

## Statistics/Facts on Aging and Health Care

*Compiled by Strategic Communications and Planning for The John A Hartford Foundation*

### Demographics

- The number of people over the age of 65 will **increase** to about 71.5 million by the year 2030 (AOA, 2005).

\*The percentage of people over 65 will be approximately 20% of the entire US population. This is greater than the percentage of older people in Florida today (AOA, 2005).

- By 2040 the population age 75 years and over will exceed the population 65-74 years of age. (Health, United States, 2006 Chartbook)
- The number of those over 85 is projected to increase from 4.2 million in 2000 to 8.9 million in the year 2030 (AOA, 2006).
- Centenarians are the fastest growing age group in the U.S. By 2050, there may be as many as 1 million people over the age of 100 (Census Bureau data).
- Of those older adults over 65, the percentage of people of color will grow from 18% in 2004 to nearly 36% by 2050 (AOA, 2000).

\*Hispanics will account for about 17.5% of the older adult population, up from 6.0% in 2004 (AOA, 2006).

### Challenges

- From 2000 to 2030, the number of people on Medicare is projected to rise from 40 million to 78 million. (Kaiser Family Foundation Fact Sheet, April 2005)
- In 2004, adults 75 years of age and over had a higher rate of visits to the hospital emergency department than any other age group (58 visits per 100 persons compared with 29-45 per 100 persons in any other age groups) (Health, United States, 2006 Chartbook)
- In 2003-2004, falls accounted for 34% of hospital emergency department injury visits for men 65 years of age and over and 48% for women in that age group. (Health, United States, 2006 Chartbook)

- One-third of hospitalized patients are aged 65 years and older. In 2004, although comprising only 12% of the US population they accounted for 38% of the approximately 35 million discharges from non-government, acute care hospitals. Moreover, the average length of stay for older persons exceeds that of younger adults. (2004 National Hospital Discharge Survey, CDC).
- Over the past 20 years, there has been a significant decline away from nursing home settings, particularly among the "oldest old" -- persons 85 and older. The nursing home use rate among the "oldest old" dropped from 21.1 percent in 1985 to 13.9 percent in 2004. The baby boom generation that reaches the age of 65 in 2011 will account for twice as many older adults in 2030 as there are today; however, if the demand for nursing homes continues to decline at just half the rate of the past 20 years, there will be only 320,000 more nursing home residents among the "oldest old" instead of 830,000 more. (The Lewin Group, 2004)
- Overall, nearly 96,000 full-time equivalent nurses and other health care professionals are now needed to fill vacant positions in America's nursing homes. In 2002, 15 percent registered nurses (RNs), 13 percent of licensed practical nurses (LPNs) and 8.5 percent of certified nurse aide (CNA) positions in America's nursing homes were vacant. By 2010, the number of vacant positions in nursing homes is expected reach 810,000. The average annual turnover rate for licensed nursing home administrators is 43 percent. The average national turnover rate for nurses working in aging services is 49 percent. The average national turnover rate for certified nursing assistants (CNAs) is 71 percent. (American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, 2007)
- Persons age sixty-five and older use 23 percent of U.S. ambulatory care visits, 48 percent of hospital days, and 69 percent of home health services, and they represent 83 percent of the residents in nursing facilities. (*Health Affairs*, 2002, Kovner, Mezey and Harrington)
- According to a study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (June 14, 2000), the U.S. will experience a 20% shortage in the number of nurses needed in the U.S. health care system by the year 2020. This translates into a shortage of more than 400,000 RNs nationwide.

## Opportunities

- In the 2000 Census, the 65-and-over population actually increased at a slower rate than the overall population for the first time in the history of the Census. However, the most rapid increase in size of any age group in the 2000 Census was the 49% jump in the population 45-to-54-years-old, prefiguring the Baby Boom's entry into the 65+ cohort beginning in 2010 (Census).

- Contrary to popular perceptions, only 4.5% of older adults live in nursing homes, and only 18.2% of those over 85 live in these facilities. (US Census Bureau, Census 2000 Special Tabulation)
- Retirement frees up 25 hours a week for men and 18 hours for women. The prevalence of early retirement and longer life means that many Americans now at work will spend a third or more of their adult life in retirement. This represents a vast, relatively untapped resource (Civic Ventures Web site).
- Today, 2.4 million grandparents are caring for grandchildren and 4.1 million grandchildren are living in a grandparent's home. (US Census Bureau, 2006)

## **Training Needs**

### **Doctors**

- There are currently just 7,000 geriatricians, specially trained to care for older adults, far fewer than we need. By 2030, we will need 36,000 geriatricians. (AGS Web site, 2007)
- More than 60% of all doctors provide services to older patients, but only 3% get any training at all in geriatrics in medical school (IOM report).

### **Nurses**

- Less than 1% of the nation's 2.2 million registered nurses are certified in gerontology and only 3% of advanced practice nurses specialize in gerontology. (GeroNurseOnline.org, 2007)
- Only 23% of nursing programs have required geriatrics courses and only 14% have electives in geriatrics. (WHCOA, 2005)

### **Social Workers**

- Only 5,000 (3%) of 155,000 National Association of Social Workers members claim aging as their primary field of practice. (Mills-Dick and Simon, 2002)
- Less than 10% of current social work faculty in 117 master's programs have formal training in aging (John A. Hartford Foundation Annual Report, 2004).