



Culture Heals. Culture Knows. Culture Leads.
NATIONAL TRIBAL HEALTH CONFERENCE 2023



Tribal Perspectives on Health Equity

Rethinking How the US Approaches Health Equity for American Indians and Alaska Natives

Carrie Field, Policy Analyst, NIHB
AC Locklear, Federal Relations Direction, NIHB

Anchorage,
Alaska

National Indian
Health Board



U.S. life expectancy

Life expectancy is a calculation of how long a baby born in a given year is expected to live on average.

— Female — Male — Total

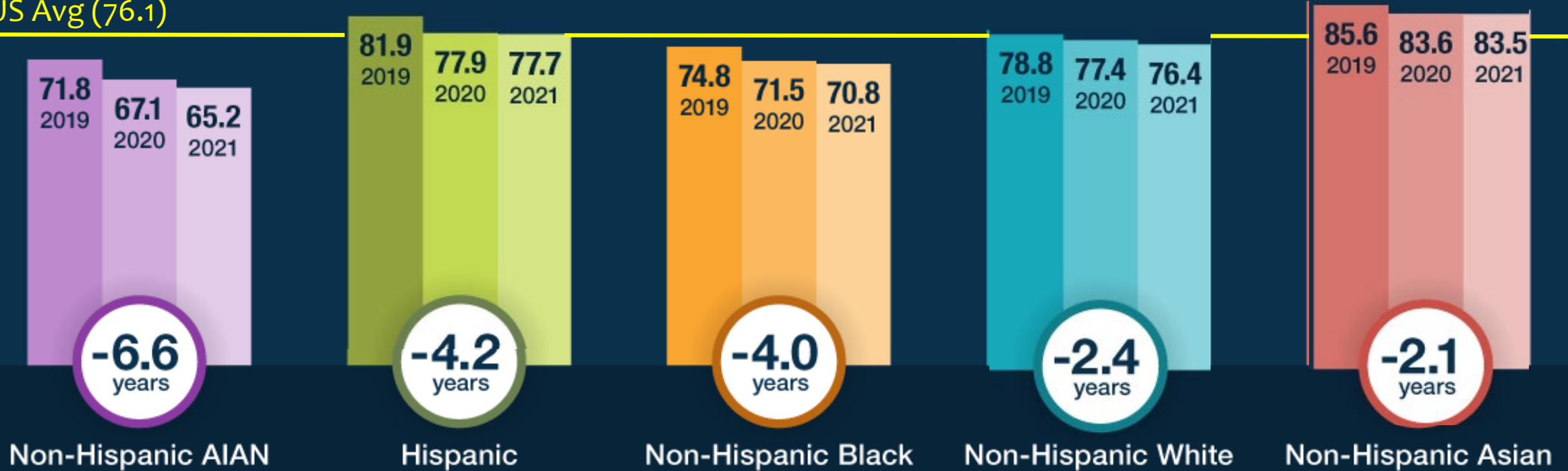


Source: NCHS, National Vital Statistics System, Mortality

U.S. LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH, PROVISIONAL MORTALITY DATA FOR 2021

The non-Hispanic American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) population experienced the largest decline in life expectancy between 2019 and 2021

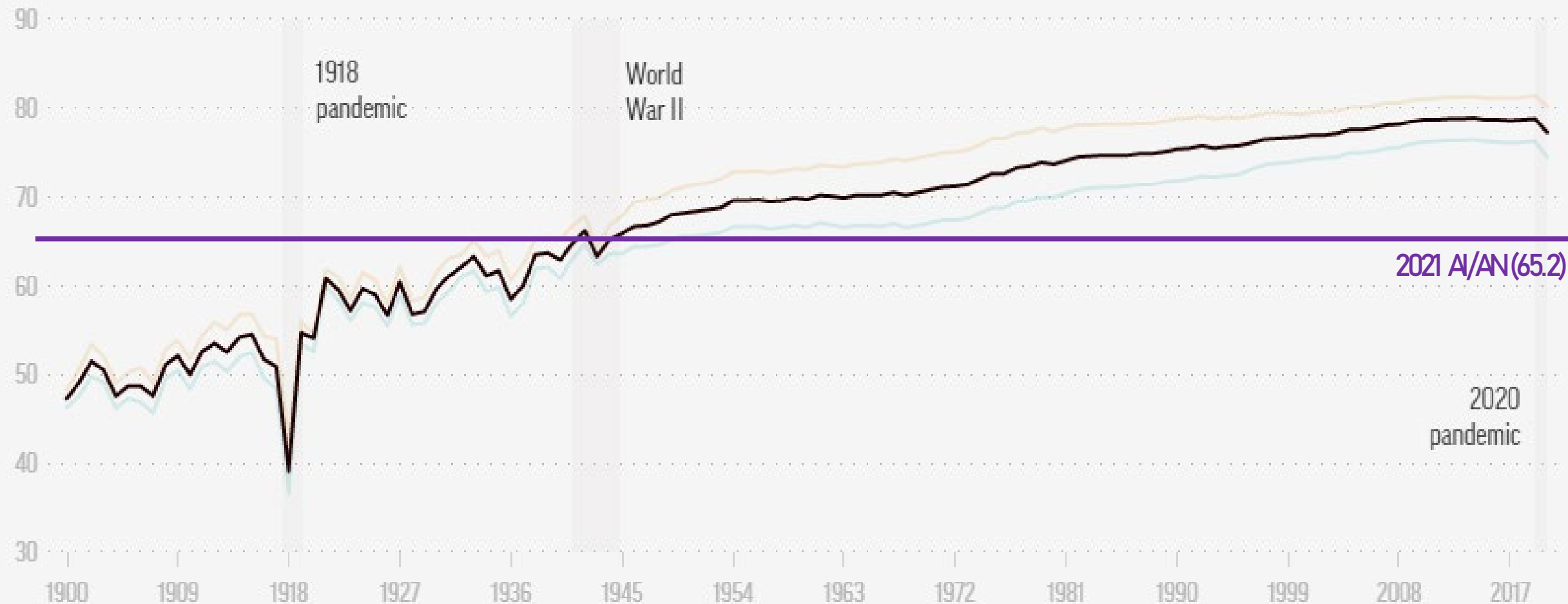
2021 US Avg (76.1)



U.S. life expectancy

Life expectancy is a calculation of how long a baby born in a given year is expected to live on average.

— Female — Male — Total



Source: NCHS, National Vital Statistics System, Mortality



Health Equity is now a federal priority.

CMS Framework for Health Equity 2022–2032

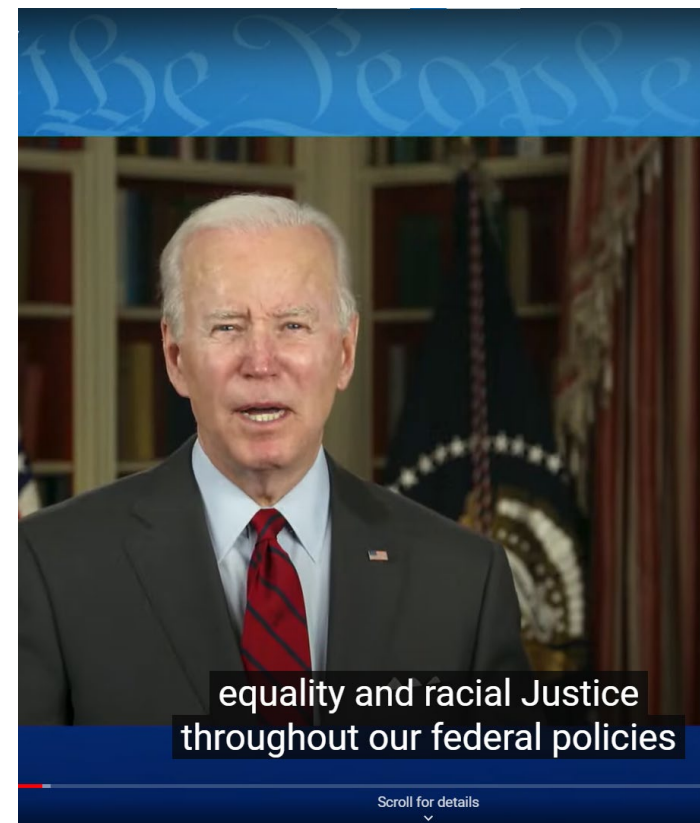


Administrative

BRIEFING ROOM

Executive Order On Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government

JANUARY 20, 2021 • PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS




But dominant perspectives of Health Equity don't tell the whole story.

Social Determinants of Health

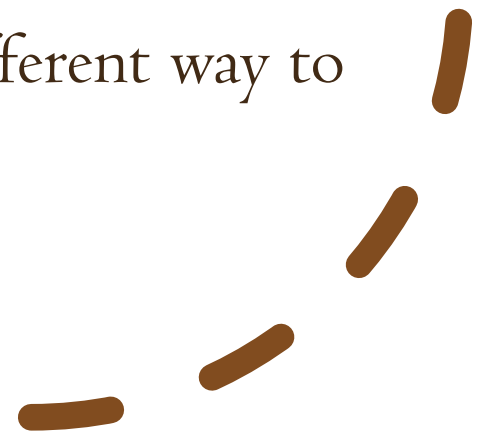


CMS Definition of Health Equity

“Health equity means the attainment of the highest level of health for all people, where everyone has a fair and just opportunity to attain their optimal health regardless of **race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography, preferred language**, or other factors that affect access to care and health outcomes.”



Tribal reactions to federal Health Equity initiatives:

- Making health equity a priority is a huge step forward
 - Many of the focus areas are important
 - Federal plans don't resonate
 - Tribes feel excluded
 - The elements most essential to achieving health equity in Indian Country are missing
 - A mindset shift is required – a different way to think about health equity
- 



NIHB's Health Equity Project

How we are amplifying Native voices in national Health Equity discourse





Key Questions

Why are these inequities happening?

What is unique about working towards Health Equity in Indian Country?

What role can federal agencies play in advancing Health Equity for American Indians and Alaska Natives?



3 Tribal Health Equity Events in 2022

May: Inter-Tribal World Café on Health Equity

- Foundations of health equity in Indian Country
- Key Drivers of health inequities for AI/AN

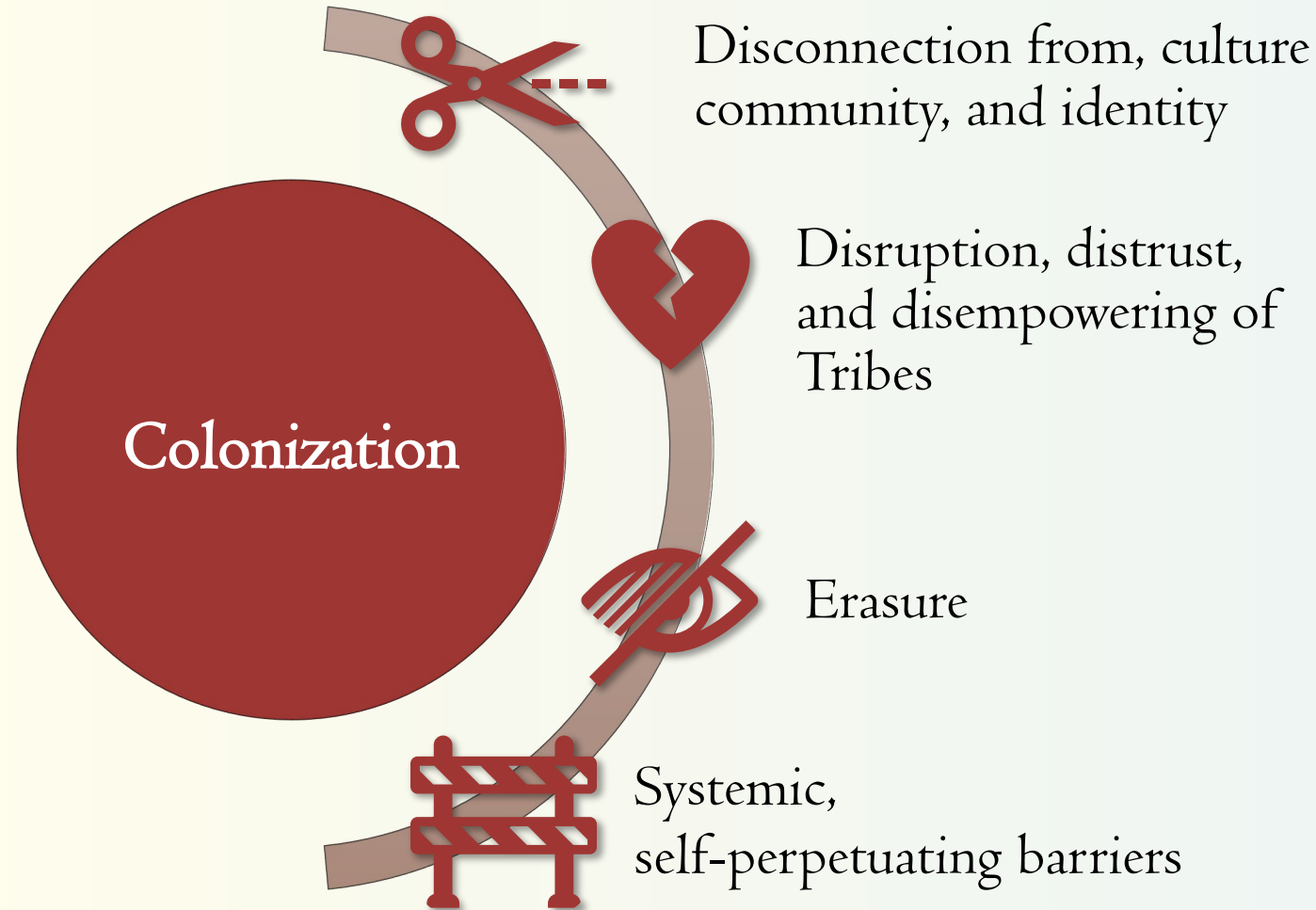
August: National Tribal Health Equity Summit

- What does health equity mean from a Tribal perspective?
- How do we advance health equity in Indian Country?

September: CMS Listening Session

- Specific feedback on the CMS Framework for Health Equity
- Rethinking how CMS approaches health equity for AI/AN

What are the root causes of AI/AN health inequities?



Inequities in health outcomes for American Indians and Alaska Natives:



AI/AN life expectancy is now 11 years less than for the general American population

Foundations of Health Equity in Indian Country

Tribal sovereignty

Resilience through culture

Strong Tribal institutions

Tribal empowerment in state &
federal governance

Federal trust responsibility

9 ESSENTIAL PRIORITIES



