



Tribal EM Critical Care Demand Soars in Response to COVID-19 Delta Variant

Clinical instructors teach Tribal facility staff skills needed to care for rising wave of COVID-19 patients

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (Aug. 2, 2021) – Tribal EM announced a rapid expansion of their critical care response training (CCRT) program in response to a dramatic rise in COVID-19 infections in Native American communities. The Tribal healthcare consulting and staffing leader was originally awarded a contract to provide onsite clinical education to staff at Indian Health Service (IHS) and federal healthcare facilities. The current rise in COVID-19 patients has exponentially increased demand for Critical Care Response Team (CCRT) deployments, including double-team deployments in some facilities.

The pandemic has created a skills gap at rural and tribal healthcare facilities, where staff are often untrained in the advanced protocols and procedures required to care for patients infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

“We began deploying CCRT teams last year at the height of the pandemic to help train staff and treat critically ill patients,” Morgan Haynes, Chief Operations Officer, said. “Some of our providers are faculty from top medical schools and leading facilities, so we compiled our critical care experts and sent them to different federal facilities to train their staff in COVID-19 protocols. We are now seeing demand skyrocket – with some facilities requesting two full CCRT teams to keep up with the rise in cases.”

In addition to CCRT deployments across the country, Tribal EM offers clinical training programs in emergency medicine, behavioral health, and other disciplines. Medical staff, particularly those in remote locations, typically must travel to distant teaching clinics for training, which can leave hospitals even more short-handed. Onsite clinical training enables staff to reduce patient transfers and update their skills without missing work.

“By providing elbow-to-elbow training and support, we have a positive impact on not only the facilities but the overall patient care experience,” said Sean Friel, a respiratory therapist who has provided instruction in multiple CCRT deployments. “When the right resources aren’t there, patients are transferred. This plays out every day and the consequence is a lack of community faith in their local hospital. As instructors, our goal is to teach advanced care protocols that build stronger community relationships and drive transformation long after our team departs.”

Dr. Ruth Spector, a leading critical care physician, added, “We want all patients that arrive at the facility's door to feel they are well cared for. We want the facilities to feel empowered and improved after we leave, but to know we will always be there for them after we are physically gone.”

About Tribal EM

Tribal EM provides medical expertise, quality assurance, process improvement, and staffing services to Federal healthcare facilities nationwide. The only organization of its kind, Tribal EM is committed to transforming Native American and Indigenous communities from within, improving access to care, empowering local providers, and delivering high quality, culturally sensitive care that is tailored to the needs of the patient population. Learn more at tribalem.com.

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