

Resource: America's Disproportionate Investment in Healthcare for American Indians and Alaska Natives

Category: Policy Blog

written by Adrienne Elliott | July 14, 2022

The National Council of Urban Indian Health recently published a one-pager showcasing the disproportionate gaps in national healthcare investment for American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs). The Indian Health Service (IHS) and Urban Indian Health budgets have long been underfunded. In the agency's [Fiscal Year \(FY\) 2023 Performance Budget Submission](#) to Congress, IHS highlighted these disparities, noting that the "Indian health system is chronically underfunded compared to other healthcare systems in the U.S." NCUIH's analysis of FY 2018 appropriations shows that the US spends \$11,172 in healthcare costs per person. In contrast, Tribal and IHS facilities receive \$4,078 per IHS eligible patient, while Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs), which support the over 70% of AI/ANs living off-reservation, receive just \$672 per AI/AN patient from the IHS budget. [NCUIH data](#) further shows that the gap between tribal budgetary needs submitted via requests to Congress and eventual appropriations has continued to skyrocket over recent years, thereby increasing discrepancies in per-person healthcare spending at UIOs.

[Link to resource.](#)

\$11,000	U.S. HEALTH CARE SPENDING PER PERSON ¹
\$4,000	INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE FUNDING PER PATIENT ²
\$700	URBAN INDIAN HEALTH FUNDING PER PATIENT ³