



North Carolina is Aging!

- ◆ The state's total population has exceeded 10 million!
- ◆ North Carolina ranks 9th nationally, both in total population and in the number of people 65 and older.
- ◆ By 2028, one in five North Carolinians will be 65 and older. By 2031, there will be more people 65 and older than children 0-17.
- ◆ The state has more people 60 and older than under 18 years.
- ◆ In 2019, 82 counties in the state had more people 60 and older than under 18 years. By 2025, this number is expected to increase to 89 counties and by 2038 to 95 counties.
- ◆ In 2019, an estimated 44,306 people 60 and older migrated from other states and abroad to North Carolina.
- ◆ In the next two decades, our 65 and older population will increase from 1.7 to 2.7 million, a projected growth of 56%. The projected growth among the age groups 65-74 (29%), 75-84 (87%) and 85+ (116%) indicates that as the baby boomers continue to age, there will be an increased proportion of older adults in the state creating challenges for long-term services and supports.

NC Population Change 2019-2039

| Age | 2019 | | 2039 | | % Change 2019-2039 |
|-------|------------|-----|------------|-----|-----------------------|
| | # | % | # | % | |
| Total | 10,487,088 | | 12,706,544 | | 21% |
| 0-17 | 2,309,948 | 22% | 2,579,712 | 20% | 12% |
| 18-44 | 3,720,591 | 36% | 4,395,245 | 35% | 18% |
| 45-59 | 2,074,591 | 20% | 2,326,862 | 18% | 12% |
| 60+ | 2,382,240 | 23% | 3,404,725 | 27% | 43% |
| 65+ | 1,735,619 | 17% | 2,705,349 | 21% | 56% |
| 85+ | 190,083 | 2% | 410,591 | 3% | 116% |

Source: NC Office of State Budget and Management, Standard Population Estimates, Vintage 2019 & Projections Vintage 2039

Race and Ethnicity, 2019

| Race/Ethnicity, age 65 and older | NC | US |
|---|-------|-------|
| White | 79.8% | 82.9% |
| Black or African American | 16.7% | 9.2% |
| American Indian and Alaska Native | 0.9% | 0.6% |
| Asian | 1.4% | 4.4% |
| Some other race | 0.5% | 1.8% |
| Two or more races | 0.7% | 1.1% |
| Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race) | 2.0% | 8.2% |

*As a % population 65 and older

Source: US Census. 2015-2019 American Community Survey (ACS), 5-year estimates

Social and Economic Characteristics of population, 2019

| Characteristics, age 65 and older | NC | US |
|---|----------|----------|
| Living alone | 26.4% | 26.0% |
| Veterans | 18.3% | 17.9% |
| Speak English less than "very well" | 2.3% | 8.7% |
| Have a disability | 35.1% | 34.5% |
| Have less than high school education | 16.5% | 15.6% |
| Have high school, GED/Alternative education | 30.8% | 31.2% |
| In labor force | 16.7% | 18.0% |
| Income below poverty level | 9.1% | 9.3% |
| Income between 100%-199% of poverty level | 21.4% | 18.8% |
| Median household income | \$41,750 | \$45,837 |

*As a % of population 65 and older

Source: US Census. 2015-2019 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates

- ◆ 42% of housing units with people 65 and older are single person households.
- ◆ Of the estimated 92,766 grandparents responsible for grandchildren under 18, 42% are age 60 and older.

Health Profile

- ◆ According to the Alzheimer’s Association, North Carolina currently (2019) has 170,000 adults 65 and older with **Alzheimer’s disease** and this number is projected to rise to 210,000 by 2025, an increase of 24%. Alzheimer’s disease is the fourth leading cause of death among people age 65 and older.
- ◆ Of the **people 65 and older**, according to the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) survey, 2019:
 - 81% had at least one chronic disease, 54% of them had 2 or more chronic diseases;
 - 71% had an adult flu shot/spray in the past 12 months and 76% had a pneumonia shot ever;
 - Only 9% self-reported that their health is poor and 72% reported exercising in the past 30 days.

| Rank | Leading causes of death, age 65 and older, 2019 | Number of deaths | % of Total deaths |
|------|---|------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Diseases of the heart | 15,493 | 22% |
| 2 | Cancer | 14,334 | 21% |
| 3 | Chronic lower respiratory diseases | 4,499 | 6% |
| 4 | Alzheimer’s disease | 4,455 | 6% |
| 5 | Cerebrovascular disease | 4,441 | 6% |
| 6 | Diabetes mellitus | 2,118 | 3% |

Source: North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics

| Type of disability, age 65 and older, 2019 | % with a disability |
|--|---------------------|
| Ambulatory | 22% |
| Independent living | 14% |
| Hearing | 15% |
| Cognitive | 9% |
| Self-care | 8% |
| Vision | 7% |

Source: US Census, 2015-2019 ACS, 5-year estimates

- ◆ **Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19):** Older adults due to age, comorbidities and likely weaker immune systems are at a higher risk of illnesses, hospitalizations, or dying if diagnosed with COVID-19. Of the total deaths due to COVID-19 (December 6, 2020), 23% of deaths occurred among people 65-74 years and 60% of deaths in 75 and older. Daily updates on cases, hospitalizations, deaths are available at <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard>

Given the potential social and economic impact of this unprecedented growth in the aging population, it is critical that NC focus efforts to improve those social determinants of health shown to have a direct positive effect on the health and well-being of individuals that promote aging within the community and postpone or avoid the necessity for long-term care.