HEALTHFIRST FAMILY CARE CENTER’S MOSAIC PRESENTS:

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH: Discussing Diabetes and Preventative Initiatives

SOME FACTS

• According to a study from 2018, diabetes was one of three leading chronic diseases among American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) elders, and it was 2x more likely to be diagnosed in AI/AN than in the US population aged 65 years and older.
• In 2017, the American Diabetes Association found that diabetes is the 7th leading cause of death in the U.S., yet the CDC found it is the 4th leading cause of death in AI/AN.
• These disparities can be attributable to inequities in education, employment and income, and lack of health care.

NATIVE DIABETES WELLNESS PROGRAM

• The Native Diabetes Wellness Program is a culmination of resources, children's books, and cultural stories that help educate all ages about healthy eating, physical activity in order to help prevent type 2 diabetes, all while maintaining a focus on traditional foods and movement.
• The Traditional Foods Project that ran from 2008-2014 is a part of this program. It included 17 Tribal programs, whose one goal (of four) was to "engage community members to improve and sustain activities in health promotion, sharing stories of hope for preventing diabetes and its complications." Although over, the project's teachings are still accessible.
• Visit CDC's Native Diabetes Wellness Program website to access all of the program's colorful books, cultural stories, and traditional foods resources!

SPECIAL DIABETES PROGRAM FOR INDIANS (SDPI)

• Established in 1997 by Congress, SDPI aimed to address type 2 diabetes among AI/AN communities by funding Diabetes Prevention Programs (DPP) through Indian Health Service (IHS) and other U.S. tribal and urban programs. Today, SDPI funds over 300 community diabetes prevention and treatment programs!
• For example: The Hoopa Valley Tribe in California has implemented a DPP. It encourages its cultural activities that maintain and incorporate its "rich heritage" like Canoe Carving Project, Fish Fair, Basket Weaving, and more which “focus on nurturing healthy bodies, healthy relationships, and healthy families”

By becoming more aware of diabetes prevalence among AI/AN communities, we are better able to understand the need for these AI/AN focused diabetes prevention programs and resources.

In utilizing these AI/AN targeted prevention resources, we are also better able to serve our AI/AN friends to help them lead a healthier and happier life for themselves and their people!