Arizona Primary Care Areas

STATE RATIONAL SERVICE AREA (SRSA) PLAN
Primary Care Area (PCA) Background

Arizona has had PCAs – used for both state and federal designations – since the 90’s. PCAs were re-built by ADHS in 2013 to represent where Arizonans go for primary care while also representing communities with a population size conducive to spatial and statistical analysis.

- Required by state statute in connection with Arizona Medically Underserved Area (AzMUA) biennial designation
- “State Rational Service Area” plan for federal shortage designations
- Built with a repeatable, rule-based methodology (used grouping analysis tool within ArcGIS software)
- Reflects tribal and village/planning area boundaries when possible
- Presented via statewide stakeholder webinar and held open comment period
- Updated every decennial census to reflect changing demographics
Arizona’s Unique Geography

Sub-county service areas are necessary in Arizona due to its large counties.
PCA Methodology - Rules

• PCAs are built from 2010 US Census Tracts.
  – Federal requirement.
• All PCAs have a 2010 population greater than 10,000 but less than 200,000.
• No PCA will have an area greater than 7500 square miles.
• PCAs shall not cross county lines.
• PCAs shall follow existing political boundaries as closely as possible.
• Every rural PCA must have a safety net facility.
PCA Methodology - Exceptions

• Tribal PCAs are exempt from population and area minimum and maximum rules.
• Tribal PCAs can cross county lines
• Based on size and homogeneity some communities were allowed to cross a county line.
  – Queen Creek
  – Sedona
PCA Methodology – Population Compliance

• Communities must be split or combined to comply with population rules
  – Rural
    • Proximity to Safety Net Facilities or other communities
  – Urban
    • Demographics
Community Boundaries Utilized When Possible

• Tribal Lands
• Village boundaries
  – Planning areas
• Census Designated Places (CDP)
  – Defined by the 2010 US Census
  – Includes incorporated places as well as other settled concentrations of people that are identifiable by name but not legally incorporated.
PCA Methodology –
Step #1: Define All Communities

• 2010 Census Blocks are assigned to a community based on the existing community entity it falls in.
  – Community entities used in this order: Tribal Lands (Reservations), Municipal Planning areas (Villages), Census Designated Places

• Assign each 2010 tract to the community within it that has the largest population.
PCA Methodology – Step #2: Split Communities >150K

Split communities above 150,000 based on demographics

- Use the ArcGIS Desktop tool called “Grouping Analysis” to assign each Census Tract to a contiguous group of Tracts that are as similar as possible within the group, but as different as possible from the other groups.

- Based on demographics (% Minority, Median Income, Median Age)
PCA Methodology –
Step #3: Combine Communities <10,000

Combine communities below 10,000 until they meet or exceed a population of 10,000.

Rural
• Combine with the neighboring community with the nearest primary care facility (PCF) or population centroid.

Urban
• Join the <10,000 community to the neighboring community whose demographics most closely match it (based on % Minority, Median Income, Median Age)
PCA Methodology –
Step #4: Name Each PCA

Each PCA was named based on the largest community within its boundaries.
Challenges

• Census tracts limit flexibility
  • Particularly true with tribal lands – don’t always follow CT boundaries

• Fixed methodology restricts the use of local knowledge in favor of predefined rules.

• Must be updated every Census
  • Planning to update upon release of 2020 Census
  • Will need to re-submit for HRSA approval as SRSA plan
PCA Facts

• 126 communities
  – The average PCA has a population of 50,730 and an area of 905 square miles
  – 55 Metro Phoenix PCAs
  – 20 Metro Tucson PCAs
  – At 199,814 Maryvale PCA has the largest population and Fort McDowell Yavapai is the smallest with a population of 971
Questions
THANK YOU!

Please feel free to contact our Shortage Designations Contractor with any additional questions:

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