



HIV Diagnoses Among Native Americans Continue to Rise

However, even as new cases climbed, deaths declined.

March 25, 2021 By [Heather Boerner](#)

HIV diagnoses [continue to rise](#) even as deaths drop sharply among Native Americans and Alaska Natives, according to data presented at the recent [Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections \(CROI\)](#).

Drawn from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National HIV Surveillance System, the data include only people who identified as single-race [Native American](#) and people registered as members of one of the 574 tribes in the United States.

Two and a half million Native Americans and Alaska Natives live in the United States; 1.6 million of them receive care from the Indian Health Service. While previous data showed that HIV rates had been rising in Indian country since 2012—and among gay and bisexual or two-spirit—Native Americans and Alaska Natives in particular—researchers wanted to see what the data could tell them about the national picture, specifically in areas served by the Indian Health Service.

What they found was that the trend of increases in HIV diagnoses continued until 2018, with the rate rising 20.7% between 2014 and 2018. This was mostly due to increases in HIV diagnoses among young people ages 13 to 24 and people 35 to 44. Unfortunately, Native American young people saw their death rate rise between 2017 and 2018 as well, while the overall death rate dropped 31.4% from 2014 to 2018.

When the researchers looked at which Native communities bore the heaviest burden of HIV, the Navajo Nation had the highest rate, at 13.7 per 100,000, which is more than the national average of 13.3 per 100,000. People residing in the Native communities around Albuquerque had a rate of 13.3 per 100,000.

Click here to read the [full CROI abstract](#).