

Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc., Area Agency on Aging

“Anytime we can train community members to go back and bring that training to their community—that’s a real plus.”

– *Mary Weston, Family Caregiver Support Specialist*

Program Description

The Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc., Area Agency on Aging (ITCA-AAA) provides caregiver support and an array of other long-term supports and services to elder members of 17 tribes in Arizona. The program administers caregiver support services through Title III and Title VI, Part C funding. Caregiver support services include caregiver trainings, information referrals, support groups, and technical assistance for caregiver support staff.

Successful Strategies

The ITCA-AAA successfully provides caregiver support services to a large number of Arizona tribes by tailoring their services to tribal needs. Successful strategies include hiring culturally competent staff and volunteers, providing assistance with complex paperwork, and comprehensive trainings for caregivers and staff.

Partnership

The ITCA-AAA partners with a number of federal and state agencies and nonprofit organizations to deliver caregiver support trainings and services. Partnership organizations include:

- AARP
- Department of Veteran Affairs, specifically VA’s Research for Enhancing Alzheimer’s Caregivers Health (REACH) program
- Governor’s Advisory Council on Aging
- Indian Health Services

Operated by: The tribal leadership of 21 member tribes in Arizona

Location: Phoenix, AZ

Contact Information:

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Community: The ITCA-AAA is an intertribal, nonprofit corporation that provides a wide variety of support services to elder community members of 17 Arizona tribes, including caregiver support services.

Cultural Considerations

ITCA-AAA incorporates cultural considerations through:

- Effectively communicating with tribal elders by hiring staff and volunteers who speak tribal languages
- Incorporating traditional art and dance into caregiver trainings and conference presentations
- Determining a community's unique needs and establishing effective caregiver support programs by having staff work directly with each community they serve

"Sitting down and talking to the elders in a small group setting can be a very effective way of communicating at the tribal level."

- Mary Weston, Family Caregiver Support Specialist, ITCA-AAA

Training

ITCA-AAA provides a wide range of training for caregivers and staff providing caregiver support services. Caregiver trainings focus on caregiver responsibilities and self-care. Staff receive quarterly trainings on various caregiver support topics, which they provide to communities. Staff also train community members on how to conduct caregiver trainings. Training topics include:

- Chronic disease management
- Stress management
- Personal care

Funding

The program receives funding from Title VI, Part C and Title III grants and some support from tribes.

Future Considerations

ITCA-AAA would like to see increased funding for caregiver support services that would include:

- Full-time caregiver support staff in each tribal community
- Increased respite care
- Enhanced care planning to help transition elders' medical needs from institutions to communities

Lessons Learned

ITCA-AAA staff highlight the limitations of Web-based trainings among remote tribal communities that do not have internet access. Providing in-person caregiver support trainings in tribal communities helps mitigate this problem. ITCA-AAA also notes the importance of considering transportation challenges among tribal communities in remote parts of Arizona when creating programs.