Culture, Values, and Beliefs Affecting Native American Health

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Good Heart Woman
Cheyenne River Sioux
Native American Health Care began as a treaty obligation

- Treaties were made with the Lakota people in the mid 1860’s
- Health Care provided by the Federal Government until the “grass grows and the water flows”
• The Aberdeen Area Office in Aberdeen, South Dakota, works in conjunction with its 13 Service Units to provide health care to approximately 94,000 Indians on reservations located in North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Iowa.
Indian Health Care Improvement Act

• 1976
• Provided Health Care appropriations from the Federal Government
• IHS Hospitals
• Tribal Health Programs
• Urban Indian Health
The Funding Flow

- HHS appropriates funds once the National budget is passed
- Set asides for Hospitals, Tribal Health Programs, and Urban Indian Health Programs
- Yearly grant submissions
- Annual program review
Health Disparities

- Tuberculosis
- Alcoholism
- Diabetes
- Unintentional injuries
- Homicide
- Suicide
Eagle Butte, South Dakota
Many Native Americans live less than the average American

- 72.3 years (Native American)
- 76.9 years (US all races)

Myths and Stereotypes

- All Native Americans are Alcoholics
- Lazy
- Don’t take care of things the Government gives them
- Untrustworthy
Values and Culture

- Respect one another. Especially our elders
- Respect the environment
- Live simply
- Be humble
- Generosity
- Accountability
More Important to Give

- Lakota status not measured by what you own but by what you give away.
- Ella Deloria in Speaking of Indians
  “when given a gift, you are to use it until the time is right and then you pass it on...”
Matriarchal Society
Education is becoming important
Bison were a large part of the Lakota Diet
Obesity and Diabetes

- Native Americans have high incidence of obesity and diabetes
- Diet changed over the years
- Lack of exercise
- Cultural practice of feeding all
Young Native American Health

- Many of our youth live shorter lives
- Gang violence
- Addiction to chemicals
Drumming at Pow Wows keeps our culture healthy
Nursing care of a Native American Client

- Shake their hand when first meeting
- Talk softly
- Do not make direct eye contact
- Be humble
- Honor cultural practices
Keep the Circle Strong
Sage and Sweet Grass
Hospital care of the Native American client

- Sage or sweetgrass
- Red is a sacred color
- Offer place for family to gather
- Star quilt placed over the hospital bedding

- “relatives in the room”