

Tribal health survey results

This summer, during the tribes' Health Fair, the St. Charles Health System conducted a health survey among the membership. Question in the survey were in regard to tribal cultural beliefs, and specifically regarding the treatment of amputated body parts and organs. Here survey questions and results:

Question: Did you know Oregon law does not allow hospitals to release amputated body parts?

Answer: Yes: 14. No: 62.

Question: How would you like to see St. Charles honor the cultural practices around burial of body parts?

Answers: Return it to patient to be buried (63 people gave this response). And some comments from the survey takers:

"We were born with it. We want it back."

"Tribal law is older than Oregon law. It should be given back to us."

"It should be frozen then returned for burial or given back when the person dies for burial (six people gave this or a similar response)."

"Freeze it for 10 years."

"We even save our hair to take with us. The body part

should be given back for burial."

"Cremate then return ashes to the person."

"I'd want it back to bury on my own tribal land."

"Honor the people's choice."

"Have a burial for it."

"We should have exceptions from the Oregon law."

"This is disturbing (about people not getting their body parts back)."

"It's my body, give it back."

"Release it to our undertaker for burial."

"Talk to our elders."

"I wouldn't want it back but our people's wishes should be honored."

"I don't know."

"Follow our tribal practices."

"Consider the religious freedom act."

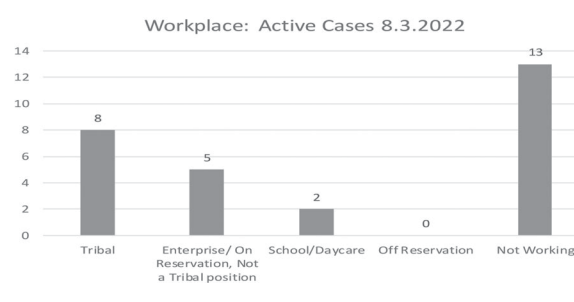
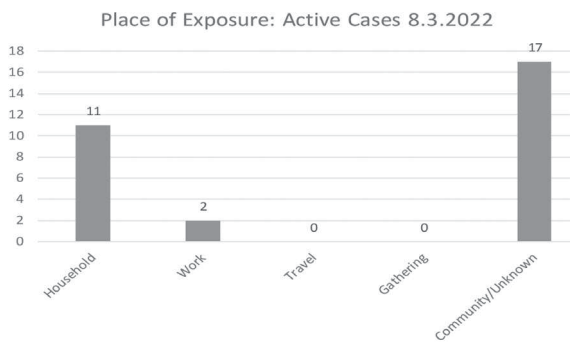
"There used to be a tribal spiritual leader here who would go to St. Charles, get the amputated limbs or parts of our Native people, and keep them in a freezer until the death of the person, then they were released for burial."

"Some of us don't even want our blood removed."

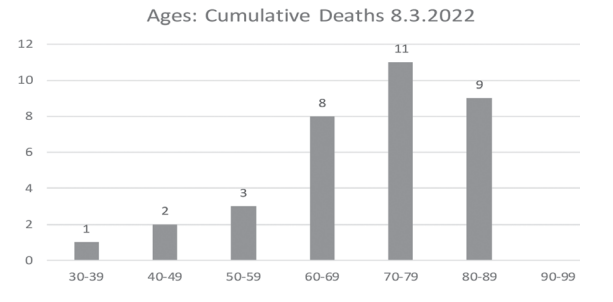
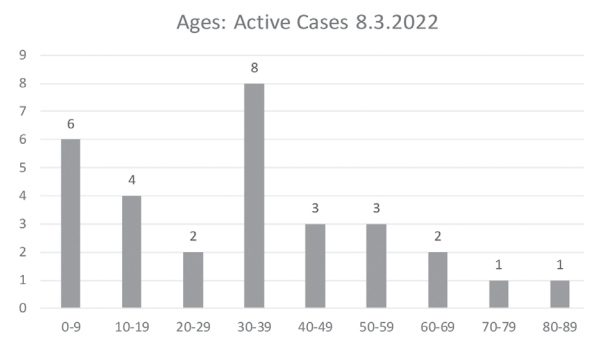
"Just decide what is going to happen and try to make sure everyone agrees."

Incidence of Covid-19

These charts provided by IHS, Community Health and the Response Team show the incidence of covid in the community as of mid last week. There has been an increase in cases of late, meaning



the virus remains, and is being spread in the community. As the first chart shows, the most common places of virus spread are in the community or unknown, and in the household. Despite covid fatigue that all are experiencing, the masking mandate continues in tribal public buildings, to protect the health of the community.



Staffing challenges at St. Charles Health System

Pushed beyond their limits by increasing demands for services—and a nationwide shortage of nurses—hospitals in Oregon face challenges in meeting community needs for health care. And the St. Charles Health System has been especially hard-hit, according to the Oregon Health Authority.

The labor crisis is the result of many factors including health care workers fleeing the industry, and staff who are temporarily out because of covid illness or vacation, said Dr. Doug Merrill, St. Charles chief medical officer.

Other factors: The nationwide shortage of nurses that has been brewing for years due to an aging workforce; the impact of the aging population's increasing need for health care services, and a nursing education system that has not grown fast enough to meet demand, Dr. Merrill said.

Joan Ching, chief nursing executive for St. Charles, says, "The industry has seen this coming, and now it's here."

"Retirement is a factor. Pandemic stress and burnout are factors. And beyond all of that, we as a country are not producing nurses fast enough to keep up with the increasing health care needs of our aging population."

The nurse shortage affects organizations across the spectrum of health care, not just St. Charles, which leads to the second part of the problem:

St. Charles hospitals discharge many patients, who need additional care, to facilities known Skilled Nursing Facilities, of SNFs. These are long-term acute care hospitals, inpatient rehab clinics, memory care facilities and other specialized services.

But SNFs and other such post-acute facilities across Central Oregon are also short-staffed and at times at capacity.

This means there is nowhere to send hospital patients who are being actively treated for acute injury and illness, including those who present to a St. Charles Emergency Department and are medically sta-

Excellent paid training program

The St. Charles Health System certified nursing assistant program is a path to a career in patient care for caregivers in non-medical positions. These might include health jobs in areas such food services and housekeeping. The program is a way for people to get into health care.

The certified nursing assistant—CNA—program trains people for positions that perform important patient-centered tasks in collaboration with nurses and physicians.

Recruiting and retaining CNAs has historically been a challenge for St. Charles, which is why the health system created the CNA trainee program. Here are features of the CNA training program:

- Participants get paid a full-time wage while taking the course
- St. Charles also pays the course tuition

- Participants get wide-ranging, hands-on experience in various departments across the health system

- People who complete the course are guaranteed a job with the health system.

- St. Charles fills an important CNA position with an educated, experienced person who already knows the health system's policies, processes and culture.

"We love this program because it really gives us the opportunity to develop people, and it's a pipeline to bolster our workforce," said Rebecca Berry, St. Charles vice president of Human Resources.

"It provides an opportunity for growth, development and career advancement for our caregivers, and it strengthens our organization by helping to attract and retain proven employees, which ultimately is good for our patients."

Kayakers: training for first descent

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Mr. Wilson continues, "To also be able to recreate on my ancestral waterways inspires me endlessly." In previous years, Ríos to Rivers has organized river trips with indigenous youth from North and South America, including teens from local tribes. This year, in anticipation of dam removal, the river advocacy organization decided to invite tribal California and Northwest youth to share the experience.

The young people in the Klamath River kayak project are between 14 and 18 years of age. For many, this is their first time

kayaking.

Some other notable points from the recent whitewater kayak training: Jackson Kayaks donated 16 high-end, fully furnished boats. Werner Paddles donated kayak paddles, and Northwest River Supplies donated life jackets, helmets and other safety gear. The kayaks and gear will stay in the Klamath Basin for more local youth to learn boating skills before the dams are removed.

Filmmakers Paul Wilson and Rush Sturges are making a documentary film about the process of the tribal youth learning to kayak and preparing to be the first people to navigate the river after dam removal.

Committees: Newly appointed

(from page 1)

Tribal Council also appointed members for the Gaming board of directors, and the Credit Enterprise board of directors. The new tribal committee members are:

Culture and Heritage Committee. Warm Springs: Roberta Kirk and Lorraine Suppah; Warm Springs alternate is Raphael Queahpama. Wasco: Radine Johnson and Lepha Smith; Wasco alternate is Carina Miller. Paite: Myra Orange and L. Rosie Tom.

Education Committee: Jaylyn Suppah, Reina Estimo and Ardis Smith; and alternate Leona Ike.

On-Reservation Fish and Wildlife Committee: Raphael Queahpama, Cyril Jim and Erland Suppah Jr.; alternate Michael Leecy.

Off-Reservation Fish and Wildlife Committee: Ron Suppah Sr., Emerson Squiemphen and Bruce Jim; alternate Frank Smith.

Health and Welfare Committee: Eugene Greene Jr., Frank Smith and Reina Estimo; alternate Charlene Dimmick.

Land Use Planning Committee: Lyle Katchia, Levi VanPelt and Martha Winishut; alternate Dustin Seyler.

Range, Irrigation and Agriculture Committee: Jimmy Tohet Sr., Joel Florendo and Una Johnson; alternate Dustin Suppah.

Timber Committee: Michael Leecy, Tony Holliday and Yvette Picard; alternate Phillip Florendo.

The new members will serve through the term of the Twenty-Ninth Tribal Council.

NO COST (DONATIONS GLADLY ACCEPTED) • REGISTRATION & AGENDA ARE PENDING

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