



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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TURQUOISE THURSDAY SHEDS LIGHT ON CERVICAL CANCER DISPARITIES AMONG AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKA NATIVE WOMEN DURING NATIONAL CERVICAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

SAINT PAUL, MN – In the United States, early detection and screening have greatly reduced the impact of cervical cancer among all women. However, cervical cancer continues to disproportionately affect Native communities and [Native women are over 1.5 times as likely to develop cervical cancer compared to White women.](#)

Join the fight against Indigenous cervical cancer burdens by turning Indian Country turquoise and spreading the word about the American Indian Cancer Foundation’s Turquoise Thursday campaign this January during National Cervical Health Awareness Month. Take action by encouraging your relatives with a cervix to receive the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine and take the [Turquoise Thursday Pledge](#) by scheduling a Pap smear – two crucial steps in combating cervical cancer.

HPV is an infection that can cause cervical, throat, penile, anal, and vulvar cancers. [Immunization is recommended for both children and adults to help prevent 90% of HPV-causing cancers.](#) The HPV vaccine helps protect against cervical cancer, one of the most preventable and treatable forms of cancer, when detected early.

Support your relatives who have committed to raising cervical cancer awareness with AICAF. Throughout January, ten(10) Clinic Champions and one cervical cancer survivor are partnering with us to raise awareness about the Turquoise Thursday campaign across Indian Country.

AICAF is honored to partner with Indigenous cervical cancer survivor, Mary Ann Cook (Red Lake Ojibwe) as our 2024 Turquoise Thursday Campaign Advocate. Follow AICAF’s social media throughout the month as we share inspiring messages from Mary. Check out her survivor story [here.](#)

Our Clinic Champions are Tribal and Urban Indian Clinics that were selected through an application process to receive a \$500 micro grant. Clinic Champions were chosen for their innovative, community-based interventions that engage community members in working towards effective and sustainable cervical cancer solutions.

The [Nebraska Urban Indian Medical Center](#) plans to organize an in-person event focused on raising awareness about cervical cancer. It will include education on cervical cancer and HPV screening, along with providing food and support like transportation and child care. Incentives will be given to encourage participation and completion of screenings. The target audience includes individuals due for screenings and anyone interested in learning more. The initiative also aims to involve medical providers and assistants to emphasize the importance of screening. Additionally, they plan to use broadcast text messaging to easily connect with patients and spread awareness.

-MORE-

The [Wewoka Indian Health Clinic](#) plans to host various cervical cancer awareness events throughout the month to raise cervical cancer awareness in their community. They will offer community education, incentives, food and schedule screenings at their upcoming “Pap-a-thon” and HPV/STI events.

AICAF is dedicated to fostering community-driven solutions. We’re honored to continue to partner with cancer survivors and Clinic Champions across Indian Country. Explore more ways you can participate in Turquoise Thursday below and share these opportunities with your network to spread the word!

GET INVOLVED!

Honor.

Cherish relatives impacted by a cervical cancer diagnosis. Listen to their stories, learn from their wisdom, and celebrate their sacred lives. Encourage a relative diagnosed with cancer or a cancer caregiver to attend AICAF’s monthly [virtual cancer support circle](#).

Get Screened.

All people with a cervix are at risk of getting cervical cancer. Screening saves lives! AICAF recommends that women start having regular cervical cancer screenings beginning at age 21. People with a cervix in this age group should discuss with their health care provider about which testing strategy is best for them and encourage loved ones over 21 years old to do the same.

Sign the [Turquoise Thursday Pledge](#) and commit to taking the next steps on your health journey by talking to your health care provider about cervical cancer screening options. Schedule your next Pap test or HPV test today!

Find more information on when to get screened for cervical cancer on our [website](#). As always, be sure to schedule an appointment to get screened if you think you have symptoms.

Donate.

A [gift](#) to AICAF helps us strengthen our programs, build larger campaigns, and provide more resources to families across Indian Country. Giving to AICAF supports our Survivor Support Circle and developing and implementing other survivor resources. It’s generous donors like you who play a vital role in making this work happen!

Learn.

Engage with AICAF’s Turquoise Thursday campaign as we provide culturally tailored cervical cancer resources, toolkits, webinars, and other activities. Stay informed about cancer prevention and share our educational materials with loved ones in your community! Visit our [website](#) to learn more about Indigenous cervical cancer burdens and what AICAF is doing to reduce them.

Spread the Word.

Share what you have learned by using the hashtag [#TurquoiseThursday](#) so we can see how you are raising awareness! Tell your friends, family, and coworkers about our campaign and ask them to wear turquoise clothing and/or jewelry to support cervical cancer survivors in Indian Country. Share posts from our [social media toolkit](#) to get your network involved!

Participate.

You're invited to AICAF's Turquoise Thursday Facebook event! We will be sharing culturally tailored resources, survivor stories, events, and activities happening all month! You can also share your cervical cancer stories and photos of yourself wearing turquoise clothing and/or jewelry on social media using the hashtag #TurquoiseThursday. RSVP here to stay up to date on all things Turquoise Thursday: <https://fb.me/e/558yt1nlc>

Webinar #1

Title: Why Policy? Why Now? Using your voice to bring change.

Date: Thursday, January 18, 2024

Time: 12:00 PM CST (1 HR)

Register: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Rbvm0wGgTCWXLbB_3qwL3Q#/registration

Webinar #2

Title: Exploring Cervical Cancer Data in American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Communities.

Date: Thursday, January 25, 2024

Time: 12:00 PM CST (1 HR)

Register: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_6_FW0dDRTBe8agOi8RLQbw#/registration

Join Our Community.

Like AICAF on [Facebook](#), follow us on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), and sign up for our [newsletter](#) to stay up to date on the latest cancer education resources and activities.

About the American Indian Cancer Foundation

AICAF is a national Native-led and Native-governed non-profit organization established to address the tremendous cancer burdens faced by Native people. AICAF strives to be a partner trusted by tribes and organizations, working toward effective and sustainable cancer solutions based on cultural teachings and wisdom.

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