

All Ages, All Stages NC

A Roadmap for Aging and Living Well

North Carolina has seen a significant demographic change in the 21st century. Today, there are over 1.9 million people over the age of 65. In the next 20 years, the number of North Carolinians aged 65 and older will increase by 48% to 2.8 million people.

Although this increase in our older population has been expected, the state has done little to plan for the opportunities and challenges of an increasing number of aging adults. Older North Carolinians have a wealth of knowledge and skills that can help our communities and state as a whole continue to prosper. At the same time, addressing complex issues such as how to handle the growing need for long-term services and support, workforce adequacy and support for family caregivers is imperative.

North Carolina's Response

Building on North Carolina's commitment to being an Age Friendly State, a Multi-Sector Plan for Aging for the State is in the final stages of development. This Plan is a cross-sector, state-led strategic planning resource that can help North Carolina transform its infrastructure and coordination of services for our rapidly aging population, as well as people with disabilities.

During the last year, hundreds of consumers, providers, and aging and disability advocates from across North Carolina have come together to discuss the needs of older adults and people with disabilities in our state and to develop recommendations on (1) how to make our state the best possible place to grown old while utilizing the strengths and skills of our older and disabled residents and on (2) how to address the challenges and gaps that exist to ensuring a good quality of life. Workgroups were formed to develop recommendations in four areas (see back of sheet for details).



Where Things Stand

For the remainder of 2024, the focus will be on finalizing the Plan and raising the awareness of the citizens of our state – including elected officials at all levels of government – of the Plan and its recommendations. Garnering the support and buy-in from all stakeholders will be critical to the successful implementation of recommendations.

As information about the Plan becomes more widely available, North Carolinians are asked to:

- Seek out information about the growth in our state's older population and the implications for this.
- Learn about the recommendations that are being put forth in the All Ages, All Stages NC Plan.
- Identify how they and the organizations/groups they are affiliated with can support proposed efforts to make North Carolina the best place in which to age.

Need More Information?

More information on the All Ages, All Stages NC Plan can be found at this website:
www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/aging/ncs-multisector-plan-aging.



Highlights from Plan Workgroups



Affording Aging

North Carolinians will have the means to effectively plan for their later stages of life. Plans include ensuring sufficient and sustainable financial provisions, while fostering avenues for personal growth and for the betterment of their communities.

This workgroup's recommendations center around:

- promoting educational resources and lifelong learning initiatives.
- optimizing services and innovations while leveraging temporary ARPA funds.
- Expanding employment and job training opportunities for older adults.
- encouraging volunteerism and engagement opportunities.
- strengthening retirement planning and saving options as well as income assistance programs and consumer protection measures.



Strengthening Communities for a Lifetime

North Carolinians will live in communities, neighborhoods, and homes that support thriving at all stages and ages.

Recommendations from this workgroup address:

- keeping older adults safe and protected.
- enhancing transportation options.
- increasing the stock of accessible and affordable housing.
- improving food security.
- decreasing social isolation and promoting social connectivity.



Optimizing Health and Well-Being

North Carolinians will have access to person-centered services and supports that will optimize their life-expectancy and health quality.

Key recommendations of the workgroup focus on efforts to:

- expand community health resources.
- support healthy aging in our state.
- promote a continuum of services in communities.
- explore health care financing and delivery options to improve care access.
- address the health care workforce crisis.



Supporting Older Adults and Their Families

North Carolinians will have access to services and resources that will enable them to stay in their homes and communities as they age and will support their families in their efforts to provide care when needed.

In developing its recommendations, the workgroup gave special attention to:

- addressing the unique challenges faced by people impacted by dementia.
- supporting the use of technology to improve individuals' quality of life.
- meeting the needs of aging adults who have disabilities and aging caregivers.
- ensuring the financial and workplace security of caregivers across the lifespan.
- accessing the services needed to live at home while optimizing health.

Insights Into Aging in North Carolina

Population Estimates and Projections

POPULATION OVERVIEW



In 2024, there were **4,503 centenarians**. This population is projected to **increase to 16,804 by 2050**, a 273% change.

In 2024, **88 counties** have more people above the age of 60 and older than under the age of 18.



	2024		2050		% Change 2024-2050
	#	%	#	%	
Total	10,984,106		14,241,032		30%
0-17	2,277,028	21%	2,841,892	20%	25%
18-44	3,950,947	36%	4,769,622	34%	21%
44-59	2,074,345	19%	2,763,692	19%	33%
60+	2,681,786	24%	3,865,826	27%	44%
65+	1,993,441	18%	3,038,133	21%	52%
85+	210,203	2%	529,204	4%	152%

Check out the [State and County Aging Profiles](#) to find county-specific data related to county rankings, race and ethnicity, social and economic characteristics, in-migration, kinship care, and others.

Demographic Snapshot (2022)

NC ranks **9th** in total population nationally. NC also ranks **9th** in the population of those age 65 and older.



An estimated **47,600** people 60 and older migrated from another state and abroad to North Carolina.



By 2031, the number of individuals aged 65 and older is **expected to surpass** the population under 18 years old.



Adults aged 85 and older are projected to experience the **fastest growth** in the state over the next 20 years.



Health and Wellness



81% of individuals aged 65 and older live with one or more chronic diseases, with 54% managing two or more chronic conditions.

34% of adults aged 65 and older report living with a disability.

Community Engagement and Civic Participation

NC voters have become older, on average, over the last decade. **Nearly a quarter of all registered voters in 2023** are 66 and older (23.4%) compared to just 18.2% in 2013. As the Baby Boomer generation has aged, the proportion of older voters has grown, signifying Baby Boomers remain **one of the largest voting cohorts**.



NATIONAL TRENDS IN INFORMAL VOLUNTEERING (2019-21): Baby boomers had the **highest rate** (59%) of all generations.

While formal volunteering rates dropped from 2019 to 2021 in every demographic group, informal helping rates largely remained steady.

Alzheimer's Disease in NC



In 2024, according to North Carolina Alzheimer's statistics, **210,500** adults aged 65 and older were diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, constituting **12%** of the population within that age group.



Food Insecurity and Malnutrition

- In 2020, North Carolina had the **14th-highest rate of older adult food insecurity** in the United States; **nearly 7.7%** of older adults aged 60 and older were food insecure.
- The **annual costs of disease-associated malnutrition** for adults aged 65 and older in North Carolina is **\$140,348,592**.

Caregiving in NC (2021)

of Caregivers: **1,280,000**


Total Hours of Unpaid Care: 1,190 Millions

Total Value of Unpaid: \$16.5 Billion

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.

Socio-Economic Characteristics

HOUSING AND LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

 **43%** of housing units occupied by individuals aged 65 and older are **single-person households**.

27% of adults aged 65 and older **live alone**, placing them at risk of **social isolation** and **associated poor health outcomes**.

POVERTY AND INCOME

One in 10 people aged 65 and older live below the poverty level.

- Below 100% Poverty Level:
10% of the population 65 and older
- In 100-199% Poverty Level:
20% of the population 65 and older



Poverty thresholds stand at **\$14,040** for individuals aged 65 and older and **\$17,710** per household of two people with the householder aged 65.

EDUCATION

Among individuals aged 65 and older, **43%** have **attained a high school education or less**.



LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

17% of the population aged 65 and older are **actively participating in the labor force**.

COMMUNITY LIVING

97% of individuals aged 65 and older **live in the community**.



In households with individuals aged 65 and older, **86%** possessed a computer, while **78%** had a **broadband internet subscription**. These figures underscore the critical need for enhancing technological literacy among older adults, including educating them about online scams, phishing attempts, and other cybersecurity risks.

KINSHIP CARE

45% of the estimated **80,928** grandparents **responsible for grandchildren under 18** were aged 60 and older.

Healthcare Workforce Crisis



PHI's research shows that from 2018 to 2028, North Carolina's long-term care sector will need to fill more than **186,000 openings in direct care**, including nearly **21,000 new jobs** to meet rising demand and **165,500 jobs that become vacant** as existing workers transfer to other occupations or exit the labor force. North Carolina's direct care workforce is **critical** to the state's long-term services and supports sector, ensuring that older adults and people with disabilities can **live and thrive** in their homes and communities and across congregate settings.

Cost of Long-Term Care: North Carolina Statistics (2023)



National statistics reveal that **seven out of 10 people** will require long-term care in their lifetime.



Based on the 2023 Genworth Cost of Care survey data, the **median long-term care costs** in North Carolina were as follows:

HOME HEALTH AIDE	ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY	NURSING HOME FACILITY PRIVATE ROOM
\$5,339 per month (\$64,068 annually)	\$5,769 per month (\$69,228 annually)	\$9,125 per month (\$109,500 annually)

County-level data can be accessed at www.genworth.com/aging-and-you/finances/cost-of-care

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