



## 23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Health, Education, and Human Services Committee receives update report from the Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation**

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Monday, the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee received an update report from the Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation, or TCRHCC, which included information regarding LESS Surgery, sexual assault services, and customer service.

The TCRHCC is a 73-bed acute and outpatient regional health system organized as a private nonprofit health care organization operating under the Indian Self-Determination Act Public Law 93-638. The medical facility serves the communities within the Western Navajo Agency encompassing over 6,000 square-miles, including adjacent communities of the Hopi Tribe.

TCRHCC has four satellite clinics located throughout the agency, which serve Navajo, Hopi, and the San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe. The clinics include Cameron Dental, LeChee Health Facility, Sacred Peaks Health Center, and Sacred Peaks Health Center – WEST. TCRHCC also has a residency and fellowship program for students studying in the medical field.

HEHSC member Council Delegate Nathaniel Brown (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) commended the TCRHCC for striving to bring home Navajo professionals, but stressed the importance of mentoring high school students to interest them to go into the medical field.

“We need an initiative to put Navajo high school students in hospitals and clinics during the summer and during school breaks to get them exposed to a hospital setting, and possibly shadow doctors and other physicians so we can get them interested and grow our own future Navajo doctors and nurses. This can be a possible solution for the doctor shortage across the Navajo Nation,” said Delegate Brown.

According to the TCRHCC chief executive officer Lynette Bonar, the first LESS hysterectomy surgery was performed in Tuba City last May, which was deemed as the first LESS surgery in Northern Arizona and is the second one performed in the state of Arizona. LESS surgery is a minimally invasive procedure that requires only a single small incision.

HEHSC member Council Delegate Steven Begay (Coyote Canyon, Mexican Springs, Naschitti, Tohatchi, Bahast’ a’a’) said the information that was presented was thorough and he was pleased

with the progress that the health care corporation is making, and inquired about sexual assault services.

“The services you provide for women is great and we realize how important it is. However, I wanted to know what services you provide for sexual assault survivors? This service is very sparse on the Navajo Nation and I think it’s important for our health facilities to be equipped and competent in regards to sexual assault services,” said Delegate Begay.

In response to Delegate Begay, Bonar stated that TCRHCC is one of the only facilities on the Navajo Nation that has implemented a fully operational Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners and Sexual Assault Response Team, which provides a comprehensive medical treatment and confidential forensic evaluation for victims.

HEHSC chair Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) reminded the TCRHCC staff and board that customer service is very important, especially in working with elders. He noted that the report did not mention customer relations and recommended that the next update report include information regarding customer service.

HEHSC members voted 2-1 to accept the report.

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