



# Key Findings

## Native Urban Elder Needs Assessment Survey (NUENAS 1.0)

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 findings listed in this document are not comprehensive, but are rather a high-level overview of some of the main findings, in addition to spotlight information regarding specific groups of interest. For more detailed information, please see the associated final report and data booklet at <https://www.nrcnaa.org/urban-needs-assessment>.

### Demographics

- 83.3% were American Indian.
- 80.8% identified as female.
- 52.9% were between the ages of 60 and 69 years.
- Most were members of a federally-recognized (84.4%) or state-recognized (63.6%) tribe.

### General Health Status

- Most urban Native Elders rated their health as good (40.4%) or fair (28.4%).
- 74.7% had not had a hospital stay in the past year.
- 46.6% reported having between 1 and 4 falls in the past year.
- 50.4% worried about falling.

### Chronic Conditions

|  | No Chronic Conditions (n = 127) | 1-5 Chronic Conditions (n = 754) | 6-10 Chronic Conditions (n = 142) |
|--|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Average number of falls                                      | 0.6                             | 1.4                              | 2.1                               |
| % disabled   | 12.4%                           | 37.6%                            | 68.8%                             |
| Average number of times socialized in past month             | 4.3                             | 3.6                              | 2.8                               |
| % who reported health was excellent, very good, or good      | 87.0%                           | 65.3%                            | 25.3%                             |
| % who said quality of life was excellent, very good, or good | 89.1%                           | 81.6%                            | 68.6%                             |
| % with good nutrition status                                 | 71.7%                           | 40.2%                            | 21.1%                             |
| % who had checkup in past year                               | 67.4%                           | 87.9%                            | 89.3%                             |

### Activities of Daily Living

- Most urban Native Elders reported struggling with heavy housework (42.7%), walking (34.7%), and bathing and showering (20.0%).

### Screening

- 48.0% of female urban Native Elders had completed a mammogram in the past year.
- 40.1% of male urban Native Elders had never had a prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test performed.

### Vision, Hearing, and Dental

- 38.3% reported difficulty in seeing, even when wearing corrective lenses.
- 19.8% had trouble hearing, even when wearing a hearing aid.
- 56.7% had seen a dentist in the past year.

### Memory and Disability

- 0.9% of urban Native Elders had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease.
- 1.3% were diagnosed with dementia.
- 39.8% of urban Native Elders reported being diagnosed with a disability.

### Memory Issues\*

|  | No Memory Issue (n = 936) | Memory Issue (n = 87) |
|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| % who reported health was excellent, very good, or good      | 63.4%                     | 41.8%                 |
| % disabled   | 37.0%                     | 68.2%                 |
| % with good nutrition status                                 | 43.2%                     | 23.0%                 |
| % who said quality of life was excellent, very good, or good | 81.4%                     | 70.3%                 |
| % with family member caregiver                               | 25.4%                     | 44.0%                 |

\*(Diagnosis of Alzheimer's, Dementia, or Other Problem With Memory or Thinking)

### Healthcare Access

- 50.2% of urban Native Elders reported using Medicare and Indian Health Services (30.1%).
- Urban Native Elders were most likely to go to a doctor's office (47.6%) or clinic (39.8%).
- Cost (18.2%) and having too long of a wait for an appointment (15.0%) were common barriers to medical care.



**Tobacco and Alcohol Use**

- 74.5% of urban Native Elders did not smoke.
- Among smokers, the average number of cigarettes smoked per day was 8.24.

**Weight and Nutrition**

- 51.9% of urban Native Elders were obese; 28.7% were overweight.
- 28.9% were at a high nutritional risk.
- 34.9% consumed traditional foods regularly, with commonly listed items being wild rice, beans, corn, fry bread, fish, and salmon.
- 34.9% of urban Native Elders reported consuming traditional foods regularly.

**Traditional Foods**

|  | Did Not Consume Traditional Foods (n = 598) | Consumed Traditional Foods (n = 321) |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| % with good nutrition status   | 32.8%                                       | 40.2%                                |
| % who reported socializing   | 68.5%                                       | 84.5%                                |
| % who reported nutritional quality of diet was excellent, very good, or good | 56.0%                                       | 74.2%                                |
| % who ate few fruits and vegetables  | 37.6%                                       | 28.3%                                |

**Spotlight: Urban Native Elders Who Indicated They Didn't Have Enough Money to Buy the Food They Needed (n = 160, 15.6%)**

- 16.5% had an income of less than \$5,000.
- None had a good nutrition status; 89.4% were at a high nutritional risk.
- 78.1% ate less because there was not enough money for food.
- 71.6% took part in nutrition programs 1-2 days per month.
- 34.6% took care of grandchildren.

**Social Support and Caregiving**

- Smudging (49.7%) and powwows (49.5%) were the most common cultural practices.
- 26.3% reported socializing 1-2 times per week, although 25.9% never socialized.
- 35.5% of Elders took care of their grandchildren, with 14.8% being the primary caregiver.

**Spotlight: Urban Native Elders Receiving Care From Family Members (n = 245, 27.2%)**

- The average number of falls in the past year was 1.79.
- The average number of chronic illnesses was 3.6.
- 50.6% reported having a disability.
- 40.8% had a high nutritional risk.

**Spotlight: Urban Native Elders Taking Care of Grandchildren (n = 312, 35.5%)**

- 17.6% had an income between \$10,000 and \$14,999.
- The average number of chronic conditions was 3.15.
- 58.2% said their health was excellent, very good, or good.
- 72.3% reported having physical support; 75.9% reported having social support.

**Social Functioning**

- Most of the time in the past month, urban Native Elders felt happy (50.8%) and calm (43.9%).
- Some felt nervous (32.7%) or downhearted and blue (37.1%) a little of the time.
- 59.9% reported feeling very safe in daily life.

**Spotlight: Urban Native Elders Who Did Not Feel Safe (n = 143, 15.8%)**

- 47.5% reported being disabled.
- 20.3% reported having a memory issue.
- 44.4% lived with family members; 40.1% lived alone.
- 38.5% took care of grandchildren.
- 57.0% reported having physical support; 64.5% reported having social support.

**Technological Connectedness**

- 61.4% of urban Native Elders had access to the internet all of the time.
- 70.3% reported using a smartphone.
- 82.8% reported using social media.

**Social Challenges**

- Nutrition was listed as being the greatest social challenge.
- Urban Native Elders were most likely to currently use pharmacy services (30.0%) and government-assisted housing (9.9%).
- If unable to meet their own needs, they would be most likely to consider using home-delivered meals (59.2%) and home health services (43.6%).