

Champaign County Older Adults' Needs Assessment

April 2024

This report was prepared by the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District with the support from the Advocates for Aging Care (AAC) and funding from the Champaign County Board.



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Executive Summary

1. Between 2000 and 2020, Champaign County witnessed a population surge of 14.6%. In contrast, Illinois experienced a more modest 3% increase (12,419,293 in 2000 to 12,812,508 in 2020). This discrepancy implies that Champaign County is undergoing population growth at a rate surpassing that of the overall state of Illinois.
2. The median age of Champaign County has risen from 28.6 in 2000 to 30.8 in 2020, indicating a transition toward an older age distribution. Over the same period, Illinois' median age has also risen from 34.7 to 38.8.
3. The 60 and above age group was the fastest growing between 2000 and 2020 with its population increasing 67%. During this time frame, male adults 60 and above have increased by 76% compared to female adults 60 and above who have increased by 60%.
4. According to the 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates
 - About 18.4% of Champaign County's population is 60 years of age and over, of which 45% are male and 55% female (About 22% of Illinois' population is 60 years of age and over, with a similar gender distribution).
 - In Champaign County, among individuals aged 60 and above, 27% fall within the 60-64 age range, 24% are in the 65-69 age bracket, and 49% of the 60 and above population is 70 and older.
 - The median age for the 60 and above population group is 69.8. About 85% of this population group is White, followed by 8% Black, 5% Asian, and 1% Two or more races.
 - About 3% of the 60 and above population group live with their grandchildren, 1% of whom are responsible for their grandchildren.
 - About 99% of older residents of Champaign County have health insurance coverage, 1% has no health insurance coverage.
 - About 94% of older adults have Medicare coverage alone or in combination, 6.4% have Medicaid/means-tested public coverage alone or in combination, and 5.6% have VA health care coverage alone or in combination.
5. Champaign County currently has 411 nursing home beds available, but there is a projected need for 721 beds by 2024. This indicates a notable shortage of 310 beds that needs to be addressed in order to meet the projected demand.
6. Champaign County is home to 17 licensed assisted living facilities, accommodating up to 784 units.
7. Champaign County is home to four skilled nursing facilities (SNFs), which are Accolade Health Care of Savoy, Clark-Lindsey Village, Country Health, and Illini Heritage Rehab & HC. In 2021, a significant proportion of the Black or African American population within SNFs was served by University Rehabilitation Center of C-U. The closure of this facility in 2023 may have changed the demographic profile of other SNFs in the jurisdiction.
8. In addition to examining the existing demographic makeup of individuals aged 60 and above in Champaign County and documenting the current infrastructure to meet the expanding

requirements of this population, the Champaign County Older Adults Needs Assessment comprised of two surveys: one for Consumers and one for Providers.

9. The **Consumer Survey** "Your Voice Matters: A Survey of Older Adults and Family Caregivers in Champaign County" was conducted to hear from older adults aged 60 and above and family caregivers to better understand their experiences and needs in caring for Champaign County's aging residents.
10. The **Provider Survey** "*Your Voice Matters: A Survey of Champaign County Older Adults' Health Care Providers*"¹ was conducted to gather crucial information from providers who are serving older adults to address the current and looming nursing home bed shortage in Champaign County and identify gaps in services for older adults in different care settings.
11. The consumer survey comprised 881 respondents, 67% of whom identified as older adults or older adults with a disability, and 33% as caregivers for an older adult in the last 24 months.
12. The provider survey comprised of 58 respondents, 43% of whom were involved in admitting patients and 57% involved with placing patients in long-term care facilities/agencies. About 52% of provider respondents were associated with acute care needs, 26% with long-term care needs, 10% with short-term rehabilitation needs, and 9% with memory care, assisted living, and other services.
13. The consumer survey findings support a high coverage rate for older adults, indicating that 100% of survey respondents have some form of health insurance. Further examination reveals that 95% of respondents stated that they have Medicare Advantage and/or Medicare coverage either on its own or in combination with other plans. This aligns with recent ACS estimates that indicate that 94% of older adults have Medicare coverage alone or in combination with other plans. Additionally, 55% of older adults have multiple insurance carriers.
14. The consumer survey identified major health concerns among older adults, including prevalent mobility issues (35%), vision or hearing impairments (23%), memory-related conditions (20%), heart disease (18%), and diabetes (12%). These findings underscore the importance of addressing these issues to maintain overall health in the aging population.
15. According to the provider survey, 30% reported frequent success in accommodating older patients based on their or their caregivers long-term care facility preferences, with 63% experiencing rare or occasional success. Only 9% managed placements within a 25-mile radius, while 54% were placed beyond 25 miles, including 21% over 45 miles away. In contrast, older adults in long-term care, rehab, or skilled nursing facilities reported that 58% were within 25 miles of their homes, with 44% within 10 miles. However, 41% were placed beyond 25 miles, including 10% over 45 miles away. While providers may prioritize factors such as facility quality or specialization, the preference for placing older adults closer to their

¹ Providers include the following professions: physicians, nurses, advanced providers (NP, PA, CRNA, DNP, etc.), case managers, social workers, healthcare administrators, etc.

homes among caregivers and the actual placements suggest the importance of accessibility and familiarity for aging residents.

16. According to findings from the consumer survey, over the past two years, 14% (124) of the older adults were placed in a long-term care, rehab, or skilled nursing facility. Among them, 70% (87) reported experiencing difficulties in securing such placements. The reasons for these challenges varied, with lack of facilities (80%) being the most commonly cited issue, followed by limited services (38%), staffing shortages (36%), and affordability (33%).
17. Providers serving older adults in the community identified significant barriers to placing or admitting patients in long-term care, rehabilitation, or skilled nursing facilities, including financial constraints (69%), staffing shortages (57%), and transportation challenges (43%). These reported barriers underscore systemic issues in healthcare delivery, necessitating solutions beyond the institutional level.
18. Providers noted several factors contributing to challenges in placing or admitting patients, such as aggressive/antisocial behaviors (81%), individuals with a criminal history (72%), and drug addiction (66%), among others. These issues highlight the complexity of care needs within the long-term care system, indicating potential benefits from a multi-disciplinary approach integrating mental health and substance abuse services into long-term care planning.
19. Among the skilled nursing facilities represented in the provider survey, Country Health Care and Rehab and Accolade indicated immediate availability. Clark Lindsey was the only facility that indicated having a waitlist for admitting older adults. Furthermore, they indicated a waitlist of 2 to 6 months. Illini Heritage lacked representation on this question.
20. Approximately 51% of respondents from our consumer and provider surveys agreed that skilled nursing facilities are the primary deficient service in Champaign County. Additionally, around half of participants identified in-home care and support services (50%) as deficient, followed by nursing homes (46%) and in-patient rehabilitation facilities (35%). These findings highlight the urgent need to address the shortage of skilled nursing facilities and nursing homes in Champaign County, especially given the challenges posed by the projected growth of the older population.
21. Roughly 78% of providers identified lack of home assistance as a primary unmet need for older adults in the county, aligning with survey respondents' views, where 50% highlighted deficiency in in-home care and support services. Affordability of services was noted by about 64% of providers, encompassing healthcare, housing, caregiving, medication, and home modifications. Transportation services beyond the home were deemed inadequate by 60% of providers, critical for maintaining older persons' mobility, independence, and engagement, as well as ensuring their safety and security during travel.
22. The survey revealed that housing, medication affordability, and transportation assistance are the top three most critical future needs of older adults in our community. Approximately 50% of respondents (consumer and provider survey respondents) identified housing as the most critical need, reflecting the increasing demand for affordable and adaptable housing as

the population ages. Medication affordability was chosen by 37% of respondents as the second most critical need, followed by transportation assistance at 31%.

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Purpose

The lack of nursing home beds for aging residents of Champaign County presents a public health concern. Due to the closure of University Rehabilitation and the downsizing of Clark Lindsey, the county is now experiencing a significant shortage of nursing home beds, putting at risk the availability of crucial long-term care services for its aging residents. The lack of resources has a greater impact on older individuals in Champaign County, especially those in need of long-term care and rehabilitation following a hospital stay. Insufficient access to nursing home beds can lead to a decline in the quality of life for patients, caregivers, and the overall community, as well as lead to higher healthcare demands for older individuals, underscoring the importance of working together to tackle this critical problem.

Background

Champaign County, Illinois is located in the heart of East Central Illinois.¹ US Interstates 57, 72 and 74 intersect in the County which puts Champaign County approximately 2 hours south of Chicago Illinois; 3 hours north-northeast of St. Louis, Missouri; and 2 hours west of Indianapolis, Indiana.² Champaign County, part of the Champaign-Urbana metropolitan area, is home to the University of Illinois, Parkland College, and two major regional hospitals (Carle Foundation Hospital and OSF Heart of Mary Medical Center).³ The Champaign Region also known as Health Service Area 4 is one of the seven regions identified by the Illinois Department of Health (IDPH), and is comprised of the following 16 counties: Champaign, Clark, Coles, Cumberland, Douglas, Edgar, Ford, Iroquois, Livingston, Macon, McLean, Moultrie, Shelby, Vermillion, DeWitt, and Piatt Counties, thereby making it part of a larger intra-regional area.⁴

Figure 1: Health Regions in Illinois

Click on a region on the map for a list of local health departments.

- [All Health Regions](#)

- [All Local Health Departments](#)

★ IDPH Regional Office

■ [Bellwood](#)

■ [West Chicago](#)

■ [Champaign](#)

■ [Marion](#)

■ [Metro East](#)

■ [Peoria](#)

■ [Rockford](#)

□ No Local Health Department

— Local Health Department Jurisdictional Boundaries



Demographic and Socioeconomic Data

Population Trends for Champaign County (and the Region)

As per the 2020 decennial census, the population of Illinois stands at 12.81 million.⁵ Champaign County, with a population of 205,865 (according to the 2020 Decennial Census by the United States Census Bureau), holds the position of the tenth most populous county in Illinois.⁶ Within the Champaign Region, it maintains the highest population, surpassing McLean County with 170,954 residents. From the year 2000 to 2020, Champaign County has witnessed a population increase of 14.6%. Comparatively, Illinois has experienced a 3% growth in population, rising from 12,419,293 in 2000 to 12,812,508 in 2020. This data indicates that Champaign County is undergoing a higher rate of population growth than the overall state. In the Champaign Region, only three other counties—McLean, Piatt, and Moultrie, along with Champaign County—have observed population growth. Conversely, other regional counties have encountered population decline, ranging from 0.9% (Douglas) to 14.4% (Edgar) during the same period.

Figure 2: Population Trends for Champaign Region (2000-2020)

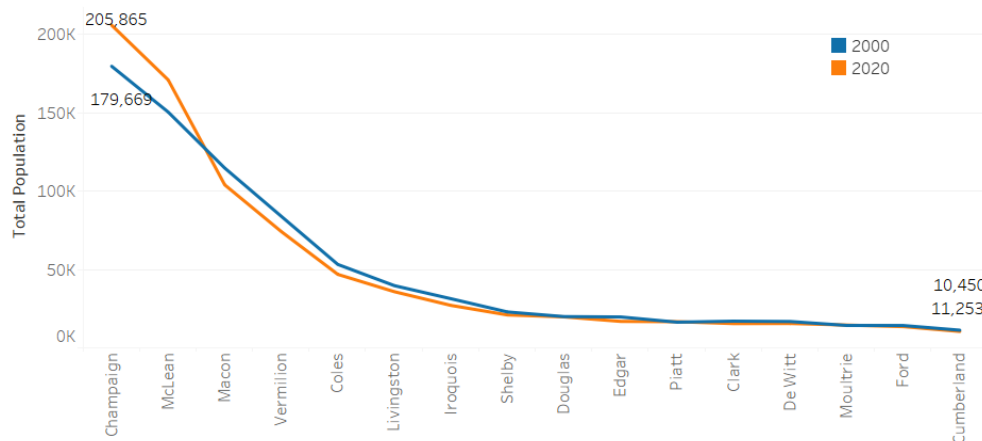
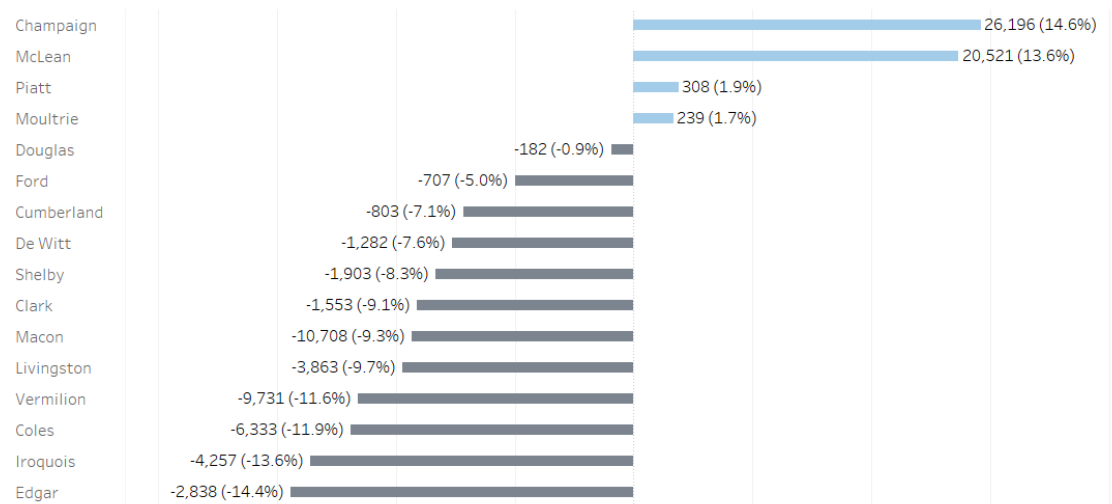


Figure 3: Population Percentage Change for Champaign Region (2000-2020)



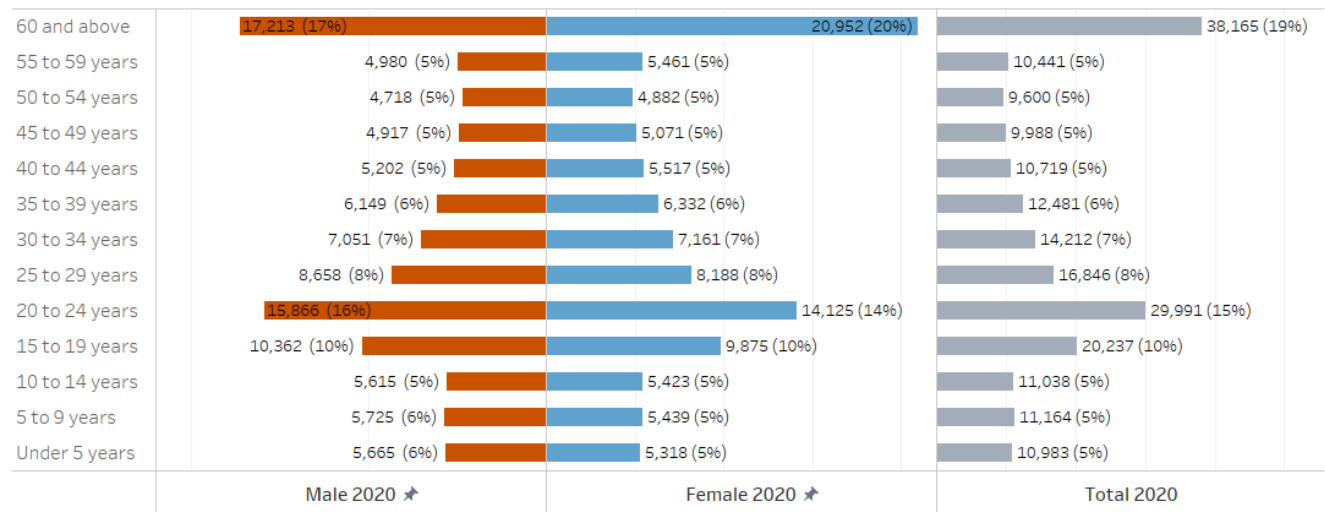
Age Pyramid for Champaign County

According to the 2020 decennial census, Champaign County's total population reached 205,865. Within this demographic, 15% (29,991 individuals) fall within the 20 to 24 years age group, while 19% (38,165 individuals) are aged 60 and above, comprising 17,213 males and 20,952 females.

The 2020 population pyramid for Champaign County highlights a significant concentration of individuals aged 20-40 years (36%), indicating a substantial workforce population. This aligns with Champaign County's role as the primary source of employment for its residents. Additionally, the pyramid reveals a noteworthy percentage (21%) of children aged 5-19 years.⁷

The gradual narrowing of the population pyramid for Champaign County suggests a net population increase, attributed to birth rates surpassing death rates.

Figure 4: 2020 Age Pyramid for Champaign County



Champaign County Older Population Growth

From 2000 to 2020, Champaign County has witnessed a notable shift in population distribution, particularly towards older age groups. The county's median age has risen from 28.6⁸ in 2000 to 30.8⁹ in 2020, indicating a notable transition toward an older age distribution. Over the same period, Illinois' median age has also risen from 34.7¹⁰ to 38.8¹¹. Moreover, the net population percentage change during this period indicates a decrease in the 40 to 50 age group, signifying a migration out of this demographic.

Conversely, the 60 and above age group experienced the most rapid growth between 2000 and 2020, with a remarkable 67% increase in population. Within this timeframe, male adults aged 60 and above surged by 76% (7,444 individuals), while their female counterparts increased by 60% (7,860 individuals). This demographic shift highlights a changing demographic landscape and the evolving patterns of residence and employment within Champaign County.

Figure 5: Population Percentage Change for Champaign Region (2000-2020) (aggregated for 60 and above)

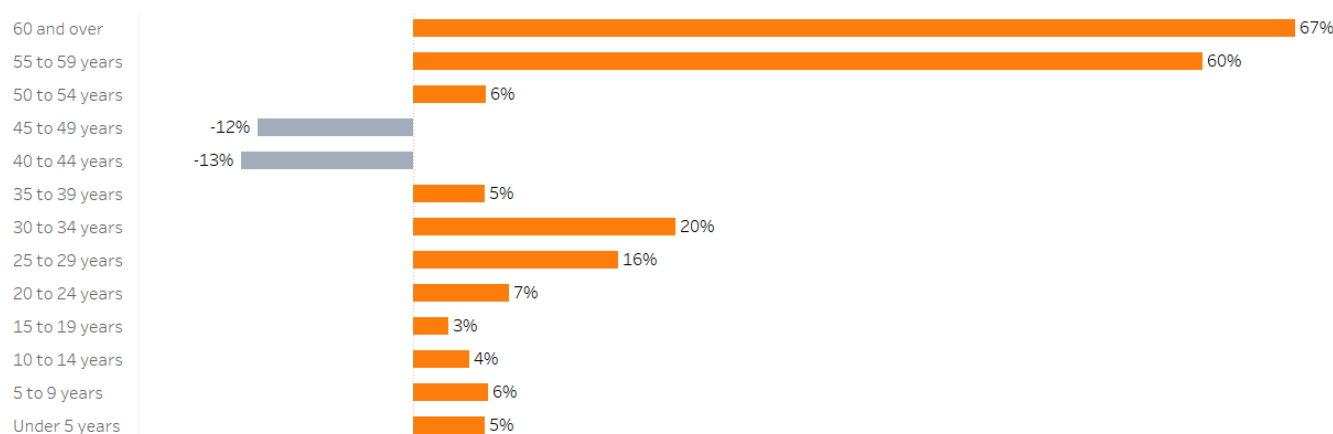
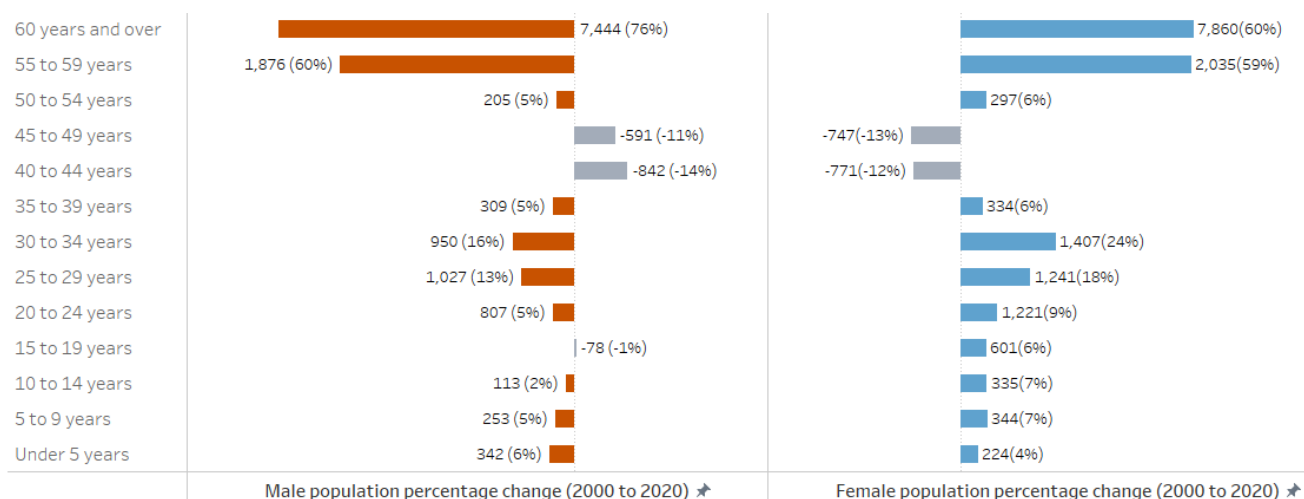


Figure 6: Population Percentage Change for Champaign Region by Sex (2000-2020) (aggregated for 60 and above)



Current Demographic Profile of Champaign County's Older Adult (60 and over) Population

Population and Population (by Gender): According to the American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, in 2022, 18.4% (38,130) of Champaign County's population is 60 years of age and over, of which 45% are male and 55% female (About 22% of Illinois' population is 60 years of age and over, with a similar gender distribution). Champaign County's total population stands at 206,525.

Population (by Age): The median age for the 60 and above population group is 69.8.

Table 1: 2022 Champaign County Older Adult Population by Age Groups

Age range	Champaign County population 2022: ACS 5-Year Estimate	%
60 to 64 years	10,381	27
65 to 69 years	9,112	24
70 to 74 years	7,363	19
75 to 79 years	4,906	13
80 to 84 years	2,970	8
85 years and over	3,398	9

Source: 2022: ACS 5-Year Estimate, S0101

Race: About 85% of the older adult population is White, followed by 8% Black, 5% Asian, and 1% Two or more races.

Marital Status: About 59% of this age group are married, 17% widowed, 16% divorced, 1% separated, and 7% never married.

Educational Attainment: About 6% of this age group have less than a high school diploma, 28% have a high school diploma, GED, or alternative, 28% have some associate's or college degree, and 38% have a bachelor's degree or higher.

Living Arrangements: About 3% of the 60 and above population group live with their grandchildren, about 1% of this group (381 older adults) are responsible for their grandchildren.

Veteran and Disability Status: About 12% of the 60 and over age group identify as veterans and 24% as a person with a disability.

Employment Status: About 30% of this population is employed.

Poverty Status: About 8% of the 60 and above age group for whom poverty status was determined is below 100% of the poverty level, 5% at 100% to 149% of the poverty level, and 87% at or above 150% of the poverty level.

Rent/Own Status (Tenure): About 80% of the 60 and over population reside in owner-occupied housing units and 20% in renter-occupied housing units.

Language Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English: About 92% of Champaign County’s older adults reported speaking English only, while 9% reported speaking a language other than English at home.

Earnings/ Income: For the 60 and over population group living in households:

- 47% have earnings (median earnings for 60 and over house holders is \$81,079)
- 70% receive social security income (mean social security income (dollars) is \$22,071)
- 5% receive mean supplemental security income (\$12,478)
- 1% receive cash public assistance income (\$3,868)
- 59% receive retirement income (mean retirement income is \$44,874), and
- 8% receive food stamps or SNAP benefits.

Health Insurance Coverages and Status of Chronic Conditions Among Medicare Beneficiaries:

- For Champaign County residents 65 and older, 99% have health insurance coverage, 1% have no health insurance coverage (Source: B27001Health Insurance Coverage Status by Sex by Age, 2022: ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables).
- About 94% have Medicare coverage alone or in combination, 6.4% have Medicaid/means-tested public coverage alone or in combination, and 5.6% have VA health care coverage alone or in combination (Source: S2704: Public Health Insurance Coverage by Type and Selected Characteristics, S2704Public Health Insurance Coverage by Type and Selected Characteristics).
- “Across the United States, 68.4% of Medicare beneficiaries had 2 or more chronic conditions and 36.4% had 4 or more chronic conditions. The prevalence of multiple chronic conditions increased with age and was more prevalent among women than men across all age groups. Non-Hispanic Black and Hispanic women had the highest prevalence of 4 or more chronic conditions, whereas Asian or Pacific Islander men and women, in general, had the lowest. Among beneficiaries with 2 or more chronic conditions, the most prevalent dyads included hypertension, hyperlipidemia, diabetes, and ischemic heart disease. Among beneficiaries 65 years of age or older, ischemic heart disease, hypertension, and hyperlipidemia was a common triad; 42.6% of men and 29.4% of women had these 3 conditions.”¹² Based on 2018 data from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS),¹³ the following are top 5 chronic conditions for Medicare beneficiaries in Champaign County (Fee-for-Service Champaign County Medicare Beneficiaries: 13,879):
 - Hypertension: 55.00%
 - Hyperlipidemia: 44.89%
 - Arthritis; 33.19%
 - Diabetes: 25.92%
 - Chronic Kidney Disease: 22.83%

Prevailing Landscape of Long-Term Care Services and Supports

The facilities and services already in place and the anticipated needs of its aging population have helped shape the current landscape of long-term care services and supports in Champaign County. This section takes into account an array of factors, utilizing the latest publicly available information. Important factors to consider include the availability of beds, projected needs, admission restrictions for skilled nursing facilities (SNFs), facility staffing levels, quality indicators, demographic data for SNFs, a compilation of assisted living facilities with their respective attributes, details about supportive living facilities, information about home health agencies, and an overview of the services available within the Community Care Program in Champaign County.

Skilled Nursing Facilities

Champaign County currently has 411 nursing beds available, but there is a projected need for 748 beds in 2026.¹⁴ This indicates a notable shortage of 337 beds that needs to be addressed in order to meet the projected demand.

In 2020, there were several admission restrictions observed in local facilities.¹⁵ Clark-Lindsey Village has a broader range of admission restrictions, encompassing various factors such as behavior, alcoholism, developmental disabilities, addiction, healthcare coverage, mental health, mobility, age, and self-medication ability. In addition, it does not accept Medicaid recipients. Furthermore, the need for ventilator support is a common restriction across all locations in Champaign County.

Champaign County is home to four skilled nursing facilities (SNFs): Accolade Health Care of Savoy, Clark-Lindsey Village, Country Health, and Illini Heritage Rehab & HC. Staffing plays a important role in maintaining high-quality care in SNFs. In 2020, various facilities in Champaign County experienced fluctuations in staffing levels across different categories. These categories encompass administrators, physicians, directors of nursing, registered nurses, LPNs, certified aides, and other health and non-health staff members.¹⁶

Table 2: Staffing of Champaign County Long-Term Care Facilities - 2020

	Clark-Lindsey Village	Country Health	Illini Heritage Rehab & HC
Employment Category			
Administrator	1	1	1
Physicians	0	0	0
Director of Nursing	1	1	1
Registered Nurses	20.69	6.5	3
LPN's	7.66	12	5
Certified Aides	58.59	32.5	15
Other Health Staff	8.47	1.5	0
Non-Health staff	83.03	25.5	16
TOTALS	180.44	80	41

Upon examining the number of licensed beds per facility and the number of occupied beds in February 2024, a discernible trend emerges only three of the four SNFs had limited or no availability.

Table 3: Capacity and Utilization of Beds in SNF's in Champaign County

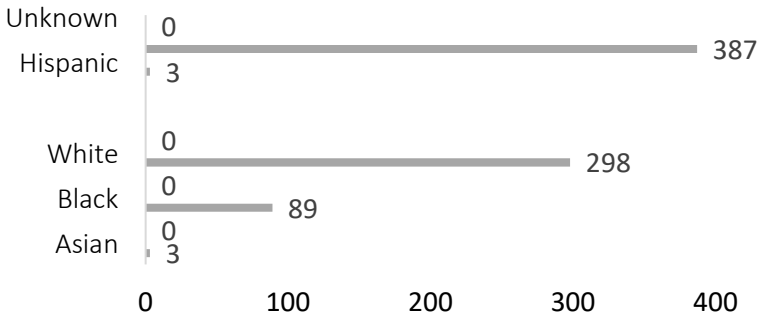
Name of Facility	Licensed Beds	Mean # Beds Occupied in February 2024 (% of total) ¹⁷
Accolade Health Care of Savoy	213	166.5 (78.2)
Clark-Lindsey Village	49	47 (95.9)
Country Health	89	84.8 (95.2)
Illini Heritage Rehab & HC	60	52.8 (87.9)
TOTALS	411	351 (85.4)

Table 4: Staffing levels, Resident Census, and Nursing Staff Turnover in Champaign County's SNF's¹⁸

Name of Facility	RN staff hours/resident/day	LPN or LVN staff hours/resident/day	Nurse Aid Hours/Resident /day	Annual Nursing Staff turnover (%)
Accolade Health Care of Savoy	20m	52m	2h 7m	N/A
Clark-Lindsey Village	2h 13m	54m	3h 27m	N/A
Country Health	32m	31m	2h 29m	59.8
Illini Heritage & Rehab	18m	3h 32m	2h 19m	75

Considering race and ethnicity, the SNF landscape in Champaign County displays a range of diversity among different groups. The majority consists of non-Hispanic white individuals, while other groups, such as Asian and Black populations, contribute to the diversity of the aging population.¹⁹ In 2021, a significant proportion of the Black or African American population within SNFs was served by University Rehabilitation Center of C-U. The closure of this facility in 2023 may have changed the demographic profile of other SNFs in the jurisdiction.

Figure 7: Residents of SNF's in Champaign County by Racial and Ethnic Groupings (2020)



Assisted Living Facilities

Assisted Living Facilities are residential environments designed to provide accommodation, support services, and limited healthcare assistance to people who need assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs) but do not require the substantial medical care provided by skilled nursing facilities. Champaign County is home to 17 licensed assisted living facilities, accommodating up to 784 units.²⁰ The table below delineates key elements of Champaign County assisted living facilities, including those that provide Alzheimer's care. In 2019, three assisted living facilities provided adult daycare in Champaign County. Currently, Arbor Rose of Tolono stands out among the 17 assisted living facilities as the only facility that currently provides adult daycare.

Table 5: Capacity and Services Provided by Assisted Living Facilities in Champaign County

Assisted Living Facility	City	Units	Adult Daycare	Alzheimer
Amber Glen Alzheimer's SCC	Urbana	38	No	Yes
Arbor Rose of Tolono	Tolono	14	Yes	Yes
Autumn Fields Of Savoy	Savoy	46	No	No
Autumn Leaves of Savoy (404)	Savoy	12	No	Yes
Autumn Leaves of Savoy (406)	Savoy	12	No	Yes
Autumn Leaves of Savoy (408)	Savoy	12	No	Yes
Bickford - Champaign Cottage	Champaign	44	No	Yes
Bridle Brook Assisted Living	Mahomet	78	No	Yes
Brookdale Urbana	Urbana	92	No	Yes
Carriage Crossing Champaign	Champaign	60	No	Yes
Green House of Clark-Lindsey Village	Urbana	90	No	Yes
Evergreen Place	Champaign	52	No	No
Glenwood Of Mahomet	Mahomet	44	No	No
Reflections Memory Care - Savoy	Savoy	32	No	Yes
Villas Of Holly Brook Rantoul	Rantoul	74	No	Yes
Villas Of Holly Brook Savoy	Savoy	50	No	No
Windsor Court - Savoy	Savoy	34	No	No

Supportive Living Programs

The Supportive Living Program (SLP) is a helpful alternative to nursing facility care that is specifically developed for low-income older adults and Medicaid-eligible individuals with disabilities. Brookstone Estates in Rantoul, Eagle's View in Rantoul, Eden Supportive Living in Champaign, and Prairie Winds of Urbana are among the active Supportive Living facilities in Champaign County.²¹ Eagle's View is unique in its service, catering to those with disabilities aged 22 to 64. Eden Supportive Living in Champaign serves a dual purpose, being both a Supportive Living facility and a Dementia Care Setting.

In-Home Care

Home health agencies play an important role in providing a variety of healthcare services to clients in the comfort of their own homes. These agencies offer a variety of part-time or intermittent services to homebound patients through Medicare Part A and Part B, including nursing care, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, medical social services, and home health assistant support.²² The Illinois Department of Public Health defines home health agencies as public or private entities that provide skilled nursing care as well as at least one other type of home health service.²³ The services are offered to a person at their home in line with a physician or podiatrist-prescribed treatment plan. Home health providers solely based in Champaign County include Bella's Home Health and Caregiving Services, Carle Home Care, LHC-Illinois Home Health Care, and OSF Home Health-Urbana.²⁴

Home Services Agencies provide services for consumers primarily in their homes and assist with ADLs, housekeeping, and companionship.²⁵

A Home Nursing agency is an agency that provides services directly in order to deliver skilled nursing and home health aide services to persons in their personal residences.²⁶

Table 6: Home Health, Home Services, and Home Nursing Services in Champaign County

Name of Agency	Type of Agency		
	Home Health	Home Services	Home Nursing
Bella's Home Health and Caregiving Services	●	●	●
Carle Home Care	●	×	×
LHC-Illinois Home Health Care	●	×	×
OSF Home Health-Urbana	●	×	×
All Ways Caring Services	×	●	●
At Home with CLV	×	●	●
Champaign Senior Care	×	●	×
Darna Home Health	×	●	×
Family Service of Champaign County	×	●	×
Meeting Your Needs 24-7	×	●	×
PocketDoor Enterprises	×	●	●
R. Angell's Homecare Services	×	●	×
Thuta Healthcare Services	×	●	×

Established in 1979 by Public Act 81-202, the Illinois Department on Aging's Community Care Program is a crucial initiative aimed at supporting older adults who might otherwise require nursing home care. The program facilitates the provision of **in-home and community-based services**, striving to maintain the independence of older adults and offering cost-effective alternatives to nursing home placement.²⁷ Services under the Community Care Program encompass comprehensive care coordination, adult day services, in-home assistance, emergency home response services, and an automated medication dispenser service.

To be eligible for the program, individuals must be 60 years of age or older, U.S. citizens or eligible non-citizens within specified categories, residents of Illinois, possess non-exempt assets of \$17,500 or less, and demonstrate an assessed need for long-term care. It's important to mention that failing to meet these standards leaves individuals largely responsible for their own care.

In Champaign County, In-Home service providers participating in the program include Addus Healthcare, Inc., All Ways Caring Services, Inc., Bella's Home Health and Caregiving Services, Family Service of Champaign County, Help at Home, LLC, Kelly Home Healthcare, Inc., and M&T Group.²⁸ Additionally, the Circle of Friends Adult Day Center is part of the program, offering an adult daycare program to further support older adults in the community.

Survey and Methodology

Apart from examining the existing demographic makeup of individuals aged 60 and above in Champaign County and documenting the current infrastructure to meet the expanding requirements of this population, the Champaign County Older Adults' Needs Assessment involves two surveys: one for consumers and one for providers.

The [Consumer Survey](#) "Your Voice Matters: A Survey of Older Adults and Family Caregivers in Champaign County" was conducted to hear from older adults aged 60 and above and family caregivers to better understand their experiences and needs in caring for Champaign County's aging population. This survey consisted of 22 questions and took about 9 minutes to complete. The survey instruments were self-administered in both electronic and paper modalities between January 15, 2024, and March 15, 2024. Several individuals and community organizations were pivotal in getting the word out about the survey.

Consumer Survey Distribution:

1. Electronic
 - Facebook and Websites
 - Champaign-Urbana Public Health District
 - Carle Foundation Hospital
 - OSF
 - Christie Clinic
 - Area Churches
 - Advocates for Aging Care
 - Listservs
 - YMCA
 - Skilled Nursing and Assisted Living Facilities
 - Advocates for Aging Care
2. Media Appearances
 - Press Release in the News Gazette
3. Paper Surveys
 - Distributed through networks of service providers:
 - a. Champaign County Health Care Consumers
 - b. Christie Clinic
 - c. Circle of Friends
 - d. ClarkLindsey
 - e. Family Services
 - Distributed at Champaign and Urbana Libraries
 - Distributed at Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)

The target audience for the consumer survey included those aged 60 or older whose primary residence was/is in Champaign County. It also included caregivers who had assisted a family member or friend in seeking long-term care in Champaign County within the last 24 months. Given the scope of the study and the focus on surveying older adults and family caregivers, we employed a nonprobability convenience sampling approach. Without a sampling frame, this method allowed for the selection of participants based on convenience and accessibility, all while ensuring maximum variation and representation of the priority population within Champaign County. Our approach was based on factors such as population distribution by zip code and demographics (gender, age, race/ethnicity, etc.). A sample size of 400 respondents, equivalent to approximately 1% of Champaign County's aging population, was determined. While this approach may limit the generalizability of our findings, it enabled us to gather in-depth and representative insights into the specific needs and challenges faced by older adults in the community.

The [Provider Survey](#) "*Your Voice Matters: A Survey of Champaign County Health Care *Providers*" was conducted to gather crucial information from providers who are serving older adults to address the current and looming nursing home bed shortage in Champaign County and identify gaps in services for older adults in different care settings. This survey comprised of 12 questions and took about 5 minutes to complete. The self-administered survey was distributed in electronic form between January 15, 2023, to March 15, 2023. Several individuals and community organizations were pivotal in getting the word out about the survey. The survey was disseminated electronically through various health care provider networks in Champaign County.

**Providers include the following professions: physicians, nurses, advanced providers (NP, PA, CRNA, DNP, etc.), case managers, social workers, healthcare administrators, etc., involved in the admission or placement of older adults in long-term care facilities.*

Ethics, Confidentiality, and Design

Ethical Issues

As a needs assessment for the County of Champaign, this project does not fit the criteria for research. That is, a systematic investigation intended to contribute to generalizable knowledge. Rather, the focus of this assessment is to provide a snapshot of localized needs for older adults within Champaign County. Throughout the duration of this project, a steadfast commitment to ethical standards, particularly safeguarding participant privacy, has been upheld. Several safeguards were put in place to maintain confidentiality. The absence of subject-specific identifiers such as names and addresses were enforced to prevent any potential linkage between participants and the collected survey data. Furthermore, demographic data collection was limited to information directly related to the project's objectives. Participants were explicitly encouraged not to include any personal identifiers in their responses, which reinforced the anonymity of their contributions. A goal throughout was to make the process as inclusive and transparent as possible, all while safeguarding the privacy of participants.

Confidentiality

Online surveys were hosted on Qualtrics to ensure compliance with industry standards and regulations for data protection. Additionally, BOX, a cloud content storage and management platform, was used for data transfers and storage. The surveys returned by mail were stored in a secure location. The idea was to provide a survey that was unbiased and untarnished. Hence, the utmost care was taken to avoid creating situations that could adversely impact the process of data collection and analysis.

Survey Instrument Design

This needs assessment was exploratory and descriptive in nature. A single pre-existing survey for this project was not available. Various survey instruments^{29,30} were used and modified for different administration modalities, such as self-administered questionnaires by mail and web, and to broaden content coverage. The survey instruments were carefully designed to minimize random and systematic errors through face validity process strategies. They incorporated item-specific and multiple-item scale formats, predominantly unipolar scales, with numerical labels assigned to each point when necessary to enhance scale reliability and validity. Before distribution, the surveys underwent field testing with project team members and members of the priority population to ensure clarity and relevance. The surveys were designed to assess experiences and perceptions regarding various long-term care services, accessibility, and barriers to accessibility, along with service prioritization inquiries. Moreover, language used in the surveys were crafted to ensure easy comprehension, as demonstrated by the Flesch-Kincaid grade level scores of 7.4 for the survey targeting consumers and 11.4 for medical providers serving older adults, both deemed appropriate for their respective audiences.

Findings/ Analysis

Demographic Analysis

Demographics of Older Adults/Care Giver Populations

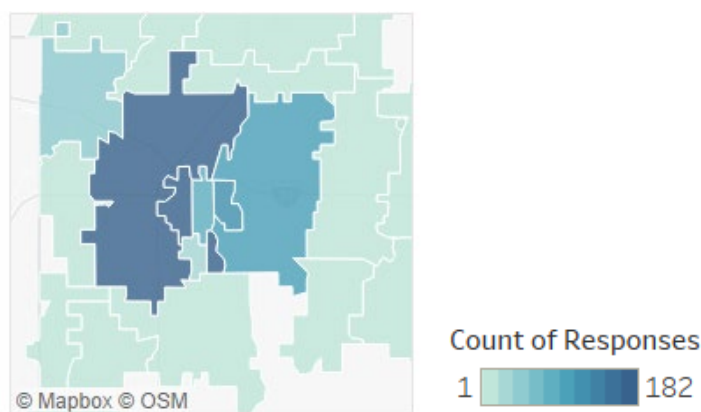
Respondents by Type: The consumer survey comprised of 881 respondents, 67% of whom identified as older adults or older adults with a disability and 33% as caregivers for an older adult in the last 24 months.

- About 9% (76) of survey respondents identified as a person with a disability.

Respondents by Location: About 97% of survey respondents were from Champaign County.

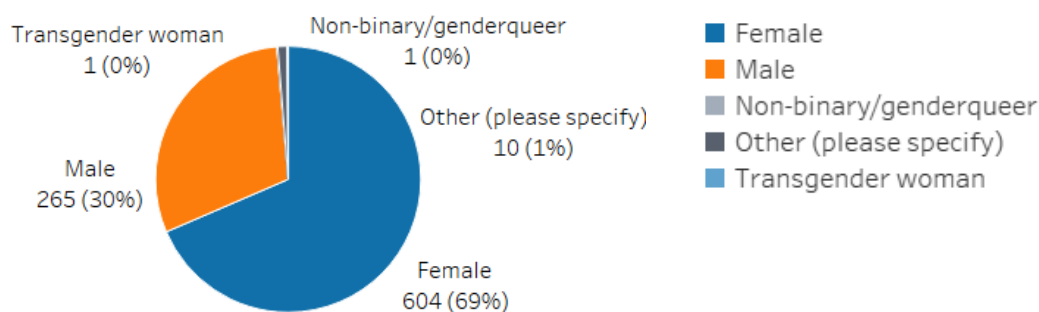
- About 70% of respondents were from zip codes 61822 (21%), 61821 (20%), 61801 (15%), and 61802 (12%).

Figure 8: Champaign County Older Adults Consumer Survey Respondents by Zip code



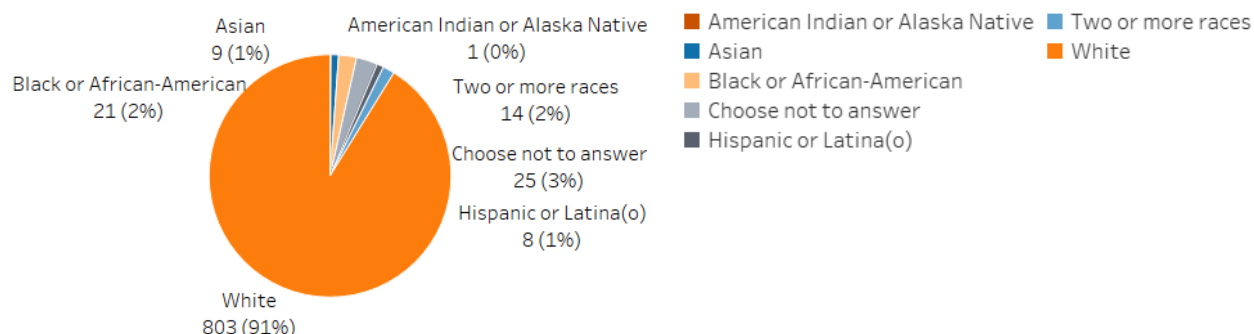
Respondents by Gender: According to the American Community Survey 5-year estimates in 2022, 45% of Champaign County's population aged 60 and over were males, while 55% were females. Based on our consumer survey results, approximately 30% of survey respondents identified as male and 69% as female. Consequently, the sample does not adequately represent the gender distribution of the older community. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that , in general, researchers have historically faced challenges in recruiting males for surveys.

Figure 9: Champaign County Older Adults Consumer Survey Respondents by Gender



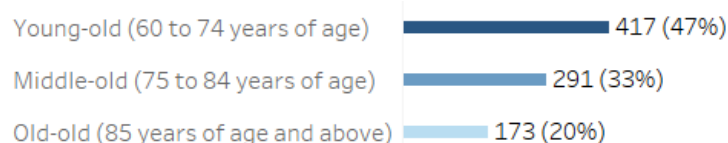
Respondents by Race/Ethnicity: Approximately 91% of participants identified as White, with 2% identifying as African American, and 1% each as Hispanic or Latina (o) and Two or more races.

Figure 10: Champaign County Older Adults Consumer Survey Respondents by Race/ Ethnicity



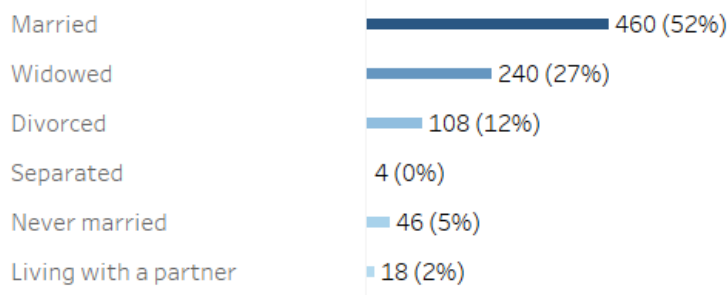
Respondents by Age: For our analysis, we've divided the older population into three sub-groups based on their age: older adults aged 60 to 74 years, older adults aged 75 to 84 years, and older adults aged 85 years or older. The majority of consumer survey participants belong to the 60-to-74 age group (47%), followed by 33% in the 75-to-84-year age group, and approximately 20% in the 85 or older age group. This categorization helps us comprehend the diverse needs of the aging population; the youngest age group is generally capable of living independently, while adults in older age are more likely to require some form of assistance to maintain their independence.

Figure 11: Champaign County Consumer Survey Respondents by Age



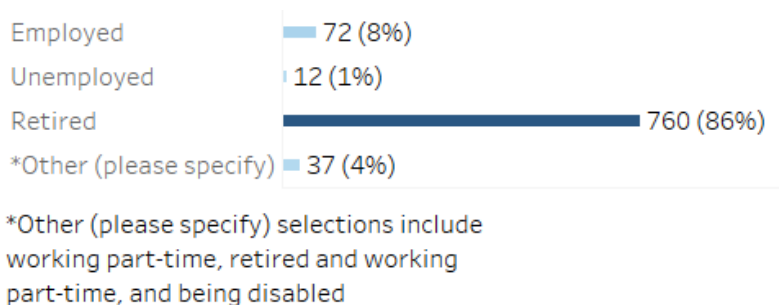
Respondents by Marital Status: Research suggests that “marital status is associated with health and survival outcomes at the oldest ages. Health status and health utilization as well as mortality, differ systematically by marital status for both sexes.”³¹ About 52% of survey respondents were married, 27% widowed, and 12% divorced.

Figure 12: Champaign County Consumer Survey Respondents by Marital Status



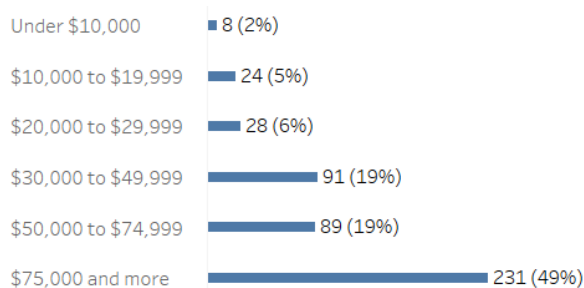
Respondents by Employment Status: About 86% of survey respondents are retired, 8% employed, and 1% unemployed. Among those who are retired, 67% identify as female while 32% identify as male.

Figure 13: Champaign County Consumer Survey Respondents by Employment Status



Respondents by Income: Higher socio-economic status is associated with improved health outcomes, a correlation that extends to older adults as well.³² Approximately half of the survey participants report an annual income exceeding \$75,000, with 12% indicating earnings below \$30,000 per year.

Figure 14: Champaign County Consumer Survey Respondents by Annual Income



***Note: This question was not answered by caregivers of older adults or caregivers of older adults with a disability. Responses where the selection was "Do not wish to answer" were excluded as well. ***

Respondents as Caregivers: As the aging population grows, the demand for caregiving also rises. Data from the 2015-2017 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) indicates that 18.8% of individuals aged 65 and above reported providing care or assistance to a loved one. Furthermore, besides caring for friends and family, grandparents often assume responsibility for their grandchildren's caregiving needs. According to the United States Census, 32.4% of grandparents live with and care for their grandchildren (Source: 2022: ACS 5-Year Estimate, DP02 Selected Social Characteristics in the United States). About 15% of older adult respondents reported providing care to one or more family members or friends on a regular basis. Among survey respondents providing care to family members or friends, 82% identified as female and 17% as male.

Living arrangements of the Older Adult: The living arrangements of older adults can significantly affect their ability to maintain independence within the community as they age. According to a report by the Administration for Community Living's Administration on Aging of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, about 28% of older adults in the United States, or 13.8 million people, live alone.³³ In our survey, nearly two thirds (66.5%) of respondents reside in family households with either a spouse or some other relative. And more than half (about 55%) live with at least one other person aged 60 or older. Our findings reveal that 33% (295) of older adults in our sample live alone, with 80% of them being women compared to 17% men living alone. Additionally, approximately 40% of older adults living alone fall into the young-old age category (60 to 74 years of age).

Older adult housing situation: Most survey participants (86%) reside in single-family homes, townhouses, or apartments. Conversely, approximately 14% of older adults live in group-living settings (e.g., skilled nursing, assisted living, and other residential arrangements). The strengths and needs of older individuals who own homes are anticipated to differ from those residing in long-term care facilities. For older adults in good health or with sufficient financial resources, homeownership can cater to many of their social and recreational needs, albeit with inherent challenges. However, older adults, especially those who are frail, disabled, or financially constrained, may require assistance in maintaining their homes.

Suitability of the older adult's current living situation: As people age, their needs regarding their living arrangements also evolve. Older individuals who either rent or own their homes often require accessibility upgrades such as grab bars and lifts as they age. Others may encounter difficulties in maintaining their housing costs and upkeep on a fixed income. "According to the Housing America's Older Adults report by the Joint Center for Housing Studies (JCHS), in 2021, nearly 11.2 million older adults aged 65 and older were cost burdened, spending more than 30% of their household income on housing costs in 2021. Those experiencing the most challenges are at risk of homelessness, as the number of households eligible for housing assistance grows while available funds cannot meet the demand."³⁴

Approximately 65% (573) of survey respondents reported satisfaction with their current living arrangements, while 35% (302) expressed either partial satisfaction with challenges or dissatisfaction, of which 12% (36) were Medicaid recipients. The primary factors contributing to dissatisfaction or limited satisfaction with living conditions were identified as accessibility and safety (65%), affordability (30%), additional challenges (27%), and lack of housing options (18%). These additional challenges encompassed various aspects such as the availability of medical care, access to higher levels of care (e.g., skilled nursing, memory care, etc.), home maintenance and modifications (e.g., railing for stairs, shower accessibility), care coordination for homebound individuals, financial expenses related to home upkeep, geographic isolation, household tasks, affordable and secure senior housing, and transportation. Managing household tasks and home maintenance emerged as common challenges when older adults were asked about difficulties in their current living situation.

Figure 15: Suitability of the Older Adult's Current Living Situation

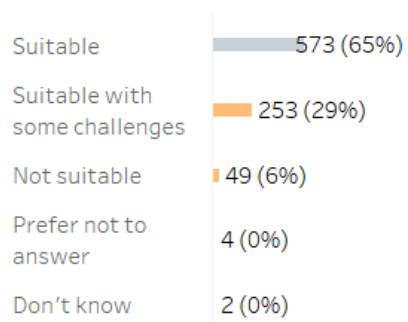
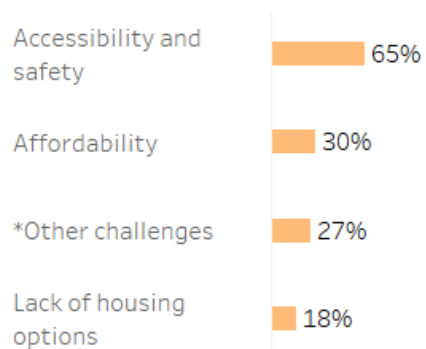


Figure 16: Current Living Situation Challenges (Consumers who selected limited suitability or unsuitability)

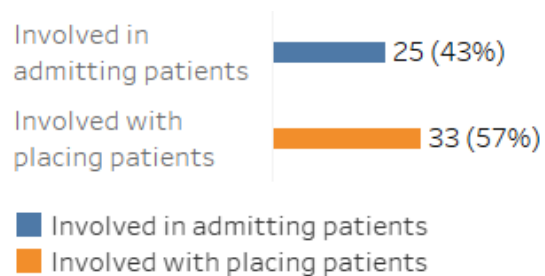


Demographics of Healthcare Providers

Providers include the following professions: physicians, nurses, advanced providers (NP, PA, CRNA, DNP, etc.), case managers, social workers, healthcare administrators, etc.

Providers by Type: The provider survey involved 58 respondents. Among them, 43% were engaged in admitting patients, while 57% were involved in placing patients in long-term care facilities or nursing homes. Among respondents admitting patients, 72% were affiliated with skilled nursing facilities or rehabs, 8% with assisted living facilities, and 4% with supportive living facilities. The remaining 16% represented other types of facilities.

Figure 17: Provider Survey Respondents by Type



About 52% of provider respondents were associated with acute care needs, 26% with long-term care needs, 10% with short-term rehabilitation needs, and 9% with memory care, assisted living, and other services. The provider respondents comprised social workers (22%), healthcare administrators (22%), physicians (21%), case managers (16%), nurses (9%), and individuals from other professions.

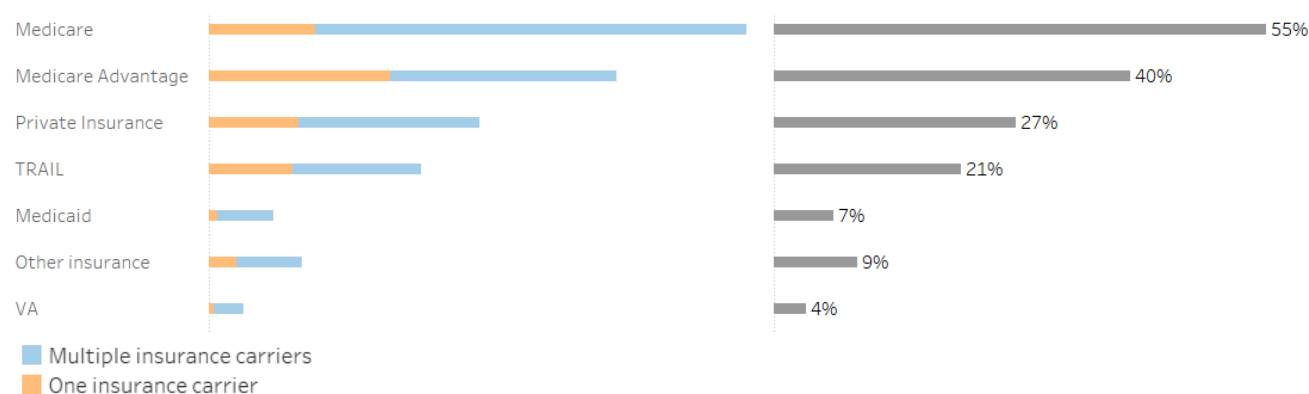
The participation of these providers, who cater to older adults in Champaign County, is vital for identifying gaps in services across different care settings in response to the impending nursing home bed shortage. Engaging providers from diverse backgrounds in the survey fosters inclusivity, provides insight into the breadth of services offered in our county, and aids in the development of comprehensive, person-centered, and life course approaches to health and well-being.

Health Insurance and Specialized Healthcare Needs

Health Coverage of the Older Adult

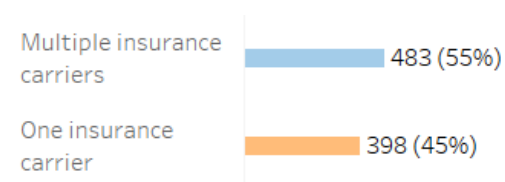
An evaluation of health insurance coverage among older adults in Champaign County indicates an almost universal rate of coverage, with 99% of persons aged 65 and older having some form of health insurance, as per the latest estimates from the American Community Survey (ACS). The consumer survey findings support the high coverage rate, showing that 100% of survey respondents have some form of health insurance. However, upon examining the survey results in relation to ACS Estimates, certain discrepancies become apparent. The majority of respondents reported having Medicare as their insurance carrier. Out of the 881 respondents, 95% stated that they have Medicare Advantage and/or Medicare coverage either on its own or in combination with other plans. This aligns with recent ACS estimates that indicate that 94% of older adults have Medicare coverage alone or in combination with other plans.

Figure 18: Insurance Type for Consumer Survey Respondents



Additionally, our survey reveals a significant proportion of older adults with multiple insurance carriers (55%).

Figure 19: Single or Multiple Insurance Carriers for Consumer Survey Respondents

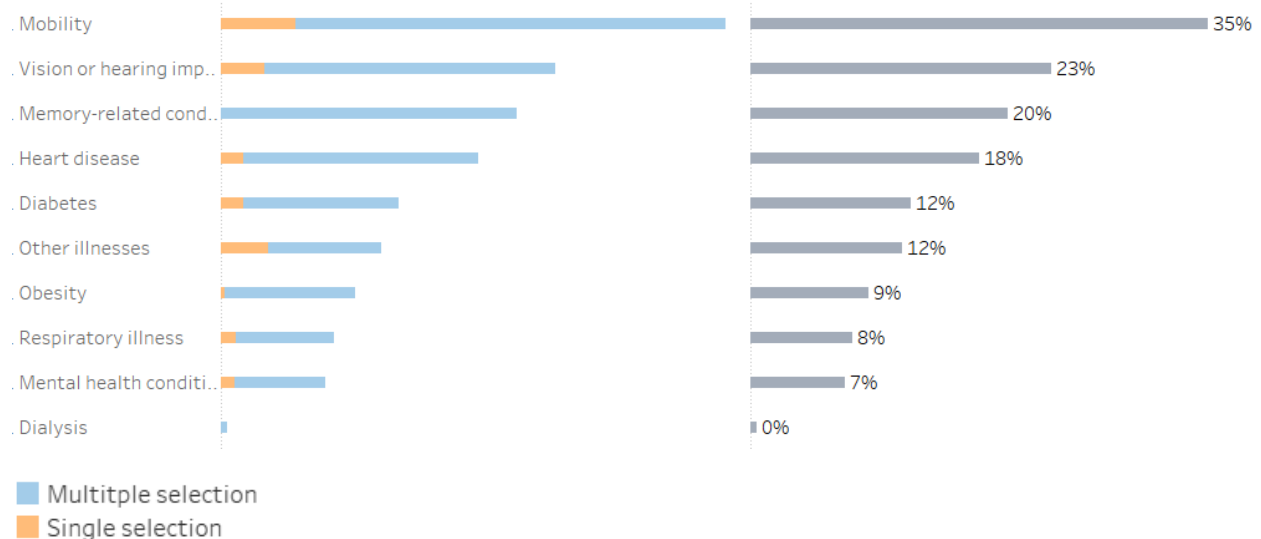


This indicates a diverse landscape of insurance coverage among older adults in Champaign County. Furthermore, our sample demonstrates adequate representation of Medicaid beneficiaries, with about 7% of older adults reporting Medicaid/means-tested public coverage alone or in combination with other plans. Moreover, there is adequate representation from older adults with Veterans Affairs (VA) health care coverage alone or in combination with other plans, with about 4% of older adults reporting VA coverage in our sample. The prevalence of other insurance types, such as Medicare Advantage and private insurance, appears slightly higher in our sample compared to the expected distribution, indicating possible sampling variations or local factors influencing insurance choices among older adults in Champaign County.

Specialized Health Conditions of the Older Adult

The Age-Friendly Champaign-Urbana survey conducted in 2017 states that “almost 25% of survey takers reported that they were not in either good or excellent health.”³⁵ Through Consumer Survey responses, we have identified several significant health concerns among older adults. A considerable challenge arose for 311 older adults (35%) in terms of mobility issues. Among them, 57 individuals reported it as their primary health concern, while 254 mentioned it in conjunction with other conditions. A significant number of older adults (23%) experienced vision or hearing impairments, which could potentially hinder their communication and mobility. Memory-related conditions, reported by 175 older adults (20%), highlight the need to prioritize cognitive health concerns among the aging population. Additionally, heart disease and diabetes were notable health conditions affecting 156 (18%) and 109 (12%) survey takers, respectively, underscoring the importance of managing chronic illnesses to maintain overall health and well-being.

Figure 20: Specialized Health Conditions of the Older Adult



Gaps in Long Term Care Services and Supports

Long-Term Care Placement

The analysis of survey data regarding the placement of older adults in long-term care facilities reveals a notable disparity between the perspectives of healthcare providers and the actual experiences of older adults and their caregivers in Champaign County, Illinois.

Based on responses from providers involved in patient placement (n=33), a substantial 30% reported frequent success in accommodating patients in facilities/agencies according to their or their family's preferences. Conversely, approximately 63% of these providers indicated rare or occasional success in aligning placements with patient or family preferences. Furthermore, almost one in every four providers, or 24%, reported rare instances of patients being placed in facilities according to their or their family's preferences. Among these providers, approximately 9% managed to secure placements for older adults in long-term care facilities located within a 25-mile radius, with only 3% of them placed within 10 miles. However, a majority (54%) were placed beyond the 25-mile radius, with 21% situated over 45 miles away from their residences.

Figure 21: Frequency of Patient Placement in Facilities/Agencies Based on the Older Adult's or their Family's Preferences

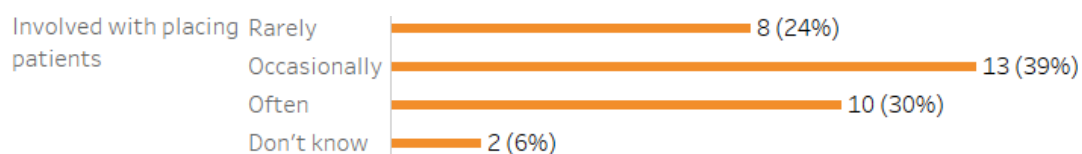


Table 7: Distance of the Facility from the Older Adult's Residence

	Older Adults who were placed in a long-term care, rehab, or skilled nursing facility (n=124)	Providers involved in placing Older Adults in a long-term care, rehab, or skilled nursing facility (n=33)
Within 10 miles	44%	3%
10 to 25 miles	14%	6%
25 to 45 miles	31%	33%
Over 45 miles away	10%	21%
Don't know or N/A	2%	36%

In contrast, data regarding the distances of facilities from home for older adults placed in long-term care, rehabilitation, or skilled nursing facilities (N=124) presents a different perspective. The majority of older adults who required the services of a long-term care, rehab, or skilled nursing facility in the last 12 months —58%—were placed within 25 miles of their homes, with a significant 44% placement within 10 miles. However, a noteworthy 43% were placed beyond the 25-mile mark, with 10% situated over 45 miles away from their residences.

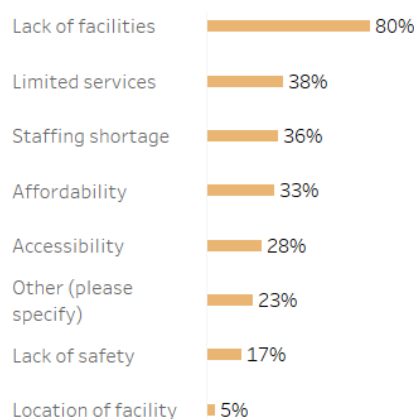
This discrepancy between provider considerations and actual placements has many potential implications. While providers may prioritize factors such as facility quality or specialization, the preference for placing older adults closer to their homes among caregivers and the actual placements suggest the importance of accessibility and familiarity for older adults. Being closer to home can enhance accessibility for family members and caregivers and maintain familiar environments for older adults, potentially contributing to better social connections and emotional well-being. For these reasons, preferences of both patients and their families in placement decisions is an important aspect of patient-centered care.

Troubles with Nursing Home Placement

Challenges Reported by Older Adults and Providers

According to findings from the consumer survey, over the past two years, 14% (124) of the older adults were placed in a long-term care, rehab, or skilled nursing facility. Among them, 70% (87) reported experiencing difficulties in securing such placements. The reasons for these challenges varied, with lack of facilities (80%) being the most commonly cited issue, followed by limited services (38%), staffing shortages (36%), and affordability (33%).

Figure 22: Reasons for Having Trouble Being Placed in a Long-Term Care, Rehab, or Skilled Nursing Facility (Consumer Survey)

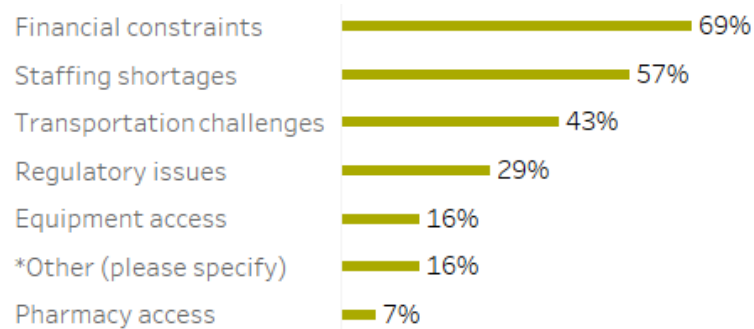


Approximately 76% of older adults admitted to long-term care, rehabilitation, or skilled nursing facilities had Medicare Advantage and/or Medicare only, while 15% had Medicaid only. The most commonly reported specialized medical conditions by older adults or caregivers facing challenges in placement included mobility issues (82%), memory-related concerns (64%), and heart disease (43%).

The high prevalence of older adults experiencing difficulties indicates a pressing need for improvements in areas of long-term care placement. The overwhelming majority attributing troubles to a lack of facilities signals a critical gap in infrastructure that should be addressed to meet the growing demand for long-term care services in the county.

Providers serving older adults in the community identified several barriers that pose challenges to placing or admitting patients in long-term care, rehabilitation, or skilled nursing facilities. The most common barriers reported were financial constraints (69%), staffing shortages (57%), and transportation challenges (43%). The reported barriers highlight systemic issues affecting healthcare delivery that require solutions beyond the scope of individual facilities.

Figure 23: Barriers to Placing or Admitting Older Adults in a Long-term Care, Rehab, or Skilled Nursing Facility (Provider Survey)



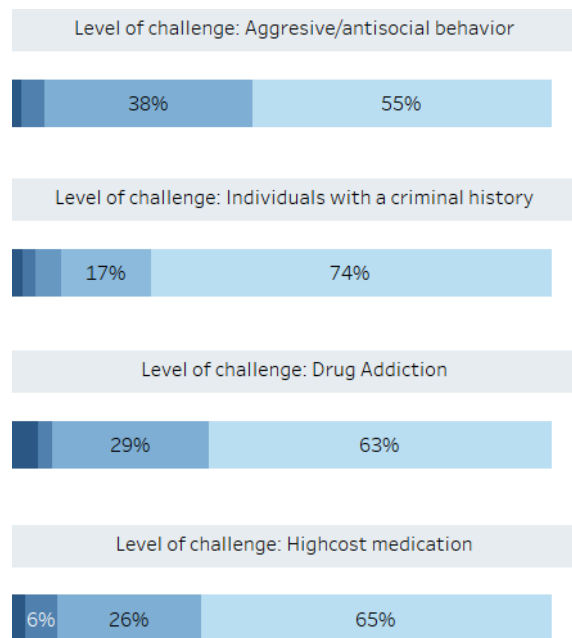
Additionally, providers highlighted various factors that contribute to challenges in placing or admitting patients. These factors included aggressive/antisocial behaviors (81%), individuals with a criminal history (72%), and drug addiction (66%), among others. The prevalence of behavioral and substance-related issues, often cited as restrictions for SNF residency, shed light on the complexity of care needs within the long-term care system. This suggests that the local long-term care system might benefit from a multi-disciplinary approach that integrates mental health and substance abuse services into long-term care planning.

Figure 24: Factors Posing Challenges to Placing or Admitting Older Adults in a Long-term Care, Rehab, or Skilled Nursing Facility (Provider Survey)



Providers also indicated the level of challenge associated with specific factors. For instance, individuals with a criminal history were reported to present the most challenge by 74% of providers, followed by high cost of medication (65%), those with drug addiction (63%), and aggressive/antisocial behaviors (55%). The high levels of challenges reported by providers reinforce the need for specialized care and support services tailored to address the unique needs of patients with complex behavioral and legal histories.

Figure 25: Level of Challenge Each Factor Poses to Placing or Admitting Older Adults in a Long-term Care, Rehab, or Skilled Nursing Facility (Provider Survey)



Availability of Facilities

(For Provider Survey)

Among the skilled nursing facilities represented in the provider survey, Country Health Care and Rehab and Accolade indicated immediate availability. Clarke Lindsey was the only facility that indicated having a waitlist for admitting residents. Furthermore, this facility indicated a waitlist of 2 to 6 months.

Preferences and Future Needs

As demographic shifts reshape the population landscape, it becomes imperative to identify current and future infrastructures to support our growing aging population. Beginning 2030, all baby boomers in United States will be older than 65, marking a substantial shift in the population distribution. Projections indicate that one out of every five Americans will have reached retirement age by this time. Moreover, by 2034, it is anticipated that the aging population will surpass the number of children in the country, a first in U.S. history. Specifically in Champaign County, it is estimated that the population aged 65 and above will experience a 19% increase by 2030.³⁶ Consequently, as the older population in Champaign County grows, so does the demand for services and resources tailored to their specific needs. This demand extends beyond assistance with daily activities to encompass long-term care services, with studies indicating that “70% of adults surviving to age 65 will require significant long-term care support before death.”³⁷

Currently lacking or insufficient long-term care services and supports for older adults in Champaign County

Considering the aforementioned trends, our consumer and provider surveys, comprising **939** respondents in total, sought to identify deficiencies in facilities and services catering to older adults in Champaign County, particularly in terms of long-term care services and support.

About 51% of our consumer and provider survey takers unanimously agreed that **skilled nursing facilities** remain the foremost service in Champaign County that is presently deficient or inadequate. Similarly, about half of the participants (50%) identified **in-home care and support** services as deficient, followed by **nursing homes** at 46% and **in-patient rehabilitation** facilities at 35%.

Table 8: Facilities or Services that are Lacking or Insufficient Regarding Long-term Care Services and Supports for Older Adults in Champaign County

	Total	%
Skilled nursing facilities	483	51%
In-home care and support	467	50%
Nursing homes	431	46%
Inpatient rehabilitation facilities	324	35%
Assisted living	291	31%
Adult daycare	277	29%
Memory care	268	29%

	Total	%
Respite care	225	24%

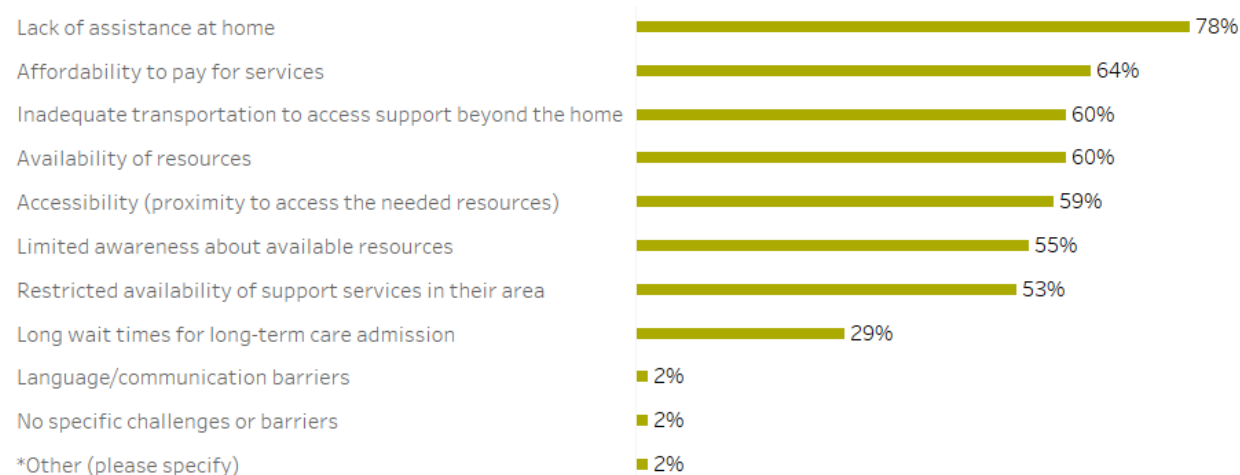
These findings underscore the urgent need to address the shortage of skilled nursing facilities and nursing beds in Champaign County. This shortage not only affects the current aging population but also poses significant challenges especially given the projected growth of Champaign County's aging population. These services are necessary to ensure high-quality and specialized care is provided to older adults recovering from illness, injury, or surgery or seeking assistance in medical management (in nursing homes). Additionally, there is a pressing demand for affordable in-home care and support services for older adults, as many major long-term care services and supports are provided within the home. With the median cost of home health aide at \$27 per hour, with conservative estimates totaling over \$40,000 per year, and the median annual cost of assisted living at \$63,000 per year,³⁸ older adults face considerable financial strain, particularly those with limited coverage or resources.

Unmet needs of older adults in Champaign County

(Provider survey only, n=58)

As providers have direct interactions with older patients and possess expertise in recognizing deficiencies in healthcare services, their insights were sought regarding the unfulfilled requirements of older adults in Champaign County. About 78% of providers stated **that lack of assistance at home** is the foremost unmet need of older adults in the county. This aligns with the views of respondents in the [previous section](#), wherein about half of the participants (50%) identified in-home care and support services as deficient. About 64% of providers felt that **affordability of services** is a significant unmet need for older adults in our community. This includes various expenses such as healthcare, housing, caregiving, prescription medication, and home modifications and repairs. About 60% of provider respondents felt that **transportation services to accessing support beyond home** are unmet in our community. Additionally, about 60% of provider respondents expressed concerns regarding **transportation services for accessing support beyond the home**. Adequate transportation is crucial for enabling older adults to maintain mobility, independence, autonomy, and engagement. Reliable and cost-effective transportation options also play a vital role in ensuring the safety and security of older adults, allowing them to travel to their destinations without posing risks to themselves or other travelers.

Figure 26: Provider Views on the Unmet Needs of Older Adults in Champaign County



*Other (please specify) includes: transportation for seniors

Most critical future needs for older adults in Champaign County

Respondents (Consumer and Provider Survey responses, N = 939) were also asked to identify the top three most critical future needs for older adults in our community.

About 50% of the survey respondents identified **Housing** as being most critical. With the aging population in our community, the demand for housing that is both affordable and adaptable to the changing needs of older adults is on the rise. Housing can be expensive for many older adults with either fixed or declining incomes. “In 2021, nearly 11.2 million older adults aged 65 and older were cost burdened, spending more than 30% of their household income on housing costs in 2021,³⁹ a prevailing sentiment expressed throughout responses was the desire of older adults to age with dignity and independence while simultaneously addressing their health and wellness needs.

About 37% of the respondents chose **Medication Affordability** as their second most critical future need for older adults in the community. Non-adherence to medication is responsible for nearly \$100 billion in yearly excess healthcare costs due to hospitalizations. Cost related non-adherence is prevalent in older adults as many are living on a fixed income and taking multiple medications.⁴⁰ Despite high Medicare coverage, a new study reveals that older adults often skip or stretch their prescriptions due to high costs and out-of-pocket expenses of drugs.⁴¹ Roughly 20% of older adults reported taking less medication than prescribed or not taking medication because of cost.

Transportation services emerged as the third most urgent future necessity for older adults in Champaign County. “Driving remains the primary mode of transportation for the majority of older adults. However, the aging process brings physical and cognitive changes that present significant challenges for older drivers. Research indicates that older adult drivers are at a higher risk of experiencing fatal crashes due to increased frailty and susceptibility to injuries. Consequently, older adults often depend on family members and caregivers for transportation assistance. Therefore, communities should establish a transportation system that meets the mobility needs, preferences, and demands of older adults.⁴² Existing transportation services geared for older adults in Champaign County include:

- Family Service of Champaign County
- MTD Services
- Champaign County Regional Planning Commission’s Transportation Assistance
- Champaign County Area Rural Transportation System (C-CARTS)
- CRIS Rural Mass Transit District, etc.

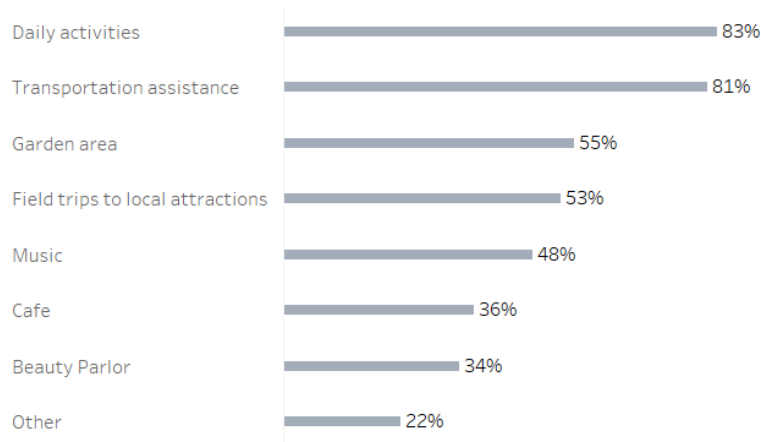
Table 9: Most Critical Future Needs of Older Adults in our Community

	Total	%
Housing	469	50%
Medication affordability	347	37%
Transportation services	292	31%
Memory care programs	269	29%
Behavioral/ mental health services	263	28%
Palliative and end-of-life care services	208	22%
Dental care services	154	16%
Dietary or nutrition services	140	15%
Medication management support	131	14%
*Other critical future needs	116	12%
Medication access	54	6%
Culturally sensitive services	48	5%
Organizations with SAGE Care Credentials (LGBTQ+ cultural competency training)	22	2%
Obesity-related care	17	2%
Drug and alcohol rehab	30	3%

Amenities in long-term care, rehab, or skilled nursing facility that are of importance to older adults in Champaign County

Consumer survey respondents (N = 881) were asked about amenities that were important to have in a long-term care, rehab, or skilled nursing facilities. Approximately 83% of respondents prioritized assistance with ADLs. Similarly, 81% highlighted the significance of transportation assistance. Garden areas within facilities were seen as desirable by just over half (55%) of the respondents. With minor variation, the preference order for these amenities remained consistent for both older adults and caregivers of older adults.

Figure 28: Amenities Important to Older Adults in Long-term care, Rehab, or Skilled Nursing Facilities



Conclusion

The findings from the Champaign County Older Adults' Needs Assessment shed light on the evolving demographic landscape and the growing requirements of our aging population. With a notable surge in growth of the aging population, coupled with increased projected demand for healthcare needs of older adults, it is clear that proactive measures must be taken to ensure adequate infrastructure and support systems are in place.

The assessment not only highlighted the increasing demand for long-term care facilities but also identified critical gaps in services, particularly in skilled nursing and in-home care. This underscores the urgency for collaborative efforts to address the projected shortage of nursing home beds and enhance access to essential services for older adults.

Moreover, insights from both consumer and provider surveys emphasize the pressing need to prioritize affordability, accessibility, and quality in healthcare delivery. Housing, medication affordability, and transportation assistance emerged as top priorities for future interventions, underscoring the importance of holistic approaches to caring for older adults.

As we navigate the complexities of long-term care services and supports, we encourage local decision-makers to utilize findings from this report to inform policy decisions, allocate resources effectively, and cultivate partnerships across sectors. By collectively addressing the challenges and gaps identified in the report, we can endeavor to create a more inclusive, supportive, and age-friendly community for all residents of Champaign County. Embracing proactive measures, in line with public health's emphasis on prevention and upstream interventions, is crucial. Identifying and implementing measures to address these gaps is paramount to adequately meet the evolving needs of older adults now and in the future.

Appendix

Click on the link below to access the surveys

[Consumer Survey](#)

[Provider Survey](#)

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