

NC Department of Health and Human Services

# North Carolina's Aging Population 2024

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Division of Aging

# Aging Population in North Carolina

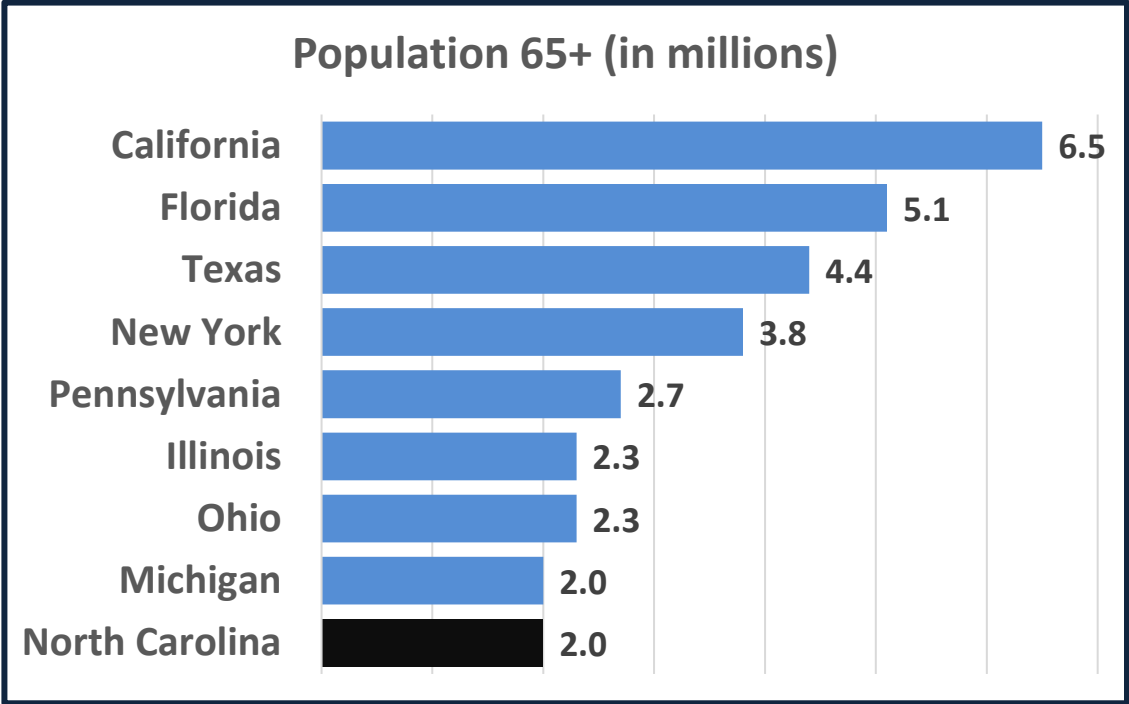
Population Estimates and Projections

Socio-Economic Characteristics

Health and Well-Being

# Estimates & Projections

# North Carolina's National Rankings



9<sup>th</sup> in total population

9<sup>th</sup> in 65+ population

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024, 1-year estimates. Table B01001: Sex by Age.

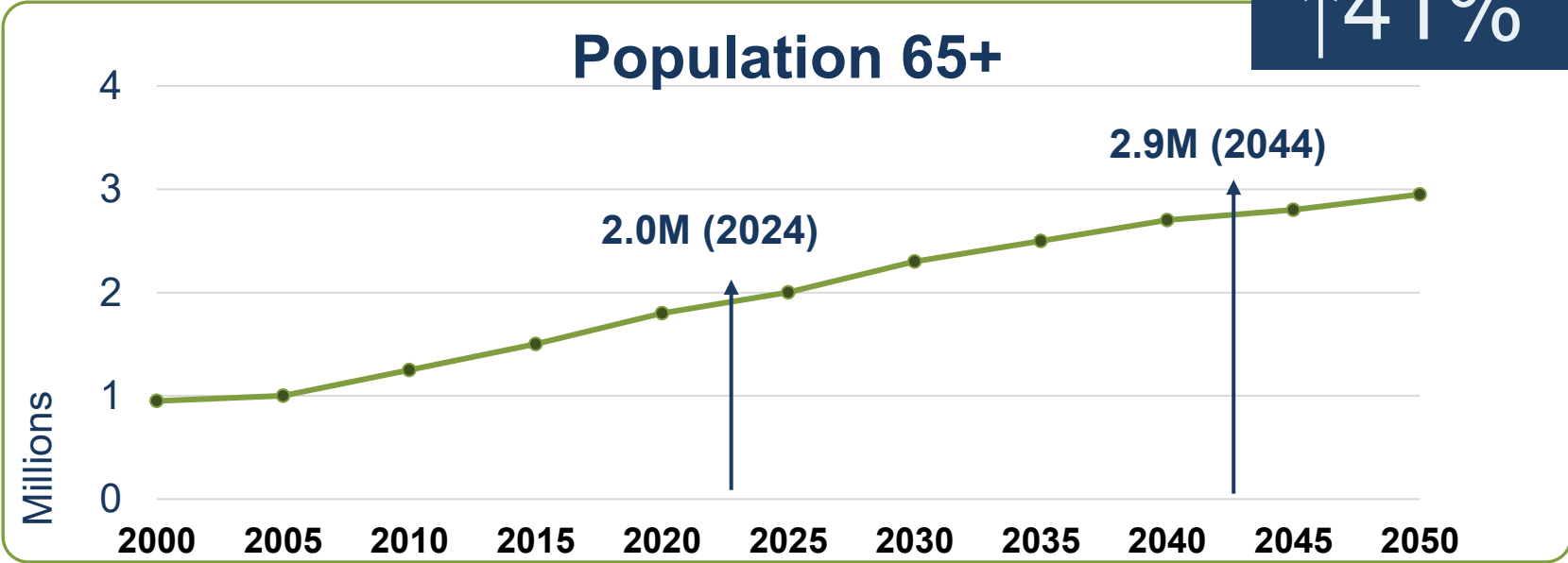
# NC's Projected Population 2024-2044

Age	2024		2044		% Change 2024-2044
	#	%	#	%	
<b>Total</b>	11,052,495		13,030,273		<b>18%</b>
<b>0-17</b>	2,323,516	21%	2,516,924	19%	<b>8%</b>
<b>18-44</b>	3,952,629	36%	4,443,904	34%	<b>12%</b>
<b>45-59</b>	2,069,299	19%	2,454,051	19%	<b>19%</b>
<b>60+</b>	2,707,051	24%	3,615,394	28%	<b>34%</b>
<b>65+</b>	2,016,408	18%	2,850,072	22%	<b>41%</b>
<b>85+</b>	200,921	2%	472,009	4%	<b>135%</b>

Source: NC Office of State Budget and Management, Standard Population Estimates, 2024; Population Projections, Vintage 2044, [www.osbm.nc.gov/facts-figures/population-demographics](http://www.osbm.nc.gov/facts-figures/population-demographics)

# Growth of Aging Population

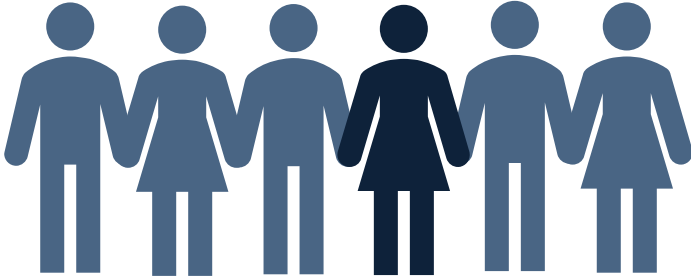
↑41%



Source: NC Office of State Budget and Management, Standard Population Estimates, Vintage 2024; Population Projections, Vintage 2044, [www.osbm.nc.gov/facts-figures/population-demographics](http://www.osbm.nc.gov/facts-figures/population-demographics)

# Growth of Aging Population

2024



1 in 5 were 65+

**By 2030 More 65+ than under 18**

Source: NC Office of State Budget and Management, Standard Population Estimates, Vintage 2024; Population Projections, Vintage 2044, [www.osbm.nc.gov/facts-figures/population-demographics](http://www.osbm.nc.gov/facts-figures/population-demographics)

# Causes of Growth in Aging Population

Aging baby boomer generation

Low fertility rates

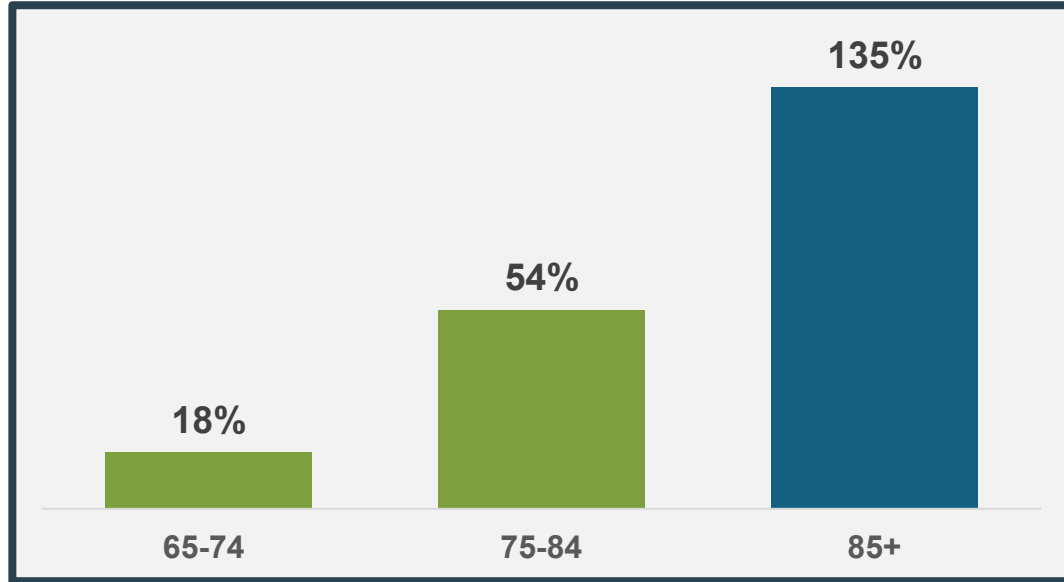
Increased longevity

In-migration

Source: By 2030, all baby boomers will be age 65 and older

<https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2019/12/by-2030-all-baby-boomers-will-be-age-65-or-older.html>

# Fastest Growth in Next 20 Years: 85+



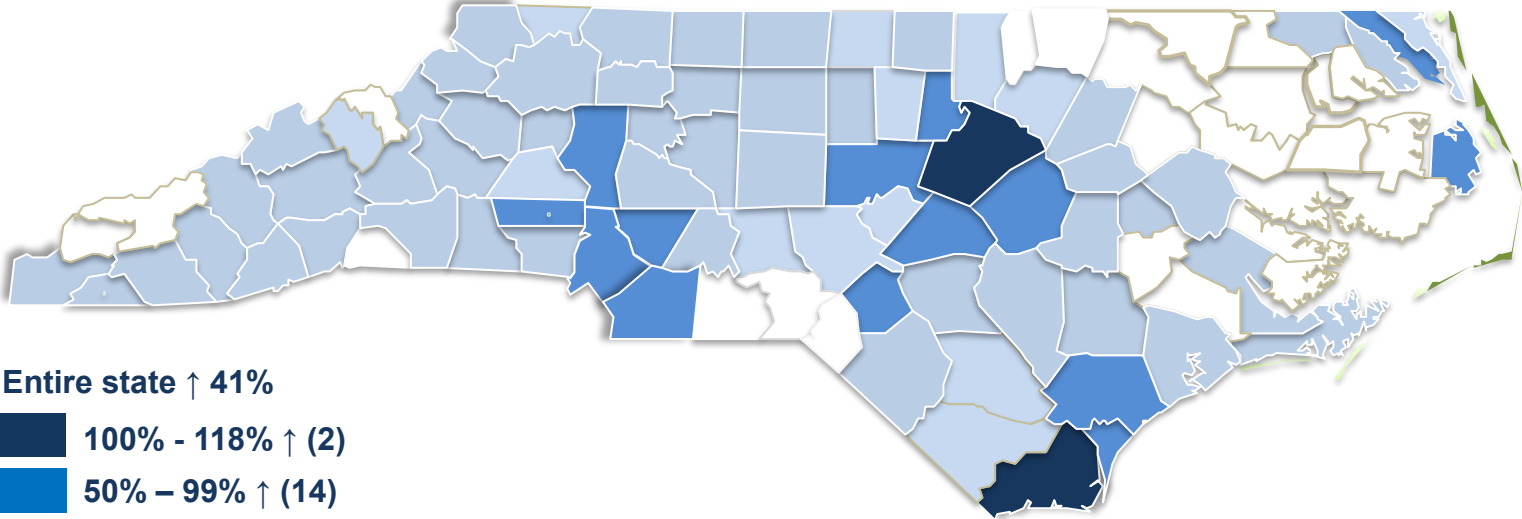
## IMPACTS

**Increased prevalence of functional limitations, frailty, chronic diseases**

**More demand for long-term supports and services**

Source: NC Office of State Budget and Management, Standard Population Estimates, Vintage 2024; Population Projections, Vintage 2044, [www.osbm.nc.gov/facts-figures/population-demographics](http://www.osbm.nc.gov/facts-figures/population-demographics)

# Projected Change in Population 65+, 2024-2044



Entire state ↑ 41%

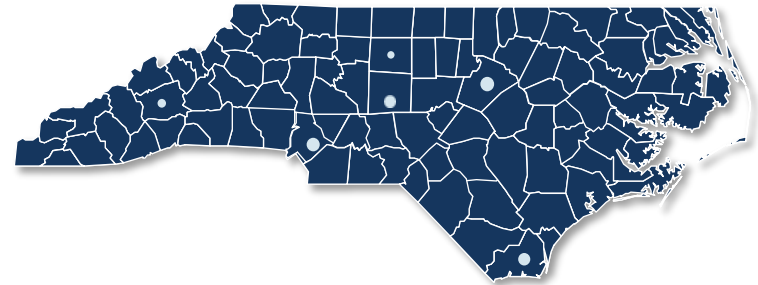
- 100% - 118% ↑ (2)
- 50% - 99% ↑ (14)
- 1% - 49% ↑ (56)
- 1% - (-30%) ↓ (25)

Expect rural county declines due to out-migration of younger people and natural decrease of older adult population

Source: NC Office of State Budget and Management, Standard Population Estimates, Vintage 2024; Population Projections, Vintage 2044  
[www.osbm.nc.gov/facts-figures/population-demographics](http://www.osbm.nc.gov/facts-figures/population-demographics)

# In-Migration of People 60+ to Largest Counties

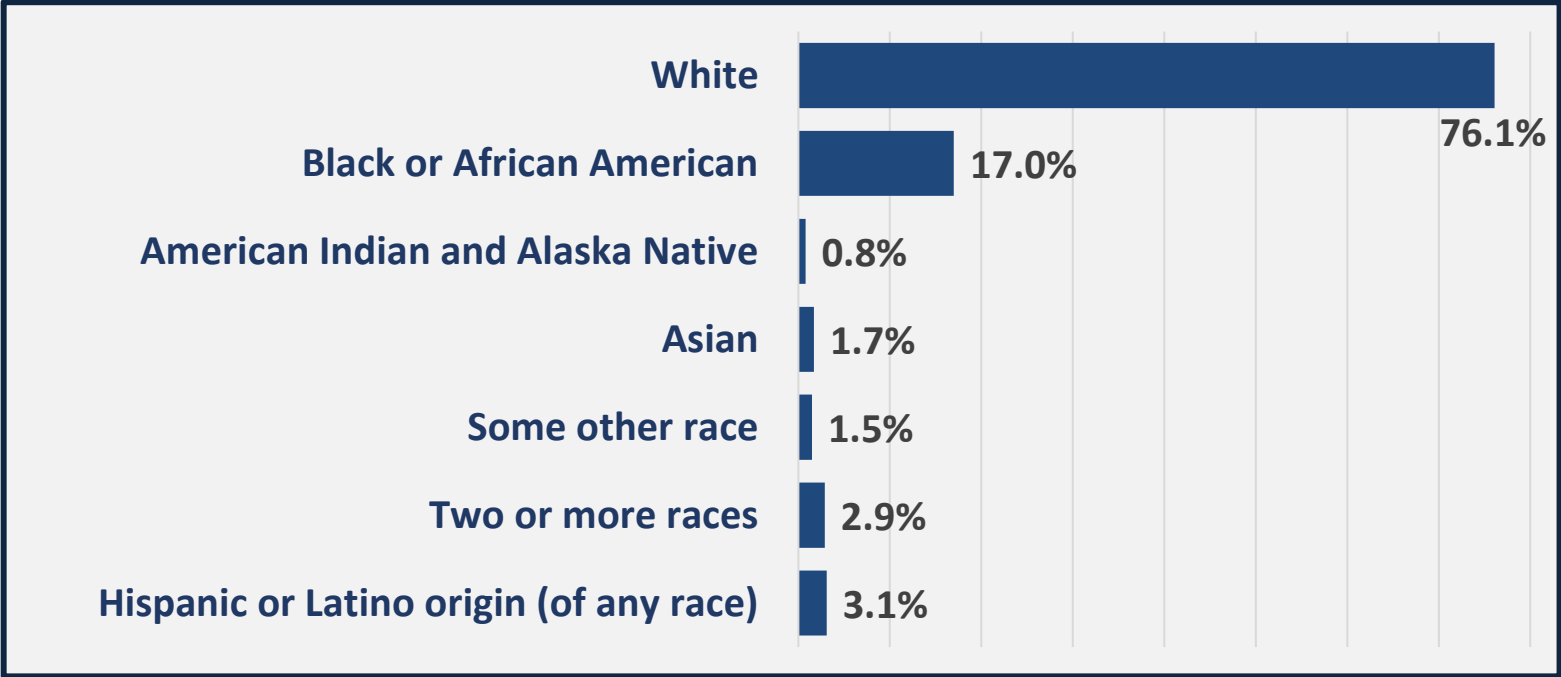
Destination	From Another State	From Abroad	Total
North Carolina	43,578	5,790	49,368
Mecklenburg	4,792	1,069	5,861
Wake	4,232	1,010	5,242
Brunswick	2,274	35	2,309
Buncombe	1,685	156	1,841
Guilford	1,630	192	1,822
New Hanover	1,585	82	1,667



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024, 5-year estimates. Table B07001: Geographical mobility in the past year by age for current residence in the United States, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>; [\\*www.osbm.nc.gov/blog](http://www.osbm.nc.gov/blog)

# Socio-Economic Characteristics

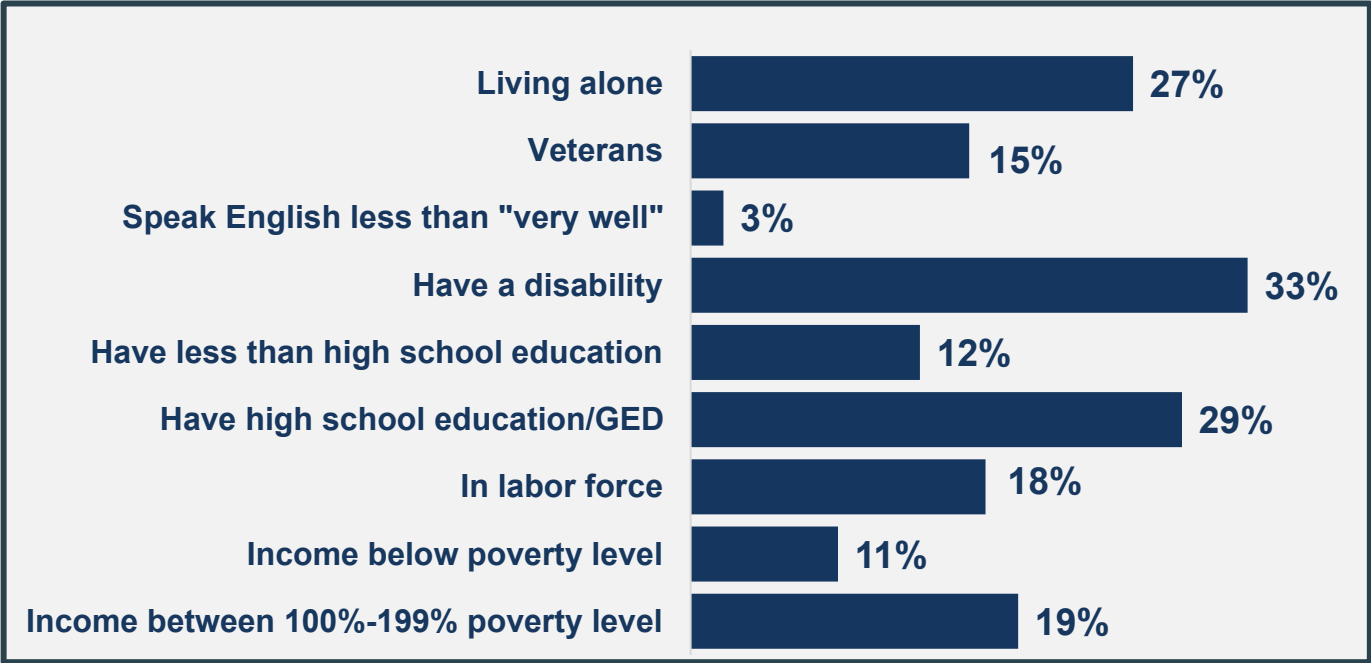
# Race/Ethnicity of 65+\*



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024, 5-year estimates. Table S0103: Population 65 and over, <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2024.S0103?q=s0103+north+carolina&moe=false>

\*As % of population 65 and older

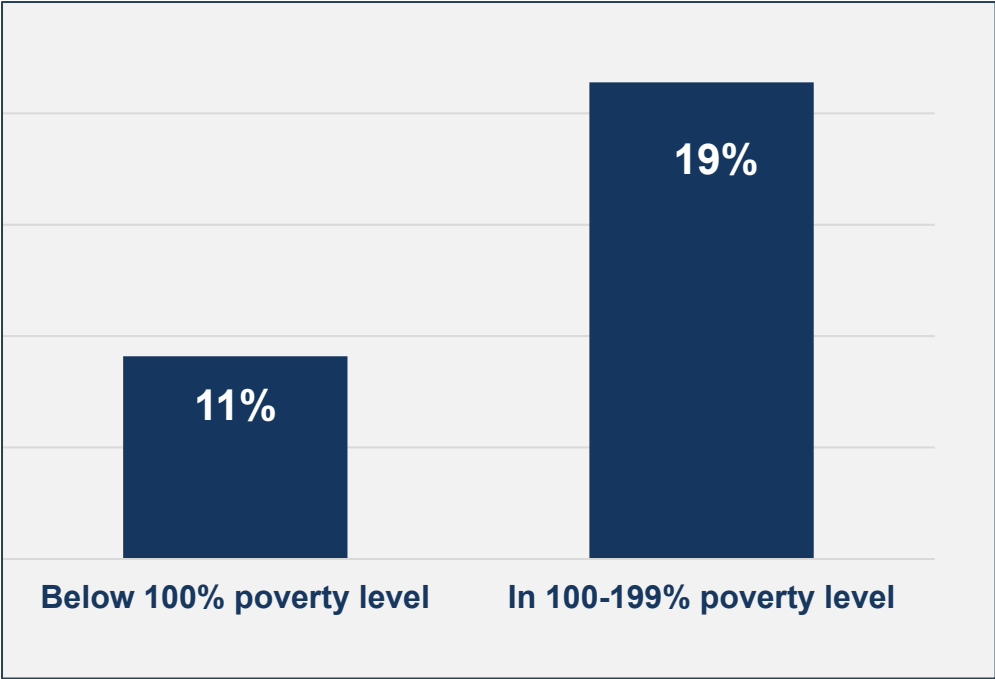
# Characteristics of Adults 65+\*



Older adults living alone at risk of **social isolation, loneliness and poor health outcomes**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024, 5-year estimates. Table S0103: Population 65 and over; B09020: Relationship by household type (including living alone) for population 65 and over, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>, \*As % of population 65 and older. Disability rate is for civilian non-institutionalized population only.

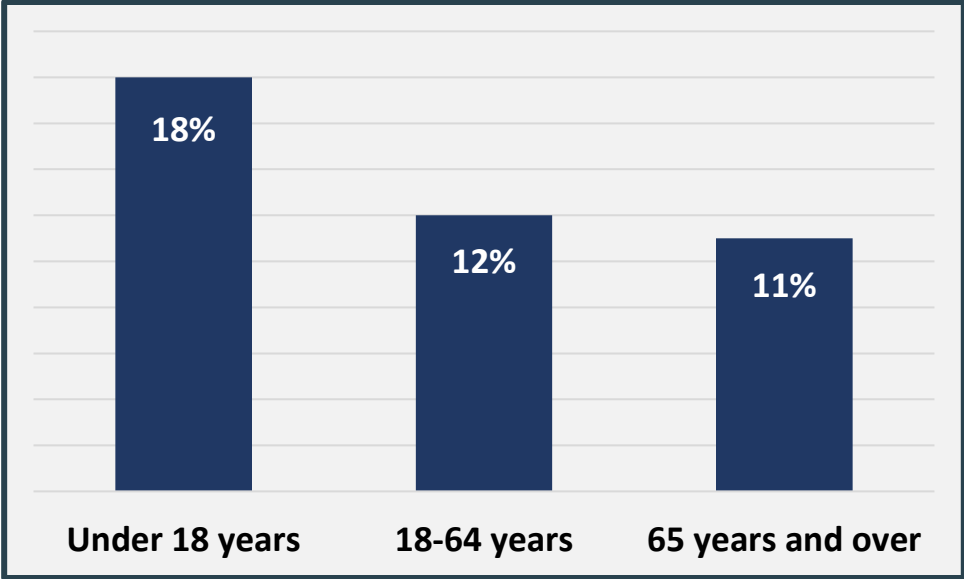
# Poverty Levels, 65+\*



**1 in 10  
people  
age 65+  
below  
poverty  
level**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024, 5-year estimates. Table B17024: Age by ratio of income to poverty level in the past 12 months, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>. \*Based on 2024 census poverty threshold; \$15,050 for individuals aged 65+ \$18,980 per household of two people with householder aged 65+; \*As % of population 65 and older

# Poverty Levels by Age Group



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024, 5-year estimates. Table S1701: Poverty Status in the past 12 months, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>; \* As a % of age group

# Older Adults and Poverty

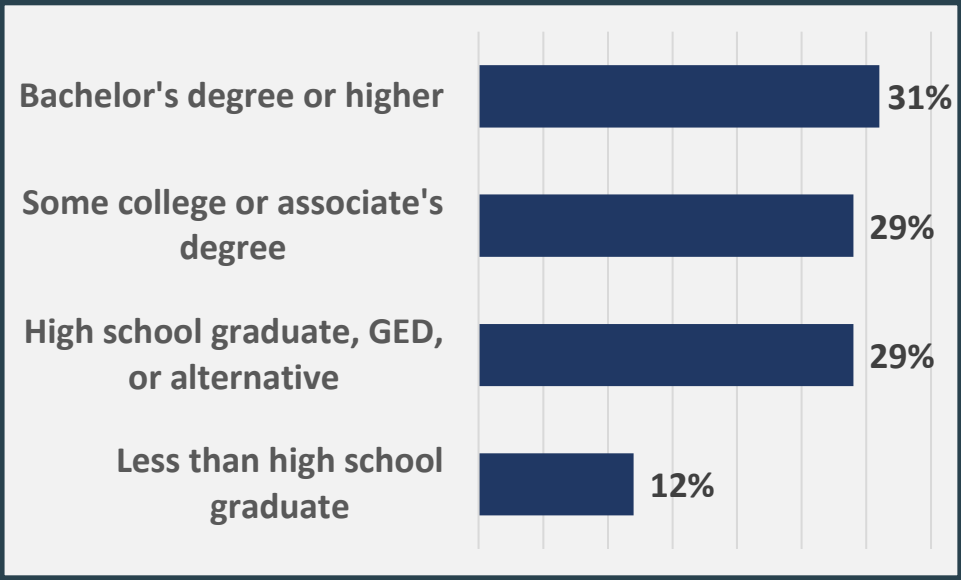
Adults 65+ experience lower poverty rates compared to other age groups

Older Americans Act services provide important safety net for older adults below and near poverty and allows them to remain in community

Federal programs such as Medicare, Social Security and Supplemental Security Income critical to enhancing economic security and reducing poverty rates

Source: AARP foundation-For a future without senior poverty, [https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/aarp\\_foundation/pdf/your-guide-to-public-benefits/North\\_Carolina\\_AARP\\_Foundation\\_Public\\_Benefits\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/aarp_foundation/pdf/your-guide-to-public-benefits/North_Carolina_AARP_Foundation_Public_Benefits_Guide.pdf)

# Education Level of 65+

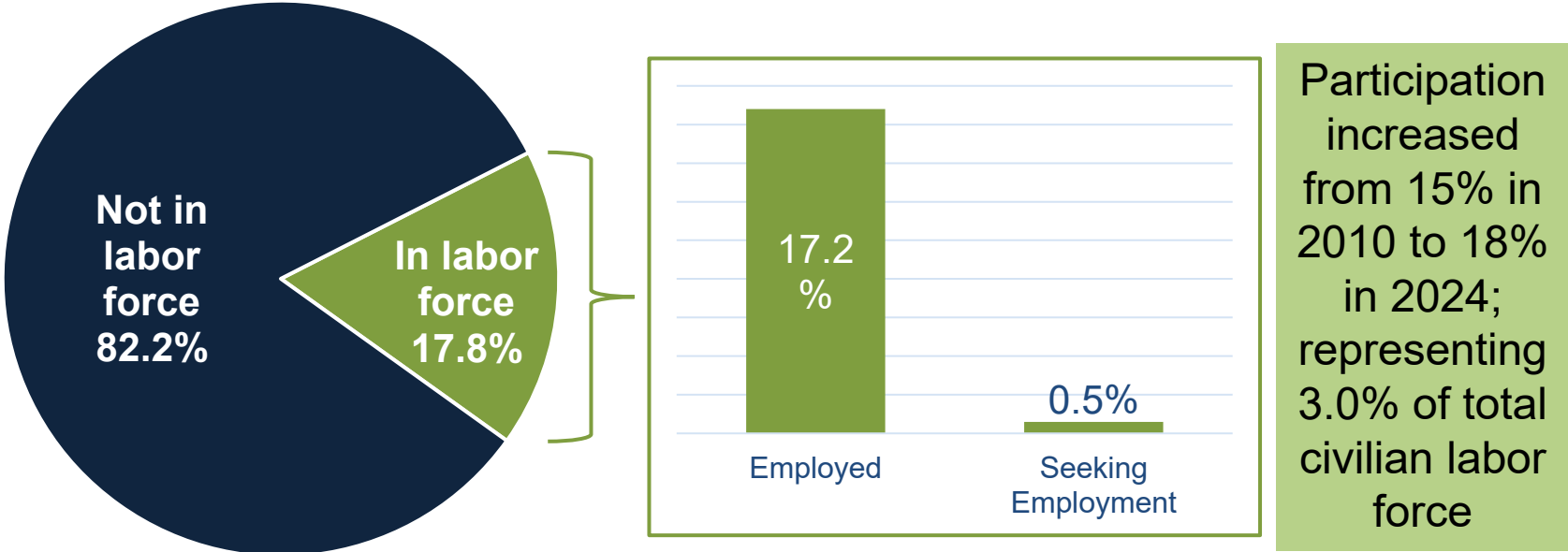


Educational levels among 65+ increased in past decade

Higher educational levels associated with higher incomes and better health outcomes

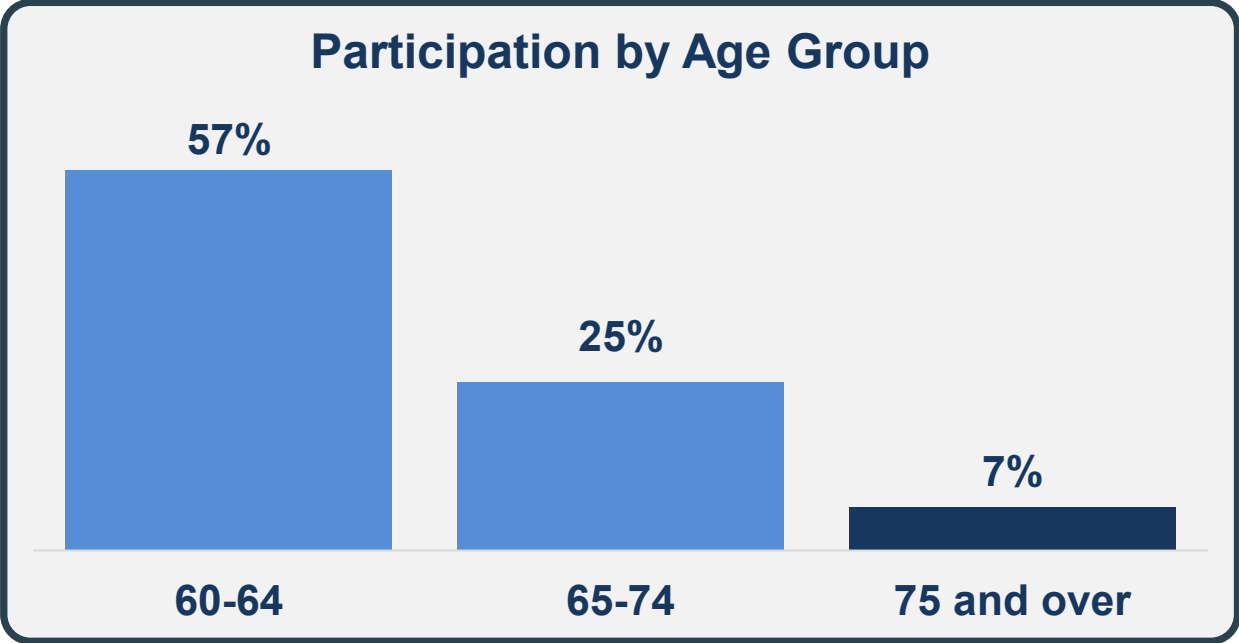
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024, 5-year estimates. Table S0103: Population 65 and over, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>;  
\* As % of population 65 and older

# Labor Force Participation, 65+



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024, 5-year estimates. Table S0103: Population 65 and over, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>; \* As % of population 65 and older

# Labor Force Participation\*



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024, 5-year estimates. Table S2301: Employment status, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci>;

\* As % of age group

# Labor Force Participation, 65+

People are  
working  
longer due  
to:

- Sense of purpose
- Being engaged
- Financial responsibilities
- Living longer
- Healthier

Source: American's Aging Workforce: Opportunities and Challenges. [www.congress.gov/115/crpt/srpt191/CRPT-115srpt191.pdf](http://www.congress.gov/115/crpt/srpt191/CRPT-115srpt191.pdf)

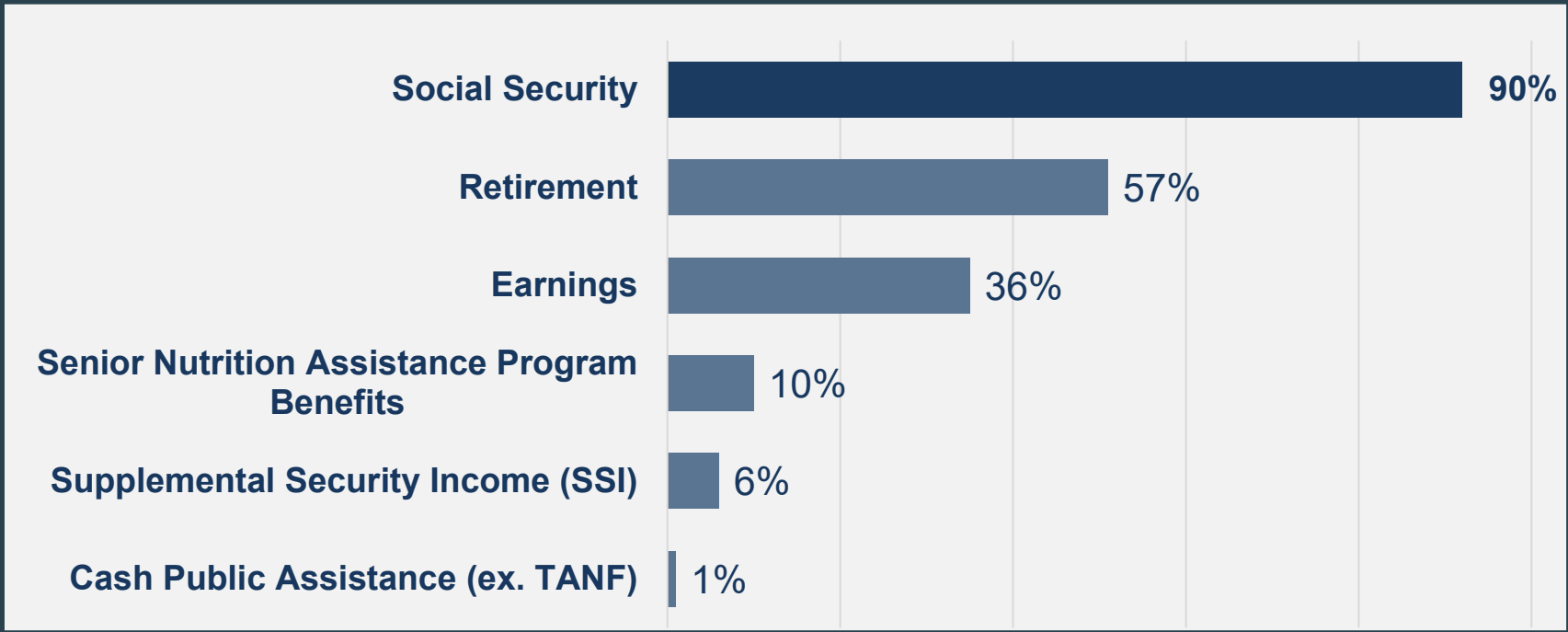
# Labor Force Participation

To Keep Older  
Adults in  
Workplace

- Change bias and attitude
- Design phased retirement programs
- Provide flexible roles and schedules
- Offer retirement options
- Allow part-time/tele-commuting
- Provide ongoing training
- Invest in wellness programs
- Help balance work and caregiving roles

Source: American's Aging Workforce: Opportunities and Challenges. <https://www.congress.gov/115/crpt/srpt191/CRPT-115srpt191.pdf>

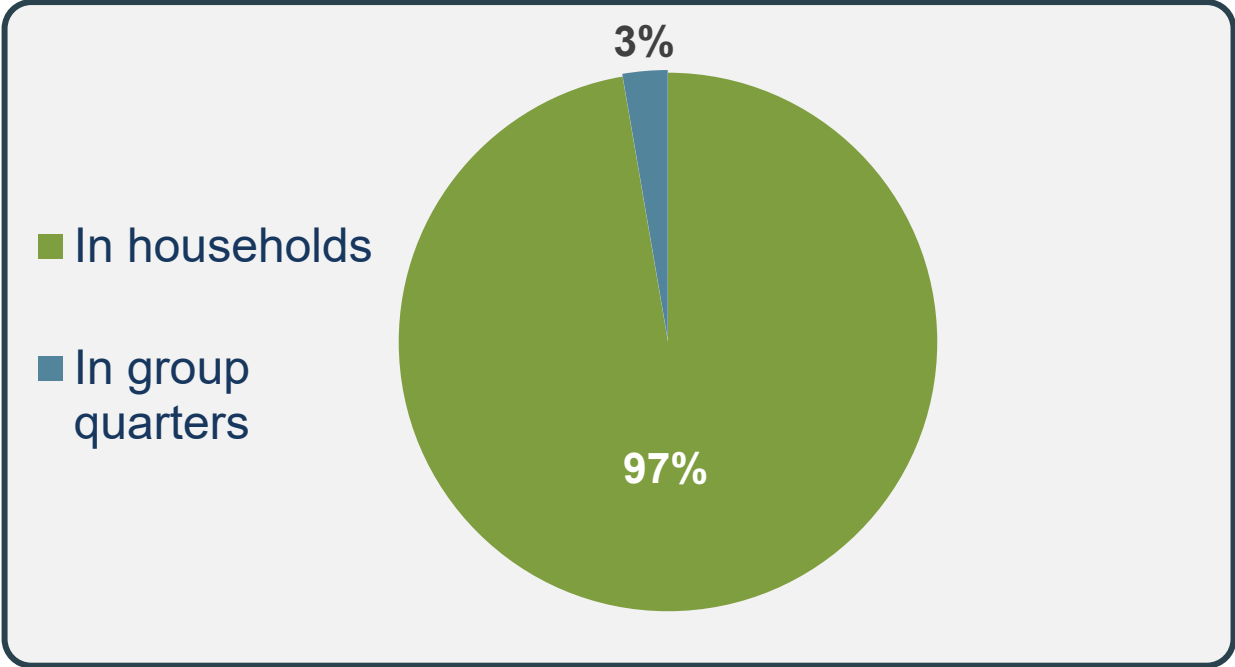
# Sources of Income, 65+\*



Source: U. S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024, 5-year estimates. Table S0103: Population 65 and over, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>

\* As % of population 65 and older

# Housing, 65+\*



43% of housing units with people 65+ are single-person

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024, 5-year estimates. Tables S0103; B09020: Relationship by household type (including living alone) for population 65 and over, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>, \*As % of population 65 and older

# Housing, 65+

Aging in place requires livable communities, home modifications, transportation, access to services, health care, and social engagement

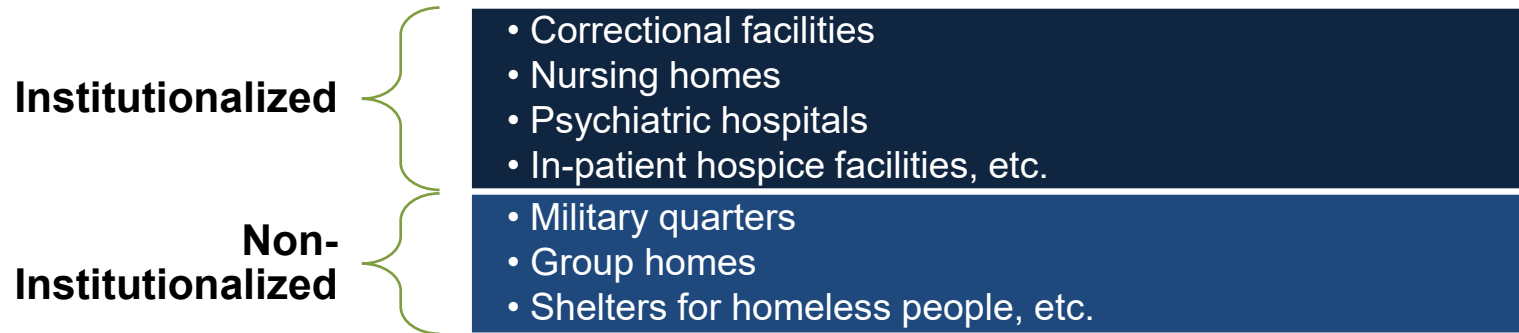


Aging population increases demand for home and community-based services

Source: Aging in place: Growing older at home <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/aging-place/aging-place-growing-older-home>

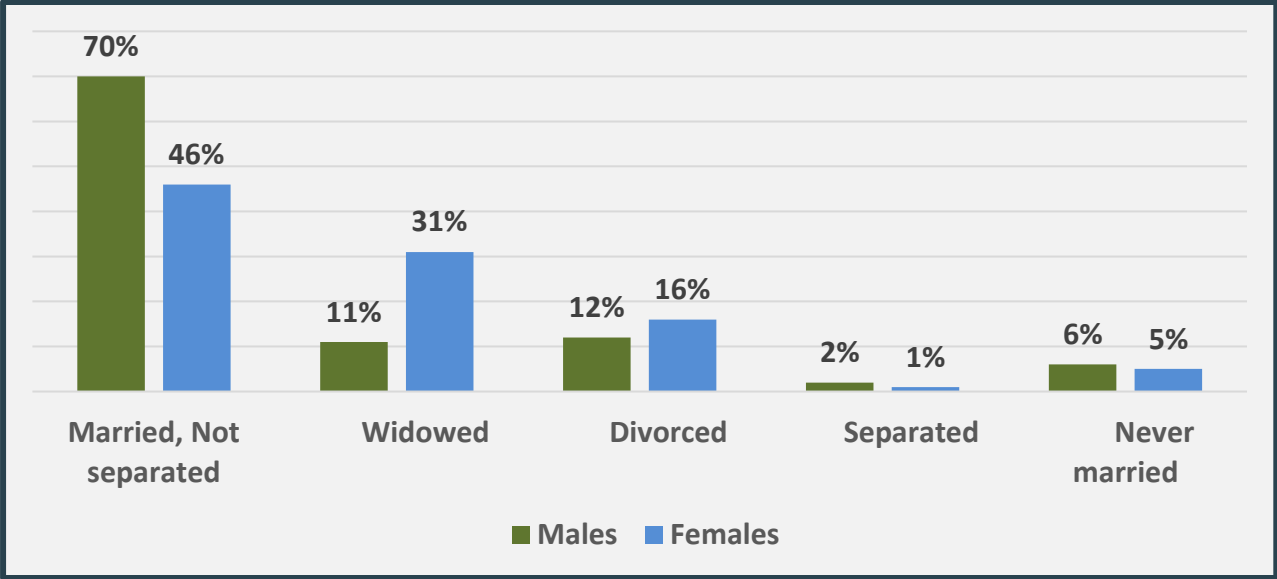
# Women Disproportionately in Group Quarters, 65+\*

	Total 65+	Institutionalized	Noninstitutionalized
<b>Total</b>	47,216	41,319	5,897
<b>Female</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>48%</b>



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024, 5-year estimates. Table S2601A: Characteristics of group quarters population, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>; \*As % of population 65 and older in group quarters

# Marital Status, 65+\*



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024, 5-year estimates. Table S1201. Marital Status, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>;  
\*As % of population 65 and over

# Marital Status, Females, 65+

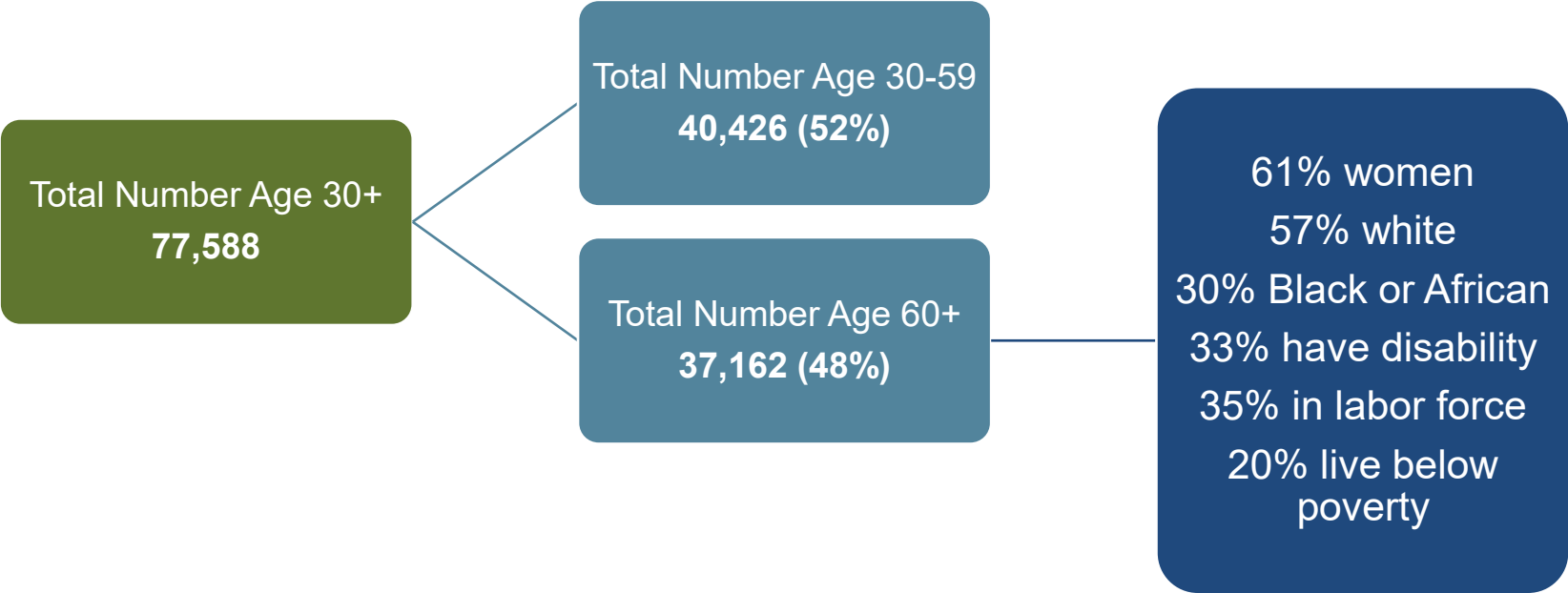
More likely to be  
widowed

Less likely to be  
married

More likely to live  
alone and face  
challenges

Source: National Council on Aging: Get the facts on women and aging <https://www.ncoa.org/article/get-the-facts-on-women-and-aging>

# Grandparents Responsible for Raising Grandchildren Under 18 Years



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024, 5-year estimates. Table S1002: Grandparents, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>

# Health & Well-Being

# Health Characteristics, 65+\*

33% have disability\*

80% have one or more chronic diseases

67% had adult flu shot/spray in past 12 months

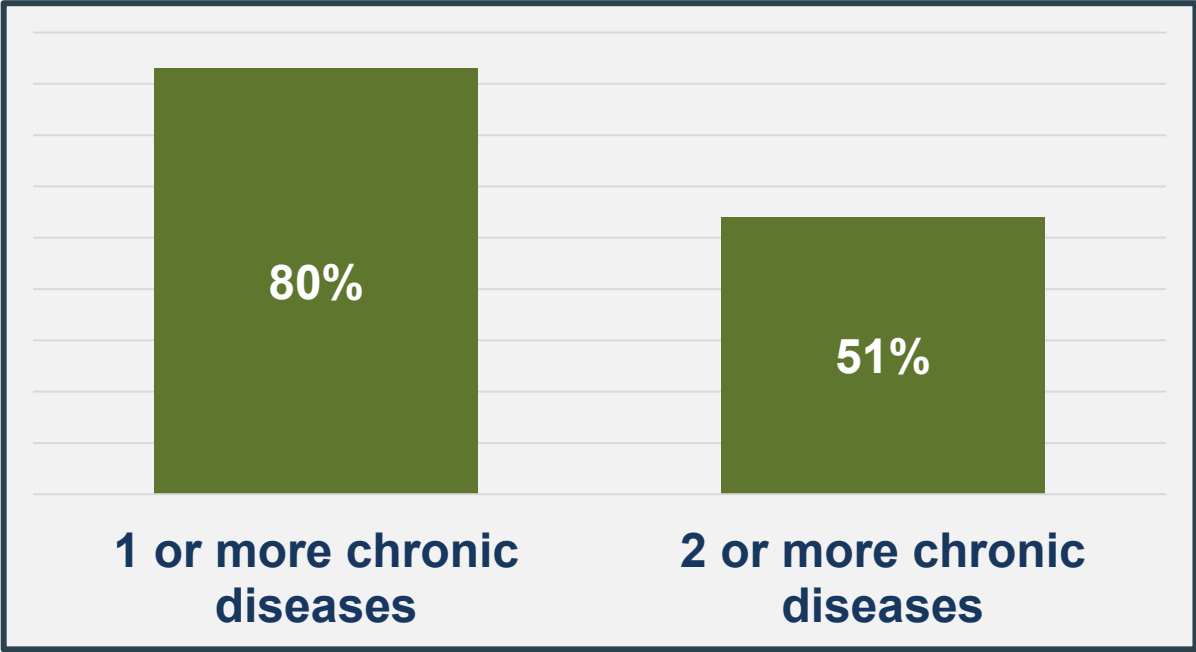
72% ever had pneumonia shot

74% exercised in past 30 days

6% self-reported poor health

Source: \*U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024, 5-year estimates. Table C18018: Age by number of disabilities, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>; NC State Center for Health Statistics. BRFSS 2024 survey results, <https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/data/brfss/survey.htm>; \*As % of population 65 and older

# Chronic Diseases and Aging in People 65+\*



Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) 2024 survey results, <https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/data/brfss/survey.htm>; \*As % of population 65 and older

# Chronic Diseases and Aging

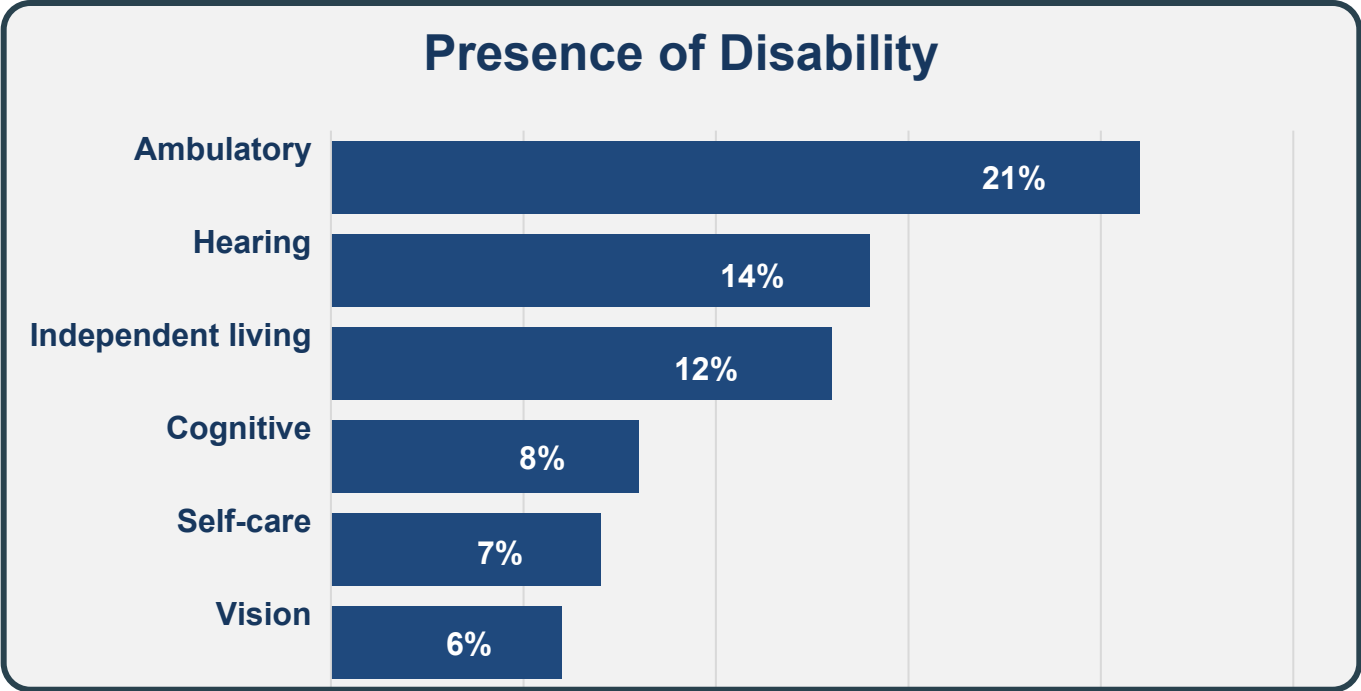
Risks of chronic diseases  
increase with old age



Chronic Disease Self-  
Management Education  
programs help people better  
manage chronic conditions

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Chronic Disease Self-Management Program  
<https://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/interventions/programs/cdsmp.htm>

# Disability Status, 65+\*



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024 5-year estimates. Table S1810: Disability Characteristics, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>; [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6873710/](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6873710/); \*As % of population 65 and older; civilian non-institutionalized population only.

## NC Caregivers(all ages) of Alzheimer's Patients (2025)

**381,000**

Number of  
caregivers

**739 Million**

Total hours of  
unpaid care

**\$13.0 Billion**

Total value of  
unpaid care

**59%**

Caregivers with  
chronic health  
conditions

**41%**

Caregivers with  
depression

**18%**

Caregivers in poor  
physical health

Source: Alzheimer's Association: Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures report, NC; <https://www.alz.org/getmedia/f4e6e515-bb40-4b29-8519-59b6478a4576/northcarolina-alzheimers-facts-figures.pdf>; . \*A caregiver is a person of any age who tends to the needs or concerns of a person with short- or long-term limitations due to illness, injury or disability.

# BRFSS Survey Responses of NC Caregivers, 65+

17% provided regular care/assistance to friend/family member with health problem/disability during past 30 days

38% provided care for more than 5 years

48% provided weekly care up to 8 hours and 30% for 40+ hours

Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, BRFSS, NC Caregiver Survey, 2021 According to the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), NC Caregiver Survey Results 2021

# BRFSS Survey Responses of NC Caregivers, 65+

28% cared for people with disabilities

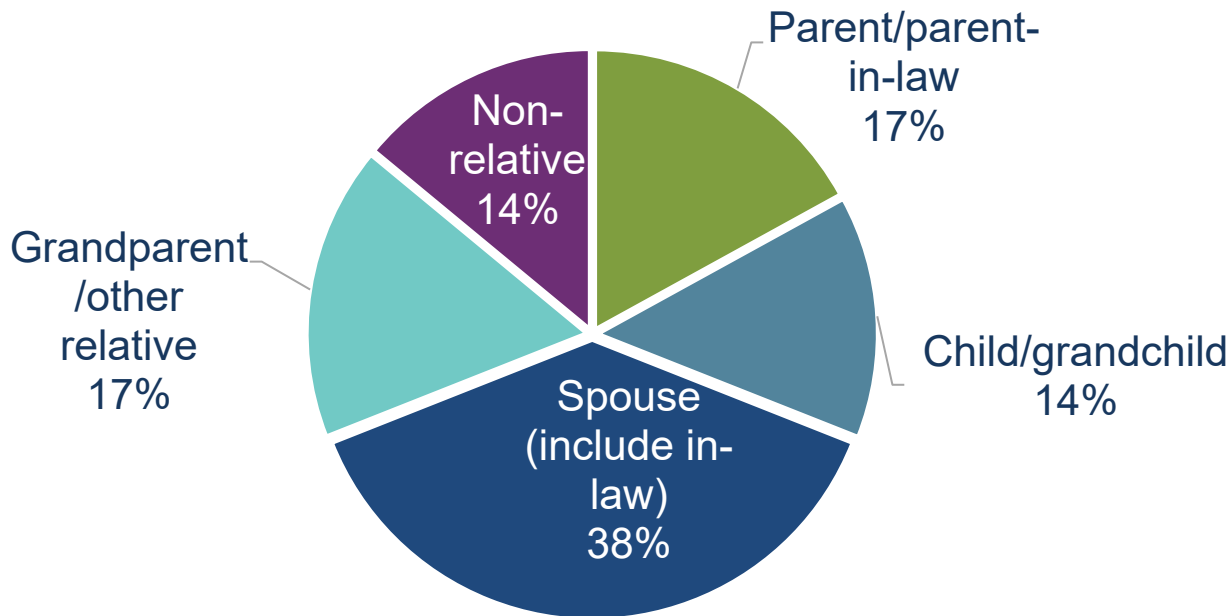
31% cared for people with hypertension, diabetes and organ failure/disease

16% cared for people with dementia and other cognitive impairment

Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, BRFSS, NC Caregiver Survey, 2021 According to the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), NC Caregiver Survey Results 2021

# BRFSS Survey Responses of NC Caregivers, 65+

## Recipients of Care



79% of care recipients were 65+

Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, BRFSS, NC Caregiver Survey, 2021 According to the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), NC Caregiver Survey Results 2021

# BRFSS Survey Responses of NC Caregivers, 65+

48% managed care recipient's personal care

75% managed personal tasks

Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, BRFSS, NC Caregiver Survey, 2021 According to the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), NC Caregiver Survey Results 2021

# Caregiving in NC (2021)

Need for caregivers significantly increases as population ages

Caregiving is rewarding but caregivers are at risk of increased stress, depression, and poor health outcomes

Family caregiver supports provide needed supports and services to caregivers

Family Caregiver Support Program

Lifespan Respite

Project CARE

NC Caregiver Platform

Source: <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/adult-services/family-caregiver-support>

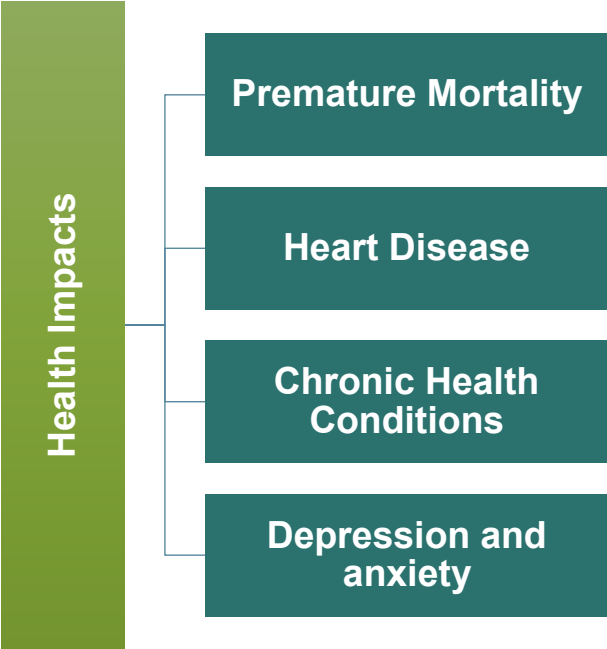
# Social Isolation and Loneliness

Associated with poor health outcomes and increased Medicare spending

27% of those 65+ live alone

~52% of those 65+ are unmarried (widowed, never married or divorced)

Many aging services address isolation and promote well-being



Source: [www.nia.nih.gov/news/social-isolation-loneliness-older-people-pose-health-risks](https://www.nia.nih.gov/news/social-isolation-loneliness-older-people-pose-health-risks) U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024, 5-year estimates .09020: Relationship by household type (including living alone) for population 65 and over. Table S1201. Marital Status, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/> Note: Social isolation is the objective physical separation from other people (living alone), while loneliness is the subjective feeling of being alone or separated.

# Older Adults and Civic Engagement:

AmeriCorps Seniors Programs (age 55+) in North Carolina, 2024

Members  
and  
Volunteers

- Prepare students for jobs
- Help those impacted by COVID-19
- Connect veterans to services
- Fight opioid epidemic
- Help seniors live independently
- Rebuild communities after disasters
- Lead conservation and climate change efforts

Source: National Service in North Carolina [https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/upload/state\\_profiles/pdf\\_2022/NC%20Combined.pdf](https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/upload/state_profiles/pdf_2022/NC%20Combined.pdf)

# Benefits Reported After Year of Volunteering

Decreased  
anxiety and  
depression

Decreased  
loneliness and  
social isolation

Enhanced  
physical  
activity

Higher life  
satisfaction

Source: American Association for Retired Persons [www.aarp.org/health/healthy-living/info-2017/health-benefits-volunteering-seniors-fd.html](http://www.aarp.org/health/healthy-living/info-2017/health-benefits-volunteering-seniors-fd.html)

# Glossary

**Disability** - A long-lasting physical, mental, or emotional condition that makes it difficult for a person to do activities such as walking, climbing stairs, dressing, bathing, learning, or remembering.

Types of disabilities:

- **Ambulatory** – Serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs
- **Independent living** – Difficulty doing errands alone
- **Hearing** – Deaf or having serious difficulty hearing
- **Cognitive** – Difficulty remembering, concentrating or making decisions
- **Self-care** – Difficulty bathing or dressing
- **Vision** – Blind or serious difficulty seeing even with glasses

**Household** - A household includes all the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. Household types are arranged into 2 groups. A **family household** contains at least 2 people, the householder and at least 1 other person related to the householder by birth, marriage or adoption. A **nonfamily household** may contain only one person, the householder or additional people who are not relatives of the householder.

**Householder** - The person, or one of the people, in whose name the home is owned, being bought, or rented.

**Income** - "Total income" is the sum of the amounts reported separately for wages, salary, commissions, bonuses, or tips; self-employment income; interest, dividends, net rental income, royalty income, or income from estates and trusts; Social Security or Railroad Retirement income; Supplemental Security Income (SSI); any public assistance or welfare payments from the state or local welfare office; retirement, survivor, or disability pensions; and any other sources of income received regularly such as Veterans' (VA) payments, unemployment compensation, child support, or alimony.

**Labor force** - The labor force includes all people classified in the civilian labor force, plus members of the U.S. Armed Forces (people on active duty with the United States Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard). The Civilian Labor Force consists of people classified as employed or unemployed.

**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

**Marital status** - Now Married, Except Separated includes people whose current marriage has not ended through widowhood, divorce, or separation (regardless of previous marital history). The category may also include couples who live together or people in common-law marriages if they consider this category the most appropriate. In certain tabulations, currently married people are further classified as "spouse present" or "spouse absent." In tabulations, unless otherwise specified, "now married" does not include same-sex married people even if the marriage was performed in a state issuing marriage certificates for same-sex couples. Separated Includes people legally separated or otherwise absent from their spouse because of marital discord. Those without a final divorce decree are classified as "separated." This category also includes people who have been deserted or who have parted because they no longer want to live together, but who have not obtained a divorce.

**Median income** - The median income divides the income distribution into two equal groups, one having incomes above the median, and other having incomes below the median.

**Metropolitan Area** - A metropolitan area contains a core urban area of 50,000 or more population. Each metro area consists of one or more counties and includes the counties containing the core urban area, as well as any adjacent counties that have a high degree of social and economic integration (as measured by commuting to work) with the urban core.

**Poverty** - The Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If the total income for a family or unrelated individual falls below the relevant poverty threshold, then the family (and every individual in it) or unrelated individual is considered in poverty. The poverty threshold (2020) for a person 65 and older is \$12,413 and for two people (householder aged 65 and older) is \$15,644.

**Race/Ethnicity** - The Census Bureau collects racial data in accordance with guidelines provided by the U.S Office of Management and Budget. The data is based on self-identification in which residents choose the race or races with which they most closely identify. *Hispanic or Latino* refers to an ethnic category, a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race.

**Rural** - All territory, population, and housing units located outside of urbanized areas and urban clusters.

**Urban** - For the 2020 Census, an urban area will comprise a densely settled core of census blocks that meet minimum housing unit density and/or population density requirements. This includes adjacent territory containing non-residential urban land uses. To qualify as an urban area, the territory identified according to criteria must encompass at least 2,000 housing units or have a population of at least 5,000.