

# Interior Alaska Service Area



## OVERVIEW

### Alaska Native 2006 User Population.

<b>INTERIOR ALASKA SERVICE AREA</b>	<b>12,981</b>
Council of Tribal Athabascan Tribal Governments	1,157
Tanana Chiefs Conference	11,612
Tanana Tribal Council	212

Users are defined as beneficiaries who used a facility that reports through the IHS data system at least once between 10/1/2003 and 9/30/2006.

**Environmental Factors.** The Interior Alaska Service Area covers about 167,644 square miles, and contains over 37 percent of Alaska's land mass. In Fairbanks, the urban center of the Interior, Alaska Natives make up about 9% of the population. In rural areas, the percentage increases to about 73%. All Interior Alaska communities are located along river transportation and subsistence systems. Service areas in Alaska's interior are set geographically in relationship to a community's location on three major river systems,

Map 6.1



# Interior Alaska Service Area



The Tanana River bisects the Interior Service Area from the Canadian border to its confluence with the Yukon River. The Yukon River stretches across the service area from the Canadian border to a point beyond Holy Cross. The confluence of the Yukon and Koyukuk rivers is headquarters to the Galena subregion, and the Koyukuk river's northernmost reach makes up the Evansville/Bettles subregion.

Interior temperatures can be as cold as -65 degrees F below zero in winter, and as warm as 95 degrees F in the summer. The average temperature is -10 degrees below zero in January and 65 degrees in July. Summer daylight lasts 21 hours, and conversely, December nights are 21 hours long. Normal annual precipitation is 11.67 inches, with an annual average snowfall of 50 inches. When temperatures drop below -20 degrees and the wind is calm, the heat and moisture from buildings and automobiles creates ice fog around settlements, which may persist for days.

While the vast majority of indigenous Native people of Interior Alaska are Athabascan Indians, a significant Eskimo population resides in Fairbanks.

**Utilities.** Fairbanks has all the utilities of an urban center, and most Interior Alaska residents on the road systems have utilities. About half of the interior village homes have no water or waste water facilities.

**Transportation.** Fairbanks is the transportation hub for Interior Alaska. Jet service is available in Fairbanks with daily flights to Seattle, Anchorage and other Alaskan communities. Villages that are located near the confluence of highways and rivers have motor vehicle access, at least during summer months. Most communities are accessible only by air, by boat during the summer, and by dogsled or snowmachine in the winter. Travel by any means is simply not practical in extreme weather, i.e. airplanes stop flying at -45 degrees or colder. There can be days or weeks during the winter when airplanes are grounded and villages are cut off completely. Fuel, construction materials and supplies are shipped from Anchorage to Nenana by railroad, and then transported to Yukon River villages by barge in the summer. Many supplies are delivered by air, year-round.

**Housing.** Housing is scarce in most rural villages of the Interior Alaska Service Area. Staff quarters are not available in Fairbanks, but adequate private rental housing can be found.

Table 6.1

### Interior Alaska Area Number of Homes With and Without Complete Water and Sewer Service<sup>1</sup>

	# Homes With	# homes Without	Total # of Homes
<b>INTERIOR ALASKA SERVICE AREA</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,081</b>	<b>2,081</b>
<b>Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>479</b>
<b>Tanana Chiefs Conference (part)</b>	<b>836</b>	<b>766</b>	<b>1,602</b>

<sup>1</sup>Complete service means operable plumbed indoor water and sewer service. Information applies only to year-round primary homes, including individual homes, duplexes and apartment units. Data from FY 2002.

\*Exclude homes covered by urban local government water and sewer service.

Source: Alaska Area Native Health Service, Office of Environmental Health.



**Education.** Eight school districts serve Fairbanks and the interior Alaska villages. Special education and vocational training are available in Fairbanks. The University of Alaska in Fairbanks is internationally known for its Geophysical Institute as well as other major Arctic research facilities. Some University of Alaska courses are available in the villages through distance learning.

**Natural Resources.** Fairbanks serves as the trade center for Interior and Northern Alaska. Agriculture, mining (mostly gold), tourism, fish and game are the major natural resources. Gold mining and tourism in the Fairbanks area have increased significantly recently.

**Economic Conditions.** Residents of rural Alaska rely heavily on subsistence hunting, fishing and trapping. Wage and salary employment is limited in the Interior Alaska Service Area, and government is the chief employer in all subregions. Because of seasonal jobs, dramatic fluctuation occurs in unemployment rates. Recent emphasis on village-based economic development projects, tourism and entrepreneurial activities may create a stronger rural economy.

**Federally Recognized Tribes.** The following federally recognized tribes are grouped by P.L. 93-638, Title V resolution:

**Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments (CATG):**

- Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government (aka Arctic Village and Village of Venetie) - P.O. Box 81080, Venetie, AK 99781
- Beaver Village - P.O. Box 24029, Beaver, AK 99724
- Birch Creek Tribe - P.O. Box KBC, Birch Creek, AK 99740
- Circle Native Community - P.O. Box 89, Circle, AK 99733
- Native Village of Fort Yukon - P.O. Box 126, Fort Yukon, AK 99740
- Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government - P.O. Box 81080, Venetie, AK 99781

Table 6.2

**Interior Alaska Service Area  
Education Status  
for the Population 25 Years and Over**

	Males	Females
<b><u>White Alone population:</u></b>		
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	6,072	5,163
Bachelors degree or higher	6,559	6,365
<b><u>AI/AN* Alone population:</u></b>		
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	1,282	1,040
Bachelors degree or higher	160	242

AI/AN\*=American Indian/Alaska Native. Includes the Denali Borough, Fairbanks North Star Borough, Southeast Fairbanks Census Area and Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area. Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2000 Census Summary File 3

Table 6.3

**Interior Alaska Service Area  
Employment Status  
for the Population 16 years and Over**

	Male	Female
<b><u>White Alone population:</u></b>		
In labor force	23,662	17,002
Employed	17,530	15,256
Unemployed	1,791	1,198
<b><u>AI/AN* Alone population:</u></b>		
In labor force	2,183	2,091
Employed	1,409	1,678
Unemployed	709	406

AI/AN\*=American Indian/Alaska Native. Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2000 Census Summary File 3

# Interior Alaska Service Area



## **Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC), Inc.:**

Allakaket Village - P.O. Box 50, Allakaket, AK 99720  
Alatna Village - P.O. Box 70, Alatna, AK 99720  
Village of Anaktuvuk Pass - General Delivery, Anaktuvuk Pass, AK 99721  
Chalkyitsik Village, P.L. 93-638, Title I - P.O. Box 57, Chalkyitsik, AK 99788  
Village of Dot Lake - P.O. Box 2279, Dot Lake, AK 99737  
Native Village of Eagle - P.O. Box 19, Eagle, AK 99738  
Evansville Village (aka Bettles Field) - P.O. Box 26087, Bettles, AK 99726  
Galena Village (aka Loudon Village) - P.O. Box 244, Galena, AK 99741  
Healy Lake Village - P.O. Box 60300, Fairbanks, AK 99706  
Hughes Village - P.O. Box 45029, Hughes, AK 99745  
Huslia Village - P.O. Box 70, Huslia, AK 99746  
Village of Kaltag - P.O. Box 129, Kaltag, AK 99748  
Koyukuk Native Village - P.O. Box 109, Koyukuk, AK 99754  
Manley Hot Springs Village - P.O. Box 23, Manley, AK 99756  
Native Village of Minto - P.O. Box 26, Minto, AK 99758  
Nikolai Village (Edzeno' Native Council) - P.O. Box 9105, Nikolai, AK 99691  
Nenana Native Association - P.O. Box 356, Nenana, AK 99760  
Northway Village - P.O. Box 516, Northway, AK 99764  
Nulato Village - P.O. Box 65049, Nulato, AK 99765  
Rampart Village - P.O. Box 67029, Rampart, AK 99767  
Native Village of Ruby - P.O. Box 210, Ruby, AK 99768  
Native Village of Stevens - P.O. Box 16, Stevens Village, AK 99774  
Native Village of Tanacross - P.O. Box 76009, Tanacross, AK 99776  
Telida Village - P.O. Box 9104, Nikolai, AK 99629  
Native Village of Tetlin - P.O. Box TTL, Tetlin, AK 99779

## **Tanana Tribal Council, P.L. 93-638, Title I Contract (no P.L. 93-638, Title V resolution):**

Native Village of Tanana, P.L. 93-638, Title I - P.O. Box 77130, Tanana, AK 99777

## **Other places in the Interior Service Area not Federally Recognized as Tribes.**

Alcan	Chatanika	Fox	North Pole	Wiseman
Anderson	Chicken	Indian River	Salcha	Wood River
Big Delta	Clear	Kokrines	Tok	
Canyon Village	Delta Junction	Lake Minchumina	Toklat	
Central	Fairbanks	Medfra	Tolovana	



## DESCRIPTION OF HEALTH-CARE DELIVERY SYSTEM

**Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center, Fairbanks.** Since 1984, the Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc. (TCC) has provided health services to Interior Alaska Natives under P.L. 93-638. They currently serve 35 of the 43 Interior villages under a Title V funding agreement with the Indian Health Service. TCC is headquartered in Fairbanks, where they lease space on the third and fourth floors of the privately owned Fairbanks Memorial Hospital for the *Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center (CAIHC)*. This location allows TCC to take advantage of the private hospital's radiology and laboratory facilities.

Family practice, internal medicine, obstetrics, gynecology, some after-hours urgent care, mental health, pharmacy, and public health nursing services are provided on-site at the CAIHC. Limited psychiatric assessment and therapy services are available. TCC operates the *Bertha Moses Patient Hostel* adjacent to CAIHC for village patients traveling to Fairbanks for general medical care. The *TCC Paul Williams House*, located a few blocks away, provides temporary housing for patients needing specialized mental health services.

The dental and optometry clinics are located several miles away from the CAIHC, and share space in TCC's main offices in downtown Fairbanks. TCC provides complete restorative and prevention dental services, and purchases specialty dental in Fairbanks for Native beneficiaries. Medical, dental and optometry staff in Fairbanks provide scheduled field visits to the remote villages of the Interior Alaska region.

Community health services provided by Tanana Chiefs Conference include outpatient alcohol counseling (*Yukon Tanana Counseling Services*), outpatient mental health counseling (*TCC Counseling Center*), health education, HIV/AIDS early intervention, HIV case management, women and children's nutrition, environmental health, CHR, home health care, CHA/P training, and substance abuse family recovery (*Old Minto Camp*). TCC provides outpatient substance abuse treatment in the Yukon Tanana Counseling Services in Fairbanks. In addition to itinerant professionals making substance abuse village visits, TCC provides village para-professional alcohol counselors in the Yukon-Tanana villages (3 counselors) and the Upper Tanana villages (8 counselors).

*Graf Rheeneerhaanji*, "*The Healing Place*" is a residential adolescent alcohol treatment facility operated by the Fairbanks Native Association (FNA) through a P.L. 93-638 Title I contract. FNA also operates the *Longhouse*, a 12-bed long term care (> 30 days) residential treatment for homeless and chronic inebriates, the *Ralph Perdue Center*, a residential substance abuse center and detox facility for adults, the *Women and Children's Center for Inner Healing*, a long-term (>30 days) facility with 12 beds for pregnant and postpartum women, and *Lifegivers*, a 12-bed detox and residential treatment program for pregnant adolescent females.



Inpatient cardiology burn/thermal treatment, trauma, level III newborn intensive care, rehabilitation services, nuclear medicine, orthopedics and reconstructive surgery are referred to the Alaska Native Medical Center (ANMC) in Anchorage. Some orthopedics, laboratory, and diagnostic imaging also must be referred to ANMC.

Graph 6.1  
**Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center  
 Outpatient Workload: FY 1971 - FY 2006**

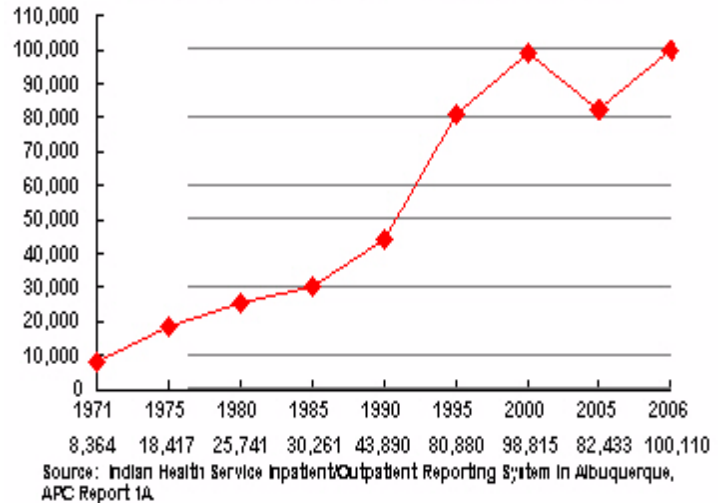


Table 6.4  
**Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center  
 Leading Causes of Outpatient Visits: FY 2001 - FY 2004**

All Age Groups	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004
Pregnancy, childbirth & puerperium	636	474	2,028	5,179
Hypertension	1,140	2,866	3,538	4,218
Upper Respiratory Problems	5,021	4,521	4,091	3,473
Neuroses & Non-Psychotic Disorders	2,996	3,101	3,169	3,371
Psychoses	3,284	3,457	3,913	3,290
Accidents & Injuries	3,531	2,952	2,724	3,204
Assessment of Symptoms	1,488	1,631	3,499	3,063
Bone & Joint Disorders	2,426	2,575	2,657	2,400
Respiratory Allergies	1,003	1,529	1,590	1,572
Diabetes Mellitus	813	1,283	1,439	1,522

Source: Indian Health Service Inpatient/Outpatient Reporting System in Albuquerque, APC Report 1C.

**Community Health Aide Program (CHAP).** The following Interior Alaska Service Area villages have community health aide programs managed by Tanana Chiefs Conference:

- |                |         |            |                  |     |
|----------------|---------|------------|------------------|-----|
| Anaktuvuk Pass | Hughes  | Manley     | Northway         | Tok |
| *Chalkyitsik   | Huslia  | Minto      | Nulato           |     |
| Eagle          | Kaltag  | Nenana     | Ruby             |     |
| Fairbanks      | Koyukuk | North Pole | *Stevens Village |     |

\*Receives support from both Tanana Chiefs Conference and the Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments.

# Interior Alaska Service Area



Located 138 miles west of Fairbanks, the *Tanana Tribal Health Center* is within the former Indian Health Service hospital compound. The Tanana Tribal Council operates the health center under a P.L. 93-638, Title I contract. Services include mid-level outpatient, 24-hour urgent care, outpatient alcohol counseling, and residential elder care. Facilities include the clinic building, two units of housing and five service buildings. Tanana Chiefs Conference provides field dental, medical and optometry visits to the community from Fairbanks.

Operated by TCC between 1980 and 1994, the *Yukon Flats Health Center* is now operated by the Council of Athapaskan Tribal Governments (CATG) under P.L. 93-638, Title V. CATG assumed operation of the Health Center in 1994, and responsibility for health care in the surrounding villages two years later. The *Yukon Flats Health Center* is a HRSA, Section 330 Community Health Center that provides primary medical, 24 hour emergency, dental, and referral services. Community health services include CHAP administration, community health representatives, health education, and family recovery camp. The CATG *CARE Center Mental Health and Substance Abuse* facility provides outpatient counseling, outreach, referral, crisis intervention, case management, and prevention/education services. TCC provides contract health services and physician field visits to *Yukon Flats Health Center*.

The *Yukon Flats Health Center* provides health care to the communities of Arctic Village, Beaver, Birch Creek, Canyon Village, Circle, Venetie, and Fort Yukon. Two of the *Yukon Flats Health Center* mid-level providers work in the clinical program, and the third serves as the coordinator/instructor for the community health aide program.

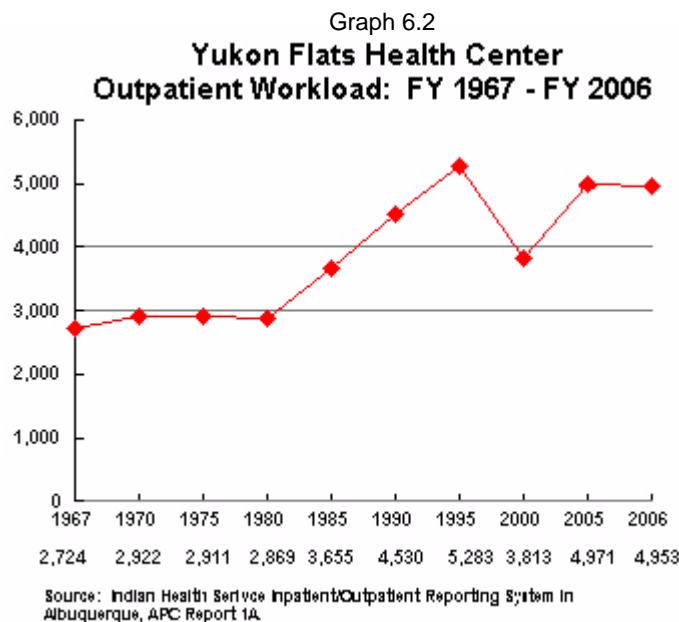




Table 6.5  
**Yukon Flats Health Center (Fort Yukon)**  
**Leading Causes of Outpatient Visits: FY 2001 - FY 2004**

<b>All Age Groups</b>	<b>FY 2001</b>	<b>FY 2002</b>	<b>FY 2003</b>	<b>FY 2004</b>
Accidents & Injuries	278	364	368	555
Tests Only	157	203	332	513
Upper Respiratory Problems	410	432	473	419
Hypertension	64	132	250	287
Otitis Media	159	181	261	280
Diabetes Mellitus	21	114	207	280
Bone and Joint Disorders	123	117	167	238
Neuroses & Non-Psychotic Disorders	84	71	106	189
Alcohol Abuse	88	92	102	135
Musculoskeletal Disorder	56	86	79	106

Source: Indian Health Service Inpatient/Outpatient Reporting System in Albuquerque, APC Report 1C.

The following villages have community health aide programs managed by the Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments. All CATG village clinics have HRSA, Section 330 operating funds:

Circle                      \*Stevens Village                      Venetie

\*Receives support from both Tanana Chiefs Conference and the Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments.

## NON-TRIBAL HEALTH AGENCIES AND FACILITIES AND TYPES OF SERVICES PROVIDED TO SERVICE POPULATION

Emergency after-hours and inpatient services are purchased from the *Fairbanks Memorial Hospital* by the Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC).

TCC contracts for outpatient visits with the *Galena Health Center*, 282 miles west of Fairbanks, which serves the villages of Galena, Hughes, Kaltag, Kokrines, Koyukuk, Nulato and Ruby. Tanana Chiefs also supports activities of the *Galena Community Mental Health Center* through a subcontract. Travel to the region is by small engine airplane, river boat and snow machine.

The *Tok Health Center* serves the Upper Tanana villages of Dot Lake, Healy Lake, Eagle, Northway, Richardson, Tanacross, Tetlin and Tok which are located along the Tanana River and accessible to the Richardson Highway. Tok is the subregional center. Tanana Chiefs Conference contracts with the privately owned *Tok Health Center* for outpatient services, and provides regularly scheduled itinerant dental services to the region.



# Interior Alaska Service Area



Public health nurses work throughout the Interior Alaska Service Area under the direction of the State of Alaska, Division of Public Health. They provide immunizations, maternal and child health services and preventive health services to the villages within Interior Alaska.

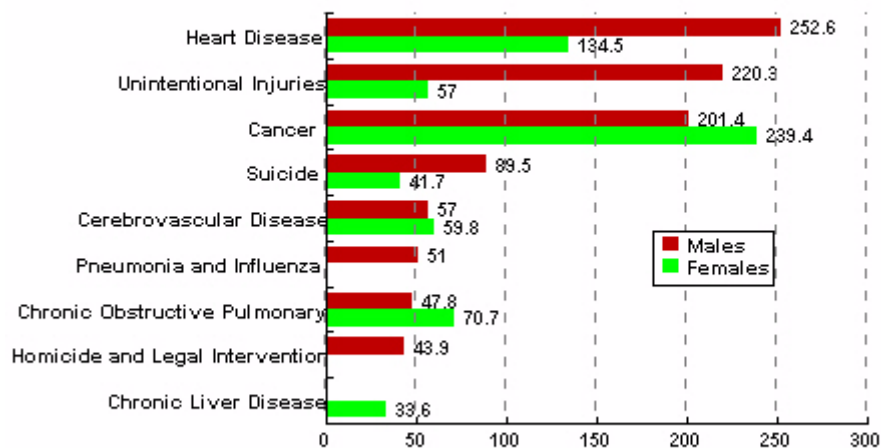
## HEALTH FACILITIES PLANNING ISSUES

The *Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center (CAIHC)* is separated by several miles from TCC's dental clinics, optometry clinics, health education services, rural health, environmental health, health administration and business office. Unification of all health services and programs under one roof adjacent to the CAIHC is a long-term goal. Smaller than adequate lease space in the Fairbanks Memorial Hospital and a 20-year lease which keeps CAIHC in its current location are the major factors preventing the consolidation of programs.

## HEALTH STATUS OF ALASKA NATIVES LIVING IN THE INTERIOR ALASKA SERVICE AREA

### Mortality.

Table 6.3  
**Interior Region**  
**Age-Adjusted Alaska Native Mortality Rates by Male and Female**  
**1999 - 2003**  
**Rates per 100,000**



- Rate not calculated for fewer than five deaths.  
Source: Alaska Native Mortality Update: 1999-2003, Alaska Native Epidemiology Center, Office of Alaska Native Health Research, Division of Community Health Services, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

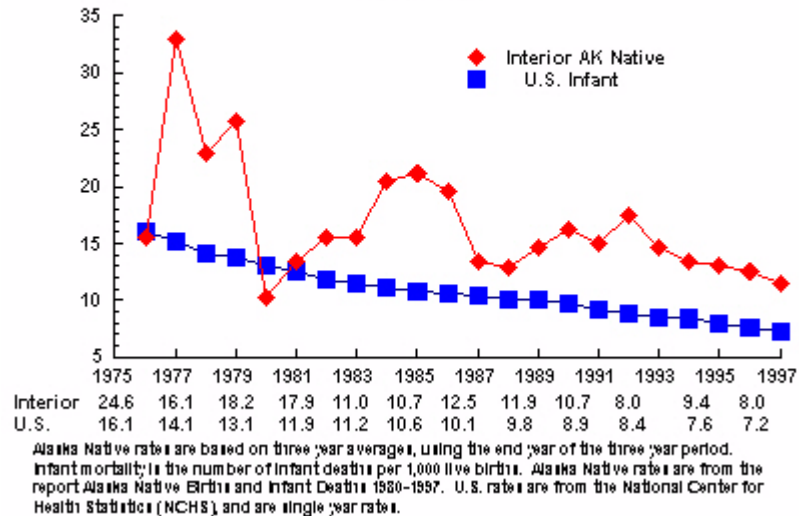
# Interior Alaska Service Area



Infant **Mortality** is the number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births.

Graph 6.4

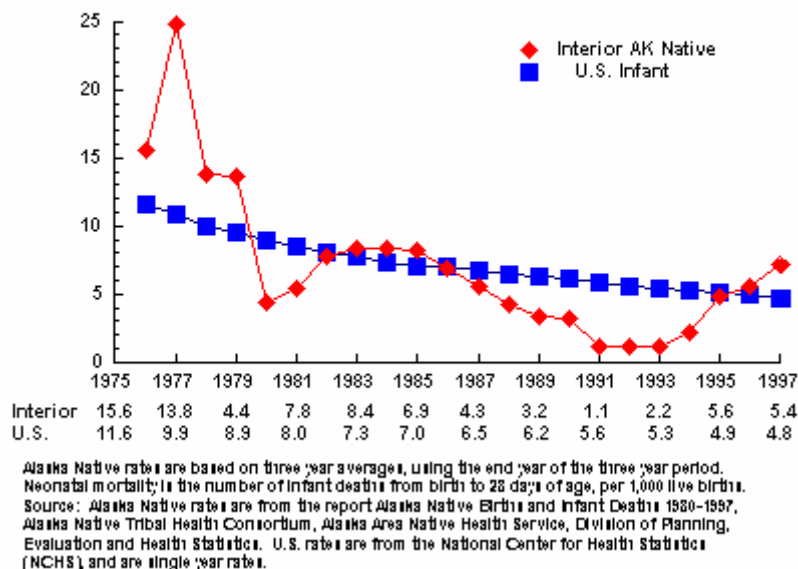
## Infant Mortality Rates Interior Service Area vs. U.S. 1975 - 1997



Neonatal **Mortality** is the number of infant deaths, from birth to 28 days of age, per 1,000 live births.

Graph 6.5

## Neonatal Mortality Rates Interior Service Area vs. U.S. 1975 - 1997

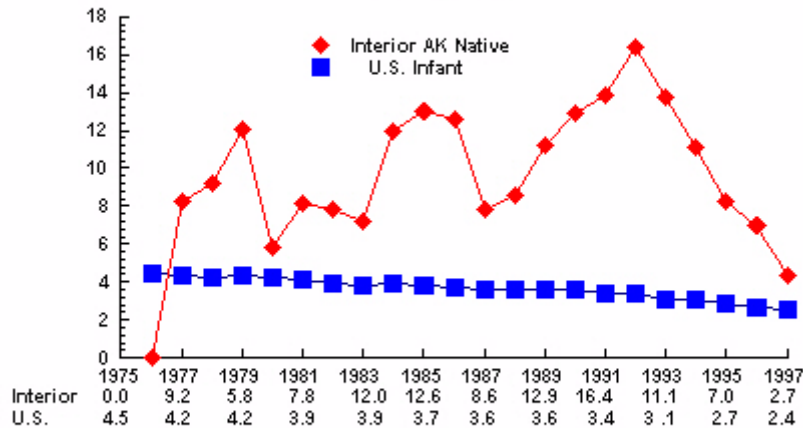


# Interior Alaska Service Area



**Postneonatal Mortality** is the number of infant deaths, from 28 days to one year of age, per 1,000 live births....

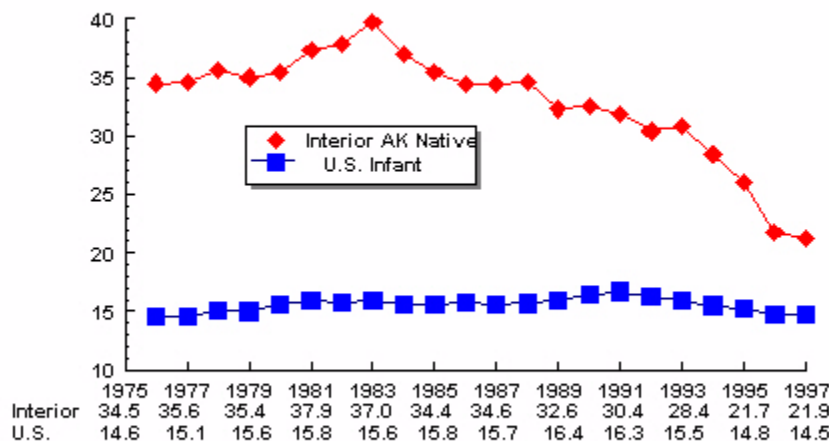
Graph 6.6  
**Postneonatal Mortality Rates**  
**Interior Service Area vs. U.S.**  
**1975 - 1997**



Birth rates are the number of births per 1,000 total population. The three year average is the end year of the three year period. Source: Alaska Native rates are from the report *Alaska Native Births and Infant Deaths 1980-1997*, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, Alaska Area Native Health Service, Division of Planning, Evaluation and Health Statistics. U.S. rates are from the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) and are single year rates.

**Birth Rates** are the number of births per 1,000 total population.

Graph 6.7  
**Birth Rates**  
**Interior Service Area vs. U.S.**  
**1975 - 1997**



Birth rates are rates per 1,000 population. Alaska Native births are from IHS report NSU-01. The three year average is the end year of the three year period. The three year average is the end year of the three year period. United States rates are from the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) and are single year rates.

# Interior Alaska Service Area

---



[ Blank Page ]