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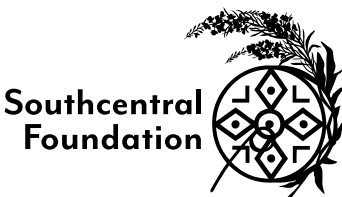
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Family Caregivers and Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month

By Southcentral Foundation Corporate Communications



When caregivers tend to their own wellness, everyone benefits.

Caregivers often find themselves juggling multiple responsibilities — providing emotional and physical care, managing a household, medications, and helping to make health care decisions. While it is important to recognize all that caregivers do for others, it also critical to understand that caregivers need care too.

November is Family Caregivers Awareness Month and National Alzheimer’s Disease Awareness Month, and both aim to improve the lives of those providing and receiving care.

A caregiver can be a partner, child, sibling, friend, spouse, or anyone who attends to the health and well-being of another. Each of these relationships is unique and can be incredibly rewarding, but it can also be physically and emotionally draining and have serious health impacts.

In 2023, caregivers in the U.S. provided an astounding 18 billion unpaid hours of care for people with Alzheimer’s or other forms of dementia. Sixty percent of those caregivers report high or very high stress levels, and that stress contributes to rates of cardiovascular disease, depression, anxiety, and chronic health conditions at much higher rates than the national average.

Chris Piromalli, an integrated palliative medicine physician at Southcentral Foundation, spoke to the difficulty in maintaining wellness for both those giving and receiving care.

“Alzheimer’s disease has rippling impacts on customer-owners, families, and friends,” Piromalli shared.

There can be profound grief experienced by all those involved, especially since Alzheimer’s disease can have significant impacts on various aspects of life including physical, mental, social, spiritual, and financial impacts.”

Clinton Brown II is a customer-owner who experienced firsthand the challenges of full-time caregiving for his father, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s dementia in his 80s.

“No two people who are suffering, are suffering the same way. In a lot of cases, there are similarities, but we are all dealing with different circumstances,” Brown said.

Although it is easy to overlook one’s own health when providing for the needs of another, it is important, Piromalli said, for caregivers to maintain wellness to remain strong and grounded. As a result, they can provide the best possible care for their loved ones.

"I have often heard that being a caregiver for someone with Alzheimer’s is like running a marathon," Piromalli said. "Caregiving is often needed for years and these needs gradually increase over time."

Consider the following tips for caregiver wellness:

- Acknowledge the effects of the disease and the powerful emotions that arise. Anxiety, stress, and anger can be felt by everyone involved. You might feel selfish or guilty when taking time for yourself, but before you become emotionally overwhelmed, you might consider seeing a therapist who can provide support.
- Maintain and foster connections with others to avoid social isolation. Take the time for a lunch date or a phone call with a friend. Join a support group to meet and share feelings.
- Look for and enjoy the good things. Savor the moments of clarity and the small things that bring joy.
- Try not to take things personally. People with dementia can have drastic changes in personality, mood, or memory, and may not remember their own children. Understand that dementia can cause people to do and say things they don’t mean.
- Take a break. Do something that makes you feel better and let the small things go. Exercise of any form or length is a positive thing. You might try breathing techniques or watching a favorite show or movie. Don’t hesitate to ask others for help.

A caregiver, it is important to love and help yourself. When you care for your own wellness, everyone benefits.

For more information or support with your caregiver journey, contact your primary care team or Behavioral Health.

Southcentral Foundation supports the health and wellness of Elder customer-owners and caregivers.

For more information about caregiver support or advanced dementia, visit the Aging Well Initiative page at southcentralfoundation.com/aging-well/ or scan the QR code.





Look for Get Out The Native Vote tabling this fall on the Alaska Native Health Campus in Anchorage.

2024 General Election Key Dates

Monday, Oct. 21

In-person early voting begins

Friday, Oct. 26

Deadline to request an absentee ballot

Tuesday, Nov. 5

Election Day! Voting open 7 a.m.-8 p.m.

#GOTNV

Learn more at
aknativevote.com



Luq'uts'il Nlihdanlggash

●●—●●● Everyone Coming Together



Nov. 7

Anchorage Native Primary Care Center

Join Southcentral Foundation, family, and friends for *Luq'uts'il Nlihdanlggash* — a celebration of culture and community at the Anchorage Native Primary Care Center.

Scan the QR code to view upcoming events.



National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month

By Southcentral Foundation Corporate Communications

November marks National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month, a time to celebrate the cultural traditions, history, and contributions of Alaska Native and American Indian people.

Community, culture, and language celebrate who we are, define our past, and guide the way forward. Art, dance, and storytelling display the vibrancy of Alaska Native culture, and our languages bring vitality and richness.

Join Southcentral Foundation, family, and friends for *Luq'uts'il nihdanlggash* — a celebration of culture and community at the Anchorage Native Primary Care Center Nov. 7 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. *Luq'uts'il nihdanlggash* is a Dena'ina Athabascan phrase which translates to “everyone coming together.” Share your culture, wear your regalia, and celebrate with us.

As we celebrate, let us commit to honoring this rich cultural legacy not just for one month, but as a continuous effort to support and uplift Alaska Native and American Indian voices and stories throughout the year.



Art, dance, and storytelling display the vibrancy of Alaska Native culture.



Annual Flu and COVID-19 Vaccinations Available at Southcentral Foundation

By Southcentral Foundation Corporate Communications



The best way to safeguard you and your family against the flu and COVID-19 is to get vaccinated.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends a yearly flu vaccine and updated COVID-19 vaccine for everyone 6 months of age and older with rare exceptions. The reason for this is that a person's immune protection from vaccination declines over time, so an annual vaccination is needed to get the best protection against these viruses. Additionally, viruses are constantly changing, so vaccine composition is reviewed each year and updated as needed.

It is safe to receive COVID-19 and flu vaccines at the same visit. Southcentral Foundation offers these vaccines at all primary care clinics.

Help keep you, your family, and the community safe by getting your annual flu and COVID-19 vaccines. For more information on recommended vaccines, talk with your primary care provider.

Vaccinations keep you, your family, and the community safe and strong.

October brings about many things: the end to the fall colors, children anticipating Halloween costumes, and the first snowfall typically to blanket the ground. It is also the unofficial start of the flu season.

Seasonal influenza, also known as the flu, is an illness that causes fever, headache, tiredness, cough, sore throat, nasal congestion, and body aches. It is usually spread from person to person by coughing and sneezing.

Influenza and COVID-19 are both contagious respiratory illnesses, but they are caused by different viruses. COVID-19 is caused by infection with a coronavirus. Flu is caused by infection with an influenza virus.



The best way to safeguard you and your family against the flu and COVID-19 is to get vaccinated.

Raise Your Sleeve to Prevent Disease

Contact your primary care team to learn more about immunization schedules including seasonal flu, COVID-19, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccines.



Southcentral Foundation Increases Access to Behavioral Health Services for Rural Communities

By Marketing Specialist Stephanie Smith

Southcentral Foundation Rural Behavioral Health focuses on enhancing mental wellness by delivering essential behavioral health services and education directly within the communities SCF serves.

Rural Behavioral Health Services provides routine mental health assessments, individual and group therapy sessions, crisis intervention, substance abuse counseling, and community education on mental health awareness. By integrating these services into the community, the need for long-distance travel is eliminated, saving time and expenses for individuals in rural areas. This increased accessibility allows for more frequent counseling sessions and mental health check-ups.

Regular therapy sessions provide consistent monitoring and management of mental health conditions, leading to significant relief from symptoms like anxiety, depression, and stress. This consistency in care contributes to long-term mental wellness and resilience.

In addition to direct services, behavioral health clinicians emphasize the importance of preventive care in mental health through educational efforts. By guiding customer-owners through coping strategies, stress management techniques, and the benefits of regular mental health check-ups, the Rural Behavioral Health team has seen a reduction of mental health crises and long-term psychological conditions.

"We have seen a decrease in the crises, and issues, but also have seen an increase in the use of our services as the stigma of seeking out mental



Clinicians work with your integrated care team to ensure the best care is provided.

health has diminished," Kris Hadden, SCF Rural Behavioral Health manager said.

The team also provides direction on integrating daily mental health practices, such as mindfulness exercises and maintaining social connections into everyday life, making mental health care a routine part of overall health maintenance.

Clinicians work together with your integrated care team to ensure the best care possible is provided. Rural Behavioral Health also has an Anchorage-based case manager in addition to behavioral health aides in some rural communities. BHAs and case managers assist in supportive roles for your overall treatment including gathering and submitting referrals.

In cases of emergency, SCF offers critical support. Individuals experiencing mental health crises can access help through the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, the Crisis Text Line by texting "home" to 741741, or the Behavioral Health Resources Hotline at (844) 413-2323. These resources ensure help is always available when it is needed most.

Mental health care is a vital part of overall health, and SCF and the Rural Behavioral Health team are here to support customer-owners in their wellness journeys.

Southcentral Foundation Rural Behavioral Health clinicians are available Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Customer-owners residing in rural areas can make appointments by contacting Rural Behavioral Health at (907) 729-3028.



Rural Behavioral Health Locations

SCAN THE QR CODE for more information.



- | | | |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. St. Paul Community Health Center | 6. <i>Benteh Nuutah</i> Valley Native Primary Care Center | 11. Nilavena Regional Health Center |
| 2. McGrath Regional Health Center | 7. Eklutna Community Clinic | 12. Igiugig Community Health Clinic |
| 3. Takotna Clinic | 8. Indian Creek Health Clinic | 13. Kokhanok Community Health Clinic |
| 4. Nikolai Clinic | 9. Pedro Bay Community Health Clinic | 14. Lake Clark Wellness Center |
| 5. <i>C'eyiits' Hwnax</i> Life House Community Health Center | 10. Nondalton Community Health Clinic | |

Honor, Celebrate, and Give Back During Indigenous Peoples Day

By Marketing Coordinator Kaylee LaTocha



Indigenous Peoples Day is the second Monday in October and celebrates traditions, culture, family, community and so much more.

Every day is a great day to be Indigenous. The second Monday in October provides an opportunity to pause and celebrate traditions, culture, family, community, and so much more in honor of Indigenous Peoples Day. A day to recognize the momentous efforts to revitalize language, story, dance, and pass on and share the amazing history of Alaska Native and American Indian people. One way to honor Indigenous Peoples Day is to share how we can all strive to preserve and be good stewards of the land.

Indigenous Peoples Day is an opportunity to honor the relationship with the land and with each other. Many Indigenous values are centered around community and what it means to share and pay it forward. These time-honored values of respect continue to be passed down to newer generations. Ways people celebrate can be with food, potlucks, music and performances, gatherings, ceremonies, and more.

Here are ways to honor the day:

- Cook a traditional dish.
- Participate in community events.
- Connect with nature.
- Share a traditional story.
- Read about the history of Alaska Native people.
- Play Alaska Native games.
- Learn about subsistence living.
- Host a potluck.
- Visit the Alaska Native Heritage Center, museums or cultural centers in your area.

These activities can be done at any time of the year but highlighting them on this day can rally a community and lift the spirits of those involved. Learn what came before, to build a better tomorrow.

For more information on cultural classes and learning circles, visit southcentralfoundation.com.



Preparing and sharing a traditional dish is a great way to celebrate and honor Indigenous Peoples Day.



Pressure Canning Safety

Whether preserving seasonal harvests or stocking up on your favorite foods when on sale, home pressure canning is a safe, healthy, and cost-effective way to preserve and store food. However, when pressure canning, there are some considerations to protect yourself and your loved ones. The following tips will help prevent some of the most common accidents.



Read the manual.

The booklet that came with the canner is loaded with important safety information on how to use a pressure canner properly and includes everything from important safeguards to helpful hints. Manuals for pressure canners are easily found online.



Check your canner.

Seals and pressure plugs can crack, tear, or harden with age and should be checked before every session. Vents should be completely unobstructed. Check for cracks or warps in the metal of the canner itself, and make sure the pressure gauge is accurate.



Vent the canner completely.

Remove any pockets of air by letting the steam escape for a full 10 minutes before building pressure. Too much air in the canner will prevent the food from reaching the required temperature.



Follow the recipe.

Use laboratory-tested recipes from trusted sources like the U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Center for Home Food Preservation, or university extension offices.



Let the canner cool.

Never open or vent a canner while under pressure. The lid could blow off, warp, or jars could explode from extreme depressurization. Let the canner cool on its own before opening.



Don't get burned.

Pressure canning produces steam that is heated past the boiling point, and jars can be heated to over 250 degrees during cooking. Use a jar lifter to move hot jars.

By safeguarding yourself and your loved ones while preserving healthy foods, we work toward a vision of wellness. For more information about healthy eating and food preparation, visit Health Education at: www.southcentralfoundation.com/services/health-education-and-wellness.



Healing Through The Gift of Story: Addressing Domestic Violence Through Cultural Strengths

By Southcentral Foundation Family Wellness Warriors and Corporate Communications

Domestic violence often affects physical, emotional, and financial aspects of life. While immediate intervention is crucial in most cases, long-term, culturally sensitive healing is equally important.

Southcentral Foundation’s trauma-informed care model addresses domestic violence by recognizing the deep trauma and complexities within families, offering a path to recovery through story sharing and cultural values.

“There is a delicate balance within domestic violence, where love and loyalty exist even though it’s unhealthy and unsafe,” Alaska CARES (Child Abuse Response Evaluation Services) Family Advocate Eladia Howe said.

SCF understands that by creating a safe space for sharing and receiving stories, healing can begin.

“We strive to give customer-owners a place where they feel safe to share what they are ready to. It’s a gift for us to receive their story, and it’s about being there to help them take the next step,” Howe shared.

It is essential to approach individuals living in domestic violence situations with empathy and understanding, providing a supportive environment for them to share their experience.

“People used to ask why I didn’t leave. Later, they asked what took so long. These are the wrong questions. What helps is a listening ear, a kind word, and no judgment,” Bobbi Outten, Family Wellness Warriors director and domestic violence survivor, reflected on the importance of this support.

Through culturally relevant, evidence-based programs such as Arrigah House, Cultural Humility, and Soldier’s Heart, FWW works to heal trauma by assisting individuals with understanding and sharing stories. Rooted in Alaska Native traditions, FWW emphasizes building healthy relationships and offering peer support to prevent trauma from passing to the next generation.

SCF also offers cultural practices through the Traditional Healing Clinic, which provides services such as healing touch, talking circles, and many cultural classes. These spaces encourage storytelling and connection, fostering healing in ways aligned with Alaska Native values like respect for Elders, self, and community.

SCF’s domestic violence resources extend beyond clinical care to encompass the emotional, spiritual, and cultural needs of customer-owners. This holistic approach acknowledges that healing from trauma requires addressing the root causes through both modern interventions and traditional practices.

Customer-owners are invited to learn and practice healthy relationship skills by attending *Wooch.een: Healthy Relationships*, a learning circle hosted by FWW. These learning circles are offered virtually and in person Thursdays from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Anchorage Native Primary Care Center.

If you are experiencing domestic violence and need immediate help, please reach out to local or national resources such as the 24-hour Abused Women’s Aid in Crisis hotline at (907) 272-0100, Standing Together Against Rape at (907) 276-7279, or StrongHearts Native Helpline at 1 (844) 7NATIVE (762-8483).

Breaking
THE SILENCE

in a safe way
brings healing.



October is Domestic Violence
Awareness and Action Month

Alaska Native Medical Center Health Fair at Alaska Federation of Natives Convention



Thursday, Oct. 17 | 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Friday, Oct. 18 | 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Second floor of the Dena’ina Civic
and Convention Center**

**Join us for the ANMC Health Fair
at AFN! Stop by for a vaccine
clinic, health and wellness
education, community resource
information, and more.**



The Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium and Southcentral Foundation jointly own and manage the Alaska Native Medical Center under the terms of Public Law 105-85. These parent organizations have established a Joint Operating Board to ensure unified operation of health services provided by the Medical Center.

Benefits of Traditional Alaska Native Foods

By Southcentral Foundation Corporate Communications



Southcentral Foundation’s Vision is a Native Community that enjoys physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellness. Preparing, learning about, and enjoying traditional foods contribute to whole-person wellness.

Loaded with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, Alaska Native foods are typically prepared without added sugars, additives, or artificial preservatives, and because they are often fresh, they are loaded with nutrients. Traditional foods can also have anti-inflammatory or immune-boosting effects and reduce risks for chronic diseases like diabetes, cancers and cardiovascular disease.

Collecting and harvesting food connects with the rhythm of the seasons and requires physical activity that exercises the body and

helps control weight. For example, a cup of blueberries contains only 85 calories, but has four grams of fiber and 25% of the daily requirement of vitamin C. Lean proteins like caribou or moose help build strong muscles and contain only small amounts of fat, which leads to healthier hearts and minds.

Eating and harvesting plants and animals from the land also supports mental health. Research shows that spending time in nature leads to more positive emotions and less anxiety. Studies have also linked Omega 3 fatty acids, like those found in salmon, and antioxidants like those found in blueberries, to decreased rates of depression and cognitive decline. Both body and mind stay strong.

Sharing traditional foods brings people together and creates moments of joy; it provides opportunities to share good times with family members and loved ones. Memories are created and traditional knowledge is passed down. Putting away food during times of seasonal abundance creates resilience and peace of mind in knowing that hard times can be weathered. Sharing the harvest brings happiness to those giving and those receiving.

In addition, Alaska Native foods are intertwined with identity, culture, and spirituality. Ceremonies, songs, stories, and dances celebrate the plants, animals, and people who rely on them. Indigenous foods inspire art and foster a spiritual connection to the land and ancestors, connecting the present with traditional lifeways and Alaska Native knowledge. In harvesting, preparing, and sharing foods in this way, the health and stories of Alaska Native people lives on in the next generation.

To learn more, view the *Traditional Healing Clinic Cultural Class schedule* at southcentralfoundation.com or scan the QR code. Cultural classes are opportunities for customer-owners and employees to connect with their Indigenous ways of living through practicing traditional skills.



Recipe for Fun! Moose Stew

Ingredients

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. 2 lbs. moose meat | 6. 1 green pepper, chopped | 11. cooking oil |
| 2. 1 can (15 oz.) stewed tomatoes | 7. 1/2 tsp. garlic powder | 12. salt |
| 3. 4 carrots, sliced | 8. 1/2 tsp. celery seed | 13. pepper |
| 4. 2 medium onions, sliced | 9. 1 tsp. dried parsley | 14. flour |
| 5. 4 large potatoes, cubed | 10. 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce | |

Directions

1. Salt, pepper, and flour the moose meat. Brown in your choice of oil using a cast iron or heavy skillet. If your skillet is big enough, add garlic, celery seed, parsley, Worcestershire sauce, pepper, tomatoes, onions, and four cups of water. Otherwise, transfer your meat to a stock pot and add ingredients. Cover and simmer for an hour and a half.
2. Add carrots and cook for 15 minutes.
3. Add potatoes and cook until done.

Since this is a stew, you can substitute or add all kinds of ingredients. For example, try adding rutabaga with the carrots or substituting pancake mix for flour.

Serves six.





Southcentral Foundation Physician Receives Indian Health Service Award

By Southcentral Foundation Corporate Communications



Dr. Martha Cotten was awarded the Indian Health Service's Director's Award.

Southcentral Foundation congratulates Dr. Martha Cotten on receiving the Indian Health Service Director's Award. Cotten is the medical director of operations for SCF's Rural Anchorage Service Unit. A lifelong Alaskan, she graduated with honors from Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth and is board certified in emergency medicine and family practice.

The Indian Health Service recognized Cotten's work that has significantly impacted the quality of health services, trauma skills, and addictions treatment, along with the delivery of telepharmacy,

in rural Alaska. Actively involved in the professionalization and support of community health aides, Cotten is a tireless advocate for their training and advancement, expanded standing orders, and reimbursement.

She has been instrumental in developing emergency medical services capabilities across remote areas of the state, at the policy, service delivery, teaching, and mentoring levels. Cotten has built up systems that have dramatically improved health care in southcentral Alaska's remote communities.

Her work embodies the vision of strong partnerships and culturally responsive practices, and she has supported the Indian Health Service strategic goals of access and quality over her 30 years of practice. Cotten, who has made a difference in the lives of many Alaskans across the state, has been with SCF since 1998.

Indian Health Service Recognizes Teamwork and Outstanding Service

By Southcentral Foundation Corporate Communications

Southcentral Foundation's Continuous Glucose Monitoring Team, focusing on gestational diabetes management, received an IHS Director's Team Award in recognition of their impact on family wellness.

The team has successfully expanded access to care and diabetes education across Alaska Native communities. By incorporating continuous glucose monitoring into the approach to managing gestational diabetes, their innovation has significantly improved the timeliness and quality of care for customer-owners and their babies. In addition, the team provided education to statewide diabetes educators and providers in both outpatient and inpatient settings throughout Alaska, increasing knowledge and access in remote communities. Their efforts enhanced the quality of gestational diabetes management by providing real-time glucose data, leading to more personalized and effective treatment plans for customer-owners and families.

Following the presentation of the IHS Director's Awards, selected officers in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps received Honors Awards for continuous exceptional service in their positions.



Gestational diabetes mellitus is a type of diabetes that develops during pregnancy, usually diagnosed in weeks 24-28 of pregnancy.

For more information about pregnancy resources or gestational diabetes, connect with your primary care team.

Southcentral Foundation Employees Recognized as Health Care Super Stars

By Southcentral Foundation Corporate Communications



Case Management Support
Susann Wassillie.

Southcentral Foundation employees Susanna Wassillie and Natalia Navarrow were recognized as Alaska Primary Care Association's Health Center Super Stars. The awards are in recognition of outstanding contributions to their health care organization and the community. Wassillie and Navarrow were nominated by their SCF peers.

Susanna Wassillie, a case management support, was recognized for her exceptional work on the vaccine program in the Iliamna Lake region. Her meticulous care and organization of vaccines across the

six communities have been instrumental in ensuring the successful implementation of the program. Wassillie's commitment to reaching every individual in the region with the vaccines demonstrates her unwavering passion for public health and community well-being.

Navarro, a community health practitioner, was recognized for her unwavering dedication to providing exceptional health care to the community. Her compassionate nature and genuine care for the well-being of everyone she serves make her a beloved provider in Nikolai. Through her tireless efforts, she has significantly improved the health outcomes of community members and has earned their trust and respect.



Community Health Practitioner
Natalia Navarrow.

Upcoming Holiday Closures

Southcentral Foundation will be closed

Monday, Oct. 14
in observance of Indigenous Peoples Day.

Services will resume Oct. 15.



Monday, Nov. 11
in observance of Veterans Day.

Services will resume Nov. 12.

Thursday and Friday, Nov. 28-29
in observance of Thanksgiving Day and Day of Thanks.

Services will resume Dec. 2.



Health Insurance: Expanding Care in Tribal Health Systems

By Southcentral Foundation Corporate Communications

Health insurance coverage plays a crucial role in Tribal health organizations.

While the Indian Health Service provides some base funding, Tribal health care providers like Southcentral Foundation rely on insurance to help cover the costs of the array of care they provide. Since the IHS only covers about half of these costs, billing third-party insurance is critical to secure funding for important programs and services that benefit everyone, such as:

- Primary care
- Dental
- Specialty care
- Behavioral health

Having health insurance benefits both families and health care providers. Additional advantages of third-party health insurance for individuals and families include coverage for glasses, hearing aids, and dental work. If medical transportation is needed, insurance may also cover the cost of ambulance services, medevacs, and out-of-state medical travel. When traveling away from Tribal health facilities, health insurance can be the deciding factor in receiving timely care rather than postponing treatment until you return to a Tribal health service area.

By having health insurance, you help ensure the continuation of these valuable resources for your family and community, making sure high-quality care remains available and accessible for all.

SCF's Family Health Resources is available to assist with third-party health insurance application processes. For application assistance, call FHR toll-free at (833) 729-4077.



Health insurance coverage can provide families peace of mind and more choices when it comes to managing their health and wellbeing.



Health insurance provides customer-owners additional coverage of dental care, hearing aids, and glasses.



Customer-owners have health coverage options for urgent and emergent care when away from home.



OCTOBER IS Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Early detection is a vital component of breast cancer prevention and detection.

Prepare for your mammogram:

Southcentral Foundation has developed a digital intake form when you check in for your mammogram at Radiology. Please arrive 15 minutes before your scheduled appointment time.

To learn more about breast cancer, talk to your primary care provider or visit <https://bit.ly/4derJpX>.



Protecting Youth from the Harms of Vaping

By Senior Marketing Specialist Emma Irish



Substance use resources to protect our youth from the harms of vaping are available at Southcentral Foundation.

At Southcentral Foundation, we know addressing the issue of youth vaping often requires a multifaceted approach including prevention, education, and providing resources for those already using nicotine products.

In recent years, the rise of electronic cigarettes, or e-cigarettes, has sparked significant concern among health care providers and parents alike. These devices, marketed as a safer alternative to traditional cigarettes, have garnered popularity among young people, leading to a growing epidemic of youth vaping. Despite their perceived harmlessness, e-cigarettes pose serious health risks, particularly to adolescents and young adults whose brains and bodies are still developing.

Using a harm-reduction approach, SCF providers understand that nicotine use, or any substance use may often be coupled with behavioral health challenges and that behavioral health services may be the first step in treatment.

A comprehensive report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention highlights several key risks associated with youth vaping

including nicotine addiction, exposure to heavy metals and other toxins, and nicotine withdrawal symptoms, all of which impact developing adolescent brains and bodies. There are approximately 400,000 Alaska Native or American Indian teens in the U.S., and more than half are at-risk of using tobacco products, including e-cigarettes. Nearly 20% of American Indian and Alaska Native high school students reported using electronic vapor products frequently (on 20 or more days in the last 30 days) compared to 10.7% of high school students overall.

“Starting at age 10, SCF customer-owners are scheduled to see a behavioral health consultant automatically at their annual well child checks,” Michelle Shein, clinical director and primary care provider at Southcentral Foundation said. “We want to catch nicotine, or any substance use, early because we understand that substance use in youth often correlates with other behavioral or mood disorders.”

In addition to addressing behavioral health concerns, another crucial aspect is providing accessible resources for quitting tobacco products, including e-cigarettes. SCF offers a referral-based tobacco cessation program, emphasizing both traditional methods and newer strategies specific to e-cigarettes. By implementing strength-based practices and focusing on guiding individuals to take control of their health decisions, the Quit Tobacco program is a great option for those looking to quit tobacco or other nicotine products. Customer-owners under the age of 18 can participate in the Quit Tobacco program with parental consent. Acknowledging that quitting nicotine or tobacco products is a challenge and can be a gradual process is often the first step toward recovery. Tobacco cessation specialists, primary care providers, and behavioral health clinicians are here to support customer-owners and assist with alternative strategies as needed.

For more information, contact your primary care provider or visit southcentralfoundation.com.

Great American Smokeout Nov. 21

Quitting tobacco benefits your health and the health of the world around you. Breathe easier and protect the environment by pledging to quit tobacco during the Great American Smokeout.

Talk with your primary care provider for a referral to the Quit Tobacco program.



Elder Program Participants Come Together, Celebrate at Fall Harvest Potluck

By Marketing Specialist Shamika Andrew

When the weather turns crisp and the leaves begin to change, it signals the time for the annual Elder Program Fall Harvest Potluck. This eagerly anticipated event is the first of two seasonal celebrations for Elder Program participants and their families, both held at the Southcentral Foundation Nuka Learning and Wellness Center. Over 300 Elders gathered for a day of community, culture, and connection.

Elders came together to share a traditional or favorite dish, dance to the live band, and enjoy each other's company. Many customer-owners who may not see each other during the year make a point to reunite during the celebration.

Guests were pleasantly surprised as they received a whale mug as a welcome gift and had an opportunity to win door prizes.

Festivities did not stop there; accompanying the potluck was a health fair featuring SCF departments and Alaska Native artists. Participants received information on health and related services.

While the Fall Harvest Potluck and Christmas party are the Elder Program's main events of the year, the program hosts a series of reoccurring activities at 6901 E. Tudor Road, Suite 8, in Anchorage. See the weekly schedule below for more information.

These gatherings provide opportunities for connection and community throughout the year bringing Elders together to celebrate, share cultural traditions, prioritize health, and foster a sense of belonging and togetherness.



Elders gathered at the Elder Program Fall Harvest Potluck for a day of community, culture, and connection.

For more information about Southcentral Foundation Elder Program services and activities, call (907) 729-6500.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Behavioral Health Consultant 10 a.m.-noon	Culture and Traditions 10 a.m.-2 p.m.	Family Heath Resources 10 a.m.-noon	Yupik Drum Group 9-11 a.m.	Nurse Practitioner Services 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Traditional Healing Drum Group with Gilbert “Buz” Daney 10 a.m.-noon		Behavioral Health Consultant 10 a.m.-noon	Health Education and Exercise** Noon-2 p.m.	Elder Jam Noon-2 p.m.
Shopping * 12:30-2 p.m.		Bingo Noon-2 p.m.		
<small>**Please call SCF Health Education at (907) 729-2689 for more information.</small>				
<small>*Please call the Elder Program at (907) 729-6500 for transportation. Space is limited.</small>				
SCF Elder Program 6901 East Tudor Road, Suite 8, Anchorage, AK 99507 (907) 729-6500				

Important Phone Numbers	
Alaska Native Medical Center	(907) 563-2662
AARP	(907) 762-3388
Anchorage Police Department (non-emergency).....	(907) 786-8500
Anchor Rides.....	(907) 343-6543
Cook Inlet Housing Authority.....	(907) 793-3000
Division of Public Assistance	(800) 478-7778
Division of Senior and Disabilities Services.....	(800) 478-9996
Food Bank of Alaska	(907) 272-3663
People Mover	(907) 343-4536
Salvation Army Meals on Wheels	(907) 349-0613
Southcentral Foundation	(907) 729-4955
SCF Elder Program Event Hotline.....	(907) 729-6588