

Demographic & Economic Characteristics of an Aging Population

This fact sheet is one in a series that provides basic information on the “who, what, where, when, why, and how” of long-term care. All the references accessed to produce this fact sheet are provided for further review.

- In 2009, the number of Americans age 65 and older was estimated at **39.6 million** or **12.9%** of the total population. That same year, the number of Americans age 85 and older was estimated at **5.6 million** or **1.8%** of the total population.¹
- As of 2005, the largest number of older Americans lived in the **South (36%)**, followed by the Midwest (24%), Northeast (21%), and West (20%) regions.²
- Nearly **one out of every five** people age 65 and older (19.2%) are non-White or Hispanic. By 2030, the proportion of older adult who are people of color will reach **29%**.³ By 2050, this proportion will increase to **42%**.⁴
- **One-third** of people age 75 and older live alone.³
- **One of five** people age 65 and older live in a rural, non-metropolitan area.³
- **About 20.5%** of older adults have a bachelor’s degree or higher.⁵
- In 2008, the median income of older adults was **\$25,503** for males and **\$14,559** for females. Among households headed by someone age 65 and older, median income was **\$44,188**.⁵
- In 2008, **9.7%** or **3.7 million** adults age 65 and older had incomes below the poverty level. 5.8% had incomes below 50 percent of the poverty level and 11.2 percent were at 125 percent of the poverty level.⁶
- Medicaid is the federal/state health program for low-income individuals. About **5.9 million** or **10.2 %** of total Medicaid enrollees were age 65 and older as of fiscal year 2007.⁷
- Medicare is the federal health insurance program for older adults and certain disabled individuals. The number of adults eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid (“dual eligibles”) was approximately **8.8 million** in fiscal year 2005. **About two-thirds** were age 65 and older.⁸
- **More than half** of dual eligibles have incomes below the poverty level.⁹

Sources

1. U.S. Census Bureau. 2009 Population Estimates, Sex by Age. 2009; <http://factfinder.census.gov>. Accessed September 1, 2010.
2. Colello K. CRS Report to Congress: Where Do Older Americans Live? Geographic Distribution of the Older Population. 2007; <http://aging.senate.gov/crs/aging5.pdf>. Accessed August 18, 2010.

3. Gibson M, Fox-Grage W, Houser A. Across the States 2009: Profiles in Long-Term Care and Independent Living: Executive Summary, Data and Rankings, 8th Edition. 2009; http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/il/d19105_2008_ats.pdf. Accessed August 13, 2010.
4. U.S. Census Bureau. The Next Four Decades: The Older Population in the United States: 2010 to 2050, Population Estimates and Projections. 2010; http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Aging_Statistics/future_growth/DOCS/p25-1138.pdf. Accessed September 1, 2010.
5. Administration on Aging (AoA). A Profile of Older Americans: 2009. 2010; http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Aging_Statistics/Profile/2009/4.aspx. Accessed September 1, 2010.
6. U.S. Census Bureau. S0103. Population 65 Years and Over in the United States, 2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, American Community Survey 2009; http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/STTable?_bm=y&-geo_id=01000US&-qr_name=ACS_2008_3YR_G00_S0103&-ds_name=ACS_2008_3YR_G00_&-redoLog=false. Accessed August 16, 2010.
7. The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. Distribution of Medicaid Enrollees by Enrollment Group, FY2007 2010; <http://www.statehealthfacts.org>. Accessed August 14, 2010.
8. Holahan J, Miller D, Rousseau D. Dual Eligibles: Medicaid Enrollment and Spending for Medicare Beneficiaries in 2005. 2009; <http://www.kff.org/medicaid/upload/7846.pdf>. Accessed August 13, 2010.
9. Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC). A Databook: Healthcare Spending and the Medicare Program, June 2010. 2010; <http://www.medpac.gov/documents/Jun10DataBookEntireReport.pdf>. Accessed August 17, 2010.



For more information contact:

The SCAN Foundation

Lisa R. Shugarman, Ph.D., Director of Policy

Keyla Whitenhill, MPH, Policy Analyst

3800 Kilroy Airport Way, Suite 400

Long Beach, CA 90806

Phone: (888) 569-7226

Email: info@TheSCANFoundation.org

www.TheSCANFoundation.org