



National Native Network Advances efforts to Improve the Health of Native Americans

Sacramento, CA – The National Native Network (NNN), under the brand Keep It Sacred, held their annual meeting in Sacramento, California on November 17-18, 2015. Representatives from American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) organizations across the U.S. along with government agencies met to discuss collaborative efforts to reduce commercial tobacco use and cancer health disparities among AI/AN communities.

Attendees represented the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, Inc. (ITC); the California Rural Indian Health Board (CRIHB); the Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Health Board (GPTCHB); SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC); Native American Cancer Initiatives (NACI); American Indian Cancer Foundation (AICF); Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI); and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

National Native Network Principle Investigator Noel Pingatore (ITC) presented on the Network mission, objectives and progress made since the ITC received the five-year cooperative agreement from CDC in 2013. The group discussed and planned goals for the current and future years' work.

“This was a very productive meeting and we are grateful for the vast knowledge and expertise among our partner agencies,” said Noel Pingatore. She continued “Linda Burhansstippanov, a member of our cancer advisory committee, provided excellent information that will keep the tools and resources developed by the network in line with the professional detail and quality that we are working toward. It was great to share the status of our progress toward objectives. The Network continues to gain momentum and is right on track to meet our deliverables which provide excellent tools and resources specific to tribes and tribal agencies working to address commercial tobacco and cancer prevention and control.”

The National Native Network provides tools and resources to public health professionals working for and with tribes and tribal agencies across the U.S. Examples of resources include sample policies and toolkits designed to link clinic patients to community based health prevention programs and services, and guidance on working with State Cancer Registries to provide tribal leaders with tribal specific cancer profiles.

Edy Rodewald talked about SEARHC's strong presentations on behalf of the NNN at national and regional conferences and trainings, success in improving cancer screening rates, and increases in smoke free policies across Alaska Native Tribes and tribal clinics.

Richard Mousseau talked about GPTCHB's work with adapting screening and treatment guidelines for regional Tribes, the NNN collaborative poster presentation on colon cancer outreach and success in obtaining funding for a new Colon Cancer Screening Program.

Chris Cooper talked about significant progress in working with the State of California's Comprehensive Cancer Control Program made possible by CHRIB's role on the NNN- and work with the support of CDC Project Officer Ena Wanliss.

Mike Willette (ITC) presented on NNN media outreach and platforms, ways to increase engagement across platforms, and the importance and methods for partner sharing of media resources. Josh Mayo presented on the upcoming NNN podcast series, which will be made available at www.KeepItSacred.com soon.

For Immediate Release
Date: 12/8/2015

Contact:
Mike Willette
906-632-6896 x.110
mwillette@itcmi.org

Cancer Advisory Committee member Linda Burhansstippanov, from Native American Cancer Initiatives, presented the latest research and information on tobacco related cancer screening and treatment options, including vaccines, as well as AI/AN public health program evaluation. The group discussed the Network's role in documenting and promoting evidence based, best, and promising practices. Fellow Committee member Kris Rhodes presented on the American Indian Cancer Foundation's work and resources for cancer prevention and control in Native communities.

All NNN Partners agreed on the need to continue promoting the work of Tribes and tribal organizations in commercial tobacco control and cancer prevention and control across Indian Country. The NNN looks to increase engagement in all regions of the United States, and specifically in the Southeast and the Southwest.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American Indians/Alaska Natives have a higher risk of experiencing tobacco-related disease and death due to high prevalence of cigarette smoking and other commercial use. American Indian/Alaska Native youth and adults have the highest prevalence of cigarette smoking among all racial/ethnic groups in the U.S. Quitting rates are relatively low among American Indians/Alaska Natives compared to other racial/ethnic groups according to the CDC.

More information is available at www.KeepItSacred.org. The NNN can also be liked at www.Facebook.com/KeepItSacred and can be followed on Twitter @KeepItSacred.

###

The National Native Network is a network of Tribes, tribal organizations and health programs working to decrease commercial tobacco use and cancer health disparities among American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) across the U.S. We offer technical assistance, culturally relevant resources, and a place to share up-to-date information and lessons learned, as a part of a community of tribal and tribal-serving public health programs. The National Native Network is jointly funded by the Office on Smoking and Health (OSH) and Division of Cancer Prevention and Control (DCPC) under Cooperative Agreement #5NU58DP004979-03-00. The Network is administered by the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan and directed by a board composed of the California Rural Indian Health Board, Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Health Board, and SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium. The NNN has more information online at www.KeepItSacred.org. The network can be liked at www.Facebook.com/KeepItSacred and can be followed on Twitter @KeepItSacred.

Contact:

Mike Willette
Communications Specialist
Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan
906-632-6896 x.110
mwillette@itcmi.org