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| **Alabama Health INsurance Coverage for American Indians and Alaska Natives: The Impact of the affordable care act 2012-2016** |
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***This project was supported by a Cooperative Agreement, Grant No. CMS-1MOCMS331623, from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.******The contents provided are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of HHS or any of its agencies.***

# Abstract

This brief examines the evidence of the impact of the Affordable Care Act on American Indians and Alaska Natives in Alabama to determine if the ACA resulted in expected enrollment gains in Health Insurance coverage and the related reduction in uninsured. A review of findings from the American Community Survey depicts modest success in increasing the number insured, thus lowering the number uninsured for both males and females.

# Methodology

The American Community Survey provides estimates of the number of insured, uninsured for American Indians and Alaska Natives (alone and in combination). The one-year survey provides estimates with low error rates at the national level of analysis. This analysis provides cross tabulations by sex and by access to IHS-funded health programs for the years 2012 and 2016. The analysis is built on the comparison between the two years to the two variables of sex and access to IHS.

# Findings

### Summary Tables Alabama

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| --- |
| American Indian and Alaska Native Population 2012 and 2016 |
| 2012 | **2016** |
|  54,455  |  52,132  |

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| American Indian and Alaska Native Uninsured 2012 and 2016 |
| 2012 | **2016** |
|  10,402  |  6,196  |

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| Uninsured Rate 2012 and 2016 |
| 2012 | **2016** |
| 19% | 12% |

# Health Insurance Coverage

## Health Insurance Coverage of all American Indians and Alaska Natives

The table that follows depicts modest health insurance enrollment increases in Alabama. The number of American Indians and Alaska Natives with health insurance was 44,000 2012 and remained at just 46,000 in 2016; a 4% increase. Males and females are equally likely to have health insurance coverage and both shared equally in the increases since 2012.

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| 2012-2016 Health Coverage American Indians and Alaska Natives |
|  | 2012 | 2016 | Increase 12-16 | % increase |
| Male |  21,507  |  22,298  |  791  | 4% |
| Female |  22,546  |  23,638  |  1,092  | 5% |
| Total |  44,053  |  45,936  |  1,883  | 4% |
|  % Male  | 49% | 49% | 42% |  |
|  % Female  | 51% | 51% | 58% |  |

## Health Insurance Coverage for American Indians and Alaska Natives with Access to IHS

Health insurance coverage declined by 20% from 2012 to 2016 for American Indians and Alaska Natives in Alabama who feel they have access to IHS services. The finding that female coverage actually declined by 41% deserves close attention to determine the validity of this finding and a search for the likely cause.

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| 2012-2016 Health Coverage for American Indians and Alaska Natives with Access to IHS |
|  | 2012 | 2016 | Increase 12-16 | % increase |
| Male |  656  |  715  |  59  | 9% |
| Female |  946  |  562  |  (384) | -41% |
| Total |  1,602  |  1,277  |  (325) | -20% |
|  % Male  | 41% | 56% | -18% |  |
|  % Female  | 59% | 44% | 118% |  |

## Health Insurance Coverage for American Indians and Alaska Natives

## Without Access to IHS

The ACS estimates that there were 42,400 insured American Indians and Alaska Natives without access to IHS-funded health programs in 2012. By 2016, the number insured remained at just 44,600. There is some evidence of modest success in Alabama as the 2012 to 2016 increase was just 5%. Females make up 52% of the insured American Indian and Alaska Native population in Alabama who do not have access to IHS-funded health programs.

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| 2012-2016 Health Coverage American Indians and Alaska Natives with No Access to IHS |
|  | 2012 | 2016 | Increase 12-16 | % increase |
| Male |  20,851  |  21,583  |  732  | 4% |
| Female |  21,600  |  23,076  |  1,476  | 7% |
| Total |  42,451  |  44,659  |  2,208  | 5% |
|  % Male  | 49% | 48% | 33% |  |
|  % Female  | 51% | 52% | 67% |  |

# Uninsured American Indians and Alaska Natives

## Uninsured American Indians and Alaska Natives

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| 2012-2016 Uninsured American Indians and Alaska Natives |
|  | 2012 | 2016 | Decrease 12-16 | % increase |
| Male |  5,120  |  3,047  |  (2,073) | -40% |
| Female |  5,282  |  3,149  |  (2,133) | -40% |
| Total |  10,402  |  6,196  |  (4,206) | -40% |
|  % Male  | 49% | 49% | 49% |  |
|  % Female  | 51% | 51% | 51% |  |

Alabama had 10,400 American Indians and Alaska Natives who were uninsured in 2012. By 2016 this number had decreased to 6,200 uninsured, a 40% decrease in the number uninsured. Females represent 51% of all uninsured American Indians and Alaska Natives and males make up 49% of the uninsured. It is somewhat surprising that the number of uninsured declined by 40% in a state that did not implement Medicaid expansion. Further investigation of the reason for the decline is warranted.

## Uninsured American Indians and Alaska Natives with Access to IHS

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| 2012-2016 Uninsured American Indians and Alaska Natives with Access to IHS |
|  | 2012 | 2016 | Increase 12-16 | % increase |
| Male |  176  |  18  |  (158) | -90% |
| Female |  190  |  138  |  (52) | -27% |
| Total |  366  |  156  |  (210) | -57% |
|  % Male  | 48% | 12% | 75% |  |
|  % Female  | 52% | 88% | 25% |  |

American Indians and Alaska Natives with access to IHS-funded health programs did see a 57% decline in the number uninsured from 2012 to 2016. Males uninsured declined by 90% and females by 27% resulting in 200 fewer uninsured in 2016. Caution is advised for such small numbers as the estimates therefore have a large error rate.

## Uninsured American Indians and Alaska Natives without Access to IHS

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| 2012-2016 American Indians and Alaska Natives Without Health Insurance Coverage with No Access to IHS |
|  | 2012 | 2016 | Decrease 12-16 | % decrease |
| Male |  4,944  |  3,029  |  (1,915) | -39% |
| Female |  5,092  |  3,011  |  (2,081) | -41% |
| Total |  10,036  |  6,040  |  (3,996) | -40% |
|  % Male  | 49% | 50% | 48% |  |
|  % Female  | 51% | 50% | 52% |  |

The number of uninsured patients without access to IHS-funded health programs decreased by nearly 4,000 or 40% from 2012 to 2016. Males and females are equally likely to be uninsured.

# Conclusion

In Alabama, the state was successful in reducing the number of uninsured by 40%. Alabama did not adopt Medicaid expansion, so the reason for the decline is not clear. The search for an explanation should include the success of American Indians and Alaska Natives in the state in gaining employer-based insurance and possibly exchange insurance with tax credits.

Source of Data: 1-year American Community Survey, US Census

Years: 2012 and 2016

No Foreign Born, that is, nativity is the United States.

American Indian and Alaska Natives Alone and In-combination with other races.

### Alabama: Change in Access to IHS from 2012 to 2016

### Change in the Uninsured Rate for American Indians and Alaska Natives 2012 to 2016 in 20 States