Introduction - Almost 39.6 million Americans were aged 65 and over in 2009. Three in five people in this age group are women. Over the next forty years, the number of people aged 65 and older is expected to double and the number of people aged 85 and older is expected to triple. Along with general trends for America's population, the American Indian and Alaskan Native population is living longer.

Past, Present, and Future - American Indian and Alaskan Native Persons 65+, 1990 - 2050 (numbers in thousands)

The American Indian and Native Alaskan older population (Non-Hispanic and Hispanic) was 232,042 in 2009 and is projected to grow to almost 918,000 by 2050. In 2009, American Indian and Native Alaskan older persons made up 0.6 percent of the older population. An additional 175,037 persons 65 and older consider themselves to be American Indians or Alaska Natives along with another race category for a total of 407,079 persons 65 and older who report American Indian or Alaska Native heritage. By 2050, the percentage of the older population that is American Indian and Native Alaskan is projected to account for 1.0 percent of the older population.

Residence - In 2009, 50% of American Indian and Alaskan Native elderly lived in just six states: California (14.0%), Oklahoma (10.7%), Arizona (9.2%), New Mexico (6.2%), Texas (6.0%), North Carolina (4.3%) for a total of 407,079 persons 65 and older who report American Indian or Alaska Native heritage.

Participation in Older Americans Act Programs (OAA) – In 2008 Title VI of the OAA provided services through tribal organizations to 44,029 older Indians for a total of 2,098,842 congregate meals; 19,216 received a total of 2,421,590 home delivered meals; and 71,308 received one or more supportive services. In addition, about 28,900 older Indians received nutrition and supportive services from Title III provided through area agencies on aging in FY 2008.