

Psychiatric treatment,
evaluation, and bed utilization
for American Indian and Alaska
Native individuals in
Washington State

Annual Report

Substitute Senate Bill 6259; Sec. 307; Chapter 256; Laws of 2020

October 1, 2020.

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Executive summary

In March 2020, Governor Inslee signed the Indian Behavioral Health Act (IBHA), SSB 6259, which had several key provisions intended to improve the health and address the long history of limited access by American Indians/Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) to crisis services. These deficiencies have been documented as issues for decades (e.g., see the 2013 Tribal Centric Behavioral Health Legislative Report). One provision of the IBHA, RCW 71.24.665, directs:

The HCA shall provide an annual report on psychiatric treatment and evaluation and bed utilization for American Indians and Alaska Natives starting on October 1, 2020.

The report shall be available for review by the tribes, urban Indian health programs, and the American Indian health commission for Washington state.

Based on crisis data submitted to the Health Care Authority (HCA) by key crisis entities and behavioral health program providers, HCA submits this report with key measures focused on AI/AN access and encounters for the following:

- Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) investigation (also known as Designated Crisis Responder ITA evaluation or assessment) data
- ITA initial detention data
- ITA initial hearing data
- Non-ITA encounter data
- ITA and non-ITA evaluation and treatment (E&T) bed stays
- ITA and non-ITA psychiatric inpatient bed stays

To summarize of this data:

- 6 percent of the statewide investigation encounter events, initial detention encounter events, and initial hearing encounter events involved AI/AN individuals.
- 9 percent of the statewide non-ITA crisis services encounter events involved AI/AN individuals.
- AI/AN individuals had an average ITA E&T length of stay that was 0.75 day longer than the statewide average (average 5.19 day length of stay for AI/AN individuals compared to the statewide average 4.44 day length of stay for all individuals).
- AI/AN individuals had an average psychiatric hospital length of stay that was 6.56 days shorter than the statewide average (average 20.02 day length of stay for AI/AN individuals compared to the statewide average 26.58 day length of stay for all individuals).
- AI/AN individuals had an average non-ITA E&T length of stay that was 8 days longer than the statewide average (average 10.37 day length of stay for AI/AN individuals compared to the statewide average 2.3 day length of stay for all individuals).
- AI/AN individuals had an average non-ITA psychiatric hospital length of stay that was 8.8 days shorter than the statewide average (average 20.09 day length of stay for AI/AN individuals compared to the statewide average 28.97 day length of stay for all individuals).

Data

The following utilization data are provided by regional service area, drawn from the HCA – Behavioral Health Data Store (BHDS)/Behavioral Health Services System (BHSS) Data Warehouse, covering the 2019 calendar year. Note: The data in this report reflect the numbers and proportions of individuals who actually received services and do not reflect access to services based on need. The [2019 census data](#) suggest that AI/AN individuals comprised 3.5 percent of the total state population in 2019. [The 2018 Governor’s Indian Health Council report](#) to the legislature compiled data from various sources to explain that the need for behavioral health services for AI/AN individuals is much greater due to events both historical and present-day. As a result, while 6 percent of the statewide investigation encounter events involved AI/AN individuals, who comprised 3.5 percent of the state’s population in 2019, this higher incidence of investigations cannot be interpreted to mean that AI/AN individuals had better access to ITA investigations than the population as a whole. There is not yet any data on the need of the AI/AN population for ITA investigations. If the need for ITA investigations were much greater in the AI/AN population than in the population as a whole, the 6 percent figure would reflect less access to ITA investigations than for the population as a whole. More data and more analysis are needed to make conclusions regarding access to services based on need.

Crisis Utilization Data for AI/AN individuals in WA State

Table 1: Number of AI/AN individuals and events with an ITA investigation: calendar year 2019

Regional Service Area	# of individuals (AI/AN)	# of events (AI/AN)	# of events (all individuals)	% AI/AN events to all events
Greater Columbia	94	96	1,624	6%
Great Rivers	121	132	1,827	7%
King	354	390	7,009	6%
North Central	8	8	273	3%
North Sound	199	214	3,515	6%
Pierce	151	159	2,406	7%
Salish	64	75	1,172	6%
Southwest	46	48	963	5%
Spokane	247	277	3,736	7%
Thurston/Mason	186	228	2,583	9%
Total (All)	1470	1627	25,111	6%

Data Note: Percentage of detention events is the number of AI/AN ITA investigation events for AI/AN compared to statewide total events.

Number of events means that the number of individuals investigated may have more than one ITA investigation. Percentage of ITA investigation events is the number of AI/AN hearings events for AI/AN compared to statewide total events.

Table 2: Number of AI/AN individuals and events with an initial (72 hour) ITA detentions: calendar year 2019

Regional Service Area	# of individuals (AI/AN)	# of events (AI/AN)	# of events (all individuals)	% AI/AN events to all events
Greater Columbia	92	94	1,531	6%
Great Rivers	35	39	622	6%
King	222	248	4,545	5%
North Central	6	6	168	4%
North Sound	92	101	1,531	7%
Pierce	67	70	1,095	6%
Salish	27	33	499	7%
Southwest	30	31	494	6%
Spokane	108	126	1,675	8%
Thurston/Mason	70	91	846	11%
Total (All)	749	839	13,006	6%

Data Note: Percentage of detention events is the number of AI/AN hearings events for AI/AN compared to statewide total events.

Table 3: Number of AI/AN individuals and events with an ITA hearings: calendar year 2019

Regional Service Area	# of individuals (AI/AN)	# of events (AI/AN)	# of events (all individuals)	% AI/AN events to all events
Greater Columbia	66	111	1,842	6%
Great Rivers	10	10	185	5%
King	262	306	5,590	5%
North Central	0	0	5	0%
North Sound	84	89	1,390	6%
Pierce	72	87	1,328	7%
Salish	26	32	500	6%

Southwest	23	27	343	8%
Spokane	178	240	2,937	8%
Thurston/Mason	41	55	644	9%
Total (All)	749	839	13,006	6%

Data Note: Percentage of hearing events is the number of AI/AN hearings events for AI/AN compared to statewide total events.

Table 4: Number of AI/AN individuals and events with non-ITA crisis services: calendar year 2019

Regional Service Area	# of individuals (AI/AN)	# of events (AI/AN)	# of events (all individuals)	% AI/AN events to all events
Greater Columbia	175	175	5274	3%
Great Rivers	51	51	765	7%
King	422	422	14742	3%
North Central	15	15	793	2%
North Sound	261	261	4357	6%
Pierce	111	111	3208	3%
Salish	47	47	495	9%
Southwest	14	14	469	3%
Spokane	140	140	1904	7%
Thurston/Mason	70	70	1048	7%
Unknown	1658	1658	1671	4.8%
Total (All)	2964	2964	34726	9%

Data Note: Percentage of non-ITA crisis service events for is the number of AI/AN events versus the statewide event total. The number of individuals that received services from an ITA investigation that were not on an involuntary commitment.

Table 5: Number of AI/AN individual's, length of stay and average length of stay versus the statewide totals for ITA evaluation and treatment facilities: calendar year 2019.

Regional Service Area	American/Indian and Alaskan Native Individuals			Statewide		
	N	Sum	Average	N	Sum	Average
Greater Columbia	2	2	1	61	234	3.84
Great Rivers	4	61	15.25	53	1,051	19.83
King	78	78	1	943	1,508	1.6
North Central	0	0	0	8	14	1.75
North Sound	2	11	5.50	49	164	3.35
Pierce	2	3	1.50	61	209	3.43
Salish	2	27	13.50	26	327	12.58
Southwest	3	9	3	11	21	1.91
Spokane	7	9	1.29	85	320	3.76
Thurston/Mason	16	402	25.13	129	2,477	19.24
Total (All)	116	602	5.19	1426	6,325	4.44

Data Note: N = number of hospital episodes, Sum = number of days stayed, Average = average length of stay for each individual.

Table 6: Number of AI/AN individuals, length of stay, and average length of stay versus the statewide totals for ITA psychiatric hospitals: calendar year 2019.

Regional Service Area	American/Indian and Alaskan Native Individuals			Statewide		
	N	Sum	Average	N	Sum	Average
Greater Columbia	34	949	27.91	256	10,464	40.88
Great Rivers	27	561	20.78	352	6,602	18.76
King	117	2,008	17.16	1045	25,344	24.21
North Central	2	145	72.50	28	1,250	44.64
North Sound	72	1,429	19.85	779	16,724	21.7
Pierce	15	500	33.33	140	7,381	52.72
Salish	25	465	18.60	220	3,952	18.65

Southwest	7	120	17.14	57	1,640	28.77
Spokane	91	2,092	22.99	379	17,485	46.13
Thurston/Mason	54	621	11.50	468	7,852	16.78
Total (All)	444	8,890	20.02	3725	98,750	26.58

Data Note: N = number of hospital episodes, Sum = number of days stayed, Average = average length of stay for each individual.

Table 7: Number of AI/AN individuals, length of stay, and average length of stay compared to statewide totals for non-ITA evaluation and treatment facilities: calendar year 2019.

Regional Service Area	American/Indian and Alaskan Native Individuals			Statewide		
	N	Sum	Average	N	Sum	Average
Greater Columbia	131	155	1.18	5054	8,357	1.65
Great Rivers	1	5	5	42	200	4.76
King	336	396	1.18	14,106	19,016	1.35
North Central	10	10	1	714	1,090	1.53
North Sound	64	98	1.53	2,165	3,758	1.74
Pierce	69	156	2.26	2,900	5,518	1.90
Salish	2	16	8	46	194	4.22
Southwest	6	6	1	373	624	1.67
Spokane	60	101	1.68	1,657	3,779	2.28
Thurston/Mason	4	72	18	54	487	9.02
Unknown	1,655	23,235	14.04	1,659	23,239	14.01
Total (All)	2,338	24,250	10.37	28,770	66,262	2.30

Data Note: N = number of hospital episodes, Sum = number of days stayed, Average = average length of stay for each individual.

Table 8: Number of AI/AN individuals and average length of non-ITA psychiatric hospital stays versus the statewide totals: calendar year 2019.

Regional Service Area	American/Indian and Alaskan Native Individuals			Statewide		
	N	Sum	Average	N	Sum	Average
Greater Columbia	44	574	13.05	220	7,426	33.75
Great Rivers	38	625	16.45	449	8,677	19.33
King	86	1,633	18.99	635	25,072	39.48
North Central	5	183	36.60	79	3,028	38.33
North Sound	89	1,567	17.61	974	19,917	20.45
Pierce	42	1,147	27.31	308	16,524	53.65
Salish	37	575	15.54	295	6,894	23.37
Southwest	8	157	19.63	96	2,849	29.68
Spokane	80	2,113	26.41	247	10,162	41.14
Thurston/Mason	33	476	14.42	585	11,269	19.26
Unknown	3	294	98	12	1,172	97.67
Total (All)	465	9,344	20.09	3,900	112,990	28.97

Data Note: N = number of hospital episodes, Sum = number of days stayed, Average = average length of stay for each individual.