



Elderly Services Program: Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska

“It’s about the elders, and we are supposed to show respect.”

–Marilyn Doyle, Program Coordinator

The Elderly Services Program aims to achieve wellness for the elderly through health and social services.

Program Description

- The Elderly Services Program manages the elder nutrition and caregiver programs funded by the Administration for Community Living’s Title VI grant under the Older Americans Act.
- Public education activities about tribal assistance to prevent elder abuse are available to elders through the program.
- Abuse is reported through the state’s Adult Protection Services (APS).
- The program offers cooking and meal delivery to elders, which provides an opportunity to monitor for abuse.
- Financial exploitation is the most common form of elder abuse experienced by Tlingit and Haida elders.

Operated by: Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska

Location: Juneau, AK

Area served: Southeast Alaska Communities

Contact information:
Marilyn Doyle, Program Coordinator, 907-463-7131

Website:
<http://www.ccthita.org/services/elderly/overview/index.html>

Successful Strategies

- The program publishes articles in the tribal newsletter and has developed flyers to raise community awareness of elder abuse.
- A variety of public workshops are offered on elder abuse; additionally, an informational workshop for caregivers in the community about available resources and services is held annually.
- In order to promote physical activity among elders, the program hosts Walking in Balance, an annual event.

Collaboration

- Program staff participate in the Elders’ Caregivers Council, a group of social service agencies that plans elder activities and addresses issues affecting elders.
- The program collaborates with tribal and state social service programs.
- Workshops on elder protection are held in collaboration with the state and community, Catholic Services, the Juneau Commission on Aging, and other programs.
- The program works closely with the state APS representative and collaborates with the village police or the village public safety officer for a particular elder’s community.



Cultural Considerations

- Tribal values emphasize respect for self, elders, and others. The program honors this principle by opening educational opportunities to the entire community.
- Program staff have found family decision-making strategies effective for addressing abuse, and would like to apply this approach more frequently.

Funding

Program funding is grant-driven. The program actively seeks out and manages numerous grants, including grants under Title VI of the Older Americans Act. The program also receives tribal funding for the elderly emergency assistance program.

“[Programs] need [to give elders] voices. The voices need to come at all levels of your organization, from the top down.”

–Marilyn Doyle, Program Coordinator,
Elder Services Program

Future Considerations

- A larger staff is needed to be able to respond to all of the home visit requests received.
- To help ensure that family members understand and know how to address the needs of elders, the program would like to provide caregiver training.
- The program would like to develop a screening tool that would help prioritize the most critical cases during abuse investigations.
- There is a need for data-driven reporting, such as tracking investigation outcomes and the number of open investigations, in order to more efficiently serve the population.
- The program wants to establish an elders' home, where abused elders can stay if they must leave their homes.
- The program plans to set up more services for elders, including preventative services, to ensure overall good health.

Lessons Learned

It is important to gain tribal and community buy-in when developing an elder abuse prevention program, to ensure community support for the program's efforts.