

New Hampshire State Commission on Aging

ANNUAL REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

November 2023



People are living longer, healthier lives. This is good for all of us. The transformational demographic shift New Hampshire is experiencing to an older median age population brings opportunity and the potential for growth. But only if we have the foresight to plan. Continuing our current approaches to serving and engaging people will not serve us as well as adapting and modernizing our public policies, systems, and community environments. Longer lives result in people living each stage and age differently than before. The times call for policy leaders to think systemically and innovate to support productivity and engagement and the extension of resources over the course of longer lifespans.

Recognizing the imperative to make changes to public policies and more, the Commission on Aging was established in 2019 to advise the Governor and the General Court on policy and planning related to aging.

This November 2023 report builds upon the previous year's report. As the issues facing New Hampshire are complex requiring multifaceted solutions, progress is incremental. The Commission on Aging has named the same three overarching priorities for the Governor and Legislature as the previous year, with one additional priority: a call for the development of a multisector plan for aging. Developing a multisector plan for aging will help our state form consensus on the significant changes needed.

Four Priorities for the Governor and the General Court:

1. STRENGTHEN SYSTEMS OF CARE FOR HEALTHY AGING
2. GROW THE DIRECT CARE WORKFORCE
3. ADVANCE AGE FRIENDLY POLICIES, SYSTEMS AND ENVIRONMENTS
4. DEVELOP A MULTISECTOR PLAN FOR AGING

Within the report you will find descriptions of the four priority areas with highlights of progress made since last November, followed by a list of recommendations entitled, "Next Steps - 2023 Commission on Aging Recommendations".

The content of this report is based upon this year's observations and learning and was approved at the October 2023 meeting of the Commission.

This report envisions a future where all of us as we age in the Granite State are not only able to have our basic needs met but are respected and engaged in society for the knowledge, experience, and social contributions we can offer. Regardless of our differences, the resources for living well should be there for all of us as we grow older. An older median-aged society can add value to *all* our lives if as a society we adapt to this changing reality.



NEXT STEPS – 2023 COMMISSION ON AGING RECOMMENDATIONS

Strengthen Systems of Care for Healthy Aging

- A. Oversee robust implementation of requirements for the System of Care for Healthy Aging
- B. Continue to develop the System of Care for Healthy Aging infrastructure
- C. Improve resources for individual and family life planning and decision making
- D. Invest in retaining and growing the direct care workforce

Grow the Direct Care Workforce

- A. Reduce Training, Licensing and Regulatory Barriers.
- B. Create a Healthcare Workforce Investment & Innovation Fund
- C. Continue to strengthen the oversight of staff placement agencies
- D. Increase Affordable Housing, Transportation Alternatives, and Access to Childcare

Advance Age-Friendly Policies, Systems, and Environments

- A. Encourage the adoption of policies that make workplaces productive for people of all ages
- B. Support investment and development into transportation alternatives
- C. Housing – Expand efforts to layer services over housing, incentive inclusive design
- D. Civic Engagement – Disrupt Ageism, adopt inclusive meeting policies, facilitate volunteerism
- E. Support expansion of high-speed broadband, telehealth, and research and investments into technology goods and services which are the basis for healthy living and aging.
- F. Promote statewide, regional, and local initiatives that improve livability for people of all ages and leverages the economic power and opportunity of older people.
- G. Advance Efforts to Address Social Isolation
- H. Improve the Lives of People Living in Assisted Living and other Long-Term Care Settings

Develop a Multisector Plan for Aging

- A. Create an Executive Order directing the creation of a NH Multisector Plan for Aging
- B. Garner statewide leadership and cross-agency engagement in a multisector planning process
- C. Active participation by NH Legislators in the creation of a NH Multisector Plan for Aging
- D. Commitment by State Agency leadership to identify priorities within agencies in response to changing demographics
- E. Public engagement in requesting and developing a NH Multisector Plan for Aging
- F. Consensus building and planning that culminates in concrete policy recommendations



COMMISSION ON AGING ACTIVITY

The Commission on Aging is organized to study issues through engaging a diversity of stakeholders. In addition to its meetings, the Commission communicates its findings through this report, issue briefs, the [AgingMatters](#) newsletter, [website](#) and social media, testimony before the legislature, meetings with state agencies, and more.

Highlights (November 2022 – October 2023):

- Monthly Commission on Aging Meetings investigating issues of concern:

November 2022

Direct Care Workforce Issues

January 2023

Multisector Plans for Aging

State Plan on Aging Planning Process

System of Care for Healthy Aging Legislation

February 2023

NH Older Adults Advocacy Organization's Priorities

March 2023

Older Adults in the Workplace

Care Workforce Trends Including Shortages

April 2023

Older Adult Homelessness

Housing Challenges & Policy Considerations

May 2023

State Plan on Aging Survey & Focus Group Data Findings

Volunteerism In NH

June 2023

State Plan on Aging Endorsement

2024-2025 State Budget Analysis

End of Session Legislative Review

August 2023

Long Term Care Summit: System of Care for Healthy Aging, Overcoming Workforce Challenges, Multisector Plan on Aging, Supporting Family Caregivers

September 2023

Long Term Care Summit Review of Findings

MPA Learning Collaborative Kickoff

COA Annual Report Development

October 2023

NH's Digital Equity Planning Initiative

Annual Report Approval

*Meeting Minutes are available on [COA website](#).

- Convened monthly **COA Task Force Meetings** diving deeper into issue areas.
- Convened **COA State House Team Meetings** – weekly during the session, monthly throughout the year. Organizes COA guidance to the legislature and governor based on Commission findings.
- Provided written **testimony submitted on 14+ unique bills** during 2023 session.
- COA Task Force **Issue brief**, “[A Vital Granite State Asset – Older Adults: 5 Ways Older Adults Contribute to Economic & Community Wellbeing](#)”, published June 2023.
- **Older Adult Volunteer Awards** – A person from each county is honored at an annual ceremony held in the Executive Council Chambers with the Governor during Older Americans Month.
- **15+ various community engagement events**
- Publishes [Aging Matters](#) a **monthly newsletter** for older adults providing information on public policy discussions, programs and services, and other news people can use. Distributed to 1000+ community members, service providers, elected officials, and others. Subscribers increase monthly.
- **Social media launched** fall 2022 to further support messaging and outreach.
- Engages and informs media outlets about its work, resulting in **media coverage of issues impacting older people** such as homelessness, social isolation, care workforce shortages, livable communities, the importance of older adults as volunteers and more.
- Successfully applied for **New Hampshire to participate with a cohort of ten states in a learning collaborative, each developing their own Multisector Plan for Aging**. The Learning Collaborative is led by the Center for Health Care Strategies.



NH DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT

In 2024, Baby Boomers are turning age 60 to 78. We are past due planning for the later in life needs of this disproportionately large population segment.

2020 US Census – Percentages of New Hampshire’s Total Population

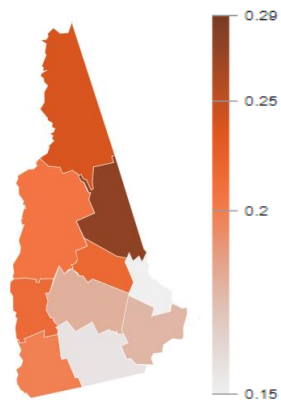
Ages 55-64	Ages 65-74	Ages 75- 84	Ages 85+	Total
15.7 %	12 %	5.4 %	1.8 %	34.9%

- Over 27% of the state’s 2020 population is aged 60 or older.
- One in two households in NH has one or more persons aged 60 years and older.
- 35% of households with one or more people 65+ are 1 person households.
- The 2021 American Community Survey estimated that 27% of the NH aged 65+ population worked in the previously 12 months to the data collection.

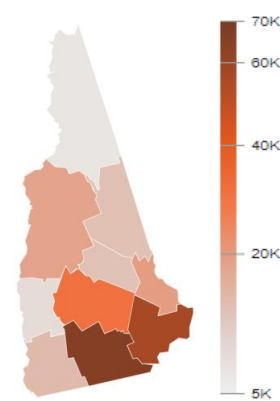
Where Do Older Adults Live?

The largest *percentage* of older adults in the state is in northern New Hampshire; the largest *number* is in southern New Hampshire. (Population 65 Years or More (2021) Data from [census.gov](https://www.census.gov), www2.census.gov via Data Commons.)

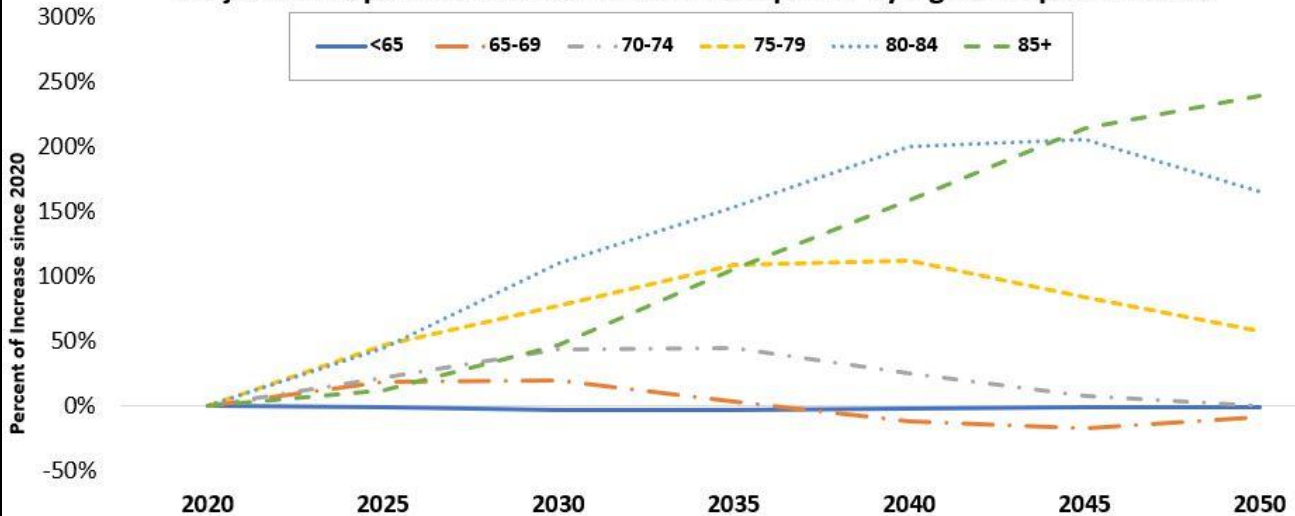
Per Capita



Numbers of Older Adults



Projection Population Growth in New Hampshire by Age Group 2025-2050



Data provided by NH Office of Planning and Development, Department of Business and Economic Affairs, June 2023

