



Bee lá'í dli (Together/Unity) | Hodíłzin (Sacred) | Hózhó (Beauty/Balance) | ʼÍ'íłi (Respect)

## Sage Memorial Hospital Laboratory Successfully Completes Joint Commission Survey



**PHOTO** - (Left-to-Right) Medical Technologists Mariel Montealto and Chinwe Nnadozie in Laboratory Department.

**GANADO, Ariz.** – Sage Memorial Hospital (SMH) proudly announces the successful completion of its laboratory's initial survey by The Joint Commission, conducted from May 6 to May 8, 2025.

SMH Laboratory was previously accredited under the Commission on Laboratory Accreditation (COLA) and welcomed the on-site review by the Joint Commission to obtain laboratory accreditation. This review was an opportunity to assess the lab's compliance with life safety and healthcare quality standards, including documentation, policies, and patient care procedures.

"The survey focused on reviewing

and confirming data related to proficiencies and quality assessments to ensure testing accuracy," said Interim Laboratory Manager Jennifer Cly. "A key part of the review highlighted a 95% proficiency testing score, demonstrating the lab's dedication to quality results."

"It was truly a team effort from the laboratory department that included a copious amount of hard work and dedication," Cly added. "We have successfully transitioned to a new building and a new accrediting agency which has been an overwhelming task, but the incredibly strong laboratory team here at SMH has completed these hurdles with grace

and have greatly increased the quality of care we provide for our patients."

The Joint Commission survey, led by Mr. Paul Ferreira, MS, MT, evaluated the hospital laboratory to ensure compliance with safety and quality standards. This process, conducted every two years, identifies opportunities to improve patient test accuracy and quality.

The survey results were overwhelmingly positive, with only five minor findings identified, all classified at a "standard level," meaning they can be resolved through documentation without requiring an on-site follow-up visit.

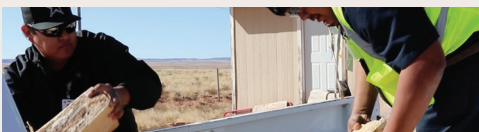
SMH leadership expressed their

satisfaction with the survey results, saying, "We are pleased with the final results of the survey and congratulate our laboratory team for passing this," said Lori Livingston, Chief of Quality at SMH. "The Joint Commission is all about helping us to identify areas of improvement so that we provide the highest quality of care - I am incredibly proud of our team."

SMH Laboratory is proactively addressing these areas to enhance patient safety and maintain high standards of care. The laboratory is already working on detailed corrective action plans, which will be submitted within 60 days.



**A Message from the Chief of Community Health**



**SMH Maintenance Department Delivers Firewood to Local Elders**



**SMH Hosts Indigenous Culinary Training for Staff to Promote Nutritious, Cultural Meals**



**Celebrating the Service of Andrew Simpson**



# SAGE NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF  
SAGE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL  
FIRST/SECOND QUARTER FY 2025  
ISSUE NO. 5  
(NOVEMBER TO MAY)  
PUBLISHED BY  
SAGE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL  
MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS  
DEPARTMENT.

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# A Message from the Chief of Community Health



## DOMINIC CLICHEE Chief Community Health Officer

Sage Memorial Hospital

I recently joined the Navajo Health Foundation – Sage Memorial Hospital as the Chief Community Health Officer. As a proud member of the Navajo Nation, my career has been dedicated to advancing wellness and equity across Native communities through culturally relevant, data-driven approaches. My journey began with a focus on infectious disease control and has since grown to include chronic disease prevention, public health education, and community-based program design.

I’ve had the privilege of working closely with public health stakeholders at tribal, state, and federal levels, contributing to efforts such as suicide prevention programs, the COVID-19 equity response, and nutrition programs aimed at addressing food insecurity.

At Sage Memorial Hospital, I now oversee a wide range of programs as the Chief Community Health Officer, including public health nursing, the Product Prescription Pilot Nutrition Program (P4), the Special Diabetes Program for Indians, mobile health outreach, and health education. My focus is on creating a cohesive, aligned division that supports the hospital’s mission and addresses the health priorities of the Navajo people. I’m committed to leadership that emphasizes sustainability, community trust, and culturally grounded care, with a vision to address not just clinical outcomes but also the social and environmental factors that shape health in our communities.

I strongly believe in building a Community Health Division that doesn’t just serve — but partners with — the local communities. My goal is to strengthen the foundation of community health within the Sage Memorial Service Delivery Area by expanding prevention and wellness programs, ensuring each initiative reflects the voices and values of the people it is designed to support. With humility, passion, and a deep commitment to collaborative leadership, I’m excited to walk alongside our community in creating healthier generations to come.

- *Dominic Clichee, MPH, DrPH(c)*  
*Chief Community Health Officer*  
*Sage Memorial Hospital*

## Biography

Dominic Clichee, MPH, DrPH(c), is the Chief Community Health Officer at Sage Memorial Hospital, where he brings over a decade of experience in public health, epidemiology, and tribal health leadership. A member of the Navajo Nation, Mr. Clichee has dedicated his career to advancing health equity, strengthening community wellness systems, and addressing the root causes of health disparities across Indigenous communities. His work has spanned academic research, field epidemiology, instructional design, and health policy—earning recognition for his culturally grounded and data-informed approach to improving population health.

Before joining Sage Memorial Hospital, Mr. Clichee served as an Epidemiologist at Fort Defiance Indian Hospital Board, where he led infectious disease surveillance efforts and authored community health needs assessments that shaped local policy and programming. His academic background includes teaching graduate-level public health courses at the University of Arizona and contributing to national research on COVID-19 disparities, suicide prevention, and chronic disease intervention. Across his roles, he has been known for building strategic partnerships, designing sustainable health programs, and mentoring the next generation of Native public health professionals.

In his new leadership role, Mr. Clichee is responsible for aligning Sage Memorial’s Community Health Division with hospital-wide goals and tribal priorities. His portfolio includes oversight of public health nursing, public health nutrition services, diabetes prevention, and mobile outreach programs. Drawing from his lived experience and professional expertise, Mr. Clichee is committed to creating a forward-thinking, culturally relevant public health infrastructure that empowers communities to thrive. He holds a Master of Public Health and is currently a Doctor of Public Health candidate at the University of Arizona.

## Beyond the Badge: Meet Dominic Clichee Outside the Office

While Dominic Clichee, MPH, DrPH(c), leads major community health efforts as Chief Community Health Officer at Sage Memorial Hospital, his life outside of work is just as purpose-driven. Raised with values centered on family, service, and mentorship, Dominic takes great pride in being a dedicated father, coach, and community role model — especially for the next generation of Native youth.

A seasoned basketball coach, Dominic has led teams at every level, from youth leagues to high school varsity, winning two New Mexico State Championships in 2013 and 2014. For him, the court is more than a place for competition — it’s a classroom for leadership, discipline, and resilience. “Coaching gives me the chance to connect with young people and help them grow both as athletes and as individuals,” he says. “It’s about showing them how to work hard, support each other, and have respect.”

When he’s not coaching, Dominic is fully engaged in his children’s extracurricular activities — whether that means showing up at games, helping with school projects, or simply being present and involved in their everyday lives. As a Native father, he is committed to being a consistent person who leads by example and challenges outdated stereotypes of what Indigenous fatherhood looks like.

**SEE MESSAGE | CONTINUE ON NEXT PAGE**



# Sage Memorial Hospital Facilities Maintenance Department Delivers Firewood to Local Elders



**PHOTO** - Facility maintenance department staff gathered wood for local elder.

**SNAKE FLAT, Ariz.** – On Dec. 20, 2024, the Sage Memorial Hospital Maintenance Department went above and beyond by delivering a much-needed load of firewood to two elders in the Snake Flat community near Burnside, Arizona. This compassionate act was part of the hospital’s ongoing efforts to support and care for its local community.

One elder expressed heartfelt gratitude, saying, “Thank you for all that you do, Sage Hospital.” For those receiving the firewood, this gesture was more than just practical help—it symbolized warmth, care, and a sense

of community during the colder months. Lead Supervisor with Facility Maintenance, Jonathan Hubbard, emphasized the importance of the initiative, explaining, “I appreciate our elders so much. They hold immense knowledge and teachings for future generations. Caring for them feels sacred.” His words echoed the sentiment of respect and reverence many feel toward elders.

Another team member reflected on the deeper meaning behind the effort, adding, “Our motivation and intentions are to approach with

respect and utter care. We are more than glad to take the initiative to aid our wise ones, in any way we can. It’s incredibly rewarding to give back to those who have contributed so much to our community.” This firewood delivery is just one example of how Sage Memorial Hospital strives to strengthen community bonds, ensuring that even the smallest acts of kindness make a big difference in the lives of those they serve.

## Message

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

And just for fun? Dominic is known to dabble in racing goldfish — a quirky, unexpected hobby that often raises eyebrows and laughs. It’s a reminder that even the busiest leaders can make space for joy, curiosity, and a little bit of humor. Whether on the court, in the community, or occasionally at a fish race, Dominic’s passion for connection and uplift is what truly defines him.



## MISSION STATEMENT

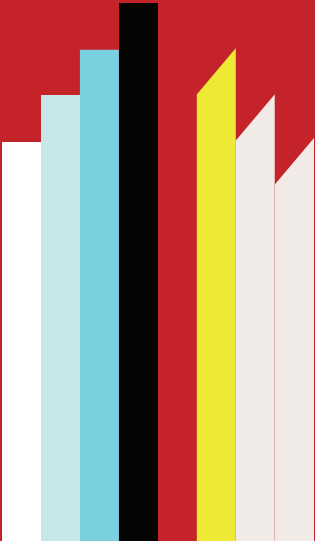
THE MISSION OF SAGE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL IS TO PROVIDE QUALITY HEALTHCARE FOR THE DINÉ PEOPLE WITH RESPECT, UNITY, BEAUTY, HARMONY IN HONOR OF K'É AND THE SACREDNESS OF LIFE.

## VISION STATEMENT

SAGE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL’S VISION IS TO ENHANCE THE DINÉ PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE WHILE DELIVERING INNOVATIVE HEALTHCARE.

## CORE VALUES

- BEE ŁÁÍ ‘DLǫ (TOGETHER/UNITY)
- HODÍLZIN (SACRED)
- HÓZHÓ (BEAUTY/BALANCE)
- ILÉ’Íǫ (RESPECT)





# SMH Hosts Indigenous Culinary Training for Staff to Promote Nutritious, Cultural Meals



**PHOTO** - Chef Mackee Bancroft (left) and Denisa Livingston (right).



**PHOTO** - Chef Bancroft demonstrating recipes during cafeteria training.

GANADO, Ariz. – Sage Memorial Hospital (SMH) recently hosted a culinary demonstration to highlight the nutritional and cultural value of indigenous foods, aiming to promote healing and wellness through traditional recipes. The event was led by Chef Mackee Bancroft, a celebrated indigenous chef, and Ms. Denisa Livingston, a passionate food sovereignty advocate, and was attended by both hospital staff and patients.

The demonstration focused on incorporating ancestral ingredients and techniques into modern meals, blending cultural heritage with health-conscious cooking. Chef Bancroft shared his enthusiasm for food traditions and their role in serving communities. “I love serving people and learning about their food traditions,” he said. “This was a great opportunity to show how indigenous food can support nourishment and healing. It’s about going back to our roots while embracing the needs of today.”

Ms. Livingston expanded on the significance of ancestral ingredients like beans, sumac, and wild herbs, emphasizing their connection to cultural identity and sustainability. “The foods we prepared are those our ancestors cared for over generations,” she explained. “By using these ingredients, we’re not only honoring them but also reclaiming our health

and traditions.”

During the hands-on session, Chef Bancroft and Ms. Livingston guided the hospital’s staff, teaching them how to prepare the featured dishes while providing practical cooking tips. Attendees gained new skills and a deeper understanding of the cultural and nutritional value of the ingredients. The 14 cafeteria staff members in attendance also had the opportunity to sample the dishes, which included hearty bean-based entrees seasoned with sumac and other traditional spices.

Patients at SMH were treated to the results of the culinary training, enjoying flavorful meals that celebrated indigenous flavors. Feedback from patients was overwhelmingly positive, with one patient saying, “likann, Very good, tasteful,” while another commented with a smile, “It was good, needs a little bit of salt.”

Kimberly James, Dietary Supervisor at SMH, expressed her gratitude to the guest presenters. “We truly appreciate Chef Bancroft and Ms. Livingston for sharing their expertise and providing our patients with a delicious and nutritious meal,” she said. “Our patients were delighted by the unique ingredients and the care put into their meal, and many of them expressed how much they enjoyed trying something new and meaningful.”



**PHOTO** - Natural ingredients, such as beans were used in the cooking demonstration.





DELICIOUS DINÉ

# Cooking Classes



FAMILIES  
WELCOME!

**Theme: Wholesome Whole Grains**

**What are we cooking?**

- **Stove Top Blue Corn Pine Nut Granola**
- **Blue Corn Mush Parfait**

**Cornfields Chapter House**  
**May 14, 2025**  
**11:00 - 1:00 PM MDT**

**Ganado Chapter House**  
**May 15, 2025**  
**11:00 - 1:00 PM MDT**

**Steamboat Chapter House**  
**May 28, 2025**  
**11:00 - 1:00 PM MDT**

**Nazlini Chapter House**  
**May 29, 2025**  
**11:00 - 1:00 PM MDT**

**With  
Dietitian  
Denee Bex**



**Scan to sign up!**

For more information, contact Sage Memorial Hospital P4 department at (928) 755-4814



## Sage Memorial Hospital Presents “Delicious Dine: Wholesome Whole Grains” Event Series

GANADO, Ariz. – Sage Memorial Hospital is excited to announce the “Delicious Dine: Wholesome Whole Grains” event series, celebrating nutritious and culturally significant foods. This culinary experience, led by Dietitian Denee Bex, will feature demonstrations of Stove Top Blue Corn Pine Nut Granola and Blue Corn Mush Parfait, showcasing the versatility and health benefits of whole grains.

The events will take place at the following locations and times:

- Cornfields Chapter House: May 14, 2025, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM MDT
- Ganado Chapter House: May 15, 2025, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM MDT
- Steamboat Chapter House: May 28, 2025, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM MDT
- Nazlini Chapter House: May 29, 2025, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM MDT

Attendees will have the opportunity to learn about wholesome cooking, sample delicious dishes, and engage with Sage Memorial Hospital’s P4 department staff.

To participate, scan the QR code on event flyers to sign up. For additional details, contact Sage Memorial Hospital’s P4 department at (928) 755-4814.

**PHOTO** - Marketing flyer for the delicious dine’ cooking classes, distributed via social media and local newspaper.





**Sage Memorial Hospital**  
NAVAJO HEALTH FOUNDATION

# PRIMARY CARE MEDICAL HOME TEAMS



## Provider Teams



**GOLDEN EAGLES**  
**(928) 410.9345**

DR. MATTHEW NELSON, MD FAM MED/OB  
DR. AURELIA TAYLOR, DNP, FNP  
KALALA KASIMU, FNP  
ERNASHA MCINTOSH, FNP



**ARROWHEAD**  
**(928) 410.9375**

DR. GAIL STOTSKY, MD PEDIATRICIAN  
CAROLINE TRACEY, FNP  
ALBERTA ESPINOZA-LYONS, FNP



**WHITESHELL**  
**(928) 410.9275**

DR. JOHN SCHLABACH, MD, FAM MED  
DOLLEEN FRANK, FNP  
KATHLEEN BUCHANAN, FNP  
MELANIE NEZTSOSIE, FNP



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SELECT YOUR PRIMARY CARE  
PROVIDER TEAM



(928) 755 - 4500



[www.sagememorial.com](http://www.sagememorial.com)



# OUTPATIENT SPECIALTY CLINIC

## CONTACT PERSON(S)

- Gwendolyn Spencer, RN
- Shaiyaia Fowler, MA
- Micah Villanueva, RN



**928-410-9276**  
**EXT: 31063**



## Services Available



### Cardiology

*Dr. Kishlay Anand*  
*Telehealth & In-person*

- Every 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Thursday of the month

*Julia Slavick, NP*  
*Telehealth only*

- Every Wednesday of  
the month



### Pulmonology

*Dr. Andrew Freedman*  
*Telehealth only*

- Every 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>  
Thursday of the  
month



### Neurology

*Dr. Arnaldo Velez*  
*Dr. Christian Rosado*  
*Dr. Victor Diaz*  
*Telehealth only*

- Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday  
of the month



### Rheumatology

*Dr. Michael Tutt*  
*In-persons*

- Once a month  
on Saturdays



### Obstetrics

*Dr. Matthew Nelson*  
*In-person*

- Every Tuesday of  
the month



### Wound Clinic/General Surgery

*Dr. David Johnson*  
*In-person*

- Every 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday  
of the month



### Gastroenterology

*Dr. Singh Hoffman, PA*  
*Telehealth & In-person*

- Every 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday  
& 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the  
Month

## Referral Process

When submitting the referral order from your designated service (ED, Inpatient, Outpatient Department, etc.), please indicate on the referral order, "Sage Memorial Hospital – (the Specialty Clinic requested)".



# SMH Dialysis Center Bill Gains Approval From Arizona State Senate, Advances To House Of Representatives

**GANADO, Ariz.** - Sage Memorial Hospital (SMH) is pleased to announce that Senate Bill 1575, the SMH Dialysis Center Bill, has been approved by the Arizona State Senate and is now advancing to the House of Representatives. The bill, sponsored by Senator Theresa Hatathlie, will appropriate \$3 million in funding for the completion of a dialysis center at SMH, providing care for Ganado and neighboring communities.

“Passage of this bill is an important step towards better health outcomes for our community,” said Melinda White CEO of Sage Memorial Hospital. “We are grateful for the support of Senator Hatathlie and the State Senate in recognizing the importance of this bill.”

“This project is essential for improving rural healthcare and addressing diabetes in underserved Native American communities,” White added. “The dialysis center would reduce long travel distances for care, improve access to treatment, and directly benefit the Navajo people.”

Last Fall, SMH fully funded and completed a \$177 million hospital which was designed to include a dialysis center. However, requirements from the Arizona Department of Transportation’s Traffic Impact Study required the hospital to redirect funds to cover two new traffic light intersections, or risk delaying the opening of the hospital. This diverted



**PHOTO** - The SMH Executive Team tunes in virtually as the Arizona Senate votes on SB 1575.

funding has delayed construction on the much-needed dialysis center.

The planned dialysis center currently sits as an unfinished shell, with the necessary infrastructure in place, making it ready for build-out. Once completed, it will offer much needed outpatient dialysis treatments closer to home, easing travel burdens for patients and their families.

## UPDATE AS OF MAY 1

Senate Bill 1575 (SB1575), which seeks to appropriate \$3 million to support the Sage Memorial Hospital Dialysis Center, remains stuck in the legislative process. The bill, aimed at improving healthcare access for underserved communities through the dialysis center, has faced a

setback in the Arizona House of Representatives.

On March 13, 2025, the Arizona Senate passed SB1575, and it was immediately transferred to the House on the same day. Speaker of the House Steve Montenegro then assigned the bill to the House Appropriations Committee. However, Rep. David Livingston, Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, has not added SB1575 to the committee agenda, effectively delaying its progress and potentially killing the bill.

“Without the inclusion on the agenda, the bill cannot move forward for a vote,” explained Christian Bigwater, Director of Marketing and Public Relations. “SB1575 is about ensuring that our community members have access to life-saving dialysis services.”

Supporters of SB1575 remain determined despite the recent setback. Efforts will likely turn toward Governor Katie Hobbs’ office and the budget reconciliation bill as potential avenues for inclusion. With limited time left in the legislative session.

## Youth Mental Health Summer Camp

**July 1st to July 24th, 2025**

**Every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday**

**Sage Memorial Hospital**

**Behavioral Health Clinic**

**Please contact Devon Gorman or Jennifer Charley at Behavioral Health for more information.**

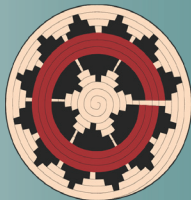
**Phone #: (928)755-4586**

### Eligibility:

- Youth ages 12 to 18
- Guardian Consent to Participate
- Must complete an assessment appointment with a behavioral health provider prior to participation

### Activities Include:

- Creative Art Projects
- Physical Wellness (ex: weightlifting and yoga)
- Cooking Classes
- Traditional Teachings including a Sweat Prayer
- Outdoor Field Trips
- Learning and Practicing Mental Health Skills





# Arizona Legislature Introduces Bill to Support Traditional Healing Practices

**PHOENIX** - On Feb. 12, the Arizona Legislature introduced SB1671, also known as the Traditional Healing; AHCCCS bill. This bipartisan bill aims to amend sections 36-2907, 36-2939, and 36-2981 of the Arizona Revised Statutes, proposing an appropriation of \$1,300,000 from the state general fund and additional funds for fiscal year 2025-2026 to expand access and reimburse traditional healing services under the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS).

Spearheaded by Senator Sally Ann Gonzales and co-sponsors including; Senators Alston, Bravo, Diaz, Epstein, Gabaldón, Hatathlie, Kuby, Miranda, Ortiz, Shope, Sundareshan, and Representatives Garcia, Hernandez A, Hernandez C, Peshlakai, this bill represents an important step in recognizing the value of traditional healing for Native American communities in Arizona.

Efforts to integrate traditional healing into healthcare policy began in 2015, when a Traditional Healing Workgroup consisting of tribal 638 and Indian Health Service (IHS) facilities, Urban Indian programs, traditional practitioners, and other stakeholders, came together to develop a waiver which sought to reimburse for traditional healing services provided by Tribal and IHS facilities. The waiver leveraged the 100% Federal Medicaid Assistance Percentage (FMAP) that IHS and 638 facilities receive. This ensured sustainable funding for these



**PHOTO** - Members from 638 health organization's traditional programs testifying at the Arizona Senate Health and Human Services committee.

important services.

On October 16, 2024, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) approved the AHCCCS 1115 waiver request to reimburse traditional healing services provided in or through Tribal 638 and IHS facilities. These services are to be eligible to all Tribal 638 and IHS beneficiaries.

Melinda White, CEO of Sage Memorial Hospital, expressed her support for the bill stating, "The integration of traditional healing practices into Medicaid is not just a policy change; it is a recognition

of the value of tribal cultures and traditions. Incorporating traditional Native health into state systems and non-tribal health care systems demonstrates that Arizona recognizes the importance of Indigenous traditions."

## UPDATE AS OF MAY 1

On March 13, 2025, the Arizona Senate passed SB1671, and it was immediately transferred to the House on the same day. Speaker of the House Steve Montenegro then assigned the bill to the House

Appropriations Committee. However, Rep. David Livingston, Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, has not added SB1575 to the committee agenda, effectively delaying its progress.

Supporters of SB1575 remain determined despite the recent setback. Efforts will likely turn toward Governor Katie Hobbs' office and the budget reconciliation bill as potential avenues for inclusion. With limited time left in the legislative session.



**HAPPY NURSES WEEK - MAY 5 - 9, 2025**



# Enhancing Patient Care: SMH Introduces Advocate and Ambassador Team

**GANADO, Ariz.** – Sage Memorial Hospital (SMH) is proud to introduce the faces behind the “Sage Experience,” designed to make hospital visits more comfortable and stress-free for patients and their families. Leading the team is Paula Keyonnie, SMH’s Patient Advocate, who serves as a resource for patients and families.

Keyonnie is dedicated and ready to serve as a bridge of communication for patients and their families in moments they may need assistance in understanding their healthcare, needing an appointment, navigating various clinics, sharing concerns and/or providing positive feedback regarding their experience and to ensure that patient needs and concerns are addressed effectively and efficiently.

“Every patient deserves to feel heard and supported,” said Paula Keyonnie. “My role is to bridge communication gaps and ensure your healthcare experience is as smooth as possible.”

Supporting this mission is the Patient Ambassador team at SMH, which includes Sheilandria Kaye, Desert Reyes, and Jane Williams.



**PHOTO (Left to Right)** - Desert Reyes, Paula Keyonnie, Jane Williams and Sheilandria Kaye.

These ambassadors are available to help visitors navigate the hospital and to ensure that patients receive the highest quality care while visiting SMH.

Both the Patient Advocate and Ambassadors are trained to provide quality patient care and are always available to address any concerns

or questions. For more information on SMH’s Patient Experience please contact us at 928-755-4828 or go to our website at [sagememorial.com/patientrelations](https://www.sagememorial.com/patientrelations) or scan the QR code.



# Sage Memorial Hospital Receives Award for Innovations in Housing

**CHANDLER, Ariz.** – Sage Memorial Hospital (SMH) is honored to be recognized for its groundbreaking efforts in employee housing. Jarom Prows, Facilities Director at SMH, accepted the prestigious “Innovations in Housing” award on behalf of the hospital during the Arizona Housing Coalition’s 30th Annual Conference, “The Road to Home,” held May 7-8 at the Phoenix Convention Center.

The Arizona Housing Coalition’s annual conference is the premier education and networking event for the affordable housing and homeless service industries in the state, attracting over 650 participants from public and private sectors. The recognition of SMH highlights its commitment to addressing housing challenges through innovative and sustainable solutions.

The award stems from SMH’s development of the “Apartments at Sage,” a 27-unit employee housing

complex offering one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments. This project is part of a broader effort to revitalize the hospital’s housing infrastructure.

“We are honored to receive this award,” said Jarom Prows Director of Facilities at SMH during his acceptance speech. “We are committed to improving community health by addressing access to healthcare,” said Prows. “By enhancing employee housing, we are creating an environment where our team can thrive, ensuring they can focus on delivering exceptional care.”

“Our mission is to address critical healthcare needs,” Prows added. “This includes building housing for essential workers like doctors and nurses. Providing these resources ensures that our communities receive the care they deserve.”



**PHOTO- TOP** - Nicole Newhouse ED of the Az Housing Coalition presents “Innovations in Housing” award to SMH. Jarom Prows, Facilities Director at SMH, accepts award on behalf of SMH during the Arizona Housing Coalition’s 30th Annual Conference, held May 7-8 at the Phoenix Convention Center.



**PHOTO-RIGHT** - Award presented.



# SMH Launches New Career Portal to Streamline Job Applications and Enhance Candidate Experience

**GANADO, Ariz.** – Sage Memorial Hospital is pleased to announce the launch of its new career portal, designed to provide job seekers with a seamless and efficient application experience. The portal features tools such as advanced job search filters, personalized job alerts, and résumé upload capabilities.

“We’re focused on making the application process as smooth and intuitive as possible, so candidates can focus on showcasing their skills and experience without unnecessary barriers,” said Ronnye Etcitty, Chief Human Resources Officer. “Angela Rodriguez, our dedicated HR recruiter, is available to assist applicants with their questions or to guide them through the application process.”

For more information or to start an application, visit [sagememorial.com/careers](http://sagememorial.com/careers) or scan the QR code below.



# WE ARE HIRING

OPEN POSITIONS



## SAGE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

### REGISTERED NURSES

ER

ICU

MTU

New Graduates

Nursing Supervisor  
(Surgical Services & ICU)

Public Health Nurse

### CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANTS

TALK TO OUR RECRUITER, ANGELA



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ER Physician

Environmental Services Specialist

Family Practice Physician

Infection Preventionist

Line Cook

Mammography Technologist

MRI Technologist

Medical Assistants

Optometrist

Patient Account Representative

Physical Therapist

Radiology Technologist CT/x-ray

Social Workers

Ultrasound / ECHO

Vascular Sonographer



# Understanding the Importance of Medicaid for Sage Memorial Hospital



**KIM RUSSELL**  
**Policy Advisor**  
Sage Memorial  
Hospital

**GANADO, Ariz. -** Understanding the Importance of Medicaid for Sage Memorial Hospital

Medicaid funding is a significant source of funding for Sage Memorial Hospital and many other healthcare facilities on the

Navajo Nation. It represents 60-70% of operating budgets for many Navajo 638 hospitals, clinics, and long-term care facilities on the Navajo Nation. In addition, a large percentage of our patients are beneficiaries of Medicaid. Medicaid funding helps tribal 638 facilities provide additional services to the community and build infrastructure for the hospital. However, recent discussions surrounding proposed federal funding cuts, specifically through Medicaid

programs; Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) in Arizona, Turquoise Care in New Mexico, and Utah Medicaid, have raised significant concerns about the future of these programs.

## What is Federal Medicaid Assistance Percentage (FMAP)

Medicaid is funded by both state and federal governments. The FMAP determines how much of the cost the federal government will cover, with the remaining percentage covered by the states. In Arizona for most Medicaid patients, the federal government pays 64.34% and the state covers 35.66%. For Tribal and IHS health care facilities there is a different rule.

Services provided to American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Medicaid-eligible patients at these facilities are reimbursed at 100% FMAP. This issue is “budget neutral” meaning, this ensures that States, like Arizona, are not fiscally responsible to pay for Medicaid services to AI/AN.

**Medicaid State Plans**

Even though Tribes and IHS facilities qualify for 100% FMAP, they must follow their State’s Medicaid State Plan which describes how the state administers its Medicaid and CHIP programs. The state plan outlines, who is covered, what, services to be provided, how providers are paid and how the program runs.

**Proposed Medicaid Cuts**

There have been discussions in Congress to cut federal Medicaid budgets which would impact how the Program can operate. Some of the proposed cuts include implementing work requirements for able bodied adults, instituting funding caps and block grants. If these cuts happen States will then have to decide how to change their programs which could be done by reducing who is eligible for the program, limiting covered services, and/or lowering reimbursement rates.

**Advocating for our Relatives**

Sage Memorial Hospital has been advocating and educating our tribal, state and federal policy

makers on how Medicaid cuts will impact our hospital and the services we provide. On Thursday, May 8, 2025, the Navajo Nation Naabik’íyáti’ Committee passed a resolution which included a white paper on “The Impact of Proposed Medicaid Cuts on the Navajo Nation” supported by the Association of Indians for Self-Determination in Healthcare. This resolution authorizes the Navajo Nation President, Navajo Nation Vice-President, and the Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council to take all steps necessary to advocate for the Navajo Nation’s position consistent with the approved and adopted comments.

**In conclusion**

SMH is working to make sure people have access to good, affordable healthcare. They are speaking up to make sure any changes to Medicaid consider the needs of American Indian communities and help everyone get fair access to healthcare. Please contact us if you have questions.

# Celebrating the Service of Andrew Simpson



**PHOTO -** SMH Chairwoman Delores Noble (left) and CEO Melinda White (Right) honor the service of Board Member Andrew Simpson (center) during the Sage Memorial Hospital annual Christmas dinner held on Dec. 19 at the Ganado Field House.

**GANADO, Ariz. -** The Sage Memorial Hospital (SMH) wishes to acknowledge and honor Andrew Simpson’s years of dedicated service and immeasurable contributions to the community as his term on the Board which concluded in December 2024. Simpson started his term on the Board in 2006 and has been an integral part of shaping the future of SMH. Some of his notable achievements include:

- New Hospital Groundbreaking and Completion: Strategic direction in planning and completion of a new hospital facility, which now provides expanded services and improved healthcare access for the community.

- Launch of New Services: Implementation of healthcare services customized to address the unique needs of the community.
- Re-branding Initiative: Re-branding of the hospital, introducing a new logo and refining the mission and values to better reflect the organization’s commitment to service and excellence.
- 638 Association Membership and Collaboration: Membership with the 638 Association, opening the door to networking and collaborations with other healthcare facilities.

