

19th Global Nursing Education Conference

April 27-28, 2017 Las Vegas, USA

The Cheyenne River Sioux tribe and quality health care between two worlds

Susan K Brown

Sacred Heart University, USA

The Native American Lakota population in La Plant, South Dakota faces abject poverty, isolation, and substandard healthcare resources. In remote regions where access to healthcare is deficient, non-profit organizations are the conduit to linking remote regions to adequate healthcare. With guidance from healthcare professionals, non-profit organizations can bridge the healthcare gap and become a vital pipeline for healthcare services. Specific healthcare recommendations are developed from a community assessment and interviews with the Lakota. The recommendations combine traditional values with modern evidence-based healthcare technology and strategies. Recommendations support cultural values to initiate health, area of health education centers, mental health and other simple but powerful initiatives. The recommendations account for the political, cultural and socioeconomic barriers that exist on the reservation and introduce a one to three-year phase-in plan. There is only one non-profit, holistic organization operating in La Plant, SD. The organization works to rebuild the Lakota population into a self-sustaining community. Though not a healthcare organization, the company is entrenched in the community and has intricate knowledge of the gaps in healthcare and access. The organization having in-depth knowledge of Lakota culture, and trusted experts in understanding population needs, and have significant connections that can provide the community with culturally appropriate healthcare services. The Lakota population is in need of adequate health services that are deficient or absent in the community. The goal of the five healthcare recommendations is to close the healthcare gap and decrease the physical and emotional isolation of the Lakota. Utilizing the only on-site organization to facilitate and advocate for a healthcare pipeline can build trust and foster optimum health within the Lakota community.

susiekahle@gmail.com

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