

2024

ANNUAL REPORT

CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS



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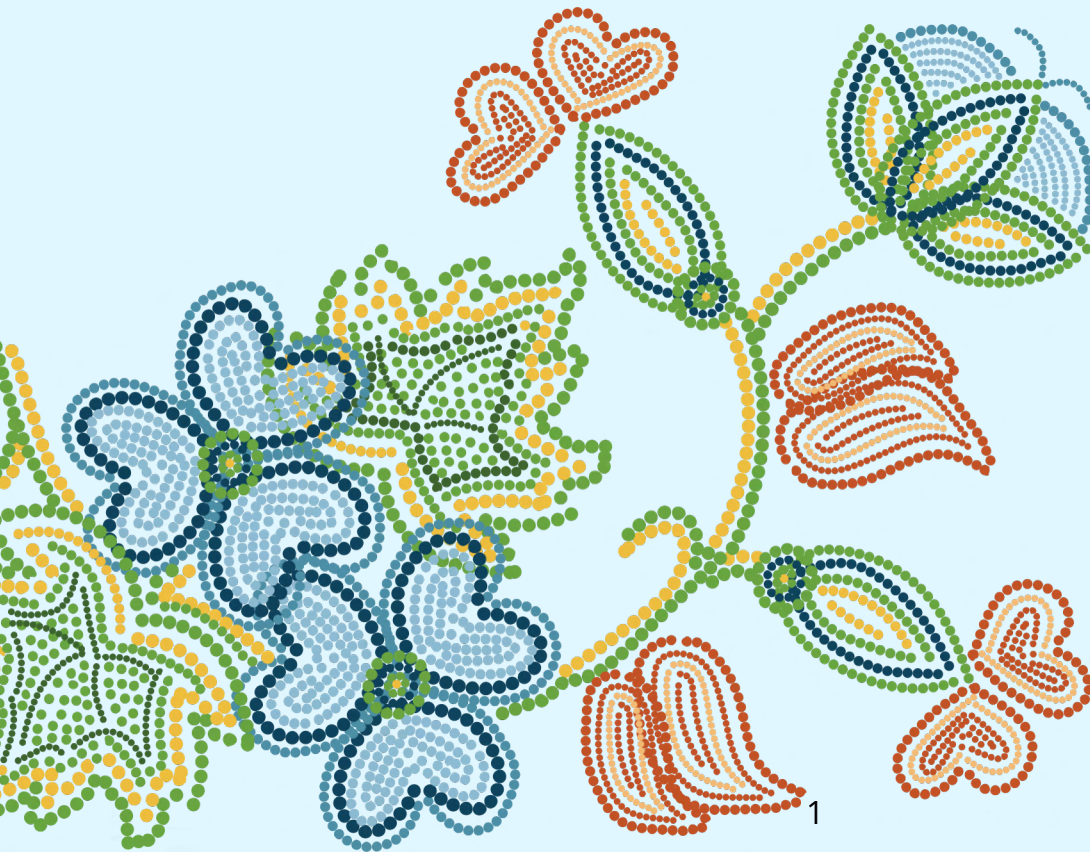
A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

In 2024, the Winnebago Comprehensive Healthcare System (WCHS) embraced transformation, innovation, and unity under the guiding theme of Cultivating Connections. This year marked a significant turning point in how we serve, support, and strengthen the health and well-being of our community. Through building bridges between patients and care teams, expanding access through new technology and partnerships, or investing in our people and infrastructure, every advancement was rooted in the belief that meaningful connection is at the heart of healing.

From achieving national recognition in clinical quality to rolling out a fully independent health IT network, WCHS moved forward with determination and vision. We implemented tools that not only increased convenience—like our new pharmacy refill line and mobile app—but also ensured safety and accountability, such as daily safety huddles and enhanced documentation systems in Purchased Referred Care. At the core of it all are the people—our patients, providers, families, and community partners—who continue to walk alongside us in this journey. Their trust fuels our mission. Their needs shape our services. And their stories remind us daily why we are here. This report is a reflection of the connections we've cultivated—across care, technology, education, and community—and a celebration of how those connections grow stronger, more resilient, and more impactful with each passing year.

A handwritten signature in brown ink, appearing to read 'DAVID EDWARDS'.

DAVID EDWARDS
WCHS CEO



SETTING THE STANDARDS

At Winnebago Comprehensive Healthcare System (WCHS), our commitment to expanding access to quality care remains at the forefront of everything we do. In 2024, we made significant strides in improving health services for Native American veterans, enhancing nursing education, meeting high laboratory standards, and providing new mental health resources—all designed to better serve our community.



STRENGTHENING VETERAN BENEFITS

A new Memorandum of Understanding with Veterans Affairs this year ensures financial stability when we provide veteran healthcare services rendered locally at WCHS. All Native veterans, regardless of where they live, have access to timely primary care, specialized services, and now have access to expanded services with Purchased Referred Care support.

EXPANDING MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

WCHS has recognized the critical need for mental health support. In February 2024, WCHS implemented CredibleMind, an evidence-based digital platform that connects patients and staff with behavioral health tools and services. Available 24/7, CredibleMind offers wellness assessments, guided self-help programs, articles, and videos—empowering users to take charge of their mental well-being.

Let’s analyze the audience using Credible Mind in 2024.



Audience Overview

INITIAL 8 MONTHS
FROM FEBURARY 2024 - SEPTEMBER 2024

Site Visitors	Registered Users	Average Session Time
1,322	18	3.35



Nurses, lab technicians, and radiology technicians are essential to delivering safe, high-quality care. To support their growth, WCHS invests in ongoing education and professional development, ensuring our staff remain equipped with the latest clinical knowledge and skills.

CERTIFIED NURSES

Our nursing teams participate in ongoing training programs to maintain certification standards and expand their expertise, ultimately translating to improved patient outcomes and satisfaction. Earning 100% compliance for updated licensure and certifications.



"We are dedicated to maintaining these critical certifications to ensure our patients experience the highest standard of across departments."

-**SHERYL STEUK**, NURSE EDUCATOR

100% 

COMPLIANCE RATE FOR
UPDATED LICENSURES &
CERTIFICATIONS

RNs CNAs

44 **6**

CMA's LPN's

6 **2**

CERTIFIED IMAGING & RADIOLOGY

Again in May 2024, the American College of Radiology (ACR) accredited our imaging & radiology services. This accreditation is the gold standard in medical imaging, awarded only to facilities that meet rigorous standards for image quality, personnel qualifications, equipment, quality control, and assurance programs. Earning this accreditation means that we have demonstrated that our patients can rely on the highest level of safety and accuracy in diagnostics, vital for early detection, treatment planning, and better health outcomes. It also reinforces our dedication to bringing advanced, accredited specialty services to rural and Native communities.



CERTIFIED LAB

In September 2024, our laboratory team achieved a prestigious two-year Certificate of Compliance under the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) program for high-complexity testing. This rigorous certification process affirmed that our lab meets or exceeds federal standards for quality, accuracy, and reliability. Maintaining CLIA compliance is vital for ensuring patients and healthcare providers can trust laboratory results critical to diagnosis and treatment.



NETWORK CUTOVER

Technology remains a key driver in enhancing healthcare access and delivery. In 2024, WCHS achieved one of the most transformative milestones in our organizational history: **full digital independence.**



"Before the cutover, persistent phone outages every 30 days, hindered the delivery of reliable care and frustrated patients and staff alike."

**-MONTI MOLTZEN, IT
MANAGER**

Through a complex and significant effort known as the Network Cutover, our IT team rebuilt the Health System's entire network infrastructure from the ground up, allowing us to separate from the Indian Health Service (IHS) D1 network. This move not only positions WCHS among a small group of Native health facilities leading the way in self-governance but also unlocks a new era of technological control, security, and innovation.

Our new infrastructure gives us full autonomy over network servers, internet connectivity, security systems, data storage, and telecommunications, including the ability to reroute calls, track service metrics, and quickly resolve technical disruptions. By gaining full control over our digital backbone, WCHS is no longer limited by legacy systems or external constraints.



NETWORK TRANSFORMATION

With the Network Cutover, modernizing our IT infrastructure, WCHS will finally be able to step away from the limitations of our current Resource and Patient Management System (RPMS) and prepare for the launch of a new state-of-the-art Electronic Health Record (EHR) system to be launched in 2025. Owning our network has allowed us and will continue to allow us:

- The ability to choose the tools and technologies that work best for our patients, employees, and our community.
- The ability to launch and manage improved digital communication tools.
- The ability to scale and evolve our systems with community needs



EMAIL & INSTANT MESSAGE TRANSFORMATION

With the network cutover, employees who were previously split across IHS.gov and WinnebagoTribe.com emails were now unified under a single professional domain: WCHS.Health. This change not only strengthens our identity as a healthcare system but also streamlines communication and coordination across all programs and locations. We also introduced an instant messaging tool that allows for secure, real-time collaboration.



PHONE SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION

With the network cutover, WCHS transitioned to a new phone system with direct phone numbers for all locations. This new phone system brings several features that significantly improve customer experience.

- Seamless Transfers: All locations, teams, and individuals can transfer callers to all individuals and teams throughout the Health System.
- In-house Management: Our team has the flexibility to build and collect reporting data and make changes to meet the needs of our patients.
- Enables Accountability: Consolidating direct phone numbers and enabling team call queues enables departments and managers to share phone responsibilities, allowing for more backup and fewer voicemails, and set data-driven goals to improve patient experiences.



NEW CONTACT INFORMATION

All these critical **network cutover** transformations to empower us with the flexibility to manage, improve, and customize our IT environment resulted in new phone numbers, fax numbers, and first.last@wchs.health email addresses. To assist our patients and community in making the transition with us and to begin utilizing our new contact information, we executed and will continue efforts for a multi-year marketing campaign across platforms to share this updated contact information and change all references and habits to ensure a smooth transition.



402-745-3950

www.wchs.health | 1-888-575-9244 (Toll-Free) | info@wchs.health
Pharmacy & Refills: 402-745-3952 | Emergency: 402-878-2245

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFICE & SHELTER

DOMESTICVIOLENCE@WCHS.HEALTH 402-745-3959

LAND OF WELLNESS

WHIRLINGTHUNDER@WCHS.HEALTH 402-745-3955

RECOVERY PROGRAM

RECOVERYPROGRAM@WCHS.HEALTH 402-745-3961

SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER

SENIORCITIZENCENTER@WCHS.HEALTH 402-745-3957

URBAN INDIAN CONNECTIONS - SIOUX CITY

CIRCLEOFCARE@WCHS.HEALTH 712-560-4750

WINNEBAGO HEALTH FOUNDATION

WHF@WCHS.HEALTH 402-745-3956

WHIRLING THUNDER WELLNESS

WHIRLINGTHUNDER@WCHS.HEALTH 402-745-3955

WOMEN INFANT, & CHILDREN PROGRAM

WIC@WCHS.HEALTH 402-745-3958



PHARMACY REFILL LINE & MOBILE APP

In July of 2024, WCHS launched an automated refill line and a RefillPro mobile app, allowing patients to request prescription refills 24/7. These tools reduce wait times and improve medication adherence by offering multiple easy-to-access refill options.

PAVING THE WAY FOR ALL OF INDIAN COUNTRY

The success of this **network cutover** initiative was reinforced by a \$5 million reimbursement from IHS, recognizing the scale and strategic importance of this investment. Additionally, WCHS became eligible to receive over \$400,000 annually through the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) Rural Health Care Program, helping offset the high cost of managing a modern IT environment in a rural setting. The network cutover is more than a technical upgrade—it's a declaration of sovereignty, capability, and our long-term commitment to building a healthier Winnebago.

AFFORDING NETWORK INDEPENDENCE

\$5M

REIMBURSEMENT FOR TRANSITION COSTS

MAINTAINING NETWORK INDEPENDENCE

\$400K

ANNUAL TECHNOLOGY DISCOUNTS

"Transitioning to one phone system answered by a live operator on behalf of both the Winnebago Public Health Department and Twelve Clans Unity Hospital enables seamless transfers, limits dead-ends, and allows us to provide a better customer service for callers."

-SHARON FRENCHMAN,
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

"Thank you for calling WCHS, how can I direct your call?"

What was once a fragmented technology landscape is now a centralized, secure, user-friendly internal network designed for improved collaboration and communication.

In 2025, WCHS plans to continue to leverage technology to benefit our patient experience.

ELEVATING THE PATIENT EXPERIENCE

At WCHS, cultivating strong relationships with both staff and patients is key to our success. In 2024, we focused on recognizing excellence, promoting safety, and incorporating patient feedback to continuously improve our care environment.

1,000 DAILY HUDDLES

At the end of March, we hosted our 1,000th Daily Huddle Meeting. This is a benchmark in safety and consistency for the organization. These quality assurance meetings involve 30+ staff members per day and are an opportunity to consistently communicate important operational information and updates between all WCHS.

It is a proven effective method of updating all staff on safety reports, daily staffing, events, etc. Participants range from executives to employee health, primary care, preventive, and acute care.

"This achievement is a testament to our commitment to quality healthcare and an open, communicative, well-informed work environment."

- DAVID PARKS,
COMPLIANCE & RISK
MANAGER

This simple daily meeting adds up over time to create an accomplishment in transparency and accountability. WCHS is committed to holding these critical touch points and growing better every day.

Primary Care Clinic Visits

752

Average
Visits Per
Month

9,022

Annual
Total Seen



26%

Year Over Year

Specialty Services Visits

Includes: Telehealth, Physical Therapy, Chiropractic, Ortho, Podiatry, Family Practice, Diabetes, Neurology, & Nutrition.

618

Per
Month

7967

Annual Total



7.47%

Year Over Year

Inpatient Admissions

13

Per
Month

155

Annual Total



65%

Year Over Year

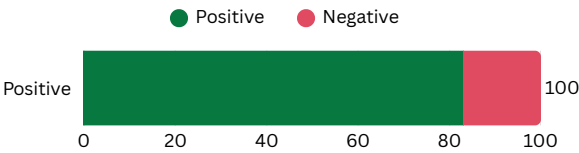
HEARING YOUR FEEDBACK

This year, we have continuously monitored patient satisfaction using HappyOrNot and Press Ganey survey tools to collect information about experiences. Our team monitors all feedback to address concerns, track trends, and guide process improvements and enhancements across departments.

Happy or Not Results

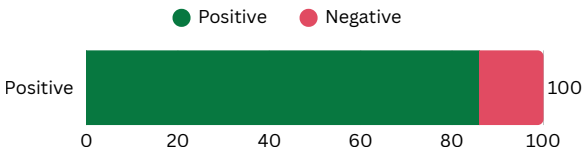
Q1 & Q2
Oct 2023 - March 2024
1943 responses

83%



Q3 & Q4
April 2024 - Sept 2024
2812 responses

86%



+869

Increase in individual survey responses.

+3 %

Increase in positive experiences throughout the fiscal year.

WCHS hosted 7+ Master Facility Concepts Focus Groups

LISTENING TO FEEDBACK

We don't just want to "hear" from you; we want to listen to you. We are committed to continuously evolving to meet the needs of the community and patients we serve.

IMPROVEMENTS INSPIRED BY YOUR FEEDBACK

GREETERS & SECURITY AT BOTH ENTRANCES



*"Main entrance is confusing and unwelcoming."
"All entrances must be secured."*

NEW PRIVACY SCREENS AND SOUNDS MACHINES IN EMERGENCY ROOM

"The emergency room is too open. Can I get a little privacy?"



FOUNDATION IS FUNDRAISING FOR NEW PLAYGROUND AT LAND OF WELLNESS



"It is hard for our family to use land of Wellness because there is nothing for little kids to do there."

NEW PHONE SYSTEM LAUNCHED TO IMPROVE CALLER EXPERIENCE

The phones are ALWAYS out! I can never get ahold of anyone there."



STARTS CREATING A MASTER FACILITIES PLAN TO ACCOMMODATE ALL PHYSICAL SPACE NEEDS



"Therapists are awesome, they changed my life, why hide them in the basement?"

DAISY AWARDS

To celebrate the dedication and compassion of our nursing staff, WCHS introduced the Daisy Award program in 2024. This prestigious recognition honors nurses who exemplify extraordinary skill, kindness, and patient advocacy. The award not only boosts staff morale but also highlights the critical role nurses play in patient healing and community health.

- Q2 Recipient Nurse Mekenna Ford & Nurse Shayna Suhra
- Q3 Recipient Nurse Judy Spath
- Q4 Recipient Nurse Amanda Walton



CARING KIND AWARD

Last fall, Advanced EMT Cari Hinrickson was recognized with the Nebraska Hospital Association's Caring Kind Award, a statewide honor given to healthcare workers who embody compassion and excellence. Cari has served the Winnebago community since 2007, and her mentorship, reliability, and commitment have made a lasting impact. Her recognition underscores the extraordinary dedication our team brings every day.



CERTIFIED LIFESTYLE COACHES

WCHS also reached a major milestone in chronic disease prevention and lifestyle medicine by graduating its first three Certified Lifestyle Coaches through the National Diabetes Prevention Program led by Certified Master Trainer Camilla Barajas, Director of the Wa i pi nagu (Diabetes) Program (DPP). Certified Lifestyle Coaches Anjelica Kamradt, Hollie Barclay, and Sheryl Steuk will bring this training directly into our clinical and community settings. Their work empowers relatives to make informed choices and supports our mission of creating a healthier, more resilient community.



WINNEBAGO COMPREHENSIVE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

A COMPONENT UNIT OF THE WINNEBAGO TRIBE OF NEBRASKA

OCTOBER 1, 2023 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

OPERATING REVENUES

Indian Health Service Compact \$	\$32,898,309
Net Patient Service Revenue	\$19,247,812
Other	\$5,106,235
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUES	\$57,252,356

OPERATING EXPENSES

Salaries and Wages	\$31,763,612
Contract Labor	\$3,437,294
Medical and Drug Supplies	\$5,298,009
Indirect Costs	\$6,353,909
Supplies and Postage	\$1,587,925
Depreciation and Amortization	\$1,569,879
Other Program Costs	\$962,525
Purchased/Referred Care	\$1,153,520
Professional Fees	\$822,173
Utilities	\$564,175
Rent	\$581,993
Information Technology	\$5,767
Travel and Training	\$407,568
Repairs and Maintenance	\$399,027
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$54,907,376

OPERATING INCOME

\$ 2,344,980

NONOPERATING REVENUE

Investment Gain	\$912,230
Interest Income	\$1,848,583
TOTAL NONOPERATING REVENUE	\$2,760,813

CHANGE IN NET POSTITION

Change In Net Position	\$5,105,793
Net Position - Beginning of Year (Restated)	\$59,978,237
Net Position - End of Year	\$65,084,030

NARRATIVE OF FINANCIAL POSITION

UNDERSTANDING INCOMING REVENUE

The Fiscal Year 2024 was a year of progress and stability for the WCHS finance team. WCHS continues to make significant strides in streamlining the back-end of the revenue cycle through efforts including:

- focusing on automating tasks,
- standardizing procedures,
- establishing our baseline to understand the potential for revenue generation.
- We even began to leverage technology and data to reduce errors, boost efficiency, and identify bottlenecks.

Driven by a more efficient revenue cycle that brought in an impressive \$19M in payments (from independent sources of income), combined with our IHS Title V funding (compact funding) and various federal and local grants, our total operating revenue \$57M.

UNDERSTANDING OUTGOING EXPENSES

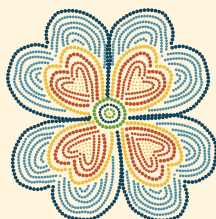
When reviewing our largest expenses, you can see the expected personnel and medication expenses that are typical of a healthcare setting. The costs of supporting external referrals through our Purchased Referred Care program continue to grow, offset by our active focus on recruiting specialists to make more specialty care accessible in Winnebago and “keeping care at home.”

And then, notable this year, was a major investment in our future that was made by transitioning our IT systems off the IHS network. With this decision, not only have our Health System gained the independence and technological edge needed to serve our patients better, but we have earned the reimbursement outlined elsewhere in this report.

UNDERSTANDING OUTGOING EXPENSES

WCHS ended the year with an impressive net of \$5M, a milestone that reflects our commitment to being good stewards of our resources while never losing sight of our mission: creating and sustaining health.

Together, WCHS has built a diverse and resilient financial base.





EXECUTIVE TEAM



DAVID EDWARDS
Chief Executive Officer



BETH WEWEL
Chief Financial Officer



SHARON FRENCHMAN
Chief Administrative Officer



GANESH KINI
Chief Medical Officer



SARA MCINTOSH
Chief Nursing Officer



AUSTIN SCHANZENBACH
Chief Transformation Officer



MONA ZUFFANTE
Chief Public Health Officer

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JIM RIXNER

Board Chair



DARLA LAPOINTE

Board Member



ROWEN K ZETTERMAN

Board Member



VICTORIA KITCHEYAN

Board Member



COLY BROWN

Board Member



JEFFERY D HARRISON, MD

Board Member



WINNEBAGO HEALTH FOUNDATION

The Winnebago Health Foundation is the 501c3 nonprofit arm of the Winnebago Comprehensive Healthcare System.

“The foundation aims to support WCHS Strategic plans in their efforts to advance healthcare quality and access in our community.”

-DANELLE SMITH,
FOUNDATION BOARD CHAIR

The first year of establishing our Foundation consisted of establishing a board, bylaws, and nonprofit status. In year two, the Foundation has begun to focus on telling its story, expanding our visibility, defining initial initiatives, and maximizing community impact.



CULTIVATING RELATIONSHIPS

During the 158th Winnebago Homecoming Celebration in July 2024, the Foundation offered a unique opportunity for regional leaders and influence-shapers to connect with the Winnebago Tribe and learn about the impactful work of WCHS and WHF. Friends, donors, and their families are invited to join the Foundation for an exclusive guided pow-wow experience event starting at WCHS's main campus with an overview of WCHS and WHF, a tour of the main campus, information about the rich history and tradition of the Winnebago Homecoming Pow Wow, and then transitioning to Veteran Memorial Park to experience Grand Entry and pow-wow for themselves.





EXPANDING ONLINE GIVING

Ongoing community support is essential to our success. This year, the Foundation launched online giving and recurring donation options, enabling donors to contribute via credit/debit cards or direct bank deposits on a schedule that suits them. This flexibility has increased sustained giving, providing a reliable funding stream to support health education, access programs, and community services that improve well-being.

CHRONIC ILLNESS PREVENTION PLAYGROUND

The first fundraising initiative to add a playground to the outdoor recreational space at Land of Wellness for the children and families of Winnebago! This year, we conducted a community-wide survey to gather feedback to help determine the direction of the Playground Project. With the help of the schools, community events, and online voters, we were able to gather over 400 adult and child surveys about the playground. These invaluable insights gathered will be used to build a vision for this playscape at Land of Wellness.

INVESTING IN FUTURE HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

Invest in the next generation of healthcare professionals through scholarships for local students pursuing medical, nursing, and allied health education. By nurturing homegrown talent, WCHS and the Foundation strengthen workforce capacity and reinforce our commitment to culturally aligned, community-based care.



DENISE MILFORD



MIA REGALADO



DIANA JIMENEZ



SANDY SCOTT

\$2,000 2024 Scholarship Recipients

KRISTIA SLOWMAN

(Photo unavailable)



This year's winners have demonstrated outstanding academic achievements, community involvement, and a strong commitment to their future careers. These scholarships aim to support their educational journeys and empower them to contribute significantly to the Winnebago community.



www.wchs.health
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