is the primary sponsor of the meeting with the National Academy of State Health Policy (NASHP) handling the coordination of the meeting site and other logistics. AHRQ held a meeting in 2000 which focused on American Indian Health. The initial AHRQ ULP planning meeting, held in Rockville, MD on December 18, 2002, determined the meeting would be limited to Region VIII. Topics and possible presenters were also identified, however, a location was not agreed upon.

A follow-up meeting, held on March 12, 2003, brought together those researchers and providers identified in the December meeting. The group of experts from across the country put forth issues relevant to American Indian long term care, and then constructed a tentative agenda for the meeting. Because the meetings are limited to 60 people and focus on informing tribal and state policy makers, the group thought Bismarck would be a better location as it is closer to a number of reservations when compared with Denver, Colorado.

The goal of ULP is to inform state and tribal policy makers through the presentation of research and exemplar programs; therefore the meeting is crucial to informing state and tribal policy makers about disparities being experienced by Native elders in Region VIII and the nation. These meetings are a great opportunity for the two groups to meet and network with their state and tribal counterparts. We are hopeful that our participation in the meeting will bring forth informed policies to address the needs of our Native elders.

### National Center for Rural Health and Human Services Information Established

*by Kristine Sande, MBA*

GRAND FORKS, N.D. – The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has funded the establishment of a national information resource, the Rural Assistance Center (RAC), for rural residents and others seeking information on health and human services for rural communities. The RAC can provide rural communities, tribal organizations, researchers, state policymakers and national organizations with assistance on a range of rural topics including the complex web of federal health and human service programs serving rural America. Based at the University of North Dakota Center for Rural Health, the Rural Assistance Center is a partnership of the University of North Dakota, the Rural Policy Research Institute at the University of Nebraska Medical Center and the University of Missouri-Columbia, and the Welfare Information Network, located in Washington, D.C.

The Rural Assistance Center can be accessed on the Web at <http://www.raconline.org> or by calling (800) 270-1898, faxing (800) 270-1913, or by e-mailing information requests to [info@raconline.org](mailto:info@raconline.org).

# Community Health Representatives and Elders Gathering

by Chris Burd, RN, PhD

University of North Dakota Nursing Center

Working with the Community Health Representative (CHR) programs in the region, plans for a continuation of the "Talking Circle" workshops with Native elders have been ongoing. The most recent workshop was titled "The Elder Summit," and was hosted by the Rosebud Sioux Tribe CHR Program on May 12-14, 2003 at the Rosebud Casino and Conference Center.

The same format which has been used during the previous "Talking Circle" conferences (hosted in 2000 by the Standing Rock Nation and in 2001 by the Mandan-Hidatsa-Arikara Nation) was followed at the Rosebud conference. Presentations by professional speakers were interspersed with "Talking Circle" time among the elders and the CHR participants. Regional leaders and elders with traditional expertise and knowledge in health were also invited to make formal presentations.

One of the goals for this year's conference at Rosebud was suggested by the CHR Directors who have been involved with the project for the past three years. This goal was to inform elders about the array of elder-related services that are available through each of the Titles of the Older Americans Act. Some of the CHR Directors have become aware of programs that could be utilized by elders in their communities, but which are not now in place. For this reason, the keynote speaker for the "Elder Summit at Rosebud" was Mr. Percy Devine, Director for Region VIII of the Administration on Aging. The conference also included a keynote presentation by Dr. Dawn Satterfield from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Diabetes Translation. Dr. Satterfield discussed her work with Native elders of the Northern

Plains, in documenting traditional health knowledge, and building networks with native elders, for promoting health in communities.

Dr. Chris Burd and Liz Tyree, Director of the University of North Dakota Nursing Center, have continued to assist the CHR Programs in coordinating the "Talking Circle" conferences. Videotaping and techni-

cal assistance for the "Elder Summit at Rosebud" was provided by Mr. James Bordeaux, who helped us throughout the entire workshop. We also had assistance with the videotaping from Kenny Keplin, CHR from Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa, who has been a very helpful participant in each of the "Talking Circle" workshops during the project. All arrangements for videotaping, and for obtaining permissions from people to be photographed and

videotaped during the workshop was arranged by Mr. Sidney Kills in Water, the CHR Director for the Rosebud Sioux Tribe and his dedicated staff.

At this point in the "Talking Circle" project with elders, planning is being done to put together information from all three workshops by the end of Summer, 2003. The plan is to develop and distribute educational materials in written form and through web site access regarding health issues and concerns of American Indian elders. These materials will be made available to CHRs and other professional health care providers, regionally and nationally, who work with Native elders.

For more information regarding the Community Health Representatives and Elders Gathering projects, contact Chris Burd at (701) 777-4508 or via e-mail at: [christine\\_burd@mail.und.nodak.edu](mailto:christine_burd@mail.und.nodak.edu)



*Featured speaker,  
Marie Randall*



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## **Chronic Disease** *(continued from page 4)*

- Discuss new ways to communicate with family and friends;
- Teach how to form a partnership with the health care team.

The Self-Help Course is for any person having one of the more than 100 types of arthritis, their spouse, other family member or friend.

Past participants of the Self-Help Courses have experienced such benefits as increased knowledge about their arthritis, increased frequency of exercise and relaxation, increased self-confidence, decreased depression, decreased pain, and decreased physician visits.

So when an Arthritis Self-Help Course comes to your community, please don't hesitate - participate.

***Native Aging Visions*** wants to hear about outstanding people and programs that provide health care and other services to Native American elders. If you know of any that deserve recognition, please let us know so we can share the information. We hope to highlight some of these people and programs in the upcoming issues.



If you receive duplicate copies of ***Native Aging Visions***, please route to others who do not receive addressed copies or call us at (800) 896-7628.