



GWYN DBP
CHEROKEE NATION®

Health Services 2024 Annual Report

For calendar year January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024

—TOGETHER—
COMMUNITY • FAMILY • CULTURE

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Osiyo!

A better life begins with better health care. This guiding principle continues to drive the Cherokee Nation's historic investments in our health system as we work to ensure the wellbeing of our 470,000-plus citizens and all residents of Northeast Oklahoma.

As the largest tribe in the United States with an annual financial impact of more than \$3 billion in the state, we operate the largest tribal health system in the country, serving over 2 million patient visits annually. Cherokee Nation stands as one of the great success stories in American history, and our health care achievements are central to this legacy.

The past year has marked several transformative milestones in our journey. We are proud to announce plans to assume operations of Claremore Indian Hospital by late 2025, a facility that has been operated by the federal government since 1930. As outlined in our State of the Nation address in August 2024, this strategic expansion will significantly enhance our ability to serve Cherokee citizens and members of all federally recognized tribes in the Claremore area.

Meanwhile, construction continues on our state-of-the-art \$470 million hospital that will replace the nearly 40-year-old W.W. Hastings Hospital in Tahlequah. Construction is also in its final stages on a 106,000-square-foot, \$84 million health center in Salina while the tribe continues to improve and update services across existing facilities throughout our reservation.

Our commitment extends beyond physical health needs. Recognizing that complete wellness encompasses mental health, we've begun work on the Cherokee Nation's first adult residential drug treatment center. This project represents just one component of our historic \$100 million mental health investment through the Public Health and Wellness Fund Act legislation.

We are equally focused on building our health care workforce from within our communities. In 2024, we celebrated the inaugural graduating class from the Oklahoma State University College of Osteopathic Medicine at the Cherokee Nation. Additionally, the tribe's Family Medicine Residency Program graduated six new physicians, with five choosing to continue their careers with Cherokee Nation. These achievements reinforce our understanding that our people respond better when their health care professionals come from the community and understand Cherokee culture.

These initiatives represent our long-term strategy to make health care better and attract top-notch professionals to serve our patients. By expanding our facilities, addressing mental health needs, and developing our workforce, we are building a health care system that honors our past while securing a healthier future for generations to come. This commitment to health care access and quality remains essential for the future of our people and the preservation of tribal government.



Chuck Hoskin Jr.

Chuck Hoskin Jr.
Principal Chief



Bryan Warner

Bryan Warner
Deputy Principal Chief

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Executive Branch

The executive branch of the Cherokee Nation is charged with executing the laws of the Cherokee Nation, establishing tribal policy and delegating authority as necessary for day-to-day operations of all programs and enterprises administered by the Cherokee Nation tribal government. These leaders include the Principal Chief, Deputy Principal Chief and seven cabinet positions appointed by the Principal Chief and confirmed by the Tribal Council.

Currently Cherokee Nation cabinet positions as of May 2025: Secretary of State Shella Bowlin, Chief of Staff Dr. Corey Bunch, Attorney General Chad Harsha, Treasurer Janees Taylor, Delegate to Congress Kim Teehee, Secretary of Natural Resources Christina Justice, Acting Marshal Daniel Mead, Secretary of Veterans Affairs S. Joe Crittenden and Deputy Secretary of State Canaan Duncan.

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Legislative Branch

The legislative branch consists of a 17-member Council of the Cherokee Nation. The council is elected by popular vote to four-year terms. There are 15 councilors elected to represent the districts within the Cherokee Nation reservation boundaries and two councilors elected to represent citizens who live outside the reservation. The Council of the Cherokee Nation establishes laws necessary and proper for the good of the Cherokee Nation and conducts other business to further the interests of the Cherokee Nation and its citizens. A speaker elected by other council members presides over the council.

Current Members of the Council of the Cherokee Nation as of May 2025: Sasha Blackfox-Qualls, D. 1; Candessa Tehee, D. 2; Lisa Hall, D. 3; Mike Dobbins, D. 4; E.O. “Junior” Smith, D. 5; Daryl Legg, D. 6; Joshua Sam, D. 7; Codey Poindexter, D. 8; Mike Shambaugh, D. 9; Melvina Shotpouch, D. 10; Kendra McGeady, D. 11; Dora Patzkowski, D. 12; Joe Deere, D. 13; Kevin Easley, Jr., D. 14; Danny Callison, D. 15; Julia Coates, At-Large; Johnny Kidwell, At-Large.

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Judicial Branch

The judicial branch includes the Cherokee Nation Supreme Court and District Court. The Supreme Court consists of five justices who are Cherokee Nation citizens and licensed attorneys nominated by the Principal Chief and confirmed by the Tribal Council. The justices serve staggered 10-year terms. The district court serves citizens by providing a forum for general jurisdiction over disputes arising under the laws and constitution of Cherokee Nation. District court judges are selected in the same manner as the justices and serve four-year terms.

Current Members of the Cherokee Nation Supreme Court Justices as of May 2025: Justice Rex Earl Starr, Justice Mark L. Dobbins, Justice Lee W. Paden, Chief Justice John C. Garrett, and Justice Shawna S. Baker.

About Health Services

Cherokee Nation is the largest federally recognized Native American tribe with more than 470,000 registered tribal citizens. There are 258,789 citizens residing in Oklahoma, and 137,295 living within the reservation of the Cherokee Nation. Cherokee Nation Health Services (CNHS) is the largest tribally operated health care system in the United States. CNHS is a growing multifaceted health care system. In the clinical setting, the system serves over 1.6 million patients throughout 11 health care facilities. These include nine tribal health centers, one employee center and one tribal hospital. Additionally, CNHS offers a wide array of community, social, and mental

health programs such as behavioral health, community health nursing, cancer prevention, diabetes prevention, Women Infants and Children, emergency medical services, environmental health, health research, emergency and risk management, clinical quality improvement and quality management. CNHS administers programs to deliver effective patient care, coordinate services, manage IT, and oversee facilities. The departments addressed above include but are not limited to Health IT, Health Privacy and Compliance, and Institutional Review Board (IRB), Research and Health Finance.

Vision

Healthy Cherokee people, families and communities for this and future generations.

Mission

To ensure the story of the Cherokee Nation continues, we partner with individuals, families, and communities to improve our health and quality of life.

Values

Cherokee Nation Health Services operates with seven values and guiding principles.

Self-Determination: For Cherokees by Cherokees

Excellence: A legacy of superior quality and selflessness carried through generations

Respect: Holding each other sacred

Visible to the Community: Our strength is in our collective collaborations with each other

Integrity: Doing the right thing and achieving the highest standard in service

Compassion: Supporting each other with genuine concern and kindness

Equity: Balancing resources to address greatest needs.

“This year, we expanded our services and reach, providing more opportunities for individuals and families to access high-quality health care and support. Whether working together with other health care providers, community organizations, or simply supporting one another, our strength is found in our collective commitment to improving the lives of Cherokee families. We know that the road ahead will require continued collaboration and dedication, but with the strength of our guiding principles, we will build a healthier future for all. Together, we will ensure that every generation of Cherokees has access to the care they need, ensuring lasting well-being for our people.”

-Dr. R. Stephen Jones, CEO and Executive Director, Health Services



“Our commitment to quality improvement initiatives has remained a cornerstone of our efforts as we expand and enhance the services we provide to our community. The construction of our new W.W. Hastings Hospital and outpatient clinic in Salina is an exciting milestone that will further elevate the care we deliver. Additionally, we are proud to continue evolving as a teaching facility, and we are inspired daily by the dedication and hard work of the medical, nursing and other students who serve and learn alongside us. Together, we remain focused on providing excellent care and fostering a culture of learning and improvement within our health system.”

-Dr. Beth Harp, Executive Medical Director/Chief Medical Officer, Health Services



“The Cherokee Nation Health Services value of excellence is embodied in this year’s report because of our recent achievements such as renewing our Primary Stroke Center accreditation along with the Oklahoma Quality Award. The Health Services team is truly achieving a legacy of superior quality and selflessness that will benefit generations to come, and it’s an honor to be a part of this work.”

-Brian Hail, Chief Operating Officer, Health Services



“I am incredibly proud to work for Cherokee Nation Health Services, where the dedication and hard work of every employee truly shine. The passion and commitment of the team make a significant impact on the care we provide, ensuring that each patient is treated with the utmost respect and attention. The focus on patient care is at the heart of everything we do, and I’m excited for the future as we continue to innovate and elevate the level of service we provide. It’s an honor to be part of such a dedicated organization, and I look forward to all that we will achieve together.”

-Wayne Coldwell, Chief Operating Officer, Health Services



“The future is exciting as we look forward to the completion of prodigious construction projects, initiation and progression of other construction projects, new and exciting partnerships and service lines, and the assumption of Claremore Indian Hospital, all of which will help CNHS continue to be guided by our mission and vision and meet the health care needs of our patient population. I remain humbled and honored to serve the tribal members who utilize the largest and best tribal health care system in the country.”

-Dr. Brett Gray, Deputy Executive Medical Director, Health Services



Cherokee Nation Health Services Business Model

Cherokee Nation Health Services business model is designed to deliver high-quality, patient-centered health care services to the tribal customer segments of Cherokee Nation, including individual patients seeking medical treatment, families involved in care decisions, and insurance providers looking for coverage partnerships. Key relationships are cultivated through personalized care, ongoing patient education, and active community engagement initiatives.

Organizational Strategic Priorities

Developing an integrated Cherokee Nation Health Services system requires continued investment in our capacity, infrastructure, resources, and ability to adapt and respond to the needs of the community. Cherokee Nation Health Services leadership identified the following five strategic directions as foundational to our vision:

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Workforce Development:

Proactively recruit, develop, and empower highly skilled top performers across all divisions of the organization, while fostering an engaged workforce through training and professional development.



Technology and Cyber Security:

Utilize advanced technology to improve productivity, reduce costs, and enable better decision-making while implementing a comprehensive cybersecurity strategy that safeguards our digital assets and information.



Innovation and Quality Care:

Improve patient outcomes, optimize health care delivery, and drive continuous advancements in medical practices through collaboration, education, and evidence-based strategies.



Financial Growth:

Achieve sustainable financial growth, optimize revenue streams, control costs, and enhance operational efficiencies by developing and deploying utilization review and management strategies for outpatient and inpatient care and services.



Health Equity Advancement:

Advance health equity by ensuring equitable access to health care services, reducing disparities in health care outcomes, and promoting cultural competence and community engagement.

By implementing the strategic plan, we are working toward a better CNHS. Our actions today are setting the foundation for the future of our health system.

Cherokee Nation Health Services Business Model

The strategic roadmap provides a process for CNHS leadership to track our progress as we implement our strategic plan over time. The roadmap aligns the strategic plan's goals, objectives, and activities with those responsible for the activities and time-framed targets. In addition to the strategic roadmap, CNHS leadership has identified the following areas as instrumental for successfully implementing this plan:

By Cherokee, For Cherokee: although the plan focuses on strengthening CNHS organizational capacity, community is the core of the CNHS strategic plan. Therefore, the plan must align with Cherokee Nation tribal health improvement plan which includes health priorities identified by community members. Upon completion of the next tribal health improvement plan, CNHS leadership will review the strategic plan to identify areas where CNHS can strengthen its capacity to support tribal health improvement efforts. As needed, CNHS leadership will update the strategic plan to ensure CNHS is primed to support the community in the tribal-wide effort to improve health.

Implementation, Review, And Revision Of The Plan: the roadmap will be monitored by CNHS senior leadership, workgroups, and committees. Workgroups have been formed for each strategic priority, and the teams will meet quarterly to determine what progress has been made and plan activities for the next quarter. Appointed workgroup leaders will complete an annual review and report findings to the CNHS governing board and other stakeholders as appropriate. During the annual review, CNHS leadership will have the option to revise the strategic plan, as needed, and ensure the strategic plan continues to address topics that support systems integration.

Performance Management: a system for performance measurement is also built into the plan. The dashboard is designed for documenting and monitoring the strategic plan measures, targets, and responsible parties, and will be maintained by performance management staff. Performance management staff will assist workgroup leaders in presenting information during the strategic plan's annual review.

Cherokee Nation is nearing completion on its six-story \$400 million hospital that will replace the nearly 40-year-old aging W.W. Hastings Hospital in Tahlequah.

Largest tribally operated health care system in the United States

- 2 million system-wide encounters
- 11 health care facilities and one youth treatment center
- Community, social and mental health programs



CLAREMORE INDIAN HOSPITAL

Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. signed a Council resolution supporting compact discussions with Indian Health Service over the tribe's effort to assume operations of Claremore Indian Hospital by late 2025. The federal government has operated the inpatient and outpatient Claremore Service Unit, commonly known as the Claremore Indian Hospital, since 1930. Indian Health Service, an agency of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, serves all citizens of federally recognized tribes at the facility, located in Claremore. In September 2024, Principal Chief Hoskin and Deputy Chief Warner proposed that Cherokee Nation assume operations of IHS Claremore with unanimous support of the Council of the Cherokee Nation. Since then, IHS and Cherokee Nation have been in negotiations over the tribe's assumption of operations.

VINITA HEALTH CENTER

The Cherokee Nation and U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs Eastern Oklahoma VA Health Care System opened its VA Clinic inside the tribe's Vinita Health Center. The 1,300 square feet of leased space with a VA Primary Care Team, serves both Native and non-Native Veterans in the region. The VA clinic includes a waiting area, exam rooms, work areas, and parking and works with the tribe's Vinita Health Center to accomplish lab and x-ray services for seamless care.



ADULT RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT

Leaders of the Cherokee Nation gathered on Aug. 24 to break ground on a new state-of-the-art adult residential treatment center near Tahlequah, the first of \$76 million worth of capital projects the tribe is undertaking to help Cherokees struggling with substance use disorders. The future facility, first announced in February 2023, will provide comprehensive and culturally based treatment services for drug addiction for Cherokee citizens via group and individual counseling, peer support services, care management, Cherokee cultural activities, equine therapy and more. The project is estimated to be a \$25 million investment.

2024 Patient age breakdown

0-18 years – 25,602

19-45 years – 38,306

46-64 years – 24,168

65-80 years – 14,716

81+ years – 2,912



56,327

Patient visits to the
emergency and urgent care
departments in 2024



2,357

Calls ran by the
W.W. Hastings Hospital
EMS in 2024



2,271,474

Prescriptions filled by
pharmacy services in 2024



4,489

Surgical procedures
performed at W.W. Hastings
Hospital in 2024



7,480

Surgical procedures performed at
the Cherokee Nation Outpatient
Health Center in 2024



163,655

Contract referrals processed
with a 97% approval rate by
contract health in 2024



113,454

Patient visits to Cherokee Nation
Dental Services in 2024

W.W. Hastings Replacement Hospital

The new hospital, a \$470 million investment authorized under the tribe's Respond, Recover and Rebuild plan, will span 400,000 square feet. The six-story structure will have 127 beds, a rooftop helipad, and will allow for expanded services for Cherokee and Native citizens. The facility will replace the existing Hastings Hospital that was built in the mid-1980s and spans 180,000 square feet. The new hospital is projected to be completed and operational as soon as 2026. The new hospital will connect to the Cherokee Nation Outpatient Health Center via a bridge, allowing easy access for Cherokee citizens and staff across the medical campus in Tahlequah. The new Hastings Hospital will offer a wide range of services, including an Emergency Room, surgery facilities, an Intensive Care Unit, and imaging services. The building will also feature a pharmacy, laboratory, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, and hospice care. Additionally, it will provide dietary services, acute care, and other medical offerings to serve the community's health care needs.

Innovative patient intake

Cherokee Nation Health Services now offers a real-time mobile patient intake and contactless check-in platform at each of its 11 health care facilities across the tribe's reservation. The new check-in platform was implemented to provide a seamless, easy, and engaging way for patients to complete consent forms, upload images, and update intakes at their convenience. In advance of future appointments, patients can speed up their registration process by confirming their appointment via mobile text message and receiving a secure Cherokee Nation link to begin a pre-visit intake.

Rare Disease Summit

About 7,000 identified rare diseases impact approximately 1 in 10 Oklahomans. The Cherokee Nation's first Rare Disease Summit on Nov. 21 marked a crucial step toward addressing the too often overlooked health care needs of this population. The annual summit embodies the tribe's deep commitment to helping our citizens with complex health challenges. This informative gathering, organized by Cherokee Nation Health Services, aims to close gaps in health care access and ensure that every patient at Cherokee Nation Health Services feels seen and heard, no matter how rare their condition may be. Participants hear from medical experts in neurology, rheumatology, and infectious diseases in both panel discussions and question-and-answer sessions as they discuss multidisciplinary approaches for tackling rare health conditions.



68,667

Visits for Cherokee Nation
Behavioral Health patients in 2024



7,793

Medicated Assisted Treatment
patient visits in 2024



997

Babies delivered at W.W.
Hastings Hospital in 2024



9,739

Women screened for breast
cancer in 2024



4,988

Women screened for cervical
cancer in 2024



11,249

Clients received dietary
services in 2024



2024 Accolades and Accreditations

Stroke Services

W.W. Hastings Hospital achieved the Rural Stroke SILVER Award by the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association. The recognition highlights their continued success using the Get With The Guidelines® program. Get With The Guidelines® Stroke Program is an in-hospital program for improving stroke care by promoting consistent adherence to the latest scientific treatment guidelines.

Family Medicine Residency

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) featured the Cherokee Nation Health Services Family Medicine Residency Program and interviewed Dr. Dustin R. Beck, Program Director. This interview is part of a series featuring Sponsoring Institutions and programs providing rural graduate medical education (GME) experiences. The Osteopathic Medical Education Consortium of Oklahoma (OMEEO) Family Medicine Residency program is a rural program affiliated with Cherokee Nation Health Services in Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

Rendering of new Cherokee Nation W.W.
Hastings Hospital.



2024 Accolades and Accreditations

Health Care Heroes

Chief Operating Officer Brian Hail and Chief Medical Officer Beth Harp have been named among the Journal Record's 2024 Health Care Heroes. The recognition program, now in its fifth year, honors individuals who go above and beyond to help make Oklahoma a healthier, safer, and happier place to live and work. The Journal Record honored 23 Health Care Heroes award winners in 2024. The 2024 Health Care Heroes winners were celebrated at an evening even at the Oklahoma Hall of Fame.

Autism Task Force

The Cherokee Nation Autism Task Force issued a report that revealed its findings and recommendations to better address autism diagnosis and treatment for Cherokee Nation citizens. The task force issued its report during a ceremony on April 17, when Chief Hoskin also signed a proclamation declaring April as Autism Awareness Month in the Cherokee Nation.

2024 Accolades and Accreditations

Community Champion Award

Childers Architect shared that Cherokee Nation Outpatient Health Center, a LEED Silver-Certified building, has won the Community Champion Award by the US Green Building Council (USGBC) Oklahoma. This state-of-the-art building is the largest tribal outpatient health facility in the country. This special recognition is for a project, group, or person that deploys exceptional actions that address community needs and social equity, meeting USGBC's vision of healthy and sustainable buildings for all.

NITRO Program

The Cherokee Nation hosted a successful kick-off event for the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health's Novel Innovations for Tissue Regeneration in Osteoarthritis (NITRO) program. The NITRO program aims to create and commercialize injectable and implantable regenerative therapies for osteoarthritis, a debilitating condition affecting millions of Americans.



2024 Accolades and Accreditations

Cherokee Nation Health Executive named HAMMRC Board Chair

Cherokee Nation Health Services Chief Operating Officer Brian Hail has been named Chairman of the Board for the Heartland Advanced Medical Manufacturing Regional Cluster (HAMMRC) Board of Directors. Cherokee Nation is a founding partner of HAMMRC, a two-state corporation with a focus on attracting and keeping high-quality health care manufacturing jobs in Northeast Oklahoma and Northwest Arkansas. Hail, who has served on the board since 2021, will be tasked with engaging and involving regional health care stakeholders in HAMMRC which is central to its strategy of increasing partnerships in the area.

Great 100 Nurses

Six Cherokee Nation Health Services nurses were recognized in The Great 100 Nurses Celebration of Oklahoma. The Great 100 Celebrations have honored thousands of nurses across Louisiana, North Carolina, Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas. These exemplary nurses are selected based on their concern for humanity, their contributions to the profession of nursing, and their mentoring of others.

The CNHS Nurses recognized are:

- Summer Clay, RN
- Ginger Glory, RN
- Kathleen Imhoff, RN
- Brandy Law, RN
- Laura Lundberg, RN
- Contrel Mayes, RN



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