Eating for Healthy Aging: Solutions to Nutrition Obstacles Facing Seniors
May 2015

Audrey Edmisten, RD, LDN, MPH
audrey.edmisten@dhhs.nc.gov
NC Division of Aging and Adult Services
A profile of North Carolinians

NC is Aging!

#Retirees
#Foreign-born population (Immigrant and refugees)
#Life expectancy
#Baby boomers
#Lower birth rates
North Carolina Ranks (2013)

- **10th** Total Population
- **9th** Population 60/65+
- **10th** Population 85+

Source: 2013 ACS one year estimates
*According to the 2014 population estimates release by US Census, NC ranked 9th in total population.*
## Current and Projected Growth of Those 60 and Older

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th></th>
<th>2033</th>
<th></th>
<th>Percent of Change 2013-2033</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number (#)</td>
<td>Percent (%)</td>
<td>Number (#)</td>
<td>Percent (%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9,861,952</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>11,856,858</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>1,969,351</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>3,117,795</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>1,402,321</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>2,411,960</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>72.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85+</td>
<td>164,848</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>309,807</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>87.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Boomers</td>
<td>2,357,514</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>1,722,795</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NC State Data Center, 10/1/2014

**Baby Boomers:** 2013 (ages 49-67)  
2033 (ages 69-87)
Counties with more people 60+ than 0-17, 2013

Source: NC State Data Center, 10/1/2014
Prepared by Swarna Reddy, NC DAAS
Counties with more people 60+ than 0-17, 2025

- Counties with more 60+ than 0-17 (90)
- Counties with more 0-17 than 60+ (10)

Source: NC State Data Center, 10/1/2014
Prepared by Swarna Reddy, NC DAAS
By 2018, NC will have more people 60+ than ages 0-17
Projected Growth of Population 65+ (2013-to 2033)

Source: NC State Data Center, 10/1/2014

Range: -14% to 156%
Projected growth for the State is 72%
Top 5 counties with the most people age 60 and over

Source: NC State Data Center, 10/1/2014
Most older adults 65+ years live in the community

- Community: 33.4 M; 93.5%
- Nursing Homes: 1.5 M; 4.5%
- Assisted Living: 1.0 M; 2.0%

US Census Bureau; Centers for Medicare & Medicaid, Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey

*28% in the Community live alone
## Disability Status, 65 and over

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>With a disability</th>
<th>Percent with a disability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population 65 years and over</td>
<td>478,429</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With a hearing difficulty</td>
<td>191,945</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With a vision difficulty</td>
<td>95,071</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With a cognitive difficulty</td>
<td>126,733</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With an ambulatory difficulty</td>
<td>313,867</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With a self-care difficulty</td>
<td>113,725</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With an independent living difficulty</td>
<td>208,169</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Civilian non-Institutionalized population*

Source: American Community Survey 2009-2013. Table S1810

Prepared by Swarna Reddy, NC DAAS
Leading causes of death, 65 and over, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Cause of Death</th>
<th>Number of Deaths</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>14,985</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Diseases of the heart</td>
<td>14,900</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chronic lower respiratory diseases</td>
<td>4,516</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Cerebrovascular disease</td>
<td>4,004</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Alzheimer's disease</td>
<td>2,863</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Diabetes mellitus</td>
<td>1,861</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Number of people 65+ with:**
One chronic disease – 82%
2 or more chronic diseases – 54%

Source: NC State Center for Health
Burden Chronic Disease
Health and Health Care

• 91% of older adults have at least one chronic condition, 73% have at least two chronic conditions
• 23% of older adults have Diabetes
• 50% of older adults have arthritis

• Chronic diseases account for 75% of the money our nation spends on health care, yet only 1% of health dollars are spent on public efforts to improve overall health.
• 1/3 of healthcare dollars are spent on older adults (will continue to increase as population increases)

# Life Expectancy, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Groups</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-74</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-79</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85+</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Life expectancy is the average number of additional years that someone at a given age would be expected to live if current mortality conditions remained constant throughout their lifetime.

Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics
Poverty Rate Increases In Older Age

Source: American Community Survey 2009-2013. Table B17024
The State of Senior Hunger in North Carolina

- In 2012, 20.5% NC adults 60 years old+ facing the threat of hunger
- In 2011, 16.9%; In 2010 15.66%
- Compared to other states and DC, NC ranks 45th, with 1 being the best.

- Today, North Carolina is ranked #5 with hunger among the 50+ population and 1st for children five years old and younger.

Ref. The State of Senior Hunger in America 2012:
Food Insecurity – Older Adults

Food insecurity comes in different forms

• Food insecure seniors sometimes had enough money to purchase food but did not have the resources to access or prepare food due to lack of transportation, functional limitations, or health problems.

• 30% low income older adults state they have had to choose between food and medical care.

• 35% low income older adults state they have had to choose between food and paying for heat/utilities.

• Elderly households are much less likely to receive help through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) than non-elderly households.

• Food Deserts
More than half of UNC-CH Emergency Room patients aged 65 yrs and above are malnourished.

- Malnutrition Among Cognitively Intact, Noncritically Ill Older Adults in the Emergency Department; Annals of Emergency Medicine; August ‘14. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.annemergmed.2014.07.018](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.annemergmed.2014.07.018)

- Random sample of cognitively intact older UNC-CH ED patients

- Results:
  - more than half were malnourished or at risk for malnutrition,
  - the majority of malnourished patients had not previously received a diagnosis.
  - Higher rates of malnutrition among individuals with depression, difficulty eating, and difficulty buying groceries by themselves

- Conclusion:
  - older adults make more than 20 million visits to U.S. emergency departments each year
  - develop the capacity of emergency department to identify the underlying conditions that impact health for older adults, particularly for those with limited resources
  - identifying malnutrition among older emergency department patients and connecting these patients with a food program or other services may be an inexpensive way to help these patients.
Our Challenges

- Rapidly growing older adult population
- Chronic disease
- Food insecurity
- Expensive - *More money spent on health, social security, shortage of labor force*
Good News!

You can make a difference in the life of a senior facing hunger

Take action now.
Food and Nutrition Assistance Programs

• **Senior Nutrition Program** – NC Division of Aging and Adult Services - *(congregate nutrition program, home-delivered meals program - Meals on Wheels)*

• **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program:**
  SNAP: food stamps

• **Food Banks** and food pantries statewide

• **Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program**
Senior Nutrition Programs

- **Purpose**
  - Provide healthy, appealing meals “to reduce hunger and food insecurity”
    - Congregate Nutrition Program
    - Home-delivered Meals Program

  **More than a Meal**
  - Promote health and prevent disease –
  - Promote socialization of older individuals
  - Providing an opportunity for meaningful community involvement (i.e., volunteering)
  - Link older adults with other community-based services such as physical activities programs, community health, or case management

*Leads to less hospitalizations, less falls, more money to take medication.*
Division of Aging and Adult Services

- Senior Nutrition Programs (Congregate, Home Delivered Meals)
- Adult Day Services
- Family Caregiver Services and Respite Care
- In-Home Aide
- Information and Case Management
- Senior Center Operations
- Transportation
- Housing and Home Improvement
- Adult Protective Services
- Other Services (Health Promotion, Ombudsman Advocacy Program, State Prescription Drug Program, . . .)
North Carolina’s Aging Network

Located in the regional Councils of Government. AAAs have functions in five basic areas: (1) advocacy; (2) planning; (3) program and resource development; (4) information brokerage; and (5) funds administration and quality assurance.

16 Regional Area Agencies on Aging

Over 400 Local Aging Services Providers
NC Senior Nutrition Program

Congregate Nutrition Program
- Targeted population: low income ≥ 60 y/o
- FY14 – 25,167 participants
  (331 sites statewide 7/12)
- ~43% at moderate/high risk malnutrition
- 40% at/below poverty

Home Delivered Meals Program
- Targeted population: ≥ 60 y/o with physical/mental limitations
- FY14 – 18,911 participants
- ~90% at moderate/high risk malnutrition
- 51% at/below poverty

• For almost half of home-delivered meals recipients—our meal provides 1/2 or more of their daily food intake.

• Waiting List: over 2800 older adults
Home Food Delivery for the Elderly Strengthens Communities

According to the analysis from a decade of spending and nursing home resident data, **states that invest more on home-delivered meals to seniors have lower rates of seniors in nursing homes.** Brown Univ 12/12
2013 More than A Meal Study

• Meals on Wheels America + AARP Foundation commissioned Brown University’s Center for Gerontology and Healthcare Research

• investigate the impact of meal service delivery on the health and well-being of adults 60 years of age and older.

• 15 week study – waiting list for home delivered meals programs across US
  • Traditional home delivered meal delivery (hot lunch meal with daily visit)
  • Once-weekly frozen meal delivery
  • Continuance on the waiting list
MORE THAN A MEAL
PILOT RESEARCH STUDY

SENIORS WHO RECEIVE DAILY MEALS ON WHEELS DELIVERIES CREDIT THOSE MEALS WITH:

- MAKING THEM FEEL BETTER
- HELPING THEM EAT HEALTHIER
- REDUCING THEIR FEELINGS OF LONELINESS

LEARN MORE AT MEALSONWHEELSAMERICA.ORG/MTAM.

CONDUCTED BY BROWN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
FUNDING BY AARP FOUNDATION
What are Food Stamps?

• Federal: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

• NC: Food and Nutrition Services (FNS)

• Not Stamps
  ❖ Debit Card (EBT) to purchase Food Items
    • Cannot be used for non-food items (e.g. soap, tobacco, or alcohol) or hot food for immediate consumption.

• Entitlement Program
  • SNAP benefits are 100% federal funding

• Each $1 in SNAP creates $1.79 in economic activity  SNAP benefits pumped about $2.43 billion into NC Economy in 2012 (supports the local grocery stores, farmers markets and people they employ)
NC Food and Nutrition Services

- NC Participation Rate including all ages: 60%
- NC Participation Rate 55y/o+: 46%
- NC monthly allotment average 55y/o+: $96
- Mecklenburg County 55+ Participation Rate: 64%
- Mecklenburg Co 55+ monthly allotment average: $122
- Iredell Co 55+ Participation Rate: 27%
- Iredell Co 55+ monthly allotment average: $101

January 2015
• Farmers Markets now accept EBT, credit and debit cards.
• SFMNP
Feeding America Food Bank Members in North Carolina

MANNA Food Bank
Asheville - 16 counties
Kitty Schaller: (828)299-3663
5,803,521 lbs. (2008) to 328 Agencies

Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest North Carolina
Winston-Salem - 18 counties
Clyde Fitzgerald: (336)784-5770
7,999,800 lbs. (2008) to 415 Agencies

Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina
Raleigh - 34 counties
Peter Werbicki: (919)875-0707
36,880,213 lbs. (FY 08-09) to 840 Agencies

Region (7 counties) served by Inter-Faith Food Shuttle
Raleigh - Jill Staton Bullard
(919)250-0043
5,654,234 lbs. (2008) to 211 Agencies

Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina
Charlotte - 19 counties
Kay Carter: (704)376-1785
21,820,670 lbs. (2008) to 619 Agencies
Includes York and Lancaster counties in South Carolina

Second Harvest Food Bank of Southeast North Carolina
Fayetteville - 7 counties
David Griffin: (910)485-8809
5,286,457 lbs. (2008) to 208 Agencies

Food Bank of the Albemarle
Elizabeth City - 15 counties
Liz Reasoner: (252)335-4035
3,117,607 lbs. (2008) to 95 Agencies

SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK OF METROLINA
Together We CAN End Hunger
Help End Senior Hunger

Together we can!
Working together as a team means winning together as a team.