



National Resource Center
on Native American Aging

NRCNAA

Title VI Needs Assessment Survey:
Identifying Our Needs:
A Survey of Elders Cycle VII
(2017-2020)

2021 Data Book

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



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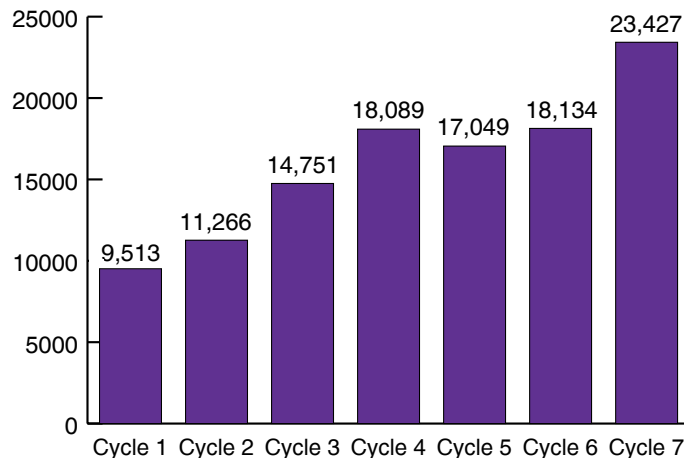
Boozhoo,

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Title VI programs across the nation – this data booklet would not have been possible without your partnership and dedication. Your endless efforts in serving our Native Elders do not go unnoticed, and we are incredibly grateful for the hard work you do each day to ensure that Elders' voices are heard and their needs are addressed.

The data shown in the following pages presents findings from “Identifying Our Needs: A Survey of Elders” VII, which was funded by the Administration for Community Living through the Office of American Indian/Alaska Native/ Native Hawaiian Programs. Your partnership in conducting the survey every three years is yet another example of your dedication and hard work in advocating for the needs of Elders in your community.

Without your partnership and dedication to your programs, the data to show the needs of Native Elders would not be possible. Because of this, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to the Title VI Directors and staff for all you do every

Participation in Cycles I - VII



Participation in the Title VI Needs Assessment has grown steadily each cycle. Cycle VII saw the largest number of participants to date with 23,427 surveys collected across tribes in the U.S.

day for our Elders and for ensuring they are not forgotten, they are represented, and their voices are heard through the information that you collect with this survey.

It is because of you that they have a voice to show their needs – you are empowering our Elders to have their voices heard.

Miigwech

ABOUT THIS DATA BOOK

National Resource Center on Native American Aging Background

The National Resource Center on Native American Aging (NRCNAA) is committed to identifying Native Elder health and social issues. Through education, training, and technical assistance, we assist in developing community-based solutions to improve the quality of life and delivery of support services to the Native aging population.

Every 3 years since 1998, the NRCNAA has conducted the “Identifying Our Needs: A Survey of Elders” Needs Assessment. This survey process, funded by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), collects health and social information from Native Elders across the United States.

During the most recent round (Cycle VII), data was collected for approximately 23,000 Native Elders from April 2017 through March 2020.

The information contained in this booklet highlights summaries and facts regarding health and social data that was collected. All information included in this data booklet refers to aggregate data among those over the age of 55 years. Together, these pages provide a comprehensive overview of the health, needs, and stories of Native Elders across the nation.

Number of Indigenous Communities Participating in Cycle VII

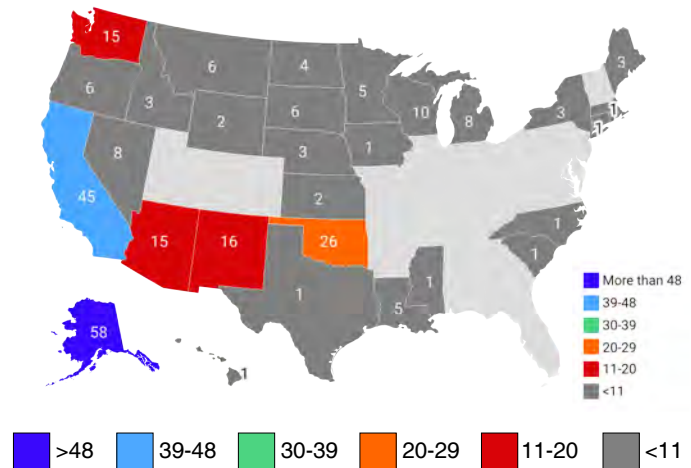




TABLE OF CONTENTS

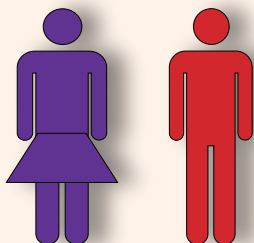
6	Demographics Overview	22	Social Support and Housing
8	General Health Status	24	Social Functioning
10	Activities of Daily Living	26	Spotlight: Grandparent Caregiving
11	Screening	27	Spotlight: Disability
12	Vision, Hearing, and Dental	28	Spotlight: Chronic Conditions
14	Memory and Disability	29	Spotlight: Veterans
16	Healthcare Access	30	Who We Are
18	Tobacco and Alcohol Use	31	What We Can Do For You
20	Weight and Nutrition		

DEMOGRAPHICS OVERVIEW

21,153

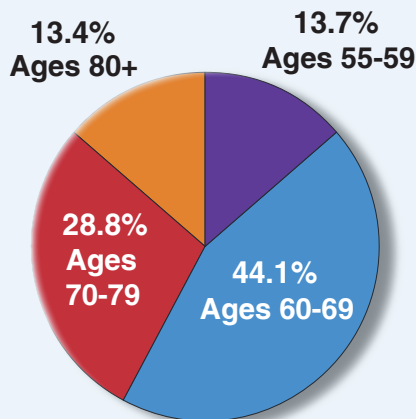
Native Elders over the age of 55 completed the Cycle VII “Identifying Our Needs: A Survey of Elders” assessment

Gender

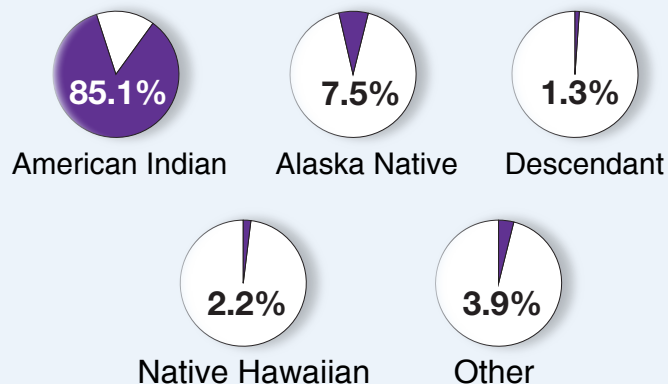


61.8% Female
38.2% Male

Age

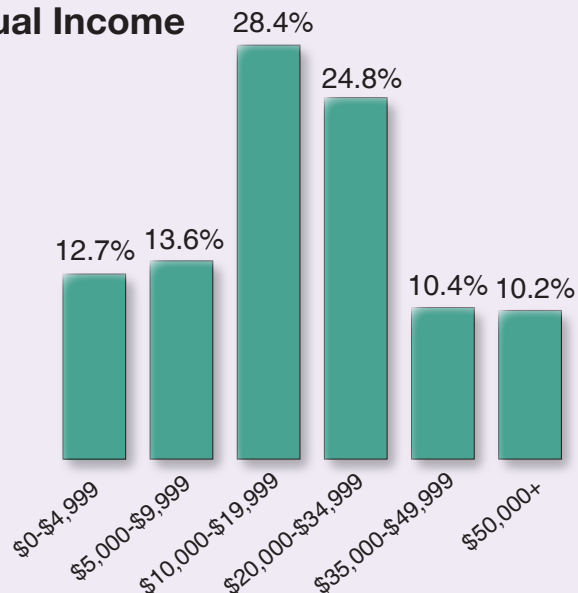


Ethnicity



The majority of Elders reported being American Indian (85.1%). The next largest group was Alaska Native (7.5%).

Annual Income



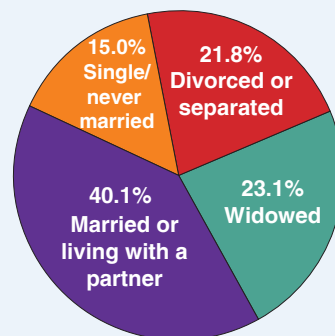
Most Native Elders reported an annual income of \$10,000-\$19,999 (28.4%) or \$20,000-\$34,999 (24.8%).

Between 2017 and 2020, as part of the Cycle VII survey collection, the NRCNAА processed over 23,000 surveys. These included 21,153 surveys from Elders over the age of 55 years.

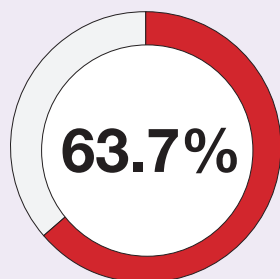
15.6%

of Native Elders served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, Military Reserves, or National Guard

Marital Status

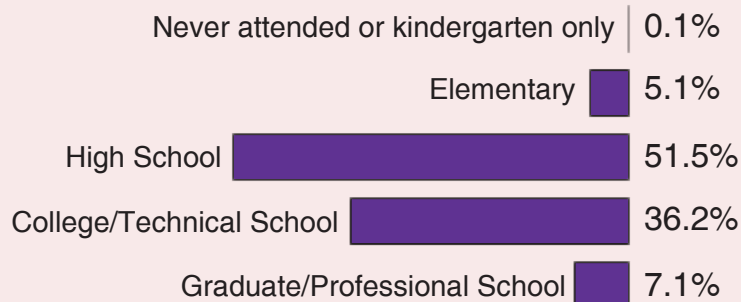


When asked about current marital status, most Native Elders reported being married or living with a partner (40.1%).



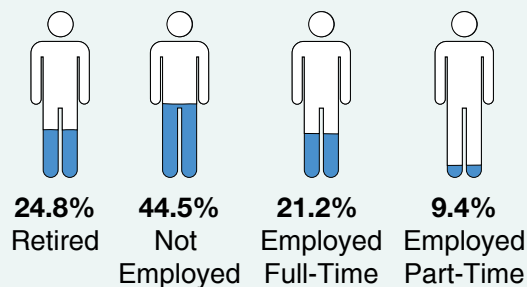
of Native Elders resided on a reservation, trust land, Alaska village, or Hawaiian homestead

Highest Education Completed



Over half (51.5%) of Native Elders had completed high school; this was followed by 36.2% who graduated from college.

Current Work Status in Past 12 Months



When asked about current work status in the past 12 months, most Native Elders reported that they were not currently employed (44.5%), although 21.2% continued to work full-time.

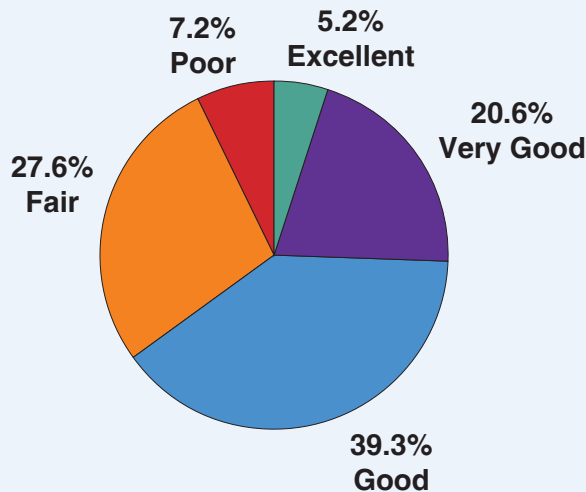
91.8%

of Native Elders were an enrolled member of a federally recognized tribe

GENERAL HEALTH STATUS

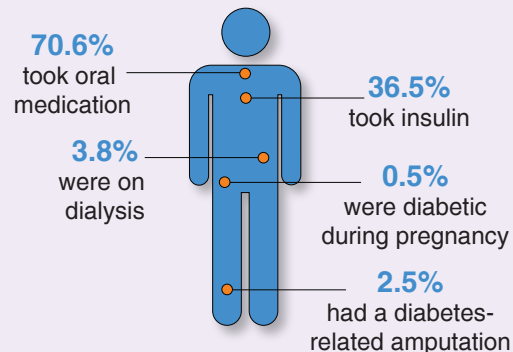
General Health Status

Most Elders said their health was good (39.3%). Only 5.2% reported that their health was excellent.

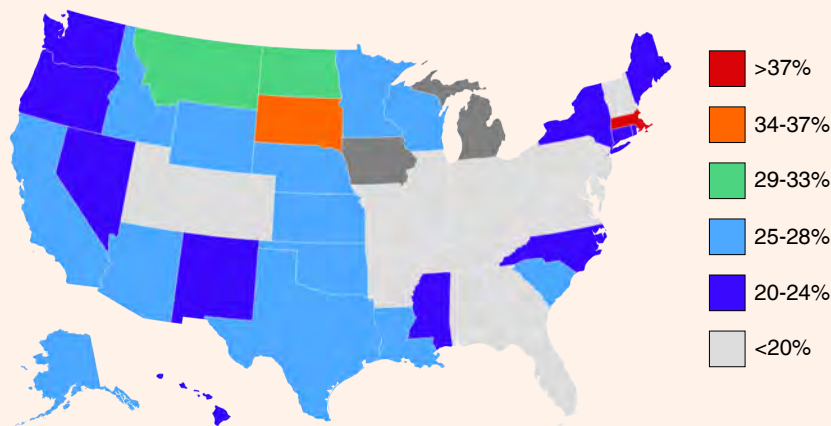


Diabetes

Among the **35.8%** of Native Elders who had diabetes:

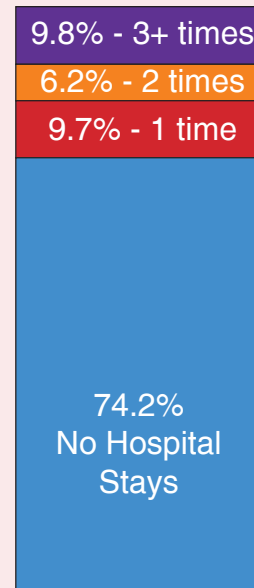


State Percentages for Elders Reporting One or More Hospital Stays



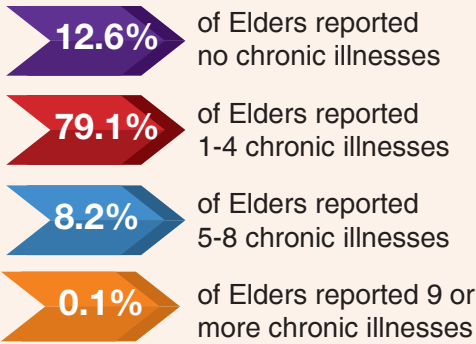
When asked how many times they had stayed in the hospital overnight or longer in the past year, 74.2% of Native Elders said 0 times. Another 9.7% reported 1 time; 6.2% reported 2 times; and 9.8% reported 3 or more times. The average was 1.17 times.

Hospital Stay Frequency in the Past Year

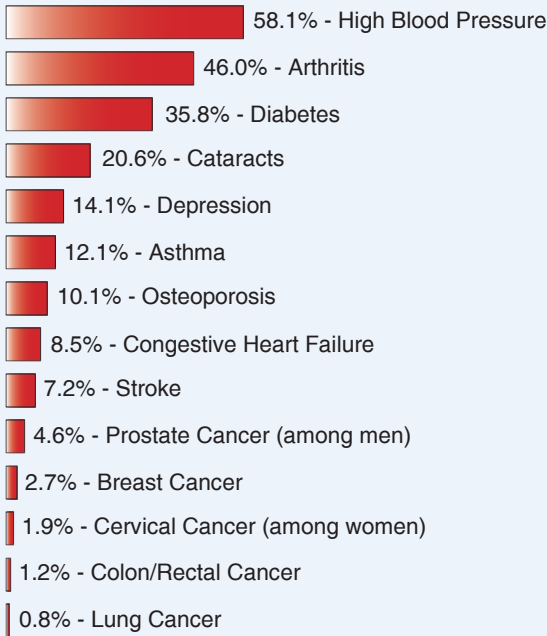


Over one-third of Native Elders rated their health as good. Most had between one and four chronic illnesses, with the most commonly reported condition being high blood pressure.

Total Number of Chronic Illnesses

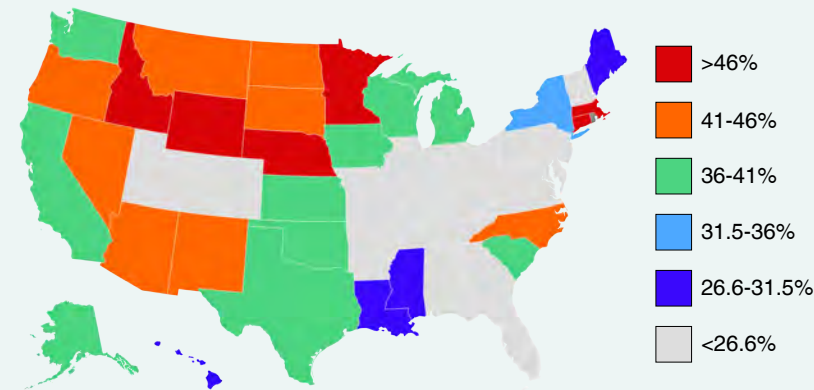


Chronic Illness



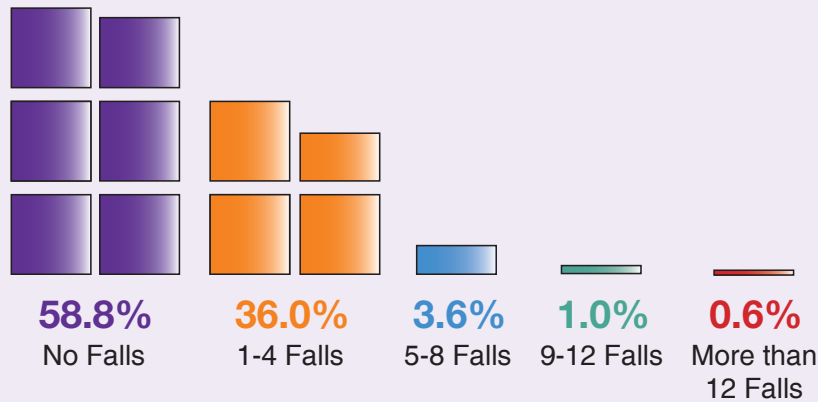
High blood pressure was the most commonly reported condition (58.1%), followed by arthritis (46.0%) and diabetes (35.8%).

State Percentages for Elders Reporting One or More Falls



Idaho Elders were most likely to report having one or more falls (51.0%). This this was followed by Wyoming (48.2%), Minnesota (48.1%), and Connecticut (47.6%). The average number of falls across all states was 1.14.

Fall Frequency in the Past Year



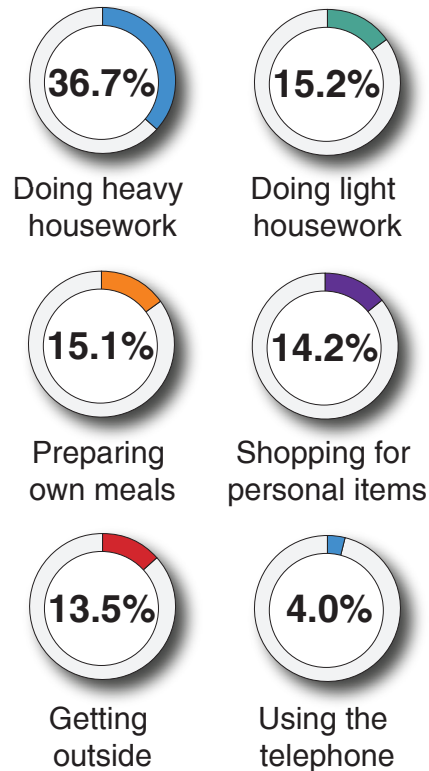
ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING

Because of a health or physical problem that lasted more than 3 months, Native Elders reported having difficulty...



62.6%

of Native Elders had no activities of daily living that limited them. Approximately 18.8% reported 1 activity that limited them; 7.5% reported 2 activities; and 4.1% reported 3 activities.

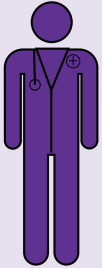


56.7%

of Native Elders had no instrumental activities of daily living that limited them. Approximately 19.7% reported 1 activity that limited them; 8.4% reported 2 activities; and 5.6% reported 3 activities.

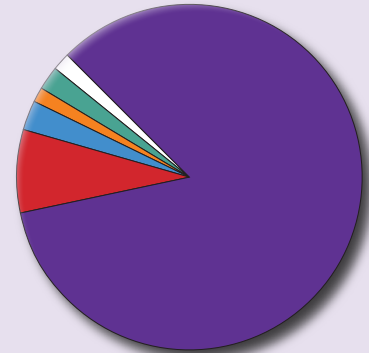
SCREENING

Last Routine Check-up

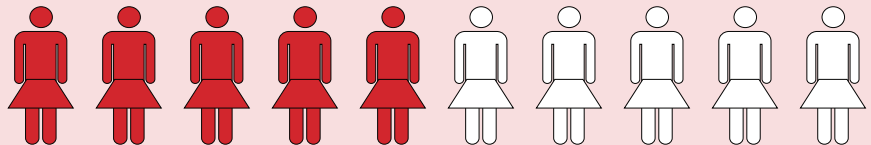
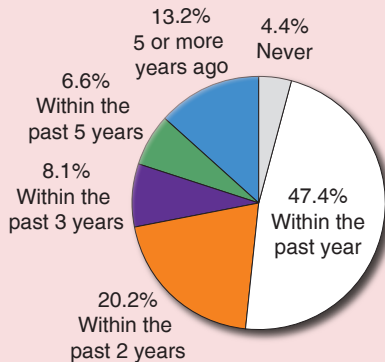


84.4%

of Native Elders had visited a healthcare provider for a routine checkup in the past year



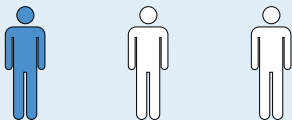
Last Mammogram



5 in 10

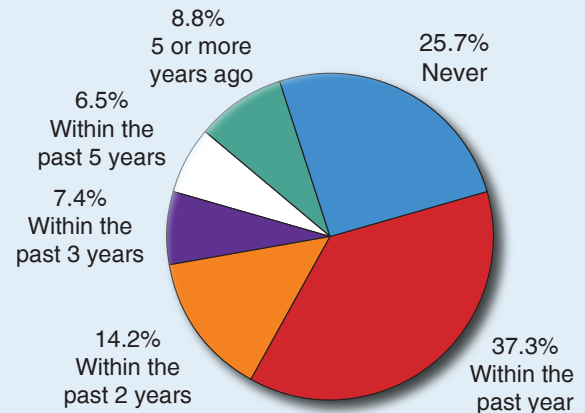
Native female Elders reported having a mammogram in the past year. Approximately 20.2% had a mammogram in the past 2 years; 13.2% reported having one 5 or more years ago.

Last Prostate-Specific Antigen Test



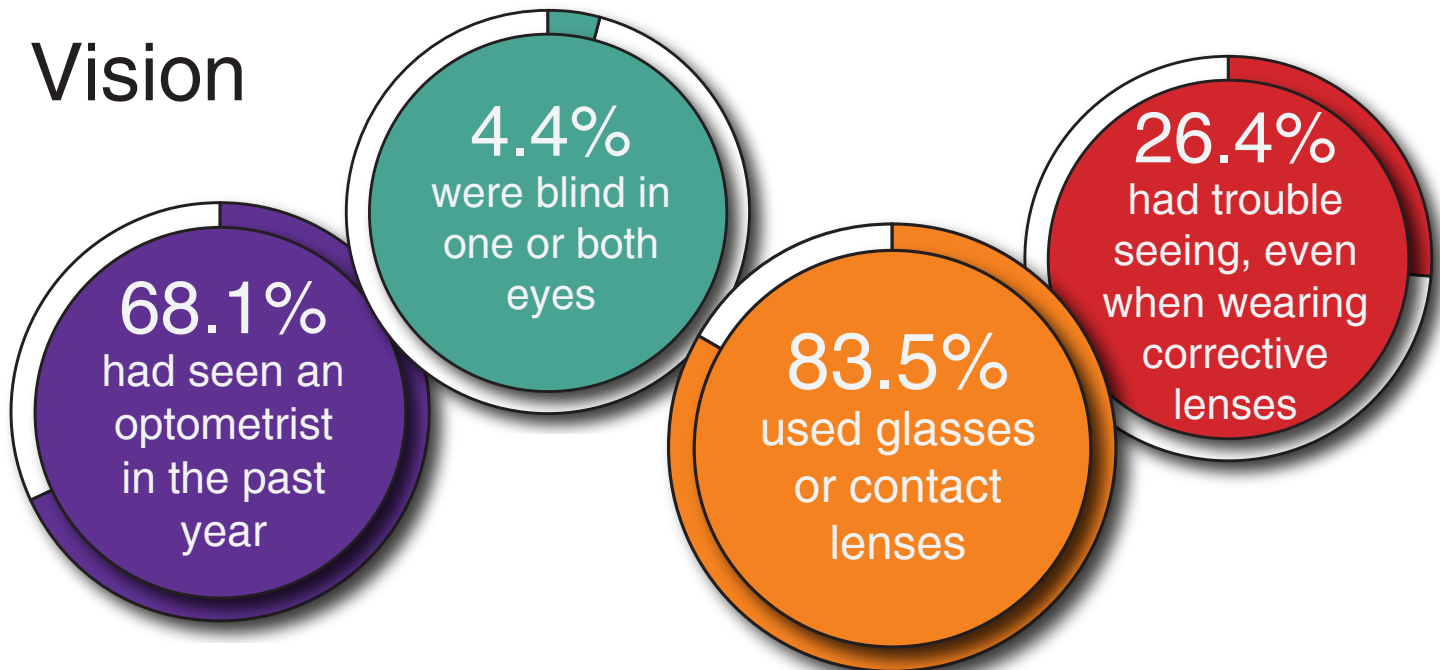
1 in 3

Native male Elders reported having a prostate-specific antigen test within the past year (37.3%), however about 1 in 4 males (25.7%) had never had this test performed before.

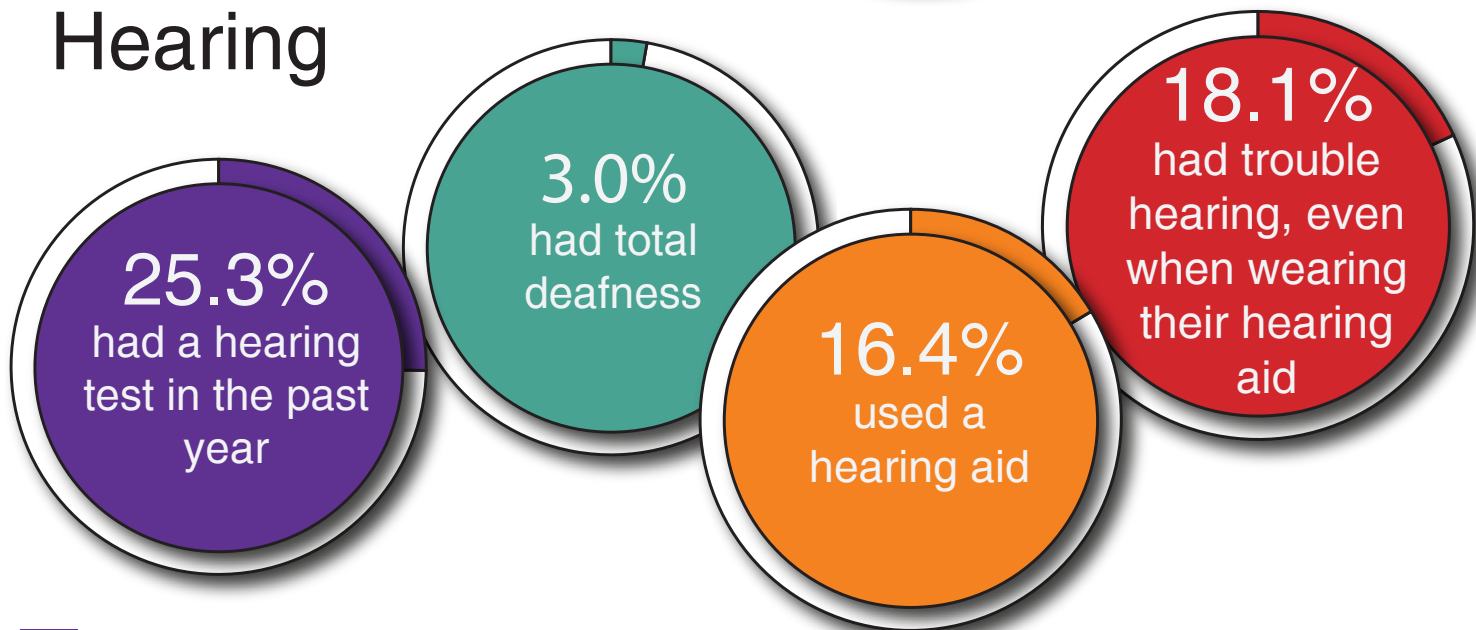


VISION, HEARING, AND DENTAL

Vision

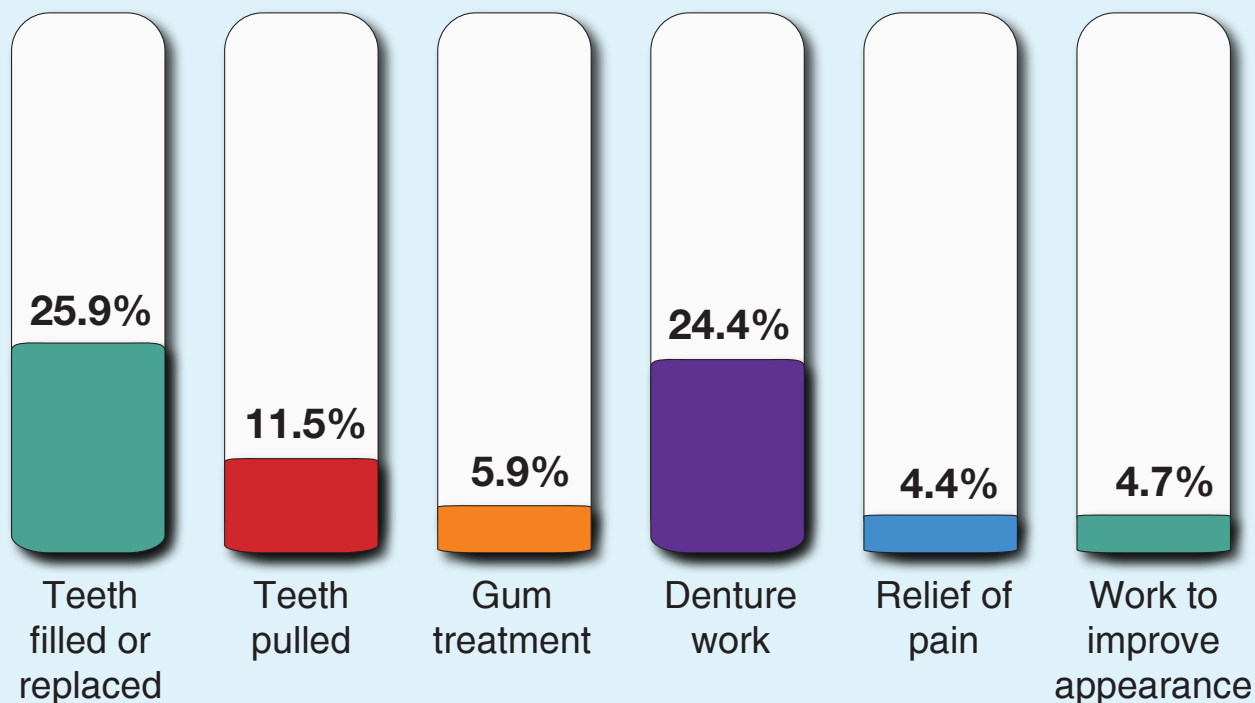


Hearing



Over one-quarter of Native Elders had trouble seeing, even when wearing corrective lenses. Close to twenty percent had trouble hearing, even when wearing a hearing aid.

What type of dental care do you need?



Approximately 58.7% of Native Elders reported seeing a dentist or dental hygienist in the past year.



MEMORY AND DISABILITY



4.2%

of Native Elders reported being diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, dementia, or other problems with memory or thinking.

5.8%

of Native Elders reported that someone they're helping care for has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, dementia, or other problems with memory or thinking.

Among those who reported being diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or were helping to care for someone who had been diagnosed with it:

71.1%

believed they were diagnosed in a timely way

81.4%

knew what to do to help themselves or those they were caring for, and where to get help if needed

75.5%

reported feeling well-supported

85.0%

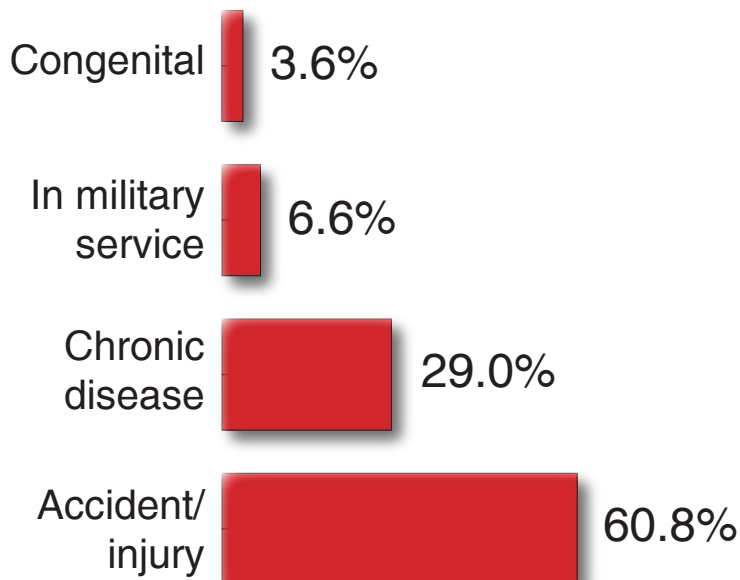
believed that their wishes for the kind of care they wanted to get were listened to and respected

Fewer than 5% of Elders reported being diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, dementia, or other problems with memory or thinking.

Approximately
1 in 3
of Native Elders
reported being
disabled

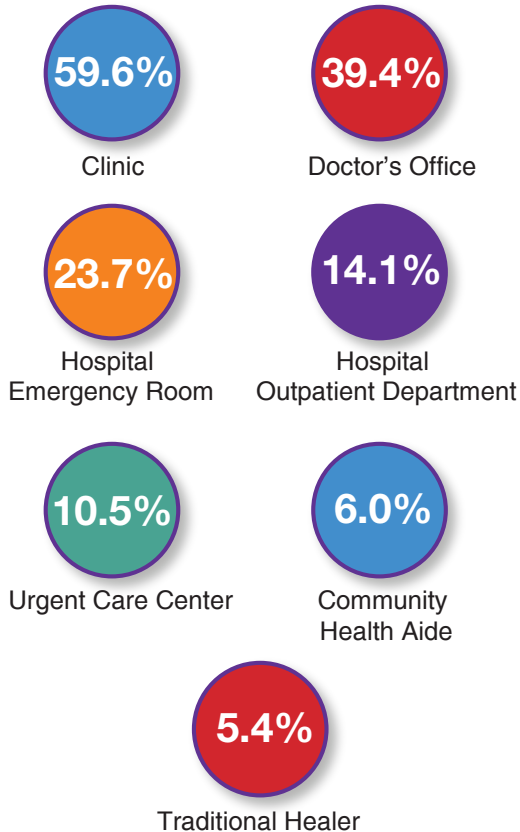


Reasons for disability, among the
28.7%
of Native Elders who reported being
disabled:

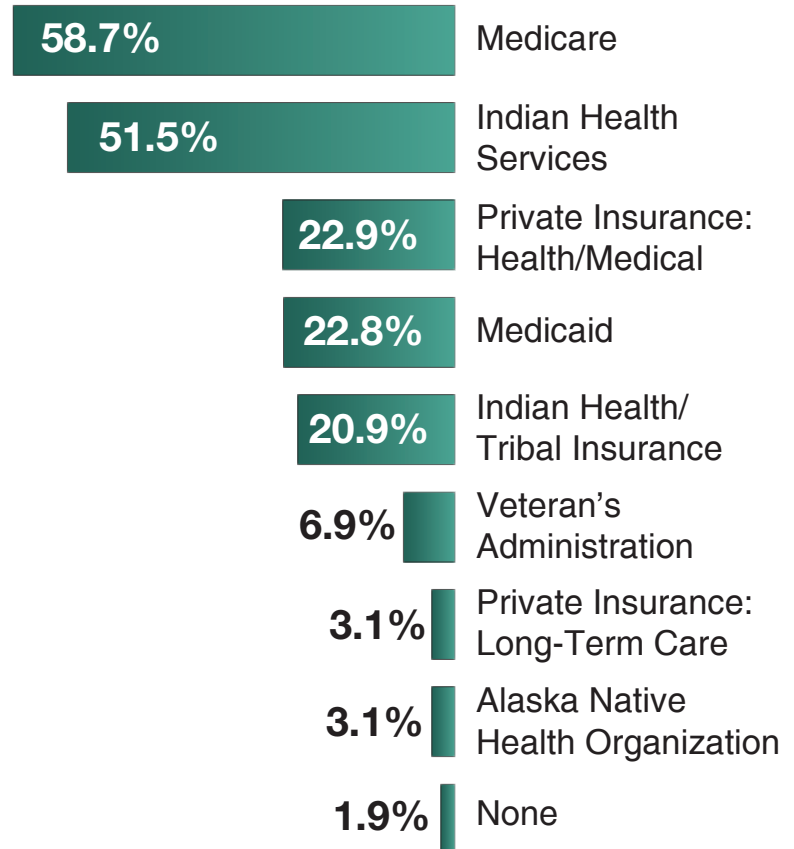


HEALTHCARE ACCESS

When you are sick or need professional advice about your health, where do you go?



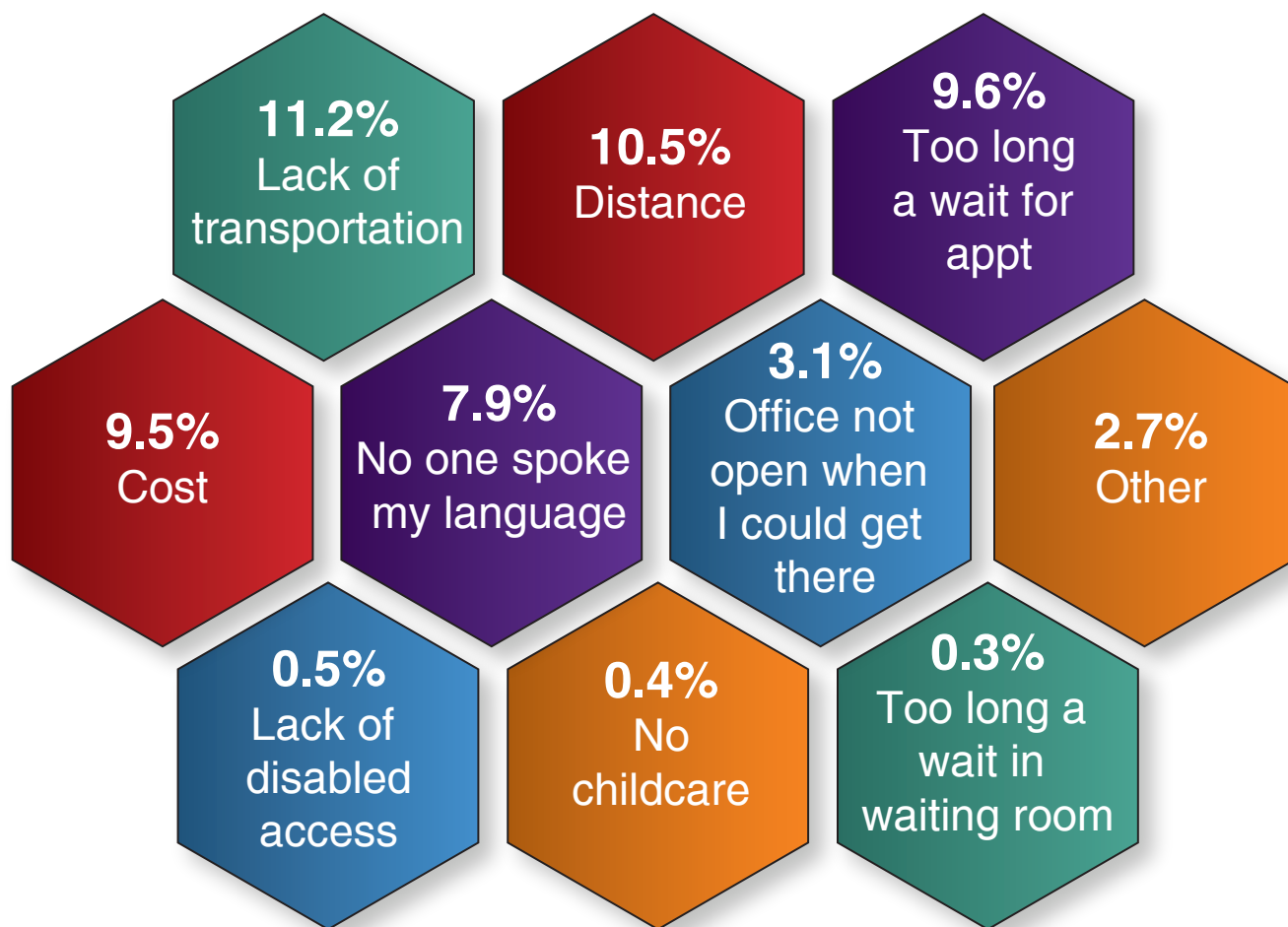
Types of Healthcare Coverage



49.7% of Native Elders had one person they thought of as their personal doctor/health provider. About 28.3% had more than 1 provider; 17.0% said they did not have one person they thought of as their personal doctor; 5.1% were not sure.

Native Elders most commonly reported Medicare and Indian Health Services as their types of healthcare coverage. Their greatest barrier to receiving healthcare was lack of transportation.

Barriers to Medical Care



Native Elders were asked what barriers had kept them from medical care in the past 12 months. Lack of transportation (11.2%), distance (10.5%) and too long a wait for an appointment (9.6%) were the most commonly reported reasons. Approximately 56.2% indicated that there had been no barriers.

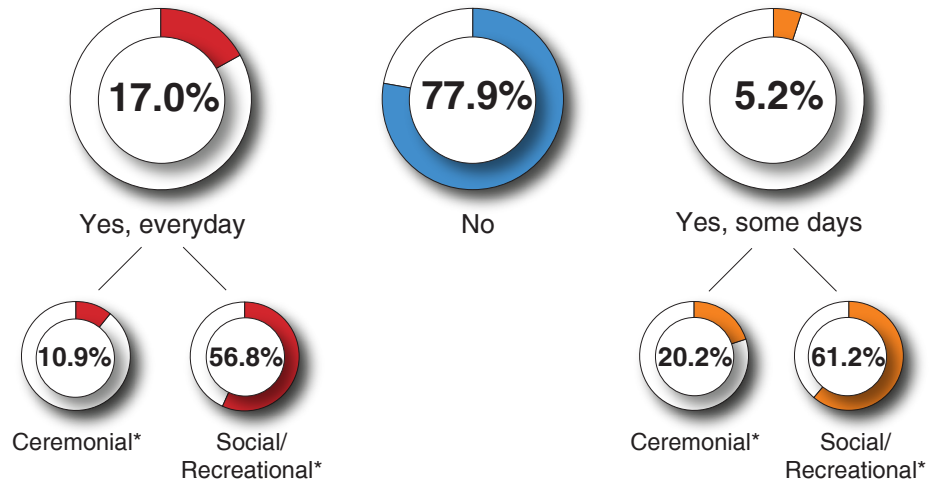
TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL USE

Most Native Elders reported that they did not currently smoke tobacco (77.9%).

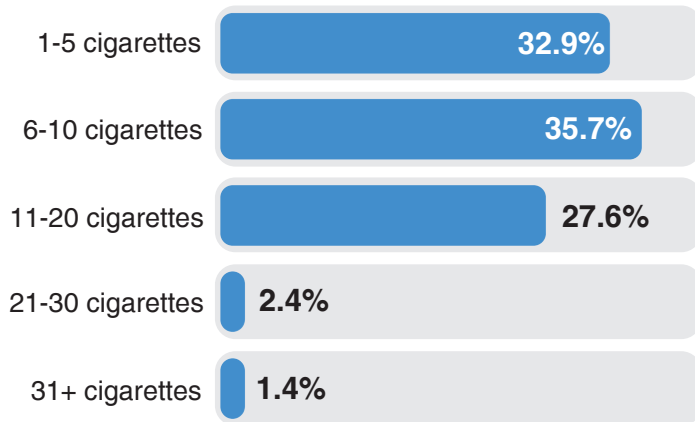
Among those who did smoke, 17.0% did so everyday - 10.9% of Elders smoked everyday for ceremonial purposes, and 56.8% for social/recreational. Among the 5.2% who smoked some days, 20.2% smoked for ceremonial purposes, and 61.2% for social/recreational.

*Please note that percentages will not add up to 100.0%.

Do You Use Tobacco Now?

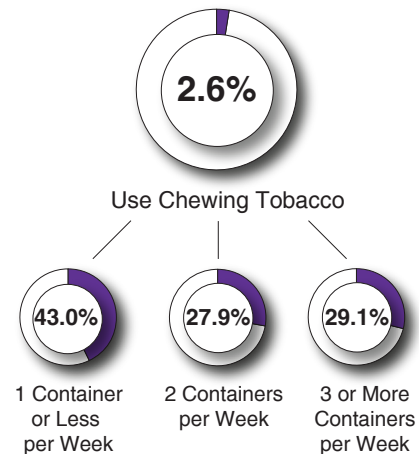


Cigarettes Smoked Per Day



Among Native Elders who smoked cigarettes, most (35.7%) smoked 6-10 cigarettes per day. This was followed by 32.9% who smoked 1-5 cigarettes. Across all smokers, the average number of cigarettes smoked per day was 9.94.

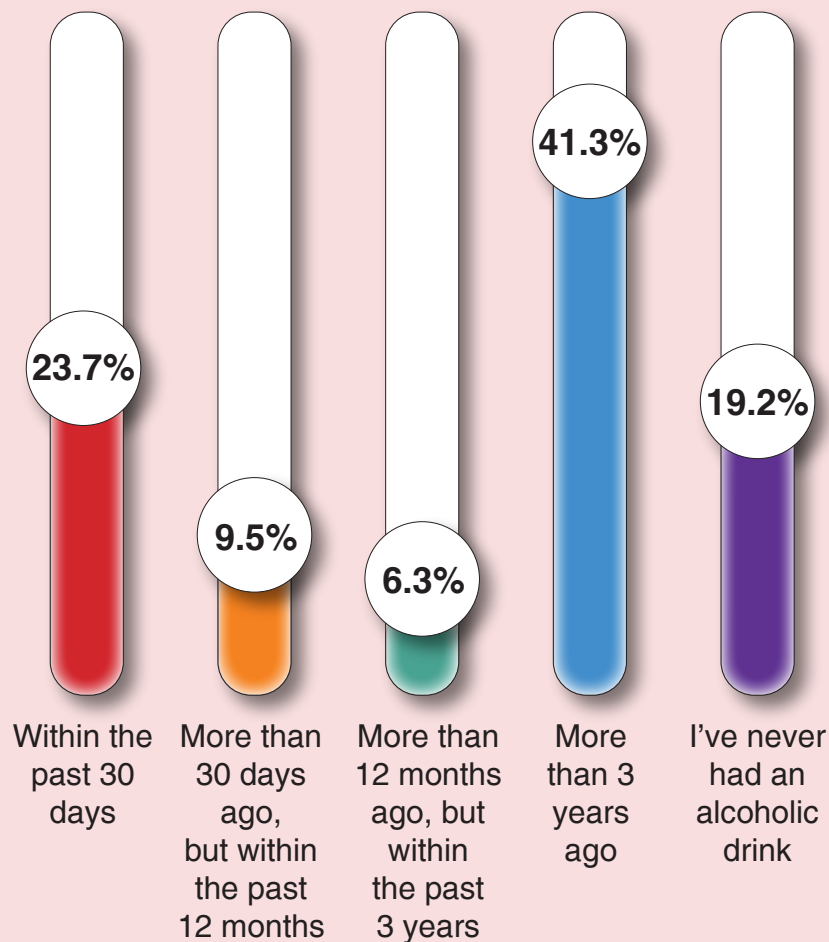
Do You Use Chewing Tobacco Now?



Most Native Elders did not report chewing tobacco (97.4%). Among the 2.6% who did report using it, the average number of containers was 2.17 per week.

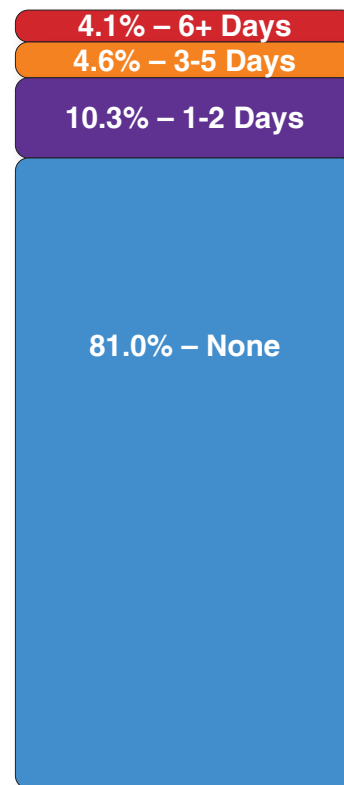
More than three-quarters of Native Elders did not smoke. Over 40% had their last alcoholic drink more than 3 years ago, with 19% reporting never having an alcoholic drink before.

How long has it been since you last drank an alcoholic beverage?



Most Elders' last alcoholic beverage was more than 3 years ago; this was followed by 23.7% who reported having an alcoholic beverage within the past 30 days. Approximately 19.2% had never had an alcoholic drink.

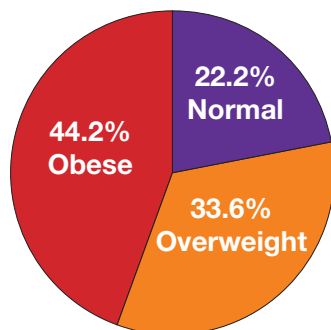
During the past 30 days, on how many days did you have 5 or more drinks on the same occasion?



Among those who reported drinking, 81.0% reported that they did not drink 5 or more drinks on the same occasion in the past 30 days. Approximately 10.3% reported there were 1-2 days in which this occurred.

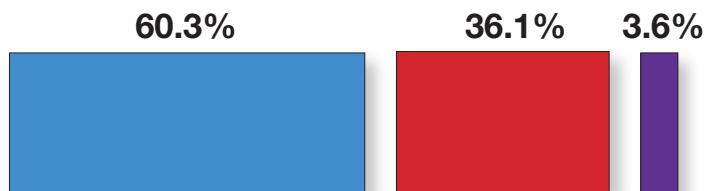
WEIGHT AND NUTRITION

Body Mass Index



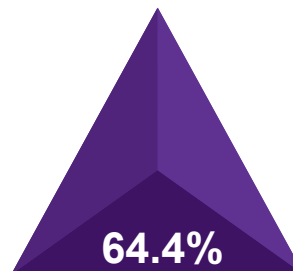
The majority of Native Elders reported being obese (44.2%) or overweight (33.6%).

Weight Goals

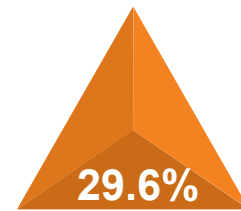


Most Elders were not presently trying to gain or lose weight (60.3%). Approximately 36.1% were trying to lose weight, and 3.6% were trying to gain.

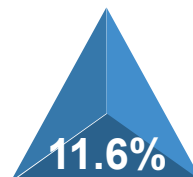
Exercise



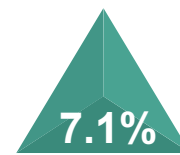
Walking



Yard Work



Gardening



Bicycling

When asked what vigorous exercises they had done over the past 30 days, most Elders reported walking (64.4%), yard work (29.6%), gardening (11.6%) and bicycling (7.1%).



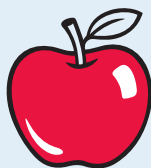
Slightly over half of Native Elders had a good nutritional status. Most were likely to report walking as a form of exercise, and 44% were obese.

Among Native Elders:



37.5%

took 3 or more prescribed or over-the-counter drugs a day



26.7%

ate few fruits, vegetables, or milk products



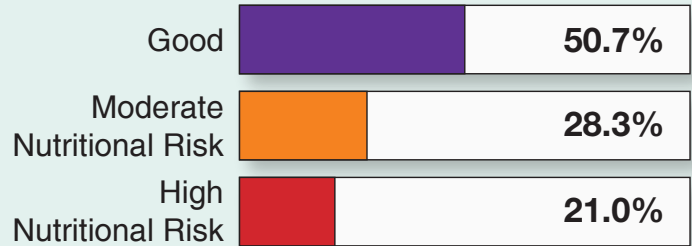
20.4%

ate alone most of the time



23.6%

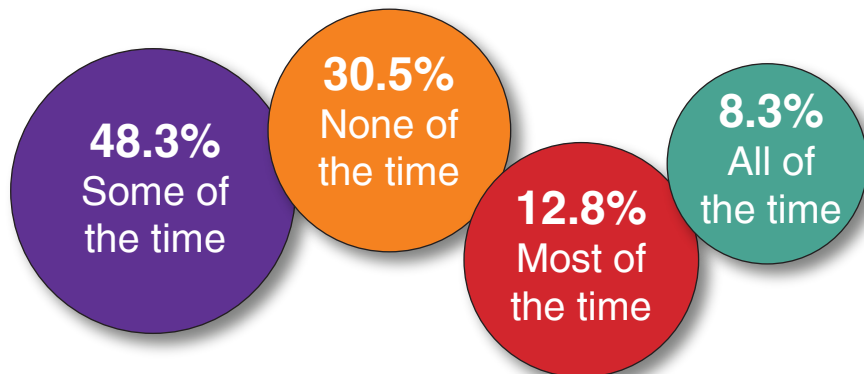
changed the kind/amount of food they ate because of an illness



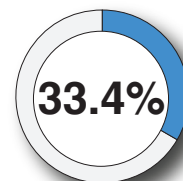
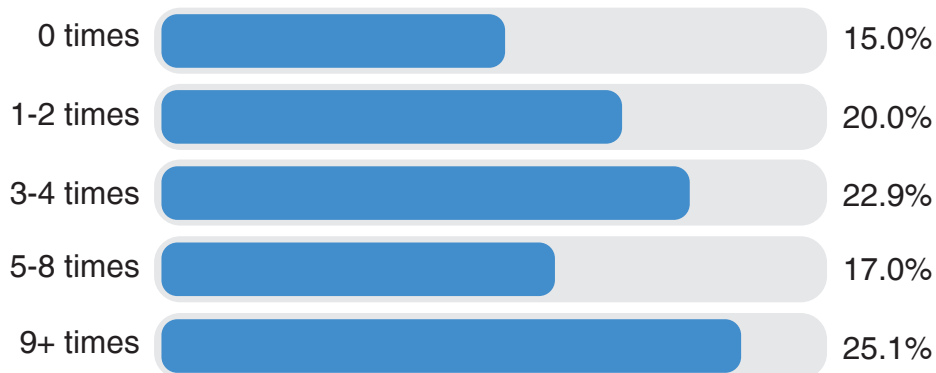
Based on the Nutrition Screening Initiative, 50.7% of Native Elders had a good nutritional status. There were 28.3% who had a moderate nutritional risk and 21.0% with a high nutritional risk.

SOCIAL SUPPORT AND HOUSING

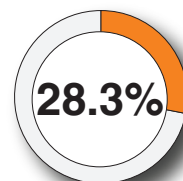
Do you participate in cultural practices that include traditional food, music, and customs?



How often do you get out and socialize per month?



Had a family member who provides care for them



Took care of grandchildren



Were the primary caregiver of grandchildren

Although close to one-third of Native Elders lived alone, over 25% of Elders reported socializing with others nine or more times each month.

Housing



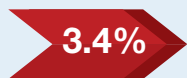
72.2%

of Native Elders reported living in a single family residence. Approximately 11.4% lived in an apartment.

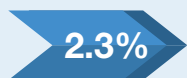
Living Situation



64.6% of Elders lived with family members.



3.4% of Elders lived with non-family members.

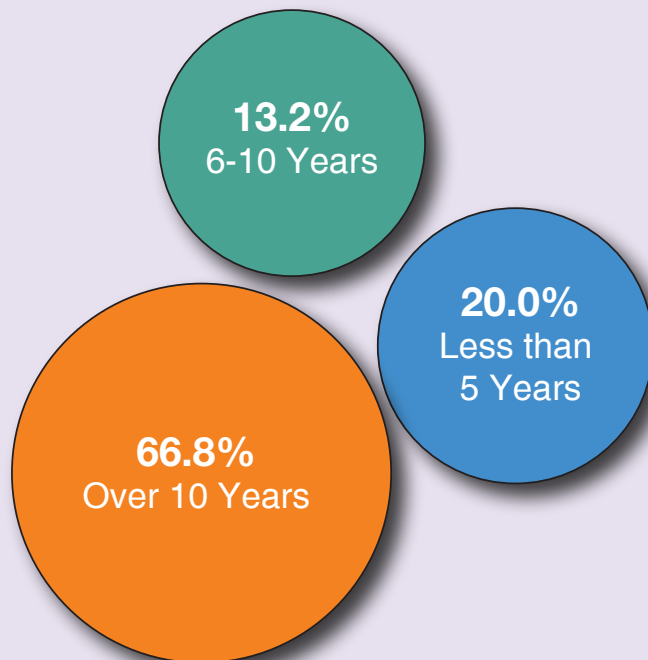


2.3% of Elders lived with both family and non-family members.



29.7% of Elders lived alone.

How long have you lived at your present address?



Most Native Elders had lived in their home for over 10 years (66.8%). This was followed by those who lived in their home less than 5 years (20.0%) and between 6 and 10 years (13.2%).

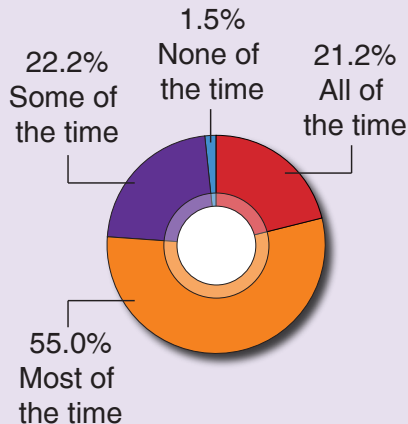
2.66

Average number of individuals living in Native Elders' households.

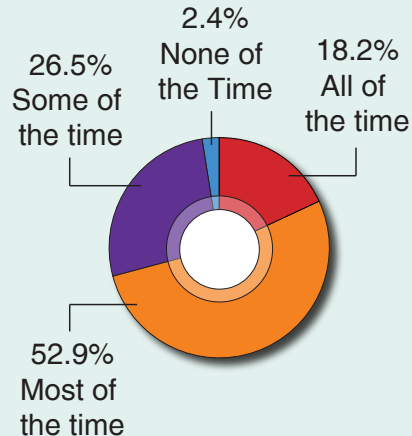
SOCIAL FUNCTIONING

In the past month, how often did you feel...

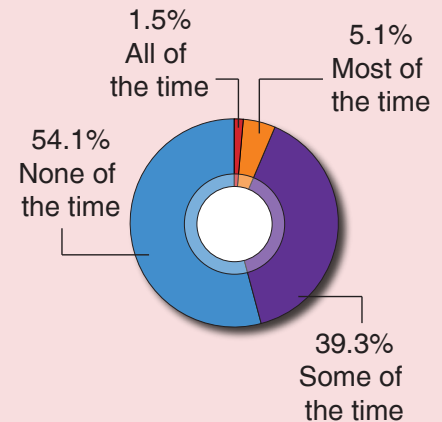
Happy



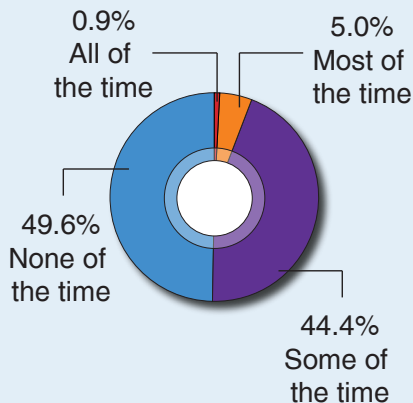
Calm and Peaceful



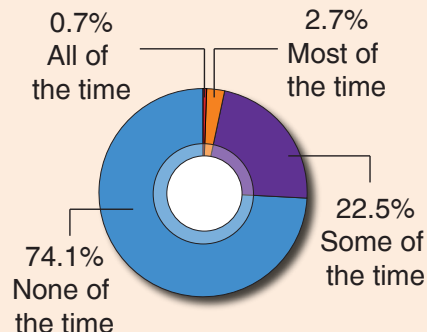
Nervous



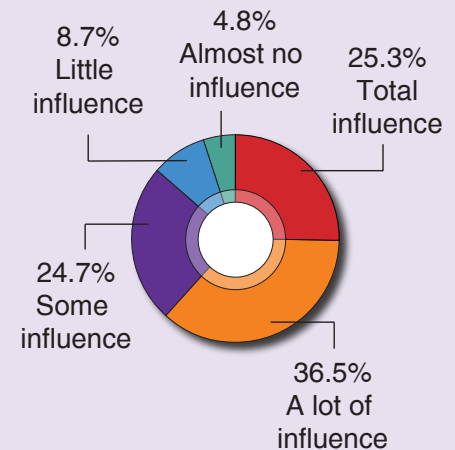
Downhearted and Blue



Down in the Dumps - Nothing Could Cheer You Up



How Much Influence You Feel You Have Over Your Life



Most Native Elders reported being happy and calm and peaceful most of the time, although they reported feeling downhearted and blue some of the time.

Senior Service Programs

Top 5 Services - Now Using

17.1% - Congregate Meals

15.0% - Home-Delivered Meals

14.3% - Senior Center Programs

9.5% - Transportation

6.2% - Information & Referral Assistance

Top 5 Services - Would Use if Offered

40.2% - Home Repair/Modification

37.5% - Home-Delivered Meals

35.5% - Transportation

35.4% - Home Health Services

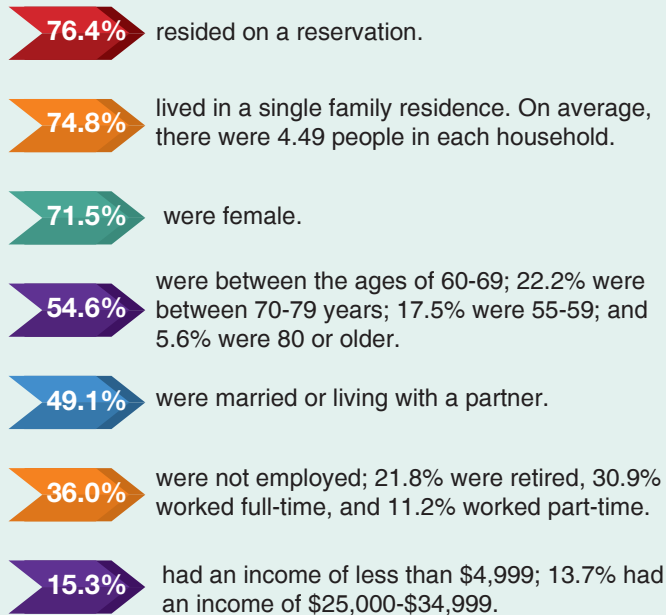
33.9% - Caregiver Programs



SPOTLIGHT: GRANDPARENT CAREGIVING

Among the 10.9% of Native Elders who were primary caregivers for their grandchildren:

Demographics

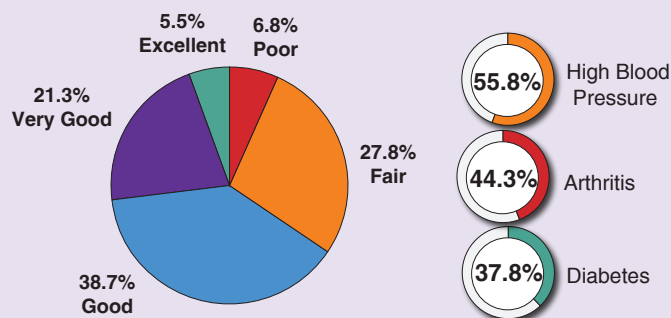
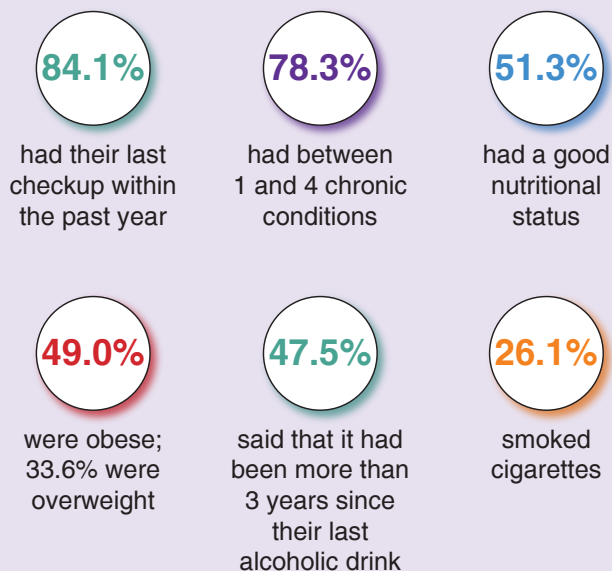


Social Support



Most grandparents reported getting out to socialize about 3-4 times per month.

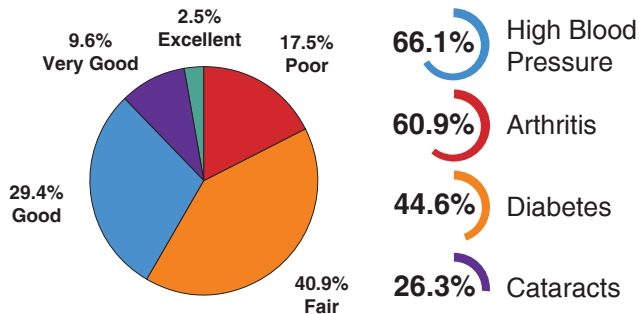
Health of Grandparents



Most grandparents reported having good (38.7%) or fair (27.8%) health. High blood pressure (55.8%) and arthritis (44.3%) were the most commonly reported health conditions.

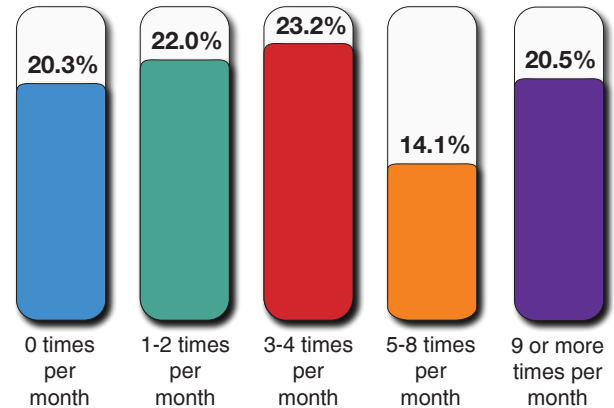
SPOTLIGHT: DISABILITY

General Health



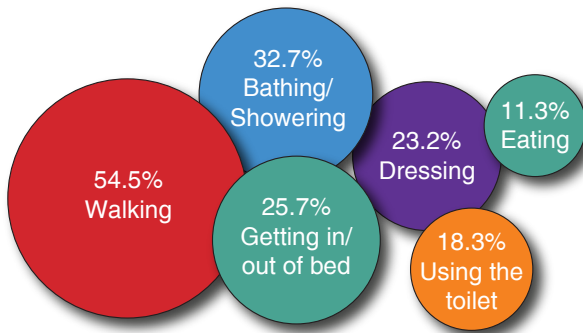
Most disabled Native Elders were in fair health (40.9%), and were most likely to report having high blood pressure (66.1%). Approximately 77.4% reported having between 1 and 4 chronic health conditions.

Socialization



Most disabled Native Elders reported socializing 3-4 times per month, although there were many (20.3%) who reported never socializing.

Activities of Daily Living



Most disabled Native Elders reported issues with walking (54.5%). When looking at *independent* activities of daily living, most Elders reported issues with heavy housework (63.6%), preparing meals (33.1%) and light housework (32.1%).

Demographics

Among Native Elders who had disabilities:

- **67.8%** lived in a single family residence.
- **33.3%** had attended college.
- **33.0%** were married/living with a partner.
- **25.8%** were retired.
- **23.2%** had an income of \$10,000-\$14,999.

SPOTLIGHT: CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Among the 8.3% of Native Elders reporting 5 or more chronic conditions:

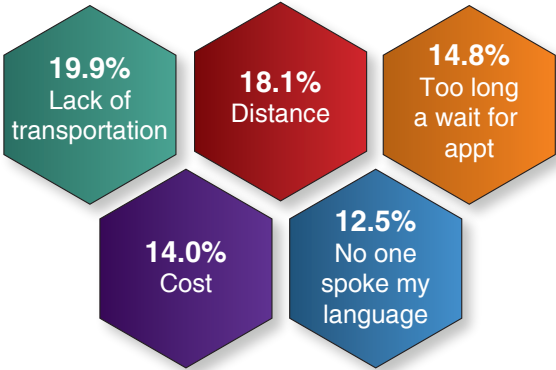
Demographics & Health Status

- 71.3%** were female.
- 53.5%** had between 1 and 4 falls in the past year.
- 48.6%** had one person they thought of as their personal doctor; 36.4% had more than one person.
- 43.2%** reported they were in fair health.
- 38.7%** were between the ages of 60-69; 35.8% were between the ages of 70-79 years.
- 31.9%** were widowed; 31.7% were married or living with a partner.

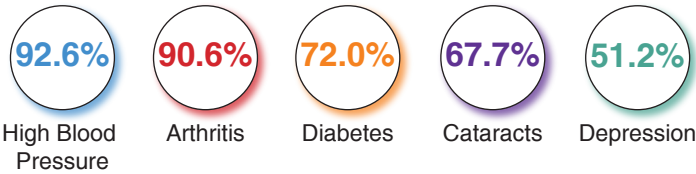
Health Behaviors

- 91.5%** had a checkup with in the past year.
- 56.9%** reported walking as a form of exercise.
- 55.9%** were obese. About 26.3% were overweight; 17.8% had a normal weight.
- 33.8%** reported eating fewer fruits, vegetables, or milk products.
- 25.8%** socialized 9 or more times per month.

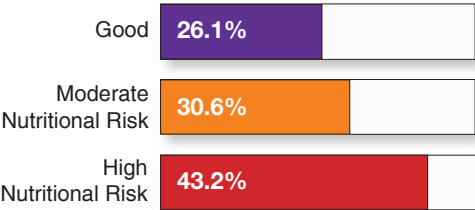
Barriers to Healthcare



Frequently Reported Health Conditions



Nutrition Status

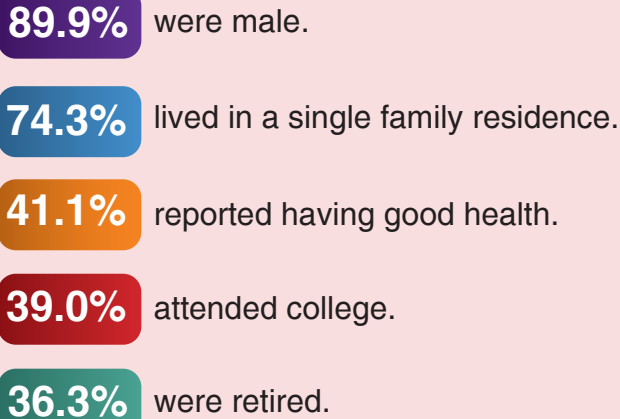


Based on the Nutrition Screening Initiative, only 26.1% of Native Elders with chronic conditions had a good nutritional status. Approximately 30.6% had a moderate nutritional risk and 43.2% were at high nutritional risk.

SPOTLIGHT: VETERANS

Demographics

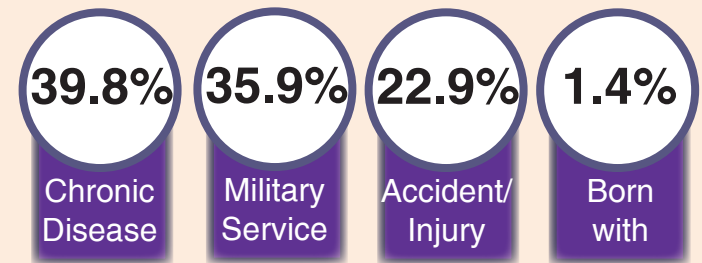
Among Native Elder veterans:



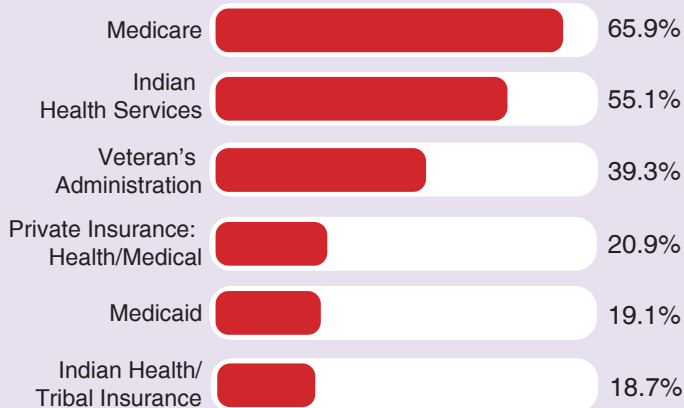
Disability



Among the **33.7%** of Native Elder veterans who were disabled, causes included:



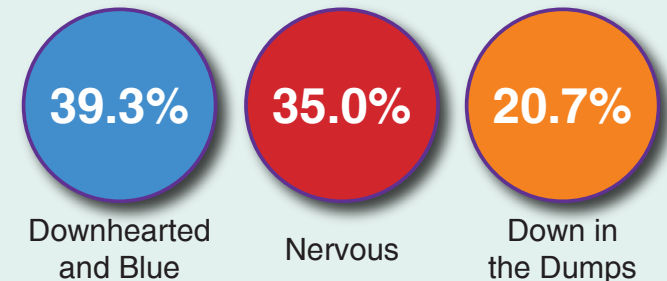
Healthcare Coverage



Most Native Elder veterans reported having Medicare, Indian Health Services, or Veteran's Administration as their primary healthcare coverage types.

Social Functioning

In the past month, how often did you feel the following **some** of the time?



Most Native Elder veterans did not report experiencing high levels of sadness or anxiety. Approximately 11.2% reported they experienced depression.

WHO WE ARE



Dr. Collette Adamsen
Director

I feel very blessed to be working with tribal communities and serving the Native Elder population in this capacity. I appreciate my position in serving our Elders and feel inspired every day to continue to be a resource for Indian Country.



Courtney Davis
Souvannasacd
Outreach Coordinator

It is very empowering to be a resource for Indigenous communities and their Elder programs. The fundamental goal is to serve as a conduit to support tribal sovereignty.



Jordan Dionne
Project Coordinator

My purpose in life is to help other people. Working at the NRCNAA gives me that opportunity by providing underserved people with information and resources that help improve their quality of life.



Michelle Meyer
Senior Project Coordinator

I made a promise to an elderly gentleman from my home community to go home and help my people after receiving my education. It's been more than 15 years since I finished my formal education, but working for the NRCNAA gives me a chance to make good on that promise.



Heather Lawrence
NRCNAA & Native Aging in Place Project LTSS Tribal Coordinator

I really enjoy working at the NRCNAA because I feel like I'm contributing to the ability of rural communities to provide important services.



Halle Short
Student Research Assistant

I like working for NRCNAA because it gives me insight on the needs that many Elders have and it gives us a chance to try and make those changes.



Dr. Robin Besse
Research Analyst

Working for the NRCNAA gives me the opportunity to learn and use my skills to improve and make a difference in the lives of others.

In the photo on the right, several directors and honored guests were recognized at the 25th anniversary celebration of the NRCNAA in December 2019.

From left, Cynthia LaCounte; Shawn Egeland, representing Leigh Jeanotte; Kathy and Gina Allery, representing Allan Allery; Richard Ludtke; Brad Hawk, representing Russ McDonald; Twyla Baker; Paula Morin-Carter; and Collette Adamsen, current director of the NRCNAA.

WHAT WE CAN DO FOR YOU

Title VI Needs Assessment: “Identifying Our Needs: A Survey of Elders”

The purpose of this survey is to assist tribes, villages, and homesteads in creating a record of the health and social needs of their elders.

Urban Needs Assessment: “Native Urban Elder Needs Assessment Survey”

The purpose of this survey is to assist tribes, villages, and homesteads in creating a record of the health and social needs of their elders.

Native Elder Caregiver Curriculum

Elder caregivers in your community are one of our most valuable resources. Help them function more effectively with a three-day workshop.

Native Service Locator

An interactive map with Tribal Elderly services available in the continental U.S., Alaska, and Hawaii.

Native Aging in Place Project

This project works to create a sustainable infrastructure of long-term services and supports for Spirit Lake Tribal Elders by creating and implementing best practices that allow Native American Elders to live independently in their homes.

Well-Balanced Program (Wise Elders Living Longer)

A group program designed specifically for Native American Elders, combining exercise, information, and social interaction to help Elders remain active and independent as long as possible.





Contact Us Today!

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Grand Forks, ND 58202-9037

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