



# Needs of Urban Native Elders

## Comparisons Across Urban, Tribal, and National Data

The Native Urban Elder Needs Assessment Survey (NUENAS 1.0) was developed in order to gain insight and awareness into the current health and social needs of urban Native Elders. The survey, which was administered from March 2021 through November 2022, includes data from 1,023 urban Native Elders ages 55 and older.

The current document provides several comparisons between NUENAS data (n = 1,023); Cycle 8 Needs Assessment data (n = 19,744), which refers to data collected through tribal communities that is used for Title VI nutrition and caregiving grants from the Administration on Community Living (ACL); as well as national data points (when available).

When compared with tribal and national data, the numbers for urban Native Elders indicate increased needs in several different areas. While such differences were not seen across all items measured, the values here showcase particular areas in which a larger discrepancy existed, and therefore may be indicative of greater support needs.

### General Health Status

Question	Response	NUENAS 1.0 (Age 55+) N = 1,023	Cycle 8 (Age 55+) N = 19,744	National Data (Age 55+)
Would you say that your health in general is excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor?	Excellent	3.1%	5.1%	13.8% <sup>1</sup>
	Very Good	18.1%	20.4%	29.2% <sup>1</sup>
	Good	40.4%	40.5%	32.0% <sup>1</sup>
	Fair	28.4%	27.3%	16.8% <sup>1</sup>
	Poor	10.1%	6.6%	7.8% <sup>1</sup>

### Screening

Question	Response	NUENAS 1.0 (Age 55+) N = 1,023	Cycle 8 (Age 55+) N = 19,744	National Data (Age 55+)
Percentage of urban Native Elders who had screening within the past year	Mammogram	48.0%	46.4%	63.5% <sup>2</sup>
	Pap Smear	17.7%	17.9%	42.6% <sup>2</sup>
	Prostate-Specific Antigen Test	28.7%	34.0%	59.8% <sup>2</sup>
	Have you seen an optometrist in the past year?	Yes	66.4%	66.2%
Have you had a hearing test in the past year?	Yes	17.8%	21.0%	13.9% <sup>3</sup>
Have you seen a dentist or dental hygienist in the past year?	Yes	56.7%	53.3%	65.5% <sup>3</sup>

### Dental Care

Question	Response	NUENAS 1.0 (Age 55+) N = 1,023	Cycle 8 (Age 55+) N = 19,744
During the past month, was there a time when you needed dental care but could not get it at that time?	Yes	45.0%	24.6%
	What were the reasons that you could not get the dental care you needed?	Could not afford cost	55.4%
What were the reasons that you could not get the dental care you needed?	Did not want to spend the money	7.3%	1.6%
	Insurance did not cover recommended procedures	31.7%	5.7%
	Dental office is too far away	12.2%	3.4%
	Dental office is not open at convenient times	9.2%	5.4%
	Afraid or do not like dentists	15.5%	6.0%
	Did not have transportation	13.6%	5.7%

### Disability

Question	Response	NUENAS 1.0 (Age 55+) N = 1,023	Cycle 8 (Age 55+) N = 19,744
Have you been diagnosed with a disability?	Yes	39.8%	29.0%
How were you disabled?	Congenital	5.6%	4.4%
	In military service	5.9%	7.3%
	Due to chronic disease	37.9%	36.4%
	Due to accident/injury	35.5%	28.8%
	Other	31.5%	30.8%

Urban Native Elders were generally less likely to say that they had excellent or very good health than Cycle 8 Elders and national data; they also generally had lower levels of screenings such as pap smears and PSA tests in the past year.

Compared to Cycle 8 Elders, urban Native Elders were more likely to report experiencing obstacles in receiving dental care, especially cost. They were also more likely to report being disabled, although there were no considerable differences in cause.



### Traditional Foods

Question	Response	NUENAS 1.0 (Age 55+) N = 1,023	Cycle 8 (Age 55+) N = 19,744
Do you consume traditional foods regularly?	Yes	34.9%	44.7%

### Nutritional Health

Question	Response	NUENAS 1.0 (Age 55+) N = 1,023	Cycle 8 (Age 55+) N = 19,744
Please mark all that apply to your nutritional health.	I have an illness or condition that made me change the kind and/or amount of food that I eat.	28.0%	22.8%
	I eat fewer than 2 meals per day.	23.6%	16.1%
	I eat few fruits or vegetables or milk products.	31.4%	26.5%
	I have tooth or mouth problems that make it hard for me to eat.	16.0%	11.5%
	I don't always have enough money to buy the food I need.	15.6%	9.6%

### Nutrition Category

Question	Response	NUENAS 1.0 (Age 55+) N = 1,023	Cycle 8 (Age 55+) N = 19,744
Nutrition Category	Good	41.4%	52.5%
	Moderate Nutritional Risk	29.6%	28.2%
	High Nutritional Risk	28.9%	19.4%

### Support Services Currently Used

Question	Response	NUENAS 1.0 (Age 55+) N = 1,023	Cycle 8 (Age 55+) N = 19,744
Are you now using the following services?	Home-Delivered Meals	6.6%	33.3%
	Senior Center Programs	8.9%	28.8%
	Congregate Meals	4.6%	23.5%
	Pharmacy	30.0%	38.3%

### Support Services Would Use

Question	Response	NUENAS 1.0 (Age 55+) N = 1,023	Cycle 8 (Age 55+) N = 19,744
If at some point you became unable to meet your own needs, would you be willing to use the following services?	Information and Referral Assistance	32.2%	19.0%
	Home-Delivered Meals	59.2%	71.8%
	Case Management	27.1%	17.5%
	Nutrition Counseling	23.8%	14.9%

### Food Affordability

Question	Response	NUENAS 1.0 (Age 55+) N = 1,023	Cycle 8 (Age 55+) N = 19,744
“The food I bought just didn’t last, and I didn’t have the money to get more.” How true was this for you in the last 12 months?	Often true	14.6%	9.3%
	Sometimes true	29.6%	23.9%
	Never true	55.7%	66.8%
“I couldn’t afford to eat balanced meals.” How true was this for you in the past 12 months?	Often true	18.2%	11.1%
	Sometimes true	32.6%	25.3%
	Never true	49.1%	63.6%
In the last 12 months, did you ever cut the size of your meals or skip because there wasn’t enough money for food?	Yes	30.2%	15.8%
In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn’t enough money for food?	Yes	30.6%	15.3%
In the last 12 months, were you ever hungry, but didn’t eat because there wasn’t enough money for food?	Yes	23.2%	11.4%

Urban Native Elders were less likely than Cycle 8 tribal Elders to regularly consume traditional foods, and generally reported greater levels of challenge with regard to nutritional items as well. Urban Native Elders were also more likely to be at a high nutritional risk.

When asked about services they were currently using, urban Native Elders were less likely to be utilizing home-delivered meals or senior center programs, but were more likely to report that they would use programs such as information and referral assistance, as well as home-delivered meals.

Compared to Cycle 8 Elders, urban Native Elders were less likely to report having enough money for food, and were more likely to report eating less due to lack of money as well.

### References

- 2011 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data (BRFSS)*. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- 2006 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data (BRFSS)*. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- 2003-2006 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). *National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey Data (NHANES)*. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

For more information, please see the associated final report and data booklet at <https://www.nrcnaa.org/urban-needs-assessment>.