

Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

LTSS Research: Nursing Home Facility Inventory

Nursing Homes in Indian Country

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Background

American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) have a unique relationship with the federal government. It is unlike any other population in the United States, based in part on treaties negotiated with sovereign Indian nations, beginning in the colonial period and continuing after the establishment of the United States into the late 1800s. These treaties have established a unique government-to-government relationship, based upon the cession of millions of acres of land in exchange for certain promises, benefits, and reserved rights. These treaties have helped secure the federal obligation to provide health services to AI/ANs. The Snyder Act¹ was authorized by Congress in 1921 to provide health care access to Indian people throughout the United States. Later, the Indian Health Service (IHS) was established under the U.S. Public Health Service to carry out this responsibility under the Transfer Act in 1955.²

Health programs funded through IHS serve more than 2 million AI/AN people from 566 federally recognized tribes and 34 urban Indian communities. While there has been steady progress in health care services since 1955, the health status of AI/AN populations still lags far behind that of other populations, worsened by poverty, poor nutrition, obesity, substance use disorders, violence, and injuries. Trends show that AI/AN populations suffer from higher rates of death and disease than their counterparts. As health services to AI/AN communities improve, so does the longevity of AI/AN populations. Ironically, as people live longer, they are more likely to grapple with issues of chronic disease³ and comorbidity requiring 24-hour-a-day care late in life.

Compounding the health issues that AI/ANs face are geographic isolation, poverty, and a lack of access to health care and health insurance. It is because of this that AI/ANs are projected to seek care at later stages of disease, which lowers survival rates.⁴ Delayed access to health care leads many to frailty, deteriorated health conditions, and the need for skilled nursing facility or hospice care. The lack of cultural sensitivity in facilities and hospitals serving AI/ANs might cause Native populations to seek care at later stages of their disease.⁵

Nursing Home Facilities in Indian Country

Within the continuum of care, nursing home facilities (NHF) provide the most intensive care. Residents of this type of facility-based setting demand 24-hours-a-day care. Individuals who need assistance with three or more activities of daily living (ADLs) require a skilled nursing-level of care.⁶ This type of care must be administered by staff who meet state regulations.⁷ For tribal communities, available NHFs are often great distances from an elder's home and family. These

¹ Public Law 67–85

² H.R. 303. Public Law 568

³ Finke et al. 2004, Hampton 2005, Indian Health Service 2006, Kitzes 2003, Arenella et al. 2010

⁴ Kitzes 2002, Arenella et al. 2010, Marr et al. 2012, Portman and Garret 2006, National Cancer Institute 2011

⁵ Hendrix 2003

⁶ National Resource Center on Native American Aging 2002

⁷ McDonald 2005

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facilities also often lack culturally sensitive tools and protocols. These combined factors contribute to elder loneliness, alienation, and isolation, especially if the elder is a non-English speaker.⁸

Currently, there are 16 established, tribally operated NHF in the United States, as shown in Table I.

Table I. NHFs in the United States by Region

Region	State	Nursing Home
Southwest	Arizona	Caring House
		Chinle Nursing Home
		Archie Hendricks, Sr. Skilled Nursing Center
	New Mexico	Laguna Rainbow Nursing Facility
Alaska	Alaska	Utuqqanaat Inaat
		Quyanna Care Center
		Yukon Kuskokwim Elder’s Home
Midwest	Minnesota	Jourdain/Perpich Extended Care Center
	Nebraska	Carl T. Curtis Health Education Center
	South Dakota	White River Health Care Center
	Wisconsin	Anna John Resident Centered Care Community
Eastern	Mississippi	Choctaw Residential Center
	North Carolina	Tsali Care Center
Northwest	Montana	Blackfeet Care Center
	Washington	Colville Tribal Convalescent Center
	Wyoming	Morning Star Manor

Over half of the tribally operated NHF have a bed capacity at or under 50 beds, and two NHF (the Choctaw Residential Center in Mississippi and the Caring House in Arizona) have a capacity for 100 or more beds. Ten NHF have been in operation for more than 20 years, and only three NHF have been established since 2000 (Archie Hendricks, Sr. Skilled Nursing Center in Arizona and Utuqqanaat Inaat Nursing Home and Yukon Kuskokwim Elder’s Home in Alaska).

Table II, Tribally Operated Nursing Home Facilities (Appendix A), lists all of the tribally operated NHF in Indian Country, along with detailed information about each facility. Three NHF are in discussion or development phases: Native Veterans Nursing Home in Arizona, Edith

⁸ Branch 2010

Kassanavoid Gordon Assisted Living Center in Oklahoma, and Whiteclay Nursing Home in Nebraska. The Whiteclay Nursing Home is an operation owned by the Oglala Sioux tribe. While the tribe's reservation is located in South Dakota, the nursing home is being constructed in Whiteclay, Nebraska.

The small number of nursing homes and their limited capacities point to an increasing need in Indian Country, especially as the aging AI/AN population grows. A lack of long-term care service and support options leads many to seek institutional care in the form of nursing homes.

Medicare Nursing Home Compare

In 2008, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), along with long-term care experts, developed the Medicare Nursing Home Compare (MNHC) website to provide nursing home comparisons for the public (<http://www.medicare.gov/nursinghomecompare>). The MNHC website offers nursing home comparison capability, and lists NHCs that are Medicare or Medicaid certified and provide "skilled" care.

The comparisons are based on CMS' Five-Star Nursing Home Quality Rating System.⁹ The rating system "assigns each nursing home an overall rating and three component ratings for health inspections, staffing, and quality measures, based on the extent to which the nursing home meets CMS' quality standards and other measures."¹⁰ Each rating can range from one to five stars, five stars indicating higher qualities and three indicating "average" qualities. Each nursing home identified on the MNHC has an overall rating, lists penalties within past 3 years, and provides a rating per the following categories:

- health and fire-safety inspections are annual inspections conducted by the state to ensure NHCs meet Congressional requirements on measures of nutrition and diet, pharmacy services, and resident rights, to name a few;
- NHC staffing comparisons that assess the number of NHC staff (registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, certified nursing assistant, and physical therapist) versus the number of hours staff make available per NHC resident, based on federal requirements;
- quality measures that analyze the Minimum Data Set (MDS), an annual assessment completed by NHCs detailing residents' health, physical functioning, mental status, and general well-being.

The MNHC website notes that nursing home profile data comes from annual comprehensive inspections plus the previous 3 years' complaint investigations with comparisons to state and national averages for each category. Specifically, the data comes from CMS' Health Inspection Database, and the MDS. CMS' Health Inspection database includes annual state NHC inspections and complaint investigations. The MDS assessment is completed by each Medicare

⁹ Government Accountability Office 2012

¹⁰ Government Accountability Office

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or Medicaid-certified NHF for each resident to aid the NHF's development of individual care plans for residents. The MNHC website notes that NHFs provide all of the data, and that "nursing home inspectors review it, but don't formally check it to ensure accuracy."

The MNHC includes each of the 16 tribally operated nursing homes. Table III, NHF Five-Star Rating Summary (Appendix B), summarizes the five-star ratings for each tribally operated NHF, finding that:

- Two NHFs received a four-star overall rating (Archie Hendricks, Sr. Skilled Nursing Center and Anna John Resident Centered Care Community),
- Five NHFs were rated an overall three stars,
- Four NHFs were rated two stars, and
- Five NHFs received an overall rating of one star.

In the Staffing category, each NHF was rated at or above average, with eight NHFs receiving five stars. In the Health & Fire Safety Inspections and Quality Measures categories, more than half of the NHFs were rated at or below average. Only White River Health Care Center; Archie Hendricks, Sr. Skilled Nursing Center; and Laguna Rainbow Nursing Facility received a five-star rating in the Quality Measures category.

Nursing Home Facility Support and Development

Medicare and Medicaid certification has been identified as a longstanding barrier to tribal communities in the development of healthcare services and facilities—culturally and financially. The development of an NHF, in particular, is a costly endeavor due to operational expenses. Tracking changes that occur with each tribal NHF is important to better understand the field of long-term supports and services and, specifically, NHFs in Indian Country. An expanded review of the MNHC website would be useful to learn more about how NHFs in tribal communities meet state certifications and quality measures. The MNHC profiles of the 16 tribally operated NHFs overtime could be used to develop best practices, training materials, or tools for tribal communities looking to address long-term care needs and cultural considerations for patients.

Appendix A

Tribally Operated Nursing Home Facilities

Table II. Tribally Operated NHFs

An asterisk (*) indicates NHFs that are in discussion and development phases

Tribal Affiliation	NHF Name and Address	Contact	Beds, Year Opened
Alaskan Region			
Maniilaq Community Association	Utuqqanaat Inaat 436 Mission St. P.O. Box 510 Kotzebue, AK 99752	Valdeko Ivan Kreil Administrator valdeko.kreil@maniilaq.org P: (907) 442-3321 F: (907) 442-7250	18 beds, 2011
Stebbins Community Association	Quyanna Care Center 1100 Greg Kruschek Ave. P.O. Box 966 Nome, AK 99762	Angela Gorn Administrator agorn@nshcorp.org P: (907) 443-3357 F: (907) 443-3368	18 beds, 1988
Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation	Yukon Kuskokwim Elder's Home 1100 Chief Eddie Hoffman Hwy. P.O. Box 528 Bethel, AK 99559	Gerald Hodges Administrator gerald_hodges@ykhc.org P: (907) 543-6782 F: (907) 543-6780	18 beds, 2013
Northwestern Region			
Blackfeet Nation	Blackfeet Care Center 728 S Government Sq. P.O. Box 728 Browning, MT 59417	Martha Spotted Eagle Administrator mytanagirl@yahoo.com P: (406) 338-2686 F: (406) 338-7779	47 beds, 1970
Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation	Colville Tribal Convalescent Center 1 Convalescent Center Blvd. P.O. Box 150 Nespelem, WA 99155	Shoshannah Jordan Administrator shoshannah.jordan@colvilletribes.com P: (509) 634-2878 F: (509) 634-2889	44 beds, 1981

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Tribal Affiliation	NHF Name and Address	Contact	Beds, Year Opened
Shoshone Tribe of the Wind River Reservation	Morning Star Care Center 4 N Fork Rd. P.O. Box 859 Fort Washakie, WY 82514	Kathy King Director, Tribal Health Programs esth.director@gmail.com P: (307) 332-6902 F: (307) 332-4279	45 beds, 1980
Southwestern Region			
Gila River Indian Community	Caring House 510 S Ocotillo Dr. Sacaton, AZ 85147	Christopher Daroczy Administrator cdaroczy@gricc.org P: (520) 562-7400 F: (520) 562-7406	100 beds, 1992
Navajo Nation	Chinle Nursing Home 5755 East Main St. P.O. Box 910 Chinle, AZ 86503	Wayne Claw CEO wynclaw@yahoo.com P: (928) 674-5216 F: (928) 674-5218	79 beds, 1968
Navajo Nation	Native Veterans Nursing Home* Chinle, AZ	NA	NA
Tohono O'odham Nation	Archie Hendricks, Sr. Skilled Nursing Center Federal Rte. 15, Milepost 9 HC 01 Box 9100 Sells, AZ 85634	Lee Olitzky Administrator lolitzky@toltc.org P: (520) 361-1803 F: (520) 361-3656	60 beds, 1998
Pueblo of Laguna	Laguna Rainbow Nursing Facility I-40 Exit 108 1/2 Mile S State Road 23 P.O. Box 490 Casa Blanca, NM 87007	Michael Banes Administrator mbanes@lagunarainbow.org P: (505) 552-6034 F: (505) 552-7645	58 beds, 1981
Midwestern Region			
Comanche Nation	Edith Kassanavoid Gordon Assisted Living Center* Lawton OK	NA	NA

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Tribal Affiliation	NHF Name and Address	Contact	Beds, Year Opened
Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians	Jourdain/ Perpich Extended Care Center 24856 Hospital Dr. P.O. Box 399 Red Lake, MN 56671	Gary Hjelmstad Interim Administrator P: (218) 679-3400 F: (218) 679-3434	47 beds, 1984
Omaha Tribe of Nebraska	Carl T. Curtis Health Education Center 100 Indian Hills Dr. P.O. Box 250 Macy, NE 68039	Kourtney Williams Administrator P: (402) 837-5381 F: (406) 837-4216	25 beds, NA
Oglala Sioux Tribe	Whiteclay Nursing Home* Whiteclay, NE	NA	NA
Rosebud Sioux Tribe	White River Health Care Center 515 E 8Th St. P.O. Box 310 White River, SD 57579	Carol Gregg Administrator wrhccbus@goldenwest.net P: (605) 259-3161 F: (605) 259-3106	52 beds, 1974
Oneida Nation	Anna John Resident Centered Care Community 2901 S. Overland Rd. P.O. Box 365 Oneida, WI 54155	Nola Feldkamp Administrator nfeldkamp@oneidanation.org P: (920) 869-2797 F: (920) 869-3238	48 beds, 1978
Eastern Region			
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians	Choctaw Residential Center 135 Hospital Cir. Philadelphia, MS 39350	Wendy Moran Administrator wendymoran.crc11@yahoo.com P: (601) 656-2582 F: (601) 656-0670	120 beds, 1987
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians	Tsali Care Center 55 Echota Church Rd. Cherokee, NC 28719	David Hunt Administrator davihunt@nc-chokeee.com P: (828) 554-6506 F: (828) 497-5347	72 beds, 1995

Appendix B

NHF Five-Star Rating Summary Table

Table III. NHF Five-Star Rating Summary

NHF Name	Overall Rating	Health & Fire Safety Inspections	Staffing	Quality Measures	Penalties (Actual #)
Alaskan Region					
Utuqqanaat Inaat (AK)	3	2	5	2	2
Quyanna Care Center (AK)	3	2	5	2	1
Yukon Kuskokwim Elder’s Home (AK)	2	1	5	NA	1
Northwestern Region					
Blackfeet Care Center (MT)	3	2	5	3	0
Colville Tribal Convalescent Center (WA)	1	1	3	4	0
Morning Star Care Center (WY)	1	1	3	3	0
Southwestern Region					
Caring House (AZ)	1	1	5	1	0
Chinle Nursing Home (AZ)	1	1	3	3	1
Archie Hendricks, Sr. Skilled Nursing Center (AZ)	4	2	5	5	0
Laguna Rainbow Nursing Facility (NM)	3	2	3	5	0
Midwestern Region					
Jourdain/Perpich Extended Care Center (MN)	1	1	4	1	0
Carl T. Curtis Health Education Center (NE)	3	2	5	2	0
White River Health Care Center (SD)	2	1	3	5	0
Anna John Resident Centered Care Community (WI)	4	3	4	2	0
Eastern Region					
Choctaw Residential Center (MS)	2	3	3	1	0
Tsali Care Center (NC)	2	1	5	3	0

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