2018 Massachusetts Healthy Aging Data Report
Older Adult Health in Every Community

Massachusetts is Getting Older

- About 15% of people in Massachusetts are age 65+, an increase of about 125,000 people since last report.
- The older population in Massachusetts:
  - Is more racially and ethnically diverse
  - Has more education
  - Has higher incomes, with more people earning $50K+
  - Is younger, with more 65-74-year-olds

Massachusetts is the 7th healthiest state for older people in the U.S., according to America's Health Rankings Senior Report. Still, there is room to improve!

Health challenges are shifting

- **INCREASES**
  - Arthritis
  - Anemia
  - Depression
  - Asthma
- **DECREASES**
  - Ischemic heart disease
  - Congestive heart failure
  - Men with prostate cancer
  - Colon and prostate cancers

Where You Live Matters

- Many rural communities have higher percentages of people 65+ and limited access to care and transportation options.
- Most Gateway Cities – urban hubs historically known for their mills and industry – face economic and social challenges, including the health of older residents.

Mental Health is overlooked

- Mental health is important at every stage of life. It includes emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It influences how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.
- 6% of all Massachusetts residents 65+ years have some form of substance use disorder.
  - Rates vary widely across the state, from less than 4% to about 16%.
  - Higher rates were found in communities with relatively high levels of serious and chronic disease, crime, and older people living alone.
  - Lower rates were found in communities with higher percentages of older women of Asian descent.

3 out of every 10 older residents have ever been diagnosed with depression – the most commonly diagnosed mental health issue among older people.

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Be a Part of the Change

- Download your Community Profile at healthyagingdatareports.org.
- Educate yourself and others about the older people who live in your city or town.
- Compare your city or town to state averages.
- Join the age-friendly movement.
- Prioritize community needs and resources.
- Collaborate with diverse partners and funders.

The 2015 data above reflect health for adults age 60+ or 65+ in Massachusetts.
Visit healthyagingdatareports.org for more.