

IHS DIVISION OF EPIDEMIOLOGY
& DISEASE PREVENTION

"Cancer Support Group Training"

"There is a word for cancer in my language. It's translated more as 'a sore that doesn't heal,' and it's really used for any chronic illness."

- Navajo Cancer Survivor





“There is no word for cancer in my language. We use a different word for it that doesn’t really have a translation. In my community they don’t talk about cancer – it is a death to them.”

- Cree Cancer Survivor





“There is no word for cancer in my language. It’s more of a reference to death. They call it the ‘dying disease’ or the ‘death disease.’ People are aware of it but are afraid to talk about it. If they ignore it, it will go away.”
- Native American Family Member





“There is no support for cancer survivors in my community. You’re on your own, there is nothing for cancer there.

People would come to visit, they were helping and concerned. You weren’t treated like you were contagious.

When I was diagnosed there was no literature about cancer. You just went about your life. When my husband was diagnosed I was the only one there to console him.”

- Native American Family Member



“I was very angry and emotional. I was even angry at my children. I thought I was going to die. All I thought about was dying. I felt like I was all alone. I had support from my family, but they had no experience with it. I kept thinking, ‘Why me? Why me, God?’ I was angry at the doctor. I was emotional all the time.”

- Native American Cancer Survivor





“I used humor to get through the treatment. This little cancer can’t pull me down! I used a lot of humor.

My friends cried and prayed for me. I went through ceremonies and used herbs. I credit that to my survival as well. I had to regroup and learn my faith all over again.”

- Native American Cancer Survivor





“I was given a second chance when I was diagnosed. I had babies at home and was given a second chance to take care of them.”

- Native American Family Member





"History of "Cancer in Indian Country Survivorship"

- ◇ A Gathering of Cancer Support – Mary Lovato, Santo Domingo Pueblo, NM
- ◇ People Living Through Cancer – Catherine Logan, Albuquerque, NM



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History of Cancer in Indian Country Survivorship con't.

- ◇ IHS Cancer Program - national in scope
- ◇ Concept of AGCS should be replicated in 'Indian Country'



Why do this training?

- ◇ Improve cancer survival rates of A/VANs
- ◇ Break the silence taboo of cancer
- ◇ Enhance the emotional support for cancer survivors
- ◇ Promote grassroots advocacy for cancer prevention, control and support among A/VANs



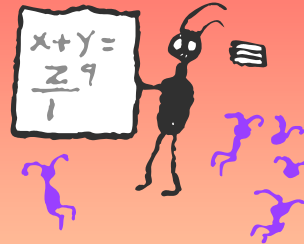
Background of training

- ◇ First training held in January 1995
- ◇ Most recent training held in July 2008
- ◇ Close to 200 participants from across the U.S.



Brief description of training

- ◆ Lecture/discussion
- ◆ Simulation
- ◆ Networking
- ◆ Educational materials



Training Evaluation - Sept. 2006

- ◆ Evaluation done by Native American Cancer Research and Spirit of Eagles through a survey of past trainees
- ◆ Generally the training is well received and still needed...
 - ◆ 75% reported this as their first such training
 - ◆ Almost 80% felt prepared to start a cancer support group
 - ◆ 65% felt they could use more training though
 - ◆ Almost 2/3's of trainees have stayed in touch with each other
 - ◆ Almost 80% would recommend the training to others
- ◆ Received some worthwhile suggestions for improvement

For more info:



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