

Rene Ramirez, Lummi Nation, WA

Rene is the Program Sponsor for the Lummi Healing Spirit Clinic Opiate Treatment Program (OTP). The Lummi Healing Spirit Clinic is one of the longest running tribally owned and operated buprenorphine/naloxone (Suboxone) only Opiate Treatment Programs in the nation. It is a part of the Lummi Counseling Services program and provides outpatient treatment for people who are dependent on opiates including prescription drugs, heroin, and fentanyl. Rene was instrumental in transitioning from an office based Opioid treatment model to an Opiate Treatment Program with a paperless electronic health record (EHR). Rene also helped set up the business processes for efficient revenue capture for the Lummi Nation. Rene works with a total of 14 counselors, 3 medical providers and 3 nurses. Rene served as the Computer Systems Analyst for 4 years prior to being promoted to Program Sponsor. Since inception of the OTP, Lummi has expanded services through grants and 3rd party revenue to include Peer Support Services (Recovery Coaches and Peer Support Counselors), Transitional Housing, Youth Engagement and Prevention, and various other Harm Reduction strategies. He also works with the Northwest Indian College as a Community Action Board Member for their Native Transformations Project II and is a small part of the Drug Task Force Committee helping to address the fentanyl epidemic at the community level through treatment and prevention. Currently, Lummi is working on adding Methadone to its OTP and a Secure Withdrawal Management Services Wellness Center that respects both Tribal Sovereignty and Culture in treatment.

