

Behavioral Health as North Dakotans Age



Is it a gap or a cliff?

Learning Objectives

- Define healthy aging
- Identify where we are now
- Identify ways to get where we want to be

Healthy aging begins with prenatal care

- The World Health Organization defines healthy aging as “the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables wellbeing in older age”

Basics About ND

- 38,175 households have no internet subscription
- 381,625 people living in non-metro areas
- 118,198 North Dakotans 65+
- 6.9% are Veterans
- 5% of people report cognitive difficulties
 - 75+ : 4,048
 - 65-74: 7,739

65+ Living Alone in ND

Counties where those aged 65+ are living alone

*From United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service (USDA ERS)

2.1-10%	Pierce, Sheridan, Wells, Nelson, Griggs, Golden Valley, Hettinger, Adams, Grant, Emmons
14.1-18%	Divide, Burke, Bottineau, Towner, Cavalier, Pembina, Traill, Eddy, Foster, Billings, Slope, Logan, McIntosh, Ransom
12.1-14%	McHenry, Ramsey, Walsh, Dunn, McLean, Stutsman, Barnes, Steele, Bowman, LaMoure, Dickey, Sargent, Richland
10.1-12%	Renville, Ward, Rolette, Mercer, Oliver, Burleigh, Kidder
18.1-35%	Williams, McKenzie, Mountrail, Benson, Grand Forks, Cass, Stark, Morton, Sioux

Where We Are Now

- For North Dakotans aged 65+
 - 13.1 suicides per 100,000
 - 12.5% report a depressive disorder
 - 8% report excessive drinking
 - 11.3% of those 65+ report difficulty living independently
 - 48% of Medicare beneficiaries have 3 or more chronic conditions

Risk of Social Isolation

- Surgeon General's Advisory
 - Social isolation can complicate health care and negatively impact physical health and mental well-being
- Increased health care cost of isolation accounts for an additional \$6.7 billion annually in Medicare spending
- North Dakota's value is 45 and rank is 17 in the risk for isolation
 - The higher the value, the greater the risk
 - This value has remained flat since 2011

So What?

- Untreated depression leads to:
 - Decreased physical, cognitive, and executive functioning
 - Diminished health-related quality of life
 - Higher use of primary health care services
 - Total in and out patient medical costs are 47-51% higher for those with major depression
- Excessive drinking
 - 65+ have higher alcohol attributed deaths than those age 25-44
 - Injuries including alcohol poisoning, car accidents, and falls
 - Increased heart disease and stroke, multiple types of cancer, and dementia and mood disorders

So What?

- Frequent Mental Distress
 - Associated with health conditions and risk factors for poor health
- Multiple Chronic Conditions
 - Medicare beneficiaries with 4 or more chronic conditions made up 40% of the population but accounted for 78% of total Medicare spending
- All of the things we've talked about are known risk factors for developing dementia
- Behavioral health needs for those who provide unpaid care are also growing
 - For those providing care to people living with dementia
 - Nearly 60% rate their emotional stress as high or very high
 - 30-40% suffer from dementia
 - Nearly 75% express concern about maintaining their own health

What Next?

- Examine where the BHPC strategic plan can be expanded to capture older adults
- Promote healthy aging in all aspects of our work
 - Healthy aging starts with prenatal care
- Confront ageism when you encounter it
- Change the narrative of growing older
- Join us with the Multigenerational Plan for Aging
 - Vast group of organizations, associations, service providers, etc who are all invested in flipping the script on aging in North Dakota
 - Learn more and take the survey on our priorities [here](#)