2023-2027 State Aging Plan:
Advancing Equity in Aging –
A Collaborative Strategy for NC

Joyce Massey-Smith
Divya Venkataganesan

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NC is Aging

Population 65+

- U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2020, one-year experimental data estimates. Table X2K0014: Population by Age. 2020 ACS 1-Year Experimental Data Tables. [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)
2020

1 in 6 are 65+
2028

1 in 5 will be 65+
Migration

44,660 in 2020

https://www.ncdhhs.gov/media/14887/open
National Rankings

9th in total population

8th in population 65+
Profile of Aging in NC

Counties with more people ages 60+ than 0-17

2020: 85 Counties

2040: 90 Counties

https://www.osbm.nc.gov/facts-figures/population-demographics
Projected Population Growth

- 65-74: 25%
- 75-84: 88%
- 85+: 116%

https://www.ncdhhs.gov/media/14887/open
# Race/Ethnicity and Social and Economic Characteristics, 65+

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White: not Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>17%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Indian and Alaska Native</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
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- **Education Levels**
  - Less than high school education: 14%
  - Bachelor's degree or higher: 28%

- **Poverty Levels**
  - Live below 100% poverty: 9%
  - In 100%-149% poverty level: 10%

**Census Poverty threshold 2021:**
- $12,996 for an individual age 65 or older
- $16,400 a household of two people with a householder 65 years or older

- **Labor Force**
  - In labor force: 18%

- **Chronic Conditions**
  - Have one or more chronic conditions: 83%
  - (30% of those ages 65-75 and 50% of those ages 75 and up have hearing loss.)
Why is the State Aging Plan Important

- Documents Tangible Outcomes
- Translates Activities into Best Practices
- Provides a Blueprint for Coordination and Advocacy
- Builds Capacity
- Input from Community and Consideration of Population Needs
State Plan Requirements

Required by NC General Statute 143B-181.1A and by Section 307 of the federal Older Americans Act (42 U.S.C. § 3027)

Submitted every 4 years

Provided to the General Assembly by June 2023 and subsequently to the U.S. Administration for Community Living by July 2023

- Plan needs to include:
  - Goals
  - Objectives
  - Strategies
  - Measures
  - Description of how the state monitors quality
Needs Assessment

7 Listening Sessions:
- 6 In-Person Listening Sessions + 1 Virtual Statewide Listening Session
  - 350 attendees

2 Surveys: Aging Plan Community Survey + Age My Way NC Survey
- 3,793 responses

Domains of Livability Roundtable Discussion:
- 180 subject matter experts
# Listening Session Key Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Affordable Housing</th>
<th>Transportation/Mobility</th>
<th>Caregiver Support</th>
<th>Access to Information and Services</th>
<th>Funding</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wilmington</td>
<td>Affordable Housing</td>
<td>Transportation/Mobility</td>
<td>Caregiver Support</td>
<td>Digital Gap/Technology Access</td>
<td>Mental Health/Social Isolation &amp; Substance Abuse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sylva</td>
<td>Affordable Housing</td>
<td>Transportation/Mobility</td>
<td>Caregiver Support</td>
<td>Digital Gap/Technology Access</td>
<td>Mental Health/Social Isolation &amp; Substance Abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kernersville</td>
<td>Affordable Housing and Home Assistance</td>
<td>Caregiver and LTC Support</td>
<td>Transportation/Mobility</td>
<td>Digital Gap/Technology Access</td>
<td>Nutrition: Food Insecurity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lumberton</td>
<td>Affordable Housing and Housing Assistance</td>
<td>Transportation/Mobility</td>
<td>Social Isolation and Social Engagement</td>
<td>Caregiver Support</td>
<td>Access to Information &amp; Expansion for Funding of Programs (ex. SCEP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenville</td>
<td>Affordable Housing</td>
<td>Caregiver and LTC Support</td>
<td>APS Support (standardized services &amp; trainings)</td>
<td>Transportation/Mobility</td>
<td>Access to Information/Services (Prevention focus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte</td>
<td>Social Isolation and Social Engagement</td>
<td>Food Insecurity</td>
<td>Affordability and Sustainability of Services</td>
<td>Transportation/Mobility</td>
<td>Caregiver and LTC Support</td>
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**Discussions on:**
- Community challenges and solutions
- Community’s strengths and assets
- What is needed to age in place safely and comfortably
- What could be done to enhance the quality of life for community members
Age My Way NC Key Findings

People want to stay in their communities and not relocate

People want to age in their own homes

Individuals worry about when they won’t be able to drive

People worry about becoming socially isolated

Employment for older and disabled adults is important issue that needs to be addressed moving forward
60.9% rated their community as a good or very good place to live for people as they age; 76.1% rated their health as good or very good.

Older adults enjoy participating in various community activities (religious/faith-based organizations, community events, libraries, and senior centers were highest selected options).

Quality long-term care options, financial security, having enough food to eat, and having access to social engagement opportunities were rated as very important.

Being unaware of service availability was rated as the highest reason for inability to access needed services.

Information about community services are mostly received by family, friends, word of mouth, internet/website, and senior centers as highest selected options.
Domains of Livability Roundtable Themes

• Reassess affordability and prioritizing funding
• Communication: education/training/awareness
• Cross-sector collaboration to break down silos
• Public participation & increased engagement
  • Intergenerational and multi-generational approaches
  • Community-focused approaches
• Equity
  • Rural vs Urban
  • Disparities: racial/ethnic populations
  • Redefining aging and reframing messaging
• Streamlining processes and infrastructures
  • Implementing changes earlier in the process
Equity is Baked Into the Process

- Racial
- Ethic
- Linguistic Background
- Rural Areas
- Gender Identity
- Disability Status
- Sexual Orientation
Formation of Diverse Aging Plan Committee

Formation of Aging Plan Committee with the goal of addressing critical aging related issues in North Carolina

Committee divided into six sub-committees that align with 2023-2027 plan goals for focused development of objectives and strategies

Collaborative approach utilized diverse stakeholders' expertise and knowledge

Comprehensive plan created to be responsive to the needs and aspirations of the aging population through effective utilization of the expertise and knowledge of diverse stakeholders
Partnerships/Collaboration

- Area Agencies on Aging
- Governor’s Advisory Council on Aging
- Senior Tar Heel Legislature
- NC Coalition on Aging
- NC DHHS:
  - Division of Health Benefits
  - Division of Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities/Substance Abuse Services
  - Division of Services for the Blind
  - Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
  - Office of Diversity Equity, and Inclusion
- Foundation for Health Leadership & Innovation
- El Centro
- SAGE USA
- Carolina Aging Alliance
- Orange County Department on Aging
- NC Center for Health and Wellness
- Resources for Seniors
- West Marion Community Forum
- WNC Bridge Foundation
2023-2027 Focus Areas

Safety, Protection, and Advocacy

Healthy Aging/Quality of Life

Housing and Homelessness

Advancing Equity and Reframing Aging

Long-term Preparedness Planning

Caregiving and Workforce Development
Safety, Protection, and Advocacy

Use policy, advocacy, education, and a multi-disciplinary approach to protect the rights of Older North Carolinians from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

- Educating stakeholders on protecting vulnerable older adults & indicators of maltreatment
- Promoting APS transformation
- Empowering long-term care residents and caregivers
- Advancing advocacy efforts for policies and programs promoting healthy aging
Healthy Aging/Quality of Life

Support programs and partnerships that improve the health and well-being of older North Carolinians.

- Addressing food and nutrition security needs
- Improving transportation options and supporting inclusive transportation systems
- Promoting evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention (EBHP/DP) programs
- Coordinating falls reduction efforts
- Raising awareness about senior centers
- Mitigating the effects of social isolation and mental health challenges.
Housing and Homelessness

Adopt an equity-centered housing lens approach to enable older adults to age in their place of choice with the appropriate services, supports, and housing opportunities.

- Enhancing home and community-based services for older adults and improving housing conditions to support aging-in-place
- Developing a comprehensive system of services to effectively address and ultimately end chronic homelessness among older adults
Caregiving Support and Workforce Development

Advance equity, accessibility, and inclusion through informal and formal caregiving support.

- Strengthening, supporting, expanding, and diversifying the direct care workforce
- Providing comprehensive support to family caregivers
- Raising awareness about Alzheimer's disease and related dementias
- Improving access to aging and disability services through a coordinated system
- Enabling individuals to remain in their preferred living arrangements
- Promoting social, emotional, and physical well-being
Long-Term Preparedness Planning

Incorporate innovative practices learned through COVID-19 and create reliable systems and infrastructures that will have the capacity to serve the growing aging population, all while recognizing the need for communication equity to foster involvement from all stakeholders.

- Enhancing and evaluating current systems and infrastructures
- Improving critical services and supports
- Promoting communication equity in emergency management and disaster preparedness
- Developing a comprehensive state-led Multisector Plan for Aging
- Supporting the implementation of the Medicare-Medicaid integration strategy
Advancing Equity and Reframing Aging

Advance equity by supporting and encouraging older adults of all backgrounds and their support systems to access information that helps them make informed choices about support services at home or in the community.

- Enhancing equity-centered communication to marginalized groups
- Fostering inclusion among underrepresented populations
- Advancing digital equity and connectivity literacy
Evaluation and Accountability: Measuring the Plan

Clear data measures and expected outcomes highlighted in 2023-2027 plan to assess the impact of our strategies.

Next Steps:

Embedding a data equity lens throughout the data collection, analysis, and communication process.

Developing a public-facing data dashboard as a part of our commitment to transparency, accountability, and equitable progress.
# Exploring Measures and Expected Outcomes

**GOAL 5:** Incorporate innovative practices learned through COVID and create reliable systems and infrastructures that will have the capacity to serve the growing aging population, all while recognizing the need for communication equity to foster involvement from all stakeholders.

**OBJECTIVE 5.1:** Evaluate current systems and infrastructures in response to the evolving needs, services, and communication access for our aging population's well-being.

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<th>STRATEGY</th>
<th>PERFORMANCE MEASURES</th>
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| **Strategy 1:** In partnership with the AAAs, local service providers, advocates, and other key stakeholders, develop ARPA Sustainability plan through in-depth ARPA program evaluation and advocacy efforts.  
**Sub-strategy 1:** Conduct fiscal and programmatic monitoring to ensure that all COVID-19 related funds are expended as stipulated by ACL through in-depth ARPA services program evaluation to identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement.  
**Sub-strategy 2:** Examine initiatives undertaken with ARPA funds to determine innovations that should be continued with necessary state support. | • By June 2024, develop ARPA sustainability plan and complete in-depth program evaluation to determine innovations that should be continued with necessary support. |

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<th>GOAL 5 EXPECTED OUTCOMES</th>
<th>OBJECTIVE 1</th>
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| • Improved sustainability planning and program evaluation for aging services and supports to better identify strengths challenges, and opportunities for improvement.  
— Development of sustainable policies and decisions that affect older adults and maximizes community benefits. |
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North Carolina State Aging Plan // 2023-2027

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Division of Aging and Adult Services