

State of Seniors Final Report Summary

Key findings and recommendations



Daily Activities

- Seniors have most difficulties with routine housework, grocery shopping, and walking.
- Restrictions of activities are due to health, cost, accessibility & crime.
- Senior employment & reentry to workforce are related to financial difficulties.
- Assistance with personal needs, chores, and meal preparation is needed to support aging in place.
- 75% reported that their relative(s) over 54 years of age relied on other people for help with daily household chores. This was the second most frequently reported need.

Recommendations

To support daily living, strategies need to focus on home care and community support services to enable people to continue leading healthy and independent lives in their own homes.

Age Discrimination & Elder Abuse

- 35% experienced age discrimination.
- 35% of respondents did not know whom to contact to report elder abuse.
- 28% of individuals 54 and under observed discrimination against a senior because of their age; accessing employment was the most frequently mentioned form of discrimination.

Recommendations

Strategies to combat elder abuse and age discrimination need to focus on raising awareness through public education, professional training, advocacy, and service coordination.

Food Security

- 54% of service providers reported that they knew of a senior who had skipped a meal due to lack of money.
- 8-14% of respondents reported skipping meals due to lack of money.
- 72% reported not having a grocery store within walking distance.

Recommendations

Strategies to reduce hunger risk and food insecurity should address access, quality and sustainability to support the nutritional needs of older adults; especially individuals who have limited support and resources. Additionally, strengthening food related knowledge, skills and behaviors is needed to ensure a healthy and nutritious diet.

Caregiving

- 10% are currently raising grandchildren or children of other family members.
- Over half of service providers (61.0%) reported observing the “sandwich generation,” adults caring for both children and aging family members.
- The biggest obstacles reported for children in taking care of their parents were financial challenges and job responsibilities.
- Service providers identified the lack of ability to pay for personal assistance that seniors need (71.6%) and the need for more assistance (such as respite care) for family caregivers (64.9%) as the top two personal assistance needs faced by seniors in their community.

Recommendations

Caregiver strategies need to focus on health and social services for care recipients and respite (caregiver relief), resource assistance and user-friendly education for caregivers. Caregivers must be supported, recognized and protected from the potential adverse consequences of caregiver burnout.

Information, Assistance and Planning

- Most frequently reported sites for information: Legal Aid, Seminars, Senior Center and the Internet.
- Service providers identified problems paying the monthly bills (67.6%) and the lack of money to pay for food, clothing, shelter and other necessary items as the top two income needs faced by seniors.
- Retirement planning needed for individuals 54 and under.

Recommendations

Strategies to improve access and coordination of support services for older adults and caregivers, is vital to ensuring a consistent level of service across the system and a seamless experience for the client. On-going education on retirement planning is needed to prepare individuals for social, financial and care needs as they age in place.

Housing

- Top housing concerns/ problems include minor/ major home repairs, affordable housing and assistance with yard work.
- Cost of energy & utilities is impacting quality of life.
- Service providers identified waiting lists for subsidized housing that are too long (71.1%) and inadequate stock of accessible housing (30.3%) as the top two housing needs faced by seniors.

Recommendations

Housing strategies need to address the issues of home repair and modifications to enhance safety and accessibility. Additionally, accessible and affordable housing options need to be developed to meet the current and future needs of older adults.

Health

- 10% need, but are unable to afford medical care.
- 20% have experienced depression in the past year.
- 11% report difficulties paying for prescription medications.
- 13% reported their relative(s) over the age of 54 as having an unmet need for care. The most frequently reported unmet need was medical assistance.

Recommendations

Health promotion strategies need to focus on creating policies, services, programs and environments that enable healthy aging in settings where Fulton County residents live, work, and participate in daily life. Adopting healthier lifestyles and increasing the use of preventative screenings/ services are important in the prevention/ delaying of illness and disease.

Transportation

- 90% of individuals 55 and under reported that their relative(s) relied on other people for transportation. This was the most frequently reported need.
- 65% of service providers rated the need for transportation at the highest level of priority for improving the quality of life of seniors.
- Transportation to medical appointments and grocery shopping were the most frequently reported needs.

Recommendations

Transportation strategies need to focus on a variety of mobility options that are available, accessible, and affordable. Increasing funding will be necessary to meet the growing demand for service; more work needs to be done to enhance coordination at the state, regional and local levels.