

# Quantifying Arizona's Primary Care Shortage

## Using Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) Data

Arizona needs between **497 to 667 primary care physician (PCP) full time equivalents (FTEs)** to eliminate its current primary care physician shortage. Access to primary and preventive care can improve health outcomes,<sup>1</sup> lower the cost of health care,<sup>2</sup> and decrease emergency department visits and hospital readmission.<sup>3,4</sup>

This brief summarizes the Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE) PCPs by Arizona county and tribal areas. While other health professionals like nurse practitioners and physician assistants provide primary care, the Primary Care Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) are based on a ratio of primary care physicians to population. The target ratio is 3,500 to 1, or 3,000 to 1 in high need areas.

### ►► Arizona has PCP shortages in all counties & worse in rural areas.

- Arizona meets just **39.21% of its PCP need.**<sup>5</sup>
- Arizona ranks **42nd of 50 states** in total active PCPs at 80.2 per 100,000 population (U.S. is 94.4).<sup>6</sup>
- Arizona ranks **31st in total active physicians** at 252.0 per 100,000 population (U.S. is 286.5).<sup>6</sup>
- Arizona is **one of the fastest growing states in population**, growing 1.13% between 2010 and 2020, compared to median growth of 0.55%.<sup>7</sup>

HPSA “geographic areas, populations, or facilities that have a shortage of primary, dental or mental health care providers.”<sup>8</sup> These are Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) designations used to describe workforce needs, identify eligible locations for funding for National Health Service Corps, Nurse Corps, IHS Loan Repayment and other federal programs.

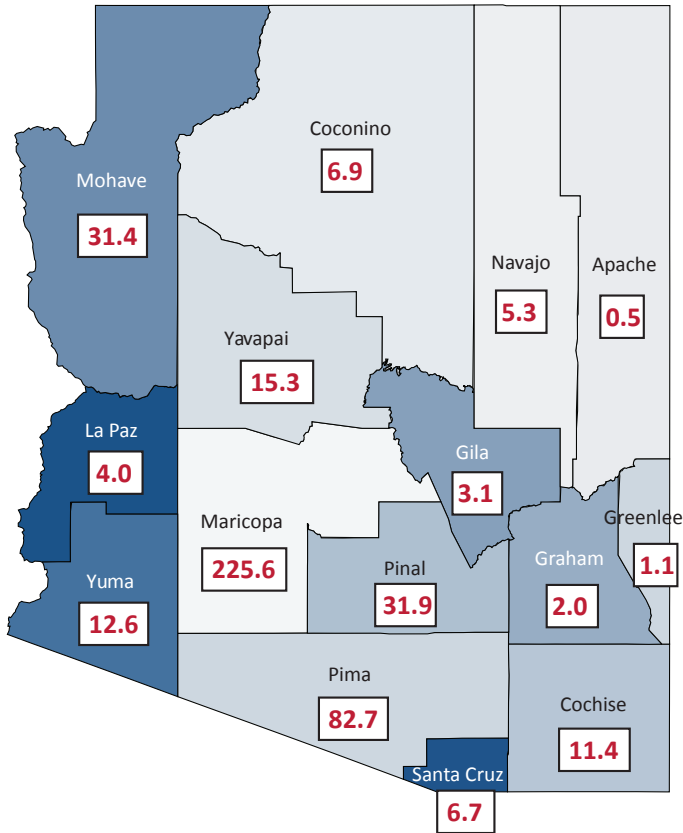
### AZ Tribal Nations Primary Care Physician Shortage (2023)

TRIBAL NATION	HIGHEST HPSA SCORE	PCPs SHORT
Colorado River Indian	18	1.4
Fort McDowell Yavapai	10	0.2
Gila River	20	2.2
Hualapai	13	0.5
Navajo Nation & Hopi	11	2.2
Pascua Yaqui	19	0.8
Salt River Pima-Maricopa	19	1.4
San Carlos Apache	21	2.0
Tohono O’Odham	17	0.8
White Mountain Apache	21	4.1

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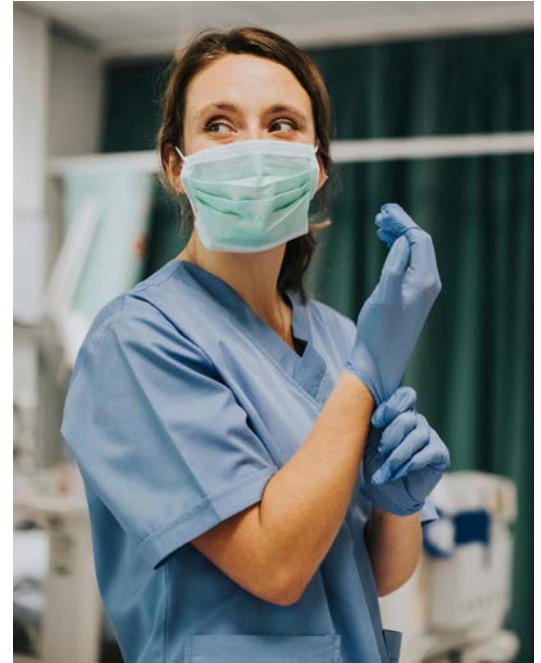
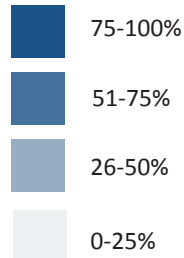
Designated Indian Health Service, Tribal Health, and Urban Indian Health Facility Primary Care HPSAs

## Percent Living in Primary Care Shortage Areas (HPSAs) and Number of Providers Needed to Eliminate Shortage (2023)



Number of providers needed to eliminate the PCP shortage

Percent population living in a HPSA



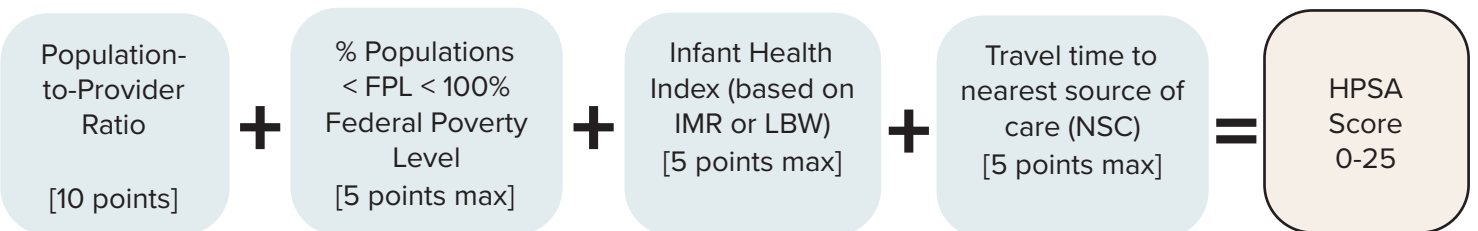
### ►► Definitions

HPSAs are a geographic area, population, or facility with a shortage of primary care, dental, or mental health providers and services. HPSAs are based on factors illustrated below. In the primary care HPSAs the following primary care physicians are included, “(M.D.) and doctors of osteopathy (D.O.) providing direct patient care who practice principally in one of the four primary care specialties—general or family practice, general internal medicine, pediatrics, and obstetrics and gynecology...”<sup>9</sup>

### Number of Designated Correctional, Federal Qualified Health Center, FQHC Look A Like, or Rural Health Clinic Facility Primary Care HPSAs

County	FQHCs & FQHC Look A Likes	Rural Health Clinic	Correctional Facility	Correctional Facility FTE Short*
Apache	0	1	0	0.0
Cochise	1	6	1	0.3
Coconino	3	0	0	0.0
Gila	0	6	0	0.0
Graham	0	1	2	2.3
Greenlee	0	0	0	0.0
La Paz	0	4	0	0.0
Maricopa	9	1	4	10.8
Mohave	1	0	0	0.0
Navajo	0	0	1	0.9
Pima	4	0	2	4.1
Pinal	2	2	5	20.1
Santa Cruz	1	0	0	0.0
Yavapai	2	0	0	0.0
Yuma	1	2	1	2.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>40.59</b>

### ►► Primary Care HPSA Score Formula



## ►► Brief Methods

This brief uses HPSA data from the HRSA. The HPSA data files can be found here <https://data.hrsa.gov/data/download> and an interactive report can be found here <https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/shortage-area/hpsa-find> on the HPSA Find site. HRSA includes data on designated and proposed for withdrawal HPSAs to estimate the total PCP FTEs needed to eliminate the shortage designation. This brief includes a more conservative estimate of the shortage (497) by subtracting the FTEs in primary care HPSAs proposed for withdrawal. Only designated HPSAs are counted by county and tribal area. The percentage of the population living in a HPSA area was calculated by adding the population reported in each HPSA type (geographic, geographic high needs, and population) and then dividing by the total population in the county (from the U.S. Census American Community Survey, 2020). Some HPSAs span county boundaries, we assigned HPSAs to a single “majority” county based on land area that composed the majority of the land area in the HPSA.

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## References

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