

# REACH U.S.

## Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan

Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

*A REACH Action Community (AC)*

**Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health Across the U.S. (REACH U.S.)** is a national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) program aimed at eliminating racial and ethnic health disparities. It utilizes community-based approaches to reduce the burden of chronic illness in specific at-risk populations. There are 22 **REACH Action Communities** using practice-based and evidence-based programs. These programs look at cultural and environmental influences related to health disparities and their underlying causes. They develop, evaluate, and share their culturally specific and relevant strategies and best practices.

### ISSUE

The Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan (ITCM) addresses the social determinants of health using four key strategies: consciousness raising, community development, health promotion, and policy/systems/environmental change. The program focuses on cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes among American Indians and Alaska Natives in three Michigan Tribes - the Bay Mills Indian Community, Hannahville Indian Community, and the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. Desired health outcomes from residents in these communities include increasing the number of residents who participate in regular physical activity, increasing the number of residents who are at a healthy weight, and reducing the number of residents who use commercial tobacco products. The program also provides targeted interventions for hypertension, type 2 diabetes, and cardiovascular disease.

### ACTIVITIES

- Provides community workshops based on the evidence-based Stanford Chronic Disease Self-Management Program.
- Promotes physical activity and healthy eating through community-level strategies.

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- Encourages the adoption of worksite policies that support healthy lifestyles for employees.
- Helps health centers make systems and policy changes to ensure tribal clinic patients at risk for cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes are referred to appropriate services.
- Works with partners to develop walking paths and trails to increase walkability in communities and to promote physical activity.
- Evaluates program efforts through surveys, assessments, and focus groups with community members.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

- Participants in the chronic disease self-management program improved their ability to manage their conditions:
  - 50% of participants reported a decrease in the amount of time they were discouraged, frustrated, fearful, or worried about their health problems
  - 45% of participants reported an increase in the amount of time engaged in physical activities.
- Two tribes instituted a comprehensive employee wellness program for all tribal employees.
- Tribal employees in one community are now entitled to five hours of weekly paid leave time to participate in on-site fitness activities and health education.
- One community achieved accreditation through the American Association of Diabetes Educators for a comprehensive diabetes education program at their tribal health center.
- One tribal health center implemented a policy to screen all patients for BMI, tobacco use, cholesterol, and blood pressure at every clinic visit; documentation of tobacco use assessments at one tribal clinic increased from 12.5% to 55.5% over a two-year period.

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