Identifying Our Needs—A Survey of Elders: Data Makes a Difference for Our Native Elders

Collette Adamsen,
NRCNAA Program Director,
Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa

National Resource Center on Native American Aging (NRCNAA)
The NRCNAA is one of three centers that are funded through the Administration for Community Living (ACL). The other two centers are:
- The National Resource Center for American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Elders (Alaska)
- National Resource Center for Native Hawaiian Elders (Hawaii)
The NRCNAA was established in 1994
- Center for Rural Health, University of North Dakota, School of Medicine & Heath Sciences.
Mission and Vision

Mission
Identify and increase awareness of evolving Native elder health and social issues.

Vision
To empower Native people to develop community based solution.
Honoring and helping to maintain cultural values.

NRCNAA Programs and Resources

• Identifying Our Needs: A Survey of Elders
• WELL (Wise Elders Living Longer) Balanced Program
• Native Elder Caregiver Curriculum (NECC)
• Service Locator Map
• Heroes Project
Identifying Our Needs: A Survey of Elders

• ACL funded project
  • Assesses the health and social needs of Native Elders in Tribal Communities
  • 3 year cycles
  • Opportunity to collect information for their communities
  • Technical assistance and training

What is a needs assessment?

• Understanding and identifying health and social issues.
• Needs assessed and documented.
• Tribal planning using data results.
• Grants
  • Data results can aid in providing resources or funding to address health and social needs.
• Overall, can improve the health and social disparities.
Data Roadmap

- Snapshot of Native elder population
- Who, what, when, and where
- Health and social needs trends
- Insight

Image retrieved from: http://roadmap.hftekk.com

Tribal Diversity

- NRCNAA research model addresses diversity between and within tribes.
  - Measurement of local needs
    - Unique fit to tribal community
  - Custom-fitting measure
    - ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL
**Population**

- Native elders residing primarily on reservations, Alaskan villages, and Hawaiian homesteads.
- Age 55 years and older
- Important to note:
  - Age 55 years and over for Native elders is considered comparable to non-Native elders 65 years and older in the general population.

**Survey Needs Data**

- General Health Status
- Diagnosis of Chronic Disease
- Falls
- Activities of Daily Living (ADL’s)
- Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL’s)
- Screening
- Vision, Hearing, & Dental
- Memory and Disability
- Health Care Access
- Tobacco and Alcohol Use
- BMI, Nutrition, and Exercise
- Social Support/Housing
- Social Functioning
- Now and Would Use
- Demographics
### Identifying Our Needs: A Survey of Elders VII

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Health Status</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Hospitalized or had surgery in the last year?</td>
<td>Yes/No/Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Taking any medication?</td>
<td>Yes/No/Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Confident in your ability to make your daily living arrangements?</td>
<td>Yes/No/Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Have you ever been in a nursing home?</td>
<td>Yes/No/Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Are you at risk for any infections?</td>
<td>Yes/No/Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Geographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic Information</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6. Are you living in a rural area?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Are you living in a city?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Are you living in a small town?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Personal Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Information</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9. Are you married?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Are you a senior citizen?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Are you a veteran?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Income Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Information</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. Are you on Social Security?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Are you on Medicare?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Health Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health Information</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14. Are you able to do daily activities independently?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Do you need assistance with daily activities?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Do you have any hearing loss?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Vision Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vision Information</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17. Do you have vision problems?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Do you use any assistive devices?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Cognitive Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive Information</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19. Do you have any cognitive problems?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Do you have any memory problems?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Mental Health Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental Health Information</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21. Are you feeling happy or sad?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Are you feeling lonely?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Substance Abuse Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance Abuse Information</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23. Have you ever used alcohol?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Have you ever used drugs?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Additional Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional Information</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25. Are you able to get food on your own?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Are you able to get heat or clothing on your own?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Are you able to get medications on your own?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Conclusion

This survey is designed to identify the needs of elders in order to provide better support and resources. Please fill out this survey to help us understand the needs of our community.
### Identifying Our Needs: A Survey of Elders VII

#### Social Support/Housing

1. Do your family members live nearby? __________
2. How often do you have dinner with your family? __________
3. How often do you have dinner with your friends? __________
4. How often do you have dinner alone? __________
5. How often do you have dinner at a restaurant? __________
6. How often do you have dinner with your significant other? __________
7. How often do you have dinner with your roommate? __________
8. How often do you have dinner with your roommates? __________

#### Wealth/Financial

9. How much do you have in your savings? __________
10. How much do you have in your retirement account? __________
11. How much do you have in your checking account? __________
12. How much do you have in your credit card account? __________
13. How much do you have in your debit card account? __________

#### Social Functioning

14. How often do you go to the doctor? __________
15. How often do you go to the dentist? __________
16. How often do you go to the pharmacy? __________
17. How often do you go to the gym? __________
18. How often do you go to the library? __________

#### Health

19. How many times have you been to the hospital in the past year? __________
20. How many times have you been to the emergency room in the past year? __________
21. How many times have you been to the doctor in the past year? __________
22. How many times have you been to the dentist in the past year? __________

#### Demographics

23. Age: __________
24. Gender: __________
25. Income: __________
26. Education: __________
27. Marital status: __________

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nrncna.org
NRCNAA Research Model and Process

Tribal Resolution

Results
Tribe Owns Data

Elder Count
Send Surveys
Guides

Administer the Surveys
Trained Staff or Volunteer

Data Processing

Comparison Sheet

Tribe Name (N=) Comparison Data to Aggregate Tribal Data and National Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response(s)</th>
<th>Tribal Data (55 and over)</th>
<th>Aggregate Tribal Data (55 and over)</th>
<th>National Data* (55 and over)</th>
<th>General Health Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Would you say your health in general is: excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor?</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>29.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alzheimer, Dementia, and Disability for Native Elders Cycle VI

- Alzheimer Diagnosed: 4.2%
- Alzheimer Care for Diagnosed: 6.4%
- Know where to go/what to do: 74.6%
- Caregiver well supported: 66.5%
- Listened to and respected: 80.8%
- Are you disabled: 29.4%

Nutritional Health Data among Native Elders Cycle VI

- Take 3 or more prescriptions/day: 35.0%
- Eat few fruits, veg., or milk prod.: 26.3%
- Illness/Condition affected kind or amount of food eaten: 23.0%
- Eat alone most of the time: 18.4%
- Eat fewer than 2 meals a day: 16.3%
- Lost or gained 10 lbs in past 6 months w/ intent: 11.6%
- Not physically able to shop, cook, feed self: 11.3%
- Not enough money to buy food: 10.8%
- Tooth/mouth prob. cause diff. eating: 9.5%
- 3 or more drinks of alcohol everyday: 2.1%
Data: Caregiving Data

Caregiving by Native Elders Cycle VI

Chronic Disease Rates by Gender among Native Elders
Utilization of Data for Tribal Communities

• Community Level
  • Renewal of Title VI Grants
  • Strengthen Grant Proposals
  • Document health and social disparities
  • Tribal planning and infrastructure
• National Level
  • Training for Native elder service providers
  • Advocating for resources and funding at the state, regional, and national level
  • Filling the research gap for Native elder information
• Training Native researchers in aging field
• Decision-making and policy

Needs Assessment Participation

- Total N = 89,436 surveys
Cycle VI Summary

• Data collected in the time span of April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2017
• 18,134 AI/AN elders
• 164 sites
• 267 tribes
• Representation from:
  • 11 out of 12 Indian Health Service (IHS) Regions
  • 9 out of 10 Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regions
  • 28 out of 50 states

*Cycle VII began April 1, 2017 and will end March 31, 2020

WELL Balanced Program
Top Five Chronic Diseases Among Native Elders: 12 year time period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Cycle III</th>
<th>Cycle IV</th>
<th>Cycle V</th>
<th>Cycle VI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
<td>56.9%</td>
<td>52.3%</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Blood Pressure</td>
<td>56.9%</td>
<td>57.3%</td>
<td>58.2%</td>
<td>56.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthritis</td>
<td>45.1%</td>
<td>44.9%</td>
<td>46.5%</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cataracts</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Top Chronic Diseases for Native Elders by Region and Tribal Aggregate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Diabetes</th>
<th>High Blood Pressure</th>
<th>Arthritis</th>
<th>Cataracts</th>
<th>Depression</th>
<th>Asthma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>***47.9%</td>
<td>*55.2%</td>
<td>***49.3%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>***45.7%</td>
<td>*56%</td>
<td>***51.4%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>***57.8%</td>
<td>*64.3%</td>
<td>***41.7%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>***52.4%</td>
<td>*57.2%</td>
<td>***48.7%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>*52.5%</td>
<td>***43.1%</td>
<td>***43%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>*61.7%</td>
<td>**60.6%</td>
<td>***58.2%</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>***48.3%</td>
<td>*55.1%</td>
<td>*45.4%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>***33.8%</td>
<td>*54%</td>
<td>***47.2%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significance levels: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001.
Falls Trending Data: 12 year time period

One or more falls in past 12 months

38.6%  38.1%  39.0%  39.2%

Cycle III  Cycle IV  Cycle V  Cycle VI

WELL Balanced Benefits

• An exercise wellness program for Native elders which promotes:
  • Falls prevention
  • Strengthening and Balance
  • Engaging in social activity
  • Managing diabetes, arthritis, and high blood pressure
  • Developing strategies for independent living while having FUN!

https://www.nrcnaa.org/well-balanced
Native Elder Caregiver Curriculum (NECC)

Caring for Our Elders
A training resource for families and caregivers serving rural American Indian Elders

NECC Model

FIGURE 1: Model of Network for Delivery of Elder Care and Community-Based Long-Term Services & Supports (LTSS) in American Indian Communities

Care of Elders

- Extended Family Structure
- Traditions & Culture
- Health Services & Community Providers
- Tribal Resources
- Family & Friends as Caregivers
**NECC Objectives**

- Age in Place
  - Home and tribal community
- Tool to assist Native elder caregivers
  - Community Health Workers (CHWs) or Community Health Representatives (CHRs)
- NECC development guided by awareness of the modern context of rural Tribal communities and the historically rich traditions and strengths of American Indian Nations.
  - This is embedded in the framework of the NECC curriculum

**Caring for our Native elders**

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**Service Locator for Native American Elders**

The NRCNAA maintains a web-base service locator for Native elders. Services vary by location, but some examples include help with chores, personal care, home-delivered meals, financial assistance, senior citizens programs and assisted living. You can search by service or by area or both.

[https://www.nrcnaa.org/service-locator](https://www.nrcnaa.org/service-locator)
NRCNAA Heroes

- The Heroes Project honors individuals who have dedicated their time, talent, and energy to help Native elders. These are your neighbors whose efforts often go unrecognized.
- Heroes who help build stronger communities by supporting and nurturing their elders.
- Submissions are currently being accepted for 2018.

Native Aging Visions Newsletter
The NRCNAA Team

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Cody Ward, Student Researcher

Contact Information

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