



## **The United States of Aging Survey Low- & Moderate-Income Findings**

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With seniors living longer and more active lives, and with more than 77 million baby boomers turning 65 at a rate of 10,000 per day, the United States is experiencing historic growth in the 65-plus demographic. This growth is pressing communities to think differently and more broadly about a whole host of issues: housing, transportation, social services, cultural offerings, and health and wellness programs, to name just a few. The ultimate question is: Are we as individuals and communities ready to address the challenges of an aging population?

To examine this question, the National Council on Aging (NCOA), UnitedHealthcare and USA TODAY created The United States of Aging Survey. In its inaugural year, the survey included 2,250 U.S. adults aged 60 and older who shared their perspectives on their own individual readiness for aging as well as their perceptions of their community's resources for senior residents.

For the purposes of this survey, “low- and moderate-income” seniors are defined as those with an income of less than \$30,000 per year. According to the U.S. Census, 40 percent of all U.S. seniors aged 60 and older are considered to be of low or moderate income.

According to the survey results, a significant minority – nearly half in some cases – of low- and moderate-income seniors face the possibility of severe financial hardship and will struggle to manage their health over the next five to 10 years. Additionally, low- and moderate-income older adults who are most in need of health care, economic security and support services to remain independent are the least confident of all survey respondents that they will be able to get the help they need.

### **Financial Security**

Low- and moderate-income older adults are very vulnerable, and even small reductions in income or benefits could be devastating to their health and economic well-being and their confidence level in receiving needed services.

- Nearly half (46 percent) of low- and moderate-income seniors are not confident that their income will be sufficient to meet their monthly expenses over the next five to 10 years, compared to 16 percent of seniors with incomes over \$30,000. Sixteen percent report that they have no financial plan for retirement whatsoever.
- Nearly one-third (32 percent) of low- and moderate-income seniors are not confident that they would have the ability to pay for unexpected expenses, compared to 13 percent of seniors with incomes over \$30,000.
- Four in 10 (41 percent) low- and moderate-income seniors are not confident that they are aware of all the benefits and programs that can help them, compared to 25 percent of seniors with incomes over \$30,000.

### **Health and Wellness**

Low- and moderate-income seniors are more likely to report having a chronic condition, are less apt to engage in physical activity, and are twice as likely to lack confidence in their ability to manage their health over the next five to 10 years.

- About one in 10 low- and moderate-income seniors (12 percent) report that they are not confident they will be able to maintain their health over the next five to 10 years, compared to just 6 percent of those with incomes over \$30,000.
- Approximately 72 percent of low- and moderate-income seniors report having a chronic condition versus 52 percent of seniors with incomes above \$30,000. This is in line with national data that suggests that 70-90 percent of seniors have at least one chronic condition.
- Nearly one-third (32 percent) of low- and moderate-income seniors with at least one chronic condition report infrequent physical activity (exercise less than once a week) compared to 17 percent of seniors with incomes over \$30,000.
- More than half (52 percent) of low- and moderate-income seniors are not confident in their ability to afford long-term care or support services versus 25 percent of seniors with incomes over \$30,000.

To access full survey findings, including results for seniors in Dallas, Miami, Milwaukee, Orange County and upstate New York, visit [www.ncoa.org/UnitedStatesofAging](http://www.ncoa.org/UnitedStatesofAging) or the newsroom at [www.UnitedHealthGroup.com](http://www.UnitedHealthGroup.com).

### **About the United States of Aging Survey**

Penn Schoen Berland conducted 2,250 telephone interviews with Americans aged 60 and older between May 10 and June 6, 2012. This included a nationally representative sample of 1,000 respondents, and oversamples of 250 respondents in upstate New York, Milwaukee, Miami, Dallas and Orange County, Calif. The margin of error for the general population is +/-3.1 percent and 6.2 percent for each of the oversamples. The data is reflective of the U.S. Census Bureau demographic statistics in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, income, education and region.

### **About NCOA**

The National Council on Aging is a nonprofit service and advocacy organization headquartered in Washington, D.C. NCOA is a national voice for millions of older adults—especially those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged—and the community organizations that serve them. It brings together nonprofit organizations, businesses, and government to develop creative solutions that improve the lives of all older adults. NCOA works with thousands of organizations across the country to help seniors find jobs and benefits, improve their health, live independently, and remain active in their communities. For more information, please visit: [www.ncoa.org](http://www.ncoa.org) | [www.facebook.com/NCOAging](https://www.facebook.com/NCOAging) | [www.twitter.com/NCOAging](https://www.twitter.com/NCOAging).

### **About UnitedHealthcare**

UnitedHealthcare ([www.uhc.com](http://www.uhc.com)) is dedicated to helping people nationwide live healthier lives by simplifying the health care experience, meeting consumer health and wellness needs, and sustaining trusted relationships with care providers. The company offers the full spectrum of health benefit programs for individuals, employers and Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries, and contracts directly with more than 650,000 physicians and care professionals and 5,000 hospitals nationwide. UnitedHealthcare serves more than 38 million people and is one of the businesses of UnitedHealth Group (NYSE: UNH), a diversified Fortune 50 health and well-being company.

