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Tuberculosis in Alaska, 2012–2016

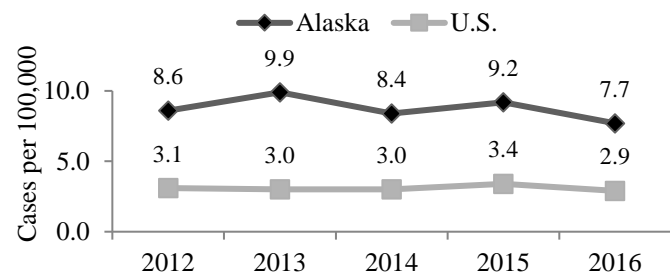
Background

Alaska continues to have one of the highest tuberculosis (TB) rates in the United States. This *Bulletin* presents a snapshot of TB trends in Alaska during 2012–2016.

Incidence of TB

Fifty-seven cases of TB were reported in Alaska in 2016, a rate of 7.7 cases per 100,000 population. This rate was more than 2.5-times higher than the national average (Figure 1).¹ In 2016, Alaska had the second highest rate of TB in the nation.

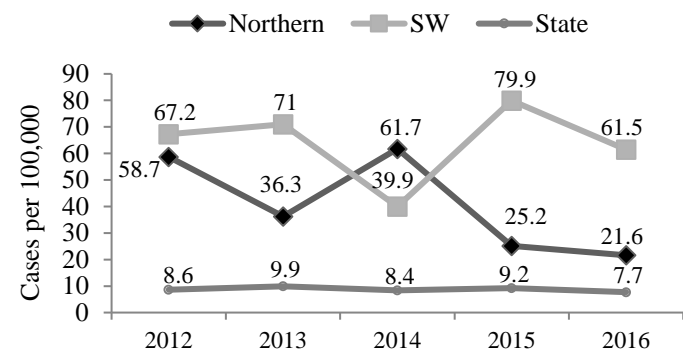
Figure 1. Alaska TB Incidence by Year, 2012–2016



Region

The incidence of TB varies across the state. In 2016, rates in the Northern and Southwest (SW) regions were nearly 3 and 8 times higher, respectively, than the statewide rate (Figure 2).

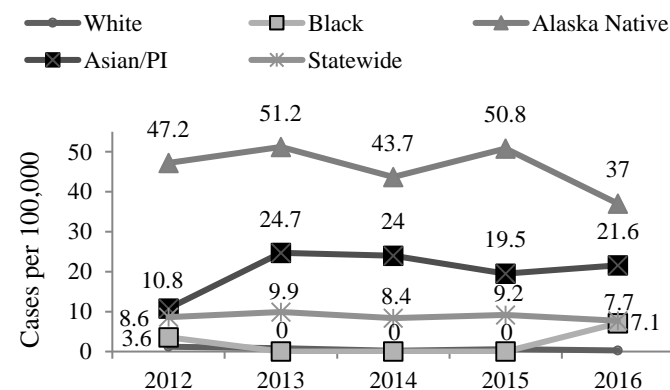
Figure 2. Alaska TB Incidence by Region, 2012–2016



Racial Group

Alaska Native people continue to bear a disproportionate burden of TB; however, Asian/Pacific Islanders (Asian/PI) also have elevated rates (Figure 3). The incidence rates among whites and blacks are equal to or less than the statewide rate.

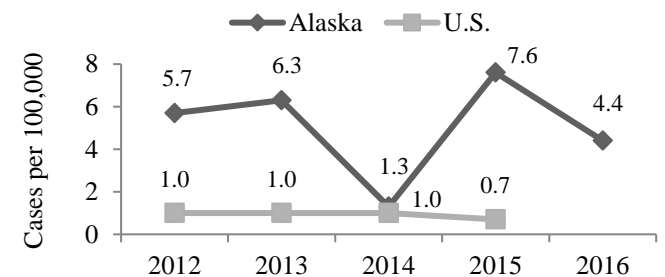
Figure 3. Alaska TB Incidence by Race, 2012–2016



TB among Children Aged 0–14 Years

During 2012–2016, TB rates among Alaska children aged 0–14 years were higher than in the U.S. overall (Figure 4). Pediatric case counts were as follows: 2012, 9 cases; 2013, 10 cases; 2014, 2 cases; 2015, 12 cases; and 2016, 7 cases.³

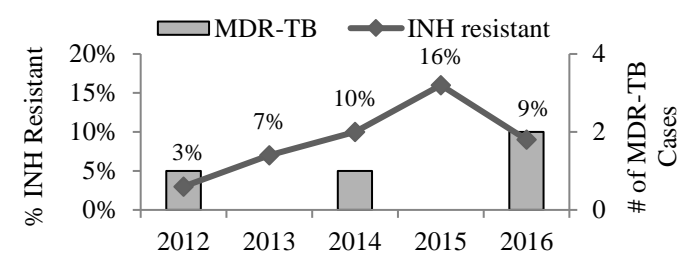
Figure 4. Alaska and U.S. TB Incidence in Children Aged 0–14 Years, 2012–2016



Drug Resistance

During 2012–2016, 3%–16% of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* (*Mtb*) isolates were resistant to isoniazid (INH), and four cases of multidrug resistant TB (MDR-TB) were identified (Figure 5). No extensively drug resistant TB (XDR-TB) cases have ever been reported in Alaska.

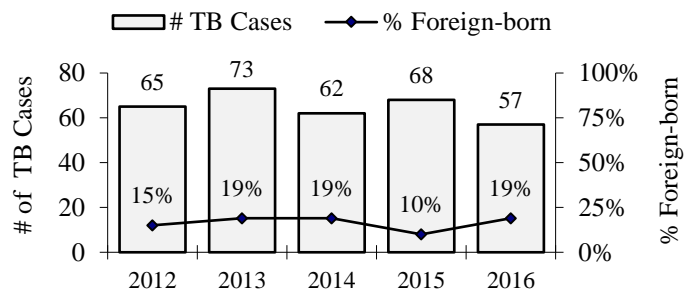
Figure 5. *Mtb* Drug Resistance in Alaska, 2012–2016



TB among Foreign-born Persons

During 2012–2016, on average, 16% of Alaska TB cases were in foreign-born persons (Figure 6). By comparison, over two-thirds of TB cases nationwide are in foreign-born individuals.

Figure 6. Alaska TB Cases by % Foreign-Born, 2012–2016



Summary

Tuberculosis remains a major public health challenge in Alaska, particularly in the Northern and Southwest regions of the state and among Alaska Native people and Asian/Pacific Islanders. A recent summary of the history of TB in Alaska offers considerations for future approaches to TB control.³ The full 2016 annual TB report, including discussion of control measures, will be available in Summer 2017.⁴

References

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