

MARCH 2024 NEWSLETTER

# QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Sault Tribe Health Division



## Health Division Collaborates to Complete Quality Improvement Series

BY MARY-ELLEN HEMMING

The Sault Tribe Health Division received the Strong Systems Stronger Communities grant in the summer of 2023. They collaborated with the Director of Quality, Risk, and Compliance at MyMichigan Medical Center Sault, Stephanie Pins, to provide a quality improvement (QI) training opportunity to all Sault Tribe Health Division staff. Throughout November of 2023, staff could participate in four trainings on the following topics: Basic Foundations of QI, QI Identifying Priorities and Tools, QI Processes and Competency, and QI Innovation, Success, and Sustainability.



The post-assessment report shows that 100% of staff attendees answered yes to the questions, “Do you feel you have a better understanding of quality improvement work after this training? After this training, do you feel more comfortable using the Plan-Do-Check-Act performance improvement tool? Are you able to identify what key performance indicators (KPIs) are for the area where you work?” Also, 70% answered likely or very likely when asked, “Do you feel you can implement change in the work that you do?”

Staff unable to attend the four training sessions can access the recordings at their convenience. The recordings provide Sault Tribe Health Division team members with ongoing QI training references to assist in their continuous improvement efforts.

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## Shingrix Vaccination Study with Marquette County Sault Tribe Patients

BY STEPHANIE DEPETRO

Did you know the same virus that causes chickenpox can be reactivated years later to cause shingles? Anyone who has had chickenpox may develop shingles, also known as herpes zoster. However, not everyone who has had chickenpox will develop shingles. Vaccination is one way to increase your likelihood of protecting against shingles symptoms, including pain, itching, tingling, fever, headache, chills, upset stomach, and a rash that often develops.

The CDC recommends that adults 50 years and older get two doses of the shingles vaccine (Shingrix). According to the CDC, Shingrix “is more than 90% effective at preventing shingles and long-term nerve pain called postherpetic neuralgia, or PHN.”

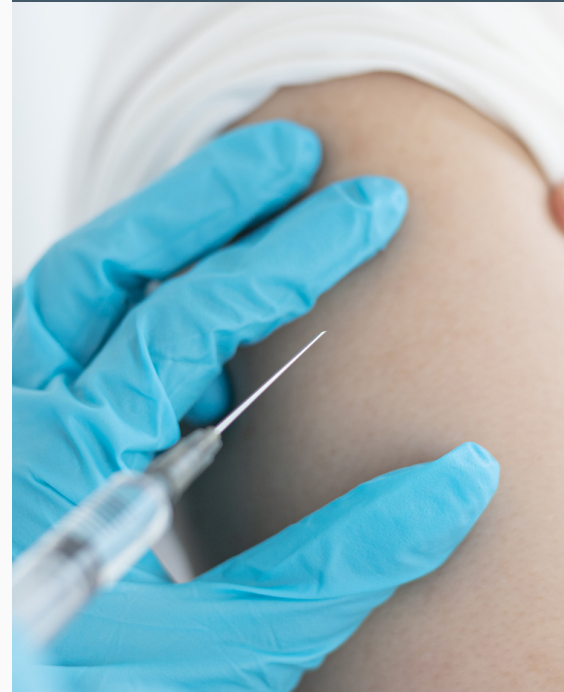
The Sault Tribe Community Health Department in Marquette, Michigan, completed a quality improvement study to investigate and increase the herpes zoster virus (shingles) vaccination rate among eligible Sault Tribe Indian Health Services patients 50 years and older living in Marquette County. First, staff identified and ran a data report on eligible patients, which indicated 106 of 179 (or 59%) had been appropriately vaccinated for herpes zoster with the Shingrix vaccination before the start of the study. The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) target rates for age-appropriate vaccinations in patients over 19 were 55.1% in 2021 and 44.4% in 2022, the 2023 benchmark for the study.

Next, staff contacted patients needing the Shingrix vaccination, and an additional 33 patients were vaccinated, bringing the total to 139 of 179 (or 78%). The remaining 22% or 40 eligible patients either chose not to receive the vaccine or did not respond to telephone messages. The study found that although the original Shingrix vaccination rate for eligible patients, 59%, was already above the GPRA benchmarks of 55.1% and 44.4%, the rate quickly rose to 78%, resulting in more Marquette County Sault Tribe patients protected against shingles and its symptoms. In addition, a corrective action plan, including a chart preparation system, new staff, chart reviews, and immunization clinics, was updated to ensure vaccination reminders are efficiently completed moving forward. Please talk with your healthcare provider if you have any questions about the shingles vaccine.



**"Practice the philosophy of continuous improvement. Get a little bit better every single day."**

BRIAN TRACY



Shingles vaccination: What everyone should know (2023) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/shingles/public/shingrix/index.html>.



## Sault Tribe Health Division Hires New Quality Improvement Coordinator

The Sault Tribe Health Division hired a new Quality Improvement Coordinator, Mary-Elle Hemming, who began in the role on November 27, 2023. Ms. Hemming has a Master of Health Administration degree and seven years of experience working with the Health Division in the Community Health Department, first as a Community Health Educator, followed by time as the Health Education Supervisor.

In her spare time, Ms. Hemming likes to be outdoors with her family, fiancé, and spunky dog, Roo. Her hobbies include gardening, bike riding, and listening to music. Ms. Hemming states, "I am excited to jump into the new role, promote continuous quality improvement, and facilitate the process within the Sault Tribe Health Division."

## Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 2024 Quality Conference



The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 2024 Annual Quality Conference will be held April 8-10, 2024, in Baltimore, MD, and there is also a virtual attendance option. This year's conference theme is "Resilient and Ready Together: Creating an Optimal Environment for Quality Healthcare for Individuals, Families, and Communities." Some topics for the conference include collecting and using quality data, expanding access to quality and affordable behavioral and physical healthcare, high reliability and quality improvement, and new technology and innovation.



For more information, please visit: <https://www.cmsqualcon.com/en/>

For more information on the Sault Tribe Health Division's Quality Improvement Program, please contact Mary-Elle Hemming at 906-635-8627 ext. 42627 or [mhemming@saulttribe.net](mailto:mhemming@saulttribe.net).