

ABSTRACT

This project explored access to traditional native foods for Alaska Native elders residing in Anchorage long term care facilities. The study implemented a telephone survey of long term care facilities (N=64), qualitative key informant interviews with 11 long-term care facility operators, and qualitative key informant interviews with 14 Alaska Native elders and/or their family members with experience in long term care. It was found that Alaska Native elders in long term care generally had limited access to Native foods. Elders and their caregivers had differing perceptions on two key issues: 1) the perceived access elders had to traditional foods and 2) perceived importance of native foods. Cross cultural issues are important considerations in Anchorage's long term care environment, due to the high number of ethnic minority caregivers in addition to the increasing number of ethnic minority residents. Several recommendations addressing barriers to traditional native food access are discussed.