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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coverage Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medicare</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IHS</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicaid</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Health</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribal</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANHO</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private LTC</td>
<td>0%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Do you have a personal doctor?

![Bar chart showing the percentage of respondents with different answers to the question of having a personal doctor.]

- **One**: 47%
- **More than one**: 29%
- **No**: 19%
- **Not Sure**: 4%

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 doctor 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,

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