

Alaska Health Status Indicators

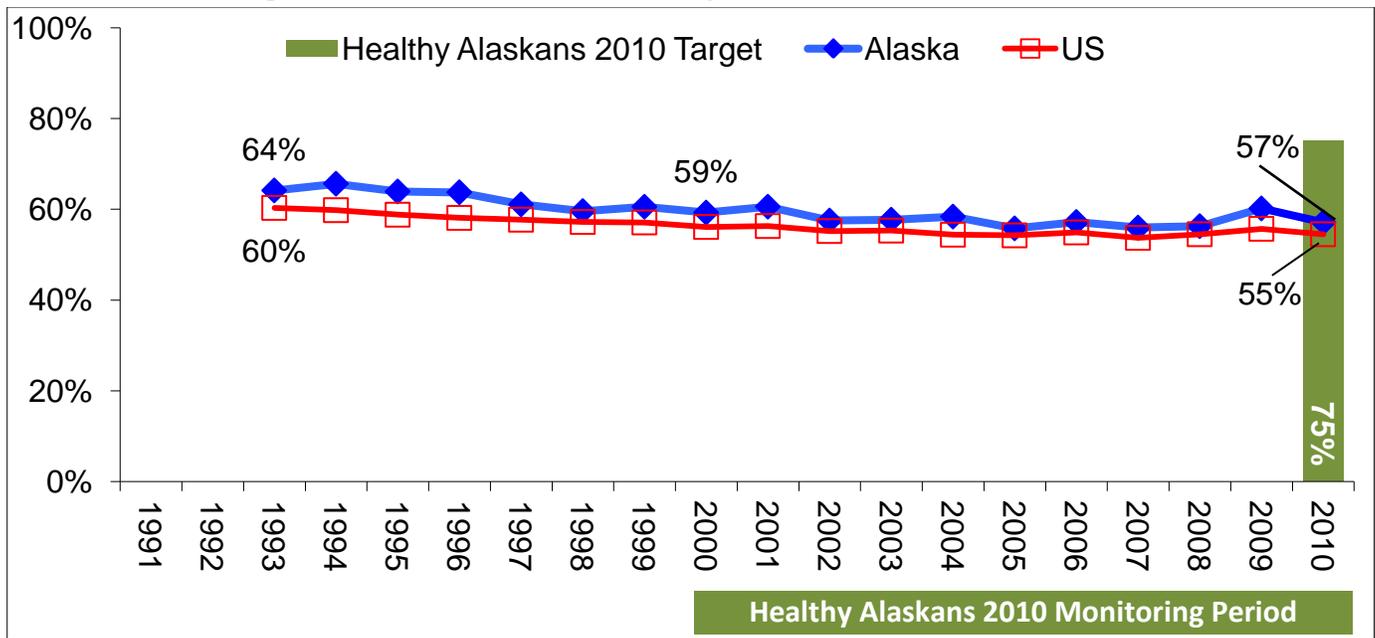
Indicator: Adult General Health Status

Why is this important?

“Self-rated health (SRH) status is a simple measure of health-related quality of life that has also been related to general happiness and life satisfaction.”^{1,2} SRH is recognized as an indicator of a population's overall well-being as lower ratings of subjective health status have consistently been associated with increased mortality, incident adverse health events, health care utilization, and illness severity, even after medical risk factors have been accounted for.^{1,3-7,8} Also, this measure is in a group that is used to assess *well-being*, which has been shown to be associated with “decreased risk of disease, illness, and injury; better immune functioning; speedier recovery; and increased longevity. Individuals with high levels of well-being are more productive at work and are more likely to contribute to their communities.”⁹

How are we doing?

Percentage of Adults with Excellent or Very Good Health Status: Alaska and the U.S.



The percentage of Alaska adults who report having very good or excellent health status declined slightly between 1993 (64%) and 2010 (57%).

❖ How is Alaska Doing Relative to the *Healthy Alaskans 2010* Target?

The *Healthy Alaskans 2010* target for adult prevalence of very good or excellent health status is 75% or higher. Adult prevalence of very good or excellent health status has remained flat and below the *Healthy Alaskans 2010* target between 2000 (59%) and 2010 (57%). **The *Healthy Alaskans 2010* target of 75% has not been met.**

❖ How does AK compare with the US?

The prevalence of very good or excellent health status among adults in Alaska has paralleled that seen in the US.

❖ How are different populations affected?

Significantly more non-Natives (64%) than Alaska Natives (43%) rate their health as very good or excellent. Ratings of general health status increase with education and income. For example, whereas 70% of college graduates and 69% of those earning \$75,000 per year rate their health as very good or excellent, only 34% of those without a high school degree and 34% of those earning less than \$15,000 per year do so. Those living in rural Alaska are less likely

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to rate their health as very good or excellent (42%) than are those in other BRFSS regions of the state (55-61%).
(Source: 2008-2010 BRFSS)

What is the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services doing to improve this indicator?

Adult general health status and well-being are addressed by all Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (AK DHSS) programs and activities; the AK DHSS vision is "All individuals and families are healthy, safe and productive."

Examples of activities by AK DHSS divisions are shown in the Annual Report 2010.¹⁰ In addition, the AK DHSS strategic plan identifies five goals and 20 outcomes to be achieved. Among the goals are:

1. Decrease the negative impacts of alcohol and drug use in Alaska,
2. Improve the health status of Alaskans,
3. Improve access to health care in Alaska, Increase the percentages of adults 65 and older living independently in Alaska, and
4. Increase the percentage of at-risk individuals who are able to live safely in their homes in Alaska.

Indicator Definition and Notes

Percentage of adults aged 18 years and older who answer "Very Good" or "Excellent" to the question: *Would you say that in general, your health is excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor?*

Data Sources

Alaska: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services; US: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Alaska data were obtained from the Standard AK BRFSS from 1993 through 2003, and from the Standard and Supplemental AK BRFSS surveys combined from 2004 through 2010. The Supplemental BRFSS survey is conducted using identical methodology as the Standard BRFSS and allows a doubling of the BRFSS sample size for those measures included on both surveys.

References

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Available at: <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/>

