



Osage Health Newsletter

LATEST HEALTH & WELLNESS NEWS, ACTIVITIES, AND HAPPENINGS

INSIDE

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Health & Wellness Topics

The very latest of a variety of Health & Wellness topics happening today.

Wahzhazhe Youth Council Returns from UNITY Conference Inspired to Lead and Serve



Twenty-two members of the Wahzhazhe Youth Council attended the 50th Annual United National Indian Tribal Youth (UNITY) conference in Oklahoma City in July.

Twenty-two members of the Wahzhazhe Youth Council returned home inspired, empowered, and ready to make a difference after attending the 2026 National UNITY Conference held July 10–14 in Oklahoma City. Sponsored by the Osage Nation Health System Prevention Program, the Wahzhazhe Youth Council joined hundreds of Native American youth representing Tribal Nations from across the United States for five days of leadership development, cultural exchange, wellness education, and community building. This year's conference also marked the 50th anniversary of United National Indian Tribal Youth (UNITY), making the event especially meaningful as the organization celebrated where it all began in Oklahoma City.

Throughout the week, Youth Council members participated in workshops focused on leadership, education, health, STEM, advocacy, and community service while learning alongside Indigenous youth from across Indian Country. Several youth attended sessions led by NASA representatives,

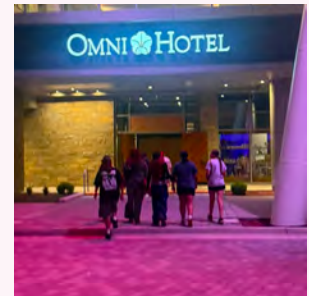
explored future educational and career opportunities, and engaged in discussions centered on strengthening Native communities through youth leadership.

The conference also provided opportunities for youth to honor important causes affecting Indigenous communities. Participants wore orange in recognition of Every Child Matters, honoring the children impacted by the residential boarding school system, and later wore red to raise awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW), demonstrating their commitment to remembrance, healing, and advocacy.

During the conference, Youth Council members also had the unique opportunity to attend the Osage Nation Inauguration Ceremony, where they witnessed the swearing-in of newly elected Osage Nation leaders. The experience was made even more meaningful as they watched former WahZhaZhe Youth Council member Noah Shadlow deliver the closing benediction, observed several current Youth Council

Wahzhazhe Youth Council Returns from UNITY Conference Inspired to Lead and Serve

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members serving as Osage Princesses during the ceremony, and celebrated another member who participated as a singer at the drum. The day served as a powerful reminder that today's youth are becoming tomorrow's leaders.

One of the conference's most memorable moments happened outside the scheduled workshops.

Each evening, WahZhaZhe Youth Council members gathered to play traditional hand games. What began as a small group quickly grew into circles of Native youth representing Tribal Nations from across the country. The Osage youth welcomed others into the games, shared their traditions, learned different styles of play from other Nations, and built friendships that crossed tribal boundaries.

These spontaneous gatherings reflected the very purpose of UNITY—bringing Native youth together through leadership, culture, and mutual respect. The experience demonstrated that leadership often happens in simple but meaningful ways by creating spaces where others feel welcomed, included, and connected.

The conference also celebrated Native excellence through cultural events, including the UNITY Gala, Native fashion show, Intertribal Social Dance, and conference powwow. Members of the WahZhaZhe Youth Council proudly represented the Osage Nation throughout each event while embracing opportunities to learn from other Indigenous cultures. For the Prevention Program, experiences like UNITY are about far more than

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Wahzhazhe Youth Council Returns from UNITY Conference Inspired to Lead and Serve

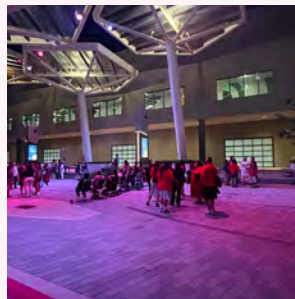
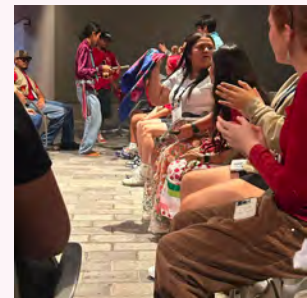
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attending a conference. They help young people develop confidence, independence, responsibility, communication skills, and a deeper appreciation for their culture while encouraging them to become positive leaders within their schools, communities, and the Osage Nation.

The relationships formed, lessons learned, and experiences shared throughout the week will continue long after the conference has ended. As the Youth Council returns home, members bring with them new ideas for community service, stronger leadership skills, lasting friendships, and an even greater commitment to serving others.

The Osage Nation Health System Prevention Program extends its appreciation to the parents and families who entrusted the Youth Council with this opportunity, the dedicated advisors and chaperones who supported the youth throughout the week, and UNITY for continuing to provide a national platform where Indigenous youth can learn, grow, and lead.

While the 2026 National UNITY Conference has come to a close, the work of the Wahzhazhe Youth Council continues. Equipped with new knowledge, renewed confidence, and strengthened connections, these young leaders will carry what they learned back into their schools, communities, and the Osage Nation as they continue building a brighter future for the next generation.



Prevention Department Hosts Movie Nights to Promote Family Bonding



As the weather warmed, the Prevention Department kicked off its outdoor movie night season beginning with a screening of Zootopia 2 as part of the Health System's Glow in the Dark Easter Egg Hunt. Movie nights welcome all ages and are geared towards families with children and youth. They provide healthy activities for youth as well as opportunities for community building and family bonding.

In July, families enjoyed a summer evening with a screening of The Sandlot, and staff offered free snow cones, water, and popcorn to attendees. Adults were guided to a sign-up area where staff gave out Increase Your Peace Kits with activities to support overall well-being and Opioid Safety Kits, including medication lockboxes and naloxone to prevent opioid



overdoses. These kits are an important outreach activity that connects people to community resources, builds relationships, and provides education on wellness and safety preparedness.

The movies Prevention chooses to screen are curated to give parents an opportunity to talk to their children about challenges and choices made by the characters. For example, in The Sandlot, we learn valuable lessons about how to treat newcomers, how to adjust to change, and the power of friendship.

The next movie night is scheduled for September with a screening of Smoke Signals. Prevention looks forward to being your host and building community together!

Happy One Year Anniversary

WAHHAZHE HEALTH CENTER

A milestone that reflects a year of growth, innovation, and compassionate care.



World Hepatitis Day: Protecting the Health of the Osage Community

Although World Hepatitis Day is observed each year on July 28, the importance of hepatitis awareness extends far beyond a single day. The Osage Nation Public Health Nursing Department recognizes this observance as an opportunity to continue educating community members about viral hepatitis, the importance of prevention, testing, and treatment, and the steps everyone can take to protect their liver health. Early detection and prevention are key to ensuring healthier futures for Osage families and future generations.

Viral hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver caused by several different viruses, most commonly Hepatitis A, B, and C. Hepatitis A and B can be prevented through vaccination, while Hepatitis C can often be cured with modern medications when detected early. Because many people with hepatitis may not experience symptoms for years, routine screening is an important step in identifying infections before serious liver damage occurs.

American Indian and Alaska Native populations continue to experience disparities in hepatitis-related illness, making education, vaccination, and access to screening especially important. The Osage Nation Public Health Nursing Department encourages community members to speak with their healthcare providers about hepatitis risk factors, recommended vaccinations, and available screening options. Individuals who have never been tested for Hepatitis C, have a history of potential blood exposure, or have concerns about their liver health should consider discussing screening with a healthcare professional.

While World Hepatitis Day has passed, the message remains just as important. Raising awareness, encouraging vaccination, and promoting early screening can help prevent serious liver disease and save lives. The Osage Nation Public Health Nursing Department encourages everyone to take an active role in protecting their health and the health of their families. Through awareness, prevention, and early intervention, we can work together to reduce the burden of hepatitis and build a healthier future for the Osage Nation.

For more information about hepatitis prevention, vaccination, and screening services, contact the Osage Nation Public Health Nursing Department.



CARF Accreditation: A Commitment to Excellence, Healing, and Tribal Sovereignty

By Mark Rogers, ONHS CEO



For a Primary Residential Treatment Center serving Native American communities, pursuing CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) accreditation is far more than achieving a national credential - it is a declaration of excellence, accountability, and an unwavering commitment to the Native people we serve. It is a promise that every family and tribal member who enters our doors will receive care rooted in quality, dignity, compassion, and cultural respect. Our clients deserve more than treatment. They deserve hope. They deserve to reconnect with their identity, culture, language, and traditions while receiving evidence-based clinical care that honors who they are as Indigenous people. CARF accreditation strengthens our ability to provide that balance by integrating nationally recognized standards with the unique cultural values that define our tribal communities and solidifies our ability to be reimbursed for these important services by third-party payors. At its heart, CARF is about continuous improvement. It challenges organizations to look beyond simply meeting minimum requirements and instead strive for excellence in every aspect of care - from clinical services and patient safety to leadership, staff development, family engagement, and measurable outcomes. For a tribal residential program, this commitment reinforces what

Native communities have practiced for generations: caring for the whole person - mind, body, spirit, and community. A culturally centered treatment program is one of the greatest strengths a tribal organization can offer. Traditional teachings, ceremonies, storytelling, drumming, language revitalization, elders' guidance, connection to the land, and cultural identity are not supplemental services; they are essential pathways to healing. CARF recognizes the importance of person-centered care, allowing organizations to build treatment models that reflect the cultural beliefs and traditions of those they serve. Rather than replacing Indigenous healing practices, accreditation provides a framework that demonstrates these cultural approaches are intentionally planned, documented, evaluated, and integrated into comprehensive, reimbursable treatment services. This sustainability will ensure the programs thrive and continue in this manner for generations to come, just as our program has served the community for nearly three decades now with the Osage Nation. For tribal governments, CARF accreditation also represents an investment in sovereignty. It affirms that tribes can develop, govern, and sustain world-class behavioral health and substance abuse programs while preserving their own traditions and values.

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CARF Accreditation: A Commitment to Excellence, Healing, and Tribal Sovereignty

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Accreditation demonstrates that Native communities are leading innovative, culturally responsive healthcare solutions designed by tribes, for tribes. Families benefit as well. Parents and guardians gain confidence knowing their loved ones are receiving care from an organization that has undergone a rigorous independent review. Accreditation provides reassurance that policies, treatment planning, risk management, medication practices, staff qualifications, and quality improvement systems meet nationally recognized standards. Trust grows when families know their loved ones are receiving both excellent clinical care and culturally meaningful support. Employees also thrive in an accredited environment. CARF promotes ongoing education, professional development, leadership accountability, teamwork, and employee engagement. Staff members gain confidence through clearly defined processes and consistent, not sporadic, training, creating a workplace where excellence becomes part of the organizational culture. This strengthens staff retention and builds a workforce dedicated to continuous learning and compassionate service. Financially, accreditation positions organizations for long-term sustainability. Many funding agencies, grant opportunities, managed care organizations, and healthcare partners recognize CARF accreditation as evidence of organizational quality and responsible stewardship. Accreditation enhances credibility, strengthens partnerships, increases competitiveness for funding, and demonstrates to stakeholders that tribal resources are being managed with integrity and accountability. It also satisfies regulatory requirements that such programs be accredited by an approved and accepted accrediting organization. Most importantly, CARF encourages organizations to measure outcomes that truly matter. Success is not simply the completion of treatment. Success

is seeing Native clients reconnect with their families, their communities, their tribal identity, improve emotional well-being, build resilience, achieve educational success, strengthen healthy relationships, and envision hopeful futures by rejoining and celebrating a life that substance abuse had once separated them from. By collecting and evaluating meaningful data, organizations continually improve services while honoring the voices of those they serve. For Native American communities, healing has always extended beyond the individual. Wellness includes family, ancestors, culture, language, ceremony, community, and future generations. A residential treatment center that embraces both clinical excellence and Indigenous wisdom creates an environment where healing becomes transformational rather than transactional. CARF accreditation is not about changing who we are. It is about strengthening who we have always been. It provides a nationally respected framework that supports our tribal values of respect, responsibility, compassion, humility, courage, and service. It validates our commitment to delivering care that is safe, effective, culturally grounded, and accountable. As tribal nations continue building healthier futures for their families, CARF accreditation stands as a symbol of excellence and resilience. It reflects a shared vision in which evidence-based treatment walks alongside traditional healing, cultural identity becomes a source of strength, and every individual receiving services is empowered to heal while remaining deeply connected to the traditions, values, and spirit of their people. When a tribal residential treatment center achieves CARF accreditation, it is not simply earning recognition - it is strengthening its tribal community, being financially solvent, and creating a legacy of healing for generations yet to come.

Meet the **PEOPLE** BEHIND THE CARE

Brandon Wallace, Facilities Director

Brandon M. Wallace serves as the Director of Facilities for the Osage Nation Health System, where he oversees facility operations, maintenance, security, housekeeping, emergency management, capital improvement projects, regulatory compliance, and the long-term stewardship of healthcare facilities. Since joining ONHS in January 2026, he has focused on building a proactive Facilities Department centered on preventative maintenance, safety, operational excellence, and continuous improvement. Before joining ONHS, Brandon served as Director of Housing for the Osage Nation, leading housing programs, capital construction projects, and strategic initiatives that expanded housing opportunities for Osage families. He also previously served as Construction Manager and Maintenance Technician for the Osage Nation, building extensive experience in facilities operations, infrastructure, project management, and organizational leadership. Earlier in his career, he worked in the construction and oil and gas industries, developing the technical expertise that continues to guide his work today.

A proud citizen of the Osage Nation and lifelong resident of Hominy, Brandon believes that well-maintained healthcare facilities are essential to delivering exceptional patient care. He views every project as an opportunity to strengthen healthcare infrastructure and create safe, dependable environments where providers can focus on caring for patients.



His professional interests include healthcare facilities management, capital project development, emergency preparedness, life safety systems, infrastructure planning, regulatory compliance, preventative maintenance, and organizational leadership. He is passionate about developing systems that improve efficiency, strengthen accountability, and support long-term sustainability.

Outside of ONHS, Brandon serves as Vice Mayor of the City of Hominy and is a member of the Osage County Industrial Authority Board, where he supports economic development and public infrastructure throughout the region. He enjoys spending time with his wife and family, participating in community activities, and taking on hands-on projects that allow him to continue building and creating.

Brandon believes leadership is rooted in service and is guided by the philosophy:

"Great facilities operate quietly in the background, allowing healthcare professionals to focus on what matters most—providing exceptional care to every patient, every day."

Meet the PEOPLE BEHIND THE CARE

Kristy Roper, Patient Registration Supervisor

Kristy Roper serves as the Patient Registration Supervisor for the Osage Nation Health System, where she has been helping patients access quality healthcare for the past four and a half years. She oversees the daily operations of the Patient Registration Department, including provider scheduling, insurance eligibility verification, patient registration, MyChart enrollment, and workflow improvements that support a positive patient experience.

With more than 15 years of experience in tribal healthcare, Kristy has dedicated her career to improving healthcare access for Native communities. Before joining ONHS, she served in leadership roles with Cherokee Nation Health Services and a private medical practice, gaining extensive experience in patient access, healthcare operations, insurance, and staff leadership. She is currently pursuing a Business degree and holds certifications as a CNA, Certified Marketplace Counselor, Tribal Veteran Certification, and State Health Insurance Program counselor.

Growing up receiving care through the Indian Health Service inspired Kristy to pursue a career focused on patient advocacy. She believes every patient



deserves to feel welcomed, respected, and valued from their very first interaction with the Health System. As a Cherokee citizen, she is especially passionate about serving Native families, helping patients overcome barriers to care, and connecting them with the resources they need.

Outside of work, Kristy enjoys traveling, hiking, spending time with her family, and cheering on her favorite college football teams. A proud mother of three sons and grandmother of three, she has also spent more than 20 years supporting youth through football and Johnson O'Malley (JOM) activities. Her guiding philosophy is:

"Lead with compassion, serve with purpose, and always remember that behind every patient is a person, a family, and a story that deserves respect and care."



OSAGE NATION HEALTH SYSTEM
A Culture of Caring

CLOSURE NOTICE

All ONHS departments will be closed from **9:00 AM to 12:45 PM** for training and in-service meetings on:

Wednesday, August 26th

This includes the counseling center, our grant programs, and Title VI - Elder Nutrition.

For Osage Nation Health System closures and updates please follow us on Facebook.



Wahzhazhe Health Center 918.287.9300 / Pharmacy 918.287.9373

Osage Nation Family Violence Department
Helping Students Start the School Year Strong!

BACK TO SCHOOL BASH

**AUGUST 7, 2026
6 PM - 8 PM**

**FREE FUN FOR ALL AGES.
EVENT OPEN TO EVERYONE.**

**OSAGE NATION OUTDOOR HEALTH COMPLEX
316 E. MAIN ST. PAWHUSKA, OKLAHOMA, 74056**

- ★ Free backpacks (while supplies last)
- ★ Free school supplies (while supplies last)
- ★ Free food
- ★ Inflatable bounce houses & games

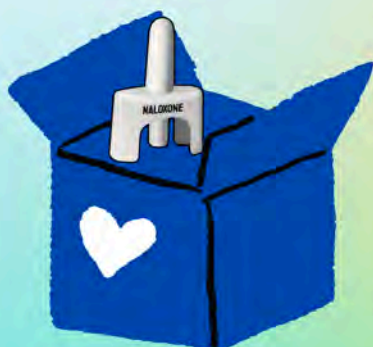
Bring the whole family and enjoy a day of fun while helping students prepare for a successful school year. We look forward to seeing you there!

Osage Nation Family Violence Department
539.212.2411 or familyviolence@osagehealth.org

BE PREPARED TO SAVE A LIFE! FREE OPIOID SAFETY KITS AVAILABLE

(Includes medication lock box and naloxone nasal spray)

Overdoses can happen in any community, and being prepared helps keep people safe. Each kit includes easy-to-use naloxone (Narcan) nasal spray with simple instructions inside. Like a first aid kit—it's better to have it and not need it.



Dial 9-1-1 in an emergency. Kits can only be picked up or delivered from Prevention during normal business hours.

To request opioid safety kit pickup or delivery, scan the QR code or visit:
<https://osagehealth.org/tribal-opioid-response/>

Questions?

Email: kitrequest@osagehealth.org
Call: 918.287.9316

Scan me



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The Employee Recognition Awards Go To... May Awardees



Employee of the Month
Jacque Jones— accepted by
Brandon Wallace



Unsung Hero - Keith Lambert



Special Leadership Award -
Kayla Marsh

June Awardees



Employee of the Month -
Mykaela Watkins accepted
by Kimetha Bennet



Unsung Hero - Samantha Frye



Special Leadership Award -
Kellie Reyes

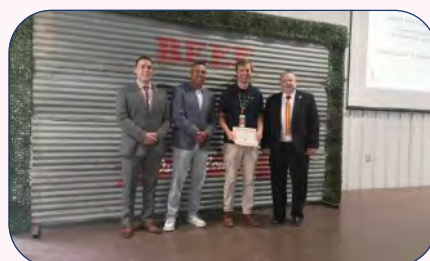
July Awardees



Employee of the Month -
Malorie Pease accepted by
Shelby Lewis



Unsung Hero - Richard McCauley



Special Leadership Award -
Ethan Schulze

MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS

See them all here.



SCAN HERE



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Prenatal Classes

Available to all expectant mothers (Native or carrying a Native child) residing in Osage County.

Every Wednesday from 10 AM - 11 AM.
Classes begin Wednesday, April 22nd.

Location: Osage Nation Health System,
Public Health Nursing Department
1230 W. Main Street
Pawhuska, OK. 74056

This 6 week class will include weekly drawings for prizes for participants.

Register in advance by contacting April Cooper, L.P.N.
at april.cooper@osagehealth.org or 539.212.0243.

brought to you by the IHS Native Public Health Resilience Grant



PHARMACY NOTICE

Due to excessive heat, refrigerated medications will not be mailed out until further notice. Please contact the pharmacy to arrange pick up of refrigerated medications when needed. Thank you.

918.287.9373

EMPOWERING NATIVE YOUTH



HAZAZA
WAHZHATHE YOUTH COUNCIL

Honoring Tradition,
Leading Today,
Building Tomorrow

Ages range for eligibility: 13-24



Get Involved:
prevention@osagehealth.org
608 Kihekah Avenue, Pawhuska, OK
<https://osagehealth.org/native-connections>

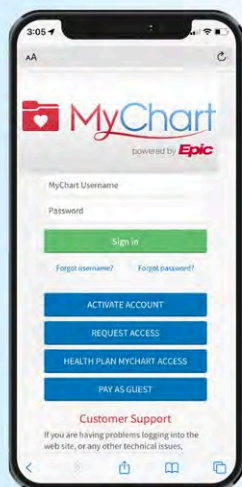


Questions? Contact John Leland, Prevention Advisor
539.212.2417, jleland@osagehealth.org



MyChart

at the OSAGE NATION HEALTH SYSTEM



New Patient Portal:

- Improved access to your health information
- Communicate directly with your provider
- Request an appointment
- And more!

Install the app on iPhone or Android for real-time access to your health information

Apple version note: MyChart app versions 10.9 and above require iOS 16



Download
the app

Download on the
App Store

GET IT ON
Google Play



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For Your Information:

ELDER CHAIR BALLET CLASS

WHEN: WEDNESDAYS | 10 AM
with the exception of the last Wednesday of every month

WHEN: Pawhuska Elder Nutrition / Title VI Site
350 Senior Circle, Pawhuska, OK

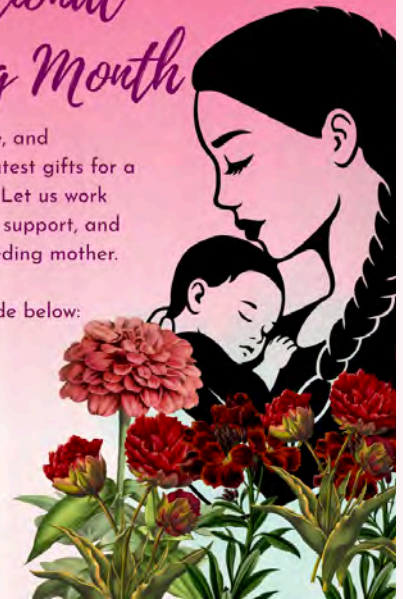


OSAGE NATION HEALTH SYSTEM
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August is National Breastfeeding Month

A mother's love begins with care, and breastfeeding is one of the greatest gifts for a child's health and development. Let us work together to promote awareness, support, and appreciation for every breastfeeding mother.

For breastfeeding facts scan code below:



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A Culture of Caring

Attention Patients:

Please bring all of your current medication bottles to your appointments. This will help our providers and nurses accurately review and enter your information into our new electronic health system, Epic.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding!



Osage Nation Health System - Pharmacy
316 E. Main Street, Pawhuska, OK. 74056 918.287.9300

ART CLASSES

**EVERY
WEDNESDAY**

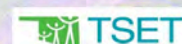
1:00 - 2:00 PM

**ONHS Elder Nutrition/Title VI
350 Senior Circle Drive**

Classes are FREE to Elders!



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Observances for July & August

July:

Monthly Observances

- Cord Blood Awareness Month
- Group B Strep Awareness Month
- Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month
- Arthritis Awareness Month
- National Cleft & Craniofacial Awareness & Prevention Month
- National Minority Mental Health Month
- Sarcoma Awareness Month
- UV Safety Month

Days to Note

- Chronic Disease Awareness Day – July 10
- World Hepatitis Day – July 28

August:

Monthly Observances

- Autoinflammatory Awareness Month
- Children's Eye Health and Safety Month
- Digestive Tract Paralysis Awareness Month
- Gastroparesis Awareness Month
- National Breastfeeding Month
- National Immunization Awareness Month
- National Minority Donor Awareness Month
- Psoriasis Action Month

Days to Note

- World Lung Cancer Day - August 1
- Health Unit Coordinator Appreciation Day - August 23
- International Overdose Awareness Day - August 31

Awareness Weeks

- August 1 - 7: CPR & AED Awareness Week
- August 2 - 8: National Health Center Week
- August 10 - 16: OSHA's Safe and Sound Week



APPOINTMENT REMINDERS



CONFIRM APPOINTMENTS



CANCEL APPOINTMENTS

Text **START** to **98041**
or SCAN the QR code to OPT IN



Hello World gives you more control on your healthcare journey, with notifications of appointments sent right to you via text message.



OSAGE NATION HEALTH SYSTEM
A Culture of Caring

Wahzhazhe Health Center

316 East Main Street
Pawhuska, OK 74056
Tel: 918.287.9300

To report an ER visit within 72 hours, please call Purchase Referred Care at 918.287.9388.

Compliance Concerns: compliance@osagehealth.org

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

24/7 Suicide Crisis Lifeline: 988
ONHS Counseling Center
M-F 8a-4:30p
539.212.2499

Wahzhazhe Health Center 918.287.9300
Title VI 539.212.2510 Prevention
539.212.2521 ONHS Security
539.212.2559 Family Violence
Prevention (FVP) 539.212.2506 FVP
24/7 Crisis Hotline 866.897.4747

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE