



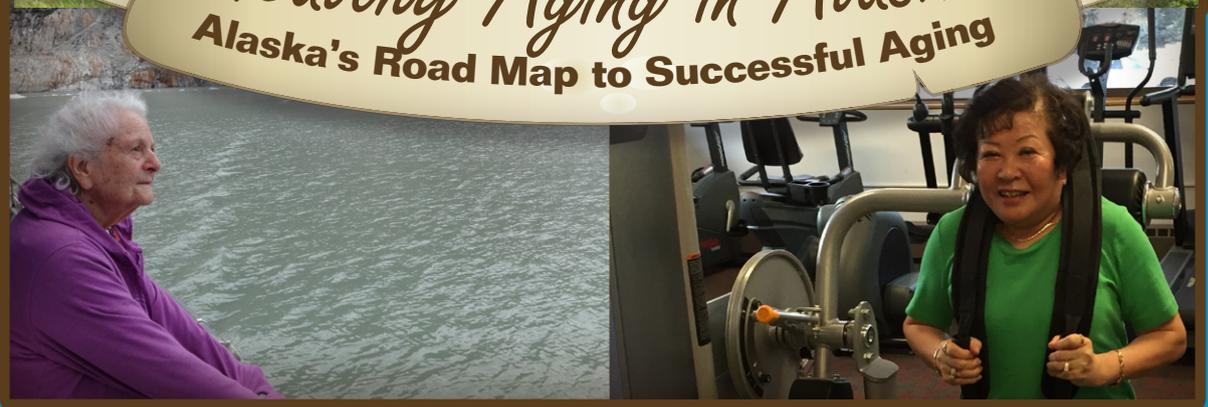
**Alaska
Commission
on Aging**



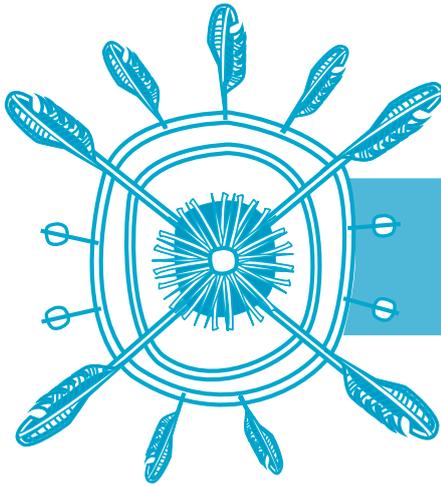
**FY 2014
Annual
Report**



Healthy Aging in Alaska
Alaska's Road Map to Successful Aging



Alaska Commission on Aging



The mission of the Alaska Commission on Aging is to ensure the dignity and independence of all older Alaskans, and to assist them to lead useful and meaningful lives through planning, advocacy, education, and interagency cooperation.

Alaska Commission on Aging FY 2014 Annual Report

<http://www.alaskaaging.org/>

Bill Walker, Governor
State of Alaska

Valerie Davidson, Commissioner
Department of Health & Social Services

Denise Daniello, Executive Director
The Alaska Commission on Aging



Alaska Commission on Aging
PO Box 110693
(150 Third Street #103)
Juneau, AK 99811-0693
Phone: (907) 465-3250

January 2015

*Photos courtesy of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services,
Alaska Commission on Aging, and Lesley Thompson, ACoA Planner.*

FY 2014 Annual Report

The Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) is pleased to present this annual report describing the work of the Commission in FY2014. The Commission believes that all older Alaskans should have the opportunity to participate meaningfully in their communities, to be valued for their contributions, and to have access to services which maintain health and independence so that they may enjoy a high quality of life and live safely at home and in the community for as long as possible.

To steer the journey and achieve successful aging, a “roadmap” is needed to show a productive pathway toward a high quality of life. The “Alaska State Plan for Senior Services, FY2016-2019” that is under construction and the recently completed “Alaska Roadmap to Address Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias” are roadmaps that we can use to reach the desired destination of healthy and productive aging for all Alaska seniors.

On May 1, 2014, the Commission with the support of many partners hosted the Power of Aging in Alaska Symposium in Anchorage as the kick-off celebration for “Older Americans Month in Alaska.” The purpose of this event was to provide Alaska seniors and those who care about them with the information and tools they need to have a strong voice in making Alaska the best place in which to live and grow old with dignity. We appreciate the support from ConocoPhillips Alaska, the Department of Health and Social Services, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, the University of Alaska Anchorage, AARP Alaska, the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, and all of the speakers who shared their knowledge and expertise at this conference. This private-public partnership made the Symposium a successful event in which 145 people attended.

Alaska seniors are vital to the future of Alaska. As a growing population, Alaska’s older adults have significant power that can be exercised in a variety of ways. During her welcome remarks as presented below, ACoA’s Chair Mary Shields described “senior power” and called out to seniors to use their power and make a positive difference to benefit all Alaskans regardless of age.

People often refer to the growth of the senior population as the silver tsunami. I am one of the more than 116,900 Alaskans who comprise the Silver Tsunami. Watch out – our numbers are growing! Alaska seniors are vital to the future of Alaska as we have enormous power. We want to share with you a few examples of senior power.



Mary Shields
ACoA Chair,
Public Member
Anchorage

Plan your retirement, don't let it just "happen" to you. Prepare financially – prepare socially. Get involved with non-profit causes that appeal to you and develop friends and activities in those areas.



Edna DeVries
ACoA Commissioner,
Public Member,
Palmer



What do you think is the most pressing issue affecting Alaska seniors today?

The price of oil because it affects not only seniors but their families who are very important to us seniors.

- ✧ **Demographic Power:** Seniors are the fastest growing population and comprise the largest percentage of all ages in Alaska. Back in the 70s and earlier, Alaska had the youngest demographic - but that was more than 40 years ago and many of us who arrived in Alaska back then are still here. It is our responsibility, baby boomers and seniors, to ensure that Alaska is the best place for its seniors to live.
- ✧ **Economic Power:** Seniors contribute to the health of the economy. We spend money and a lot of it by investing more than \$2.4 billion into the economy annually from retirements, pensions, Social Security and savings on our living expenses, health care, entertainment, and gifts for our children and grandchildren, many of whom also live in Alaska.
- ✧ **Political Power:** Seniors are “super voters” as we vote in almost every election – for national, state, and local officials. Seniors volunteer on campaigns, work on initiatives and generate dialogue on many issues facing Alaska. Through our voting power and outreach activities, seniors help shape Alaska’s political landscape. Are we talking about senior issues to our government officials and those running for office? If not, we should be.
- ✧ **Social Power:** Seniors love their families – their children and grandchildren, nieces and nephews, brothers and sisters. Seniors are devoted family caregivers who take care of their grandchildren and adult children as needed, and they assist each other when health and lives change. Seniors also care about the communities where they live and serve on boards of nonprofit organizations. They deliver meals to the homebound – and do whatever needs to be done to support local charities and service organizations.
- ✧ **Generational Power:** Seniors have lived long and seen a lot during their lifetimes. As a result, they have learned life lessons along the way from both their successes and mistakes. For this reason, seniors are Alaska’s tradition-bearers, pioneers, and mentors who link the past with the present and can help prepare future generations by offering wisdom and guidance to keep things moving forward in a positive direction.

There are many needs in our home communities and within our great state that deserve attention and energy from the senior community. Don't complain when things don't get done. Don't be a couch potato and sit on the sidelines.

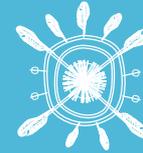
You can make a difference if you choose to get involved and make your voice heard.

You have a lifetime of experience, knowledge and wisdom to share. Be active, take a stand, and be part of the solution to effect positive change that will benefit all Alaskans, young and old!

Sincerely,

Mary E. Shields
Chair of the Alaska Commission on Aging

Denise Daniello
ACoA Executive Director



Marie Darlin
ACoA Commissioner,
Public Member,
Juneau

Alaska seniors are vital to the future of Alaska!

Seniors must use their power of aging to advocate for issues important to them at the local level.

**FY 2014
Alaska Commission
on Aging Members**
.....

Mary Shields
Chair,
Public Member,
Anchorage

Rolf Numme
Vice Chair,
Public Member,
Wasilla

David Blacketer
Public Member,
Kodiak

Marie Darlin
Public Member,
Juneau

Edna DeVries
Public Member,
Palmer

Eleanor Dementi
Public Member,
Cantwell

Anna Frank
Public Member,
Fairbanks

Rachel Greenberg
Senior Service Provider,
Palmer

Banarsi Lal
Alaska Pioneer Home
Advisory Board Chair,
Fairbanks

Duane Mayes
Director,
Senior and Disabilities
Services, Department of
Health and Social Services,
Anchorage

Paula Pawlowski
Executive Director, Serve
Alaska, Department of
Commerce, Community
and Economic
Development
Anchorage

Bob Sivertsen
Alaska Pioneer Home
Advisory Board Chair,
Ketchikan (Sept 2014)

The Alaska Commission on Aging

Established in 1982, the Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) is a governor-appointed board within the Department of Health and Social Services Commissioner’s Office that serves to ensure the dignity and independence of all older Alaskans by addressing their needs through planning, advocacy, and education through interagency coordination efforts. The Department of Health and Social Services is the federally designated State Unit on Aging. The responsibilities that come with this designation are carried out by the Division of Senior and Disabilities Services with the Alaska Commission on Aging. The Commission also collaborates with other State agencies and partners to improve the quality of life for older Alaskans.

Charged by statute, ACoA makes recommendations directly to the Governor, the Legislature, and the Administration regarding legislation, regulations, and appropriations for programs and services benefiting Alaska seniors. The Commission is authorized to develop the four-year comprehensive Alaska State Plan for Senior Services required by the U.S. Administration on Community Living/ Administration on Aging for all states receiving federal funds from the Older Americans Act. In addition, the Commission serves as an advisory board to the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority regarding issues and budget needs for Trust beneficiaries who are older Alaskans with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias, behavioral health conditions, mental illness, developmental disabilities, and brain injury.

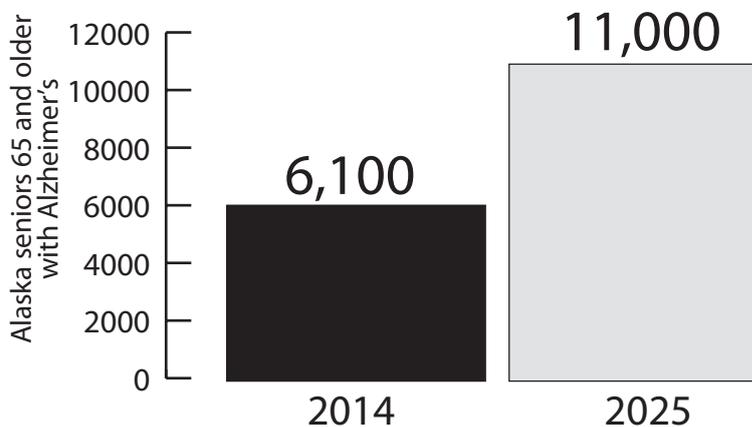
The Commission consists of eleven members, seven of whom are public members (with six members being 60 years and older) appointed by the Governor to serve four-year terms. Two seats are filled by the Commissioners of the Department of Health and Social Services and the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, or their designees. The remaining seats are reserved for the Chair of the Pioneer Home Advisory Board and a senior services provider, regardless of age. The ACoA is supported by an office staff of four that includes the Executive Director, two Planners, and an Administrative Assistant.



Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease & Related Dementias

The Roadmap is Alaska's first state plan to address the multiple and complex challenges that Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ARD) presents to individuals, families, caregivers and the long-term care system as a whole. Alzheimer's disease is an incurable and fatal disease that tragically affects an increasing number of older Alaskans and their families as our senior population continues to boom. Through statewide family caregiver forums, a family caregiver survey, and public input at other venues, stakeholders have pointed out gaps in the existing system of support services and residential options to serve individuals and caregivers, particularly as the number of people living with dementia increases over the coming years.

An estimated 9 percent of Alaska seniors 65 and older have Alzheimer's disease. The projected number of individuals over age 65 with Alzheimer's will grow from 6,100 in 2014 to 11,000 in 2025:



These projections do not include the number of people with related dementias (including vascular dementia, Parkinson's disease, Lewy Body dementia, and other forms) and those younger than 65.

The Roadmap was developed by a core team of agencies that included the Alaska Commission on Aging, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, Alzheimer's Resource Agency of Alaska, and several divisions under the Department of Health and Social Services including the Division of Senior & Disabilities Services, the Division of Pioneer Homes, the Division of Public Health, and the Division of Behavioral Health along with support from AARP Alaska and the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

FY 2014 Alaska Commission on Aging Staff

Denise Daniello,
Executive Director

Jon Erickson,
Planner II

Lesley Thompson,
Planner I

Sherice Cole,
Administrative Assistant II

Contact Us

Alaska Commission on Aging

Department of Health &
Social Services

Physical address:
150 Third Street, #103
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Mailing address:
P.O. Box 110693
Juneau, AK 99811-0693

Phone:
(907) 465-3250

Fax:
(907) 465-1398

Website:
www.alaskaaging.org

Email:
hss.acoa@alaska.gov



Duane Mayes
ACoA Commissioner,
Director of Senior &
Disabilities Services,
Anchorage



We are an aging state and the Commission on Aging will need to work with senior stakeholders to address a broad array of long term care services. Some of our biggest challenges are to address transportation and supportive housing services for Alaskan seniors in urban and rural communities.

There is a gap in the continuum of long term care services where we as a state are challenged to serve Alaskan seniors who experience dementia. The opportunity to address gaps in long term care services is now. With the state moving forward with Medicaid expansion and reform, it is critical that the Commission work closely with the Department of Health & Social Services.

The Roadmap offers this vision, mission & set of guiding principles to guide the ACoA and the core team agency partners to plan and implement services for the well-being of Alaskans impacted by Alzheimer's disease and related dementia.

Vision:

Alaska will identify Alzheimer's disease and Related Dementias as a public health priority due to the increasing number of Alaskans affected, and will build strong partnerships to address the challenges of this condition with safe and quality supports, from prevention, early detection, to end of life.

Mission:

To improve public awareness; promote prevention and early detection; increase access to necessary long-term services and supports; improve availability of safe, appropriate housing; and increase caregiver supports for all Alaskans with Alzheimer's disease and Related Dementias.

Guiding Principles:

- ✧ Early detection and planning can vastly improve quality of life and ease the financial burden for individuals with ADRD and their caregivers.
- ✧ Individuals with ADRD should be able to reside in their homes and communities for as long as possible.
- ✧ While the incidence of ADRD increases in Alaska, we must address costs by providing services to people at the earliest stage possible and seek to serve people in the least restrictive and most appropriate care setting.

In addition, the Roadmap identifies six goals with corresponding recommendations to provide a guide to the State and other organizations with a mission to improve the quality of life for Alaskans with ADRD and their caregivers.



Goal 1 Promote public awareness, prevention and early diagnosis of Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias.

- ✧ Increase opportunities for public education about Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias (ADRD).
- ✧ Increase awareness of and access to ADRD resources.
- ✧ Increase frequency of early screening and diagnosis.



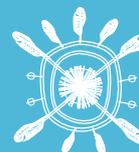
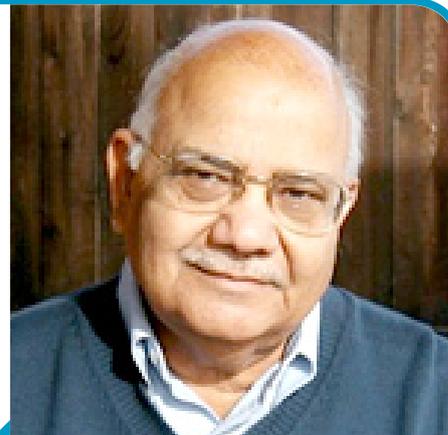
Goal 2 Improve access to appropriate housing, services, and supports for individuals with ADRD at all stages of the disease.

- ✧ Develop service eligibility requirements based on functional, cognitive, and behavioral needs and reimbursement rates based on acuity levels.
- ✧ Maintain individuals with ADRD in the least restrictive and most appropriate care setting possible.
- ✧ Develop housing options for people with ADRD.
- ✧ Identify the Department of Health and Social Services funding needs required to ensure access and to meet the needs of the rapidly growing population of those with ADRD in Alaska.
- ✧ Optimize the role of the Pioneer Homes within the statewide array of long-term services and supports.
- ✧ Increase access to end of life care.



Goal 3 Optimize quality, safety, and efficiency of services to people with ADRD.

- ✧ Ensure safety in private homes and communities for persons with ADRD.



Banarsi Lal
ACoA Commissioner,
(Term ended
September 2014)
Alaska Pioneer Home
Advisory Board Chair,
Fairbanks

The baby boomers need to remain vigilant and actively engaged at all levels where current and future needs for senior services are discussed and planned for. Such an engagement may include a dialogue with Advocacy groups, the Administration, and the Legislature, and may ensure that the response is proportionate to the need for successful aging in Alaska.



Eleanor Dementi
ACoA Commissioner,
Public Member,
Cantwell



Seniors should attend community activities that interest them thereby making their presence known and influence the community.

- ✧ Ensure safety and quality of care in residential settings.
- ✧ Strengthen the role of the primary care setting as a point of entry to the dementia care system.



Goal 4 Develop a long-term care workforce trained in dementia care.

- ✧ Increase the level of knowledge of dementia care and caregiver competence within the long-term services and supports workforce.
- ✧ Ensure health, human service and public safety professionals are knowledgeable about dementia.
- ✧ Increase cultural competence among dementia care workers.



Goal 5 Improve quality of life for family and other informal caregivers.

- ✧ Maintain and improve the physical and mental health of family and other informal caregivers.
- ✧ Develop a coalition of families and agency representatives to advocate for policy changes to support family and other informal caregivers and to decrease the financial burden of caregiving.



Goal 6 Increase monitoring and research into ADRD prevalence, cost of care, prevention and treatment.

- ✧ Maintain and expand research to understand ADRD prevalence, utilization and cost of care in Alaska.
- ✧ Maintain and expand research of ADRD best practices related to risk reduction, treatment and care.

Accomplishments

The Alaska Commission on Aging carried out the following activities in FY2014 pursuant to our core service areas of planning services for seniors, educating the public about issues affecting seniors, and advocating for policies, programs and services that help older Alaskans maintain a high quality of life and ability to participate meaningfully in their communities. The Commission collaborates with public and private partners to work toward a common goal of healthy and successful aging for all Alaska seniors.

PLANNING

- ❖ **Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias.** The Roadmap, Alaska's first ever state plan dedicated to addressing the multiple and complex needs of Alaskans impacted by dementia, is a guide for prioritizing and implementing strategies that will improve the quality of life for Alaskans with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and their caregivers. While advanced age is a significant risk factor, Alzheimer's disease is not a normal part of aging. Research also points to other risk factors for dementia that are on the rise including poor cardiovascular health, chronic disease, mental health problems, hearing loss, and head injuries. The Roadmap's recommendations are based on findings from ACoA's seven statewide family caregiver forums, a family caregiver survey, and first-time data from the 2013 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey describing perceived cognitive impairment in Alaska. Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias is scheduled for completion in December 2014.
- ❖ **Development of the Alaska State Plan for Senior Services, FY2016-2019.** This Plan is required by all states which receive federal funding from the Older Americans Act to support senior services that include senior grant-funded services, elder protection, senior vocational training, legal assistance, the Senior Voice, and other vital programs. The current State Plan for Senior Services expires on June 30, 2015. The Commission prepares the State Plan in collaboration with Senior and Disabilities Services and other partners including representatives from state agencies,



Anna Frank
ACoA Commissioner,
Public Member,
Fairbanks

*We need to be
active in different
programs and be
a voice and an
advocate for our
Elders.*



Rachel Greenberg
ACoA Commissioner,
Senior Service Provider,
Palmer



Baby Boomers can use their power by using their network, resources and influence to ensure communities are safe, accessible and have programs and services available to help them lead independent, healthy, successful lives as they age. Baby boomers have the opportunity to pave the way and change the mind-set of the general population about what we think of aging in Alaska. Becoming a "Senior" is a GREAT achievement!

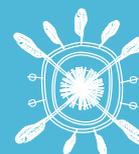
senior providers, and consumers. These representatives comprise the State Plan Advisory Committee which provides guidance and oversight of the Plan's development. The Department of Health and Social Services submits the Plan to the Administration on Community Living to satisfy the federal requirement for Alaska to receive federal funding for senior programs. Planning activities are currently underway to inform the development of the Plan's core sections that include a set of goals, strategies and performance measures; an intrastate funding formula; and supplemental information that provides data on a range of topics including demographic, health status, utilization of senior services, financial security, and senior housing. The FY2016-FY2019 Plan will be completed by June 2015.

✦ **Elder-Senior Listening Sessions & Senior Survey.**

The Commission uses several sources to gather quantitative and qualitative information to develop the needs assessment for the State Plan for Senior Services. For the FY2016-2019 Plan, we developed and are in the process of implementing a senior survey, a senior services provider survey, and hosting six Elder-Senior Listening Sessions to gather input first-hand from seniors and their caregivers about the needs of older Alaskans. Elder-Senior Listening Sessions have been held in Glennallen, September 2013; Juneau, February 2014; two sessions in Fairbanks, September 2014 that included a special outreach to Alaska Native Elders; Homer, October 2014; and Anchorage, December 2014. The Commission also received more than 2,000 completed senior surveys from Alaskans age 55 years and older and had strong community participation at each of the Elder-Senior Listening Sessions. Through these sources, the Commission sought input from seniors and their caregivers about senior access to primary health care, satisfaction with local home and community-based services, availability of senior housing in local communities, caregiver support, economic security, unmet needs of seniors in their regions, and other relevant information. Based on preliminary findings from these information sources, the priority areas of concern identified by Alaskan seniors and their caregivers listed in order of priority are access to health care (that includes long-term support services), economic security, and the need for appropriate and affordable senior housing.

✧ **White House Conference on Aging 2015.**

The White House Conference on Aging (WHCoA) occurs every ten years with the purpose of gathering policy recommendations from all states on important issues facing older Americans. The last WHCoA occurred in 2005. Four themes provide the focus for the WHCoA that coincide with the focus areas for Alaska’s State Plan for Senior Services planning efforts. The WHCoA four focus areas include financial security, long-term support services, healthy aging, and elder protection. ACoA will utilize information from the State Plan’s needs assessment activities to develop policy recommendations for the WHCoA. “Senior housing,” an issue important to Alaska seniors according to the findings from the State Plan needs assessment activities, will be added to Alaska’s WHCoA policy recommendations. The WHCoA 2015 will take place during the 50th anniversary of Medicare, Medicaid, and the Older Americans Act, in addition to the 80th anniversary for Social Security.



Denise Daniello
ACoA Executive Director,
Juneau

The aging of Alaska presents both challenges and opportunities as the senior population increases and baby boomers come of age. Viewing older adults as a great resource, an asset, rather than as a liability is an important step for creating meaningful opportunities that actively engage Alaska seniors and baby boomers to use their talents and improve community life - so that we may all benefit from their life experience dividend.

ADVOCACY

During the FY2014 legislative session, the ACoA monitored a total of 41 bills and resolutions and actively supported eight pieces of legislation with committee testimony and letters of support to bill sponsors, legislative committees, and Congressional members. During ACoA’s February 2014 legislative advocacy meeting in Juneau, Commission members met with 41 legislators and their staff members to discuss senior issues and offer recommendations for budget and policy items to address senior needs based on data and public input gathered during the Commission’s Elder-Senior Listening Sessions, Family Caregiver Forums, and public comment at ACoA’s quarterly meetings.





Rolf Numme
ACoA Vice Chair,
Public Member,
Wasilla



Our conceptions about how we age and what aging looks like are changing. Alaska's seniors are remaining in or re-entering the workforce for financial reasons or personal fulfillment and represent a broader trend among the world's developed nations—that of adults retiring later, living longer, and remaining healthier. Enlightened policies addressing age-related discrimination and the promotion of lifelong learning will serve to enhance our seniors' contributions to their communities.

- ❖ **Operating Budget:** The ACoA and our partners advocated successfully for the following budget items. We thank Governor Parnell and the Legislature for their support of these recommendations:
- ❖ **Nutrition, Transportation and Support Services Senior Grant:** Successfully advocated in support of \$545,000 additional base funding to increase the number of seniors (age 60+) provided with home-delivered meals and congregate meals served at senior centers and other group settings; assisted transportation; and homemaker services. This program serves all older Alaskans (age 60+) and targets those most in need who do not qualify for Medicaid waiver services. The increased base funding was requested to provide an appropriate level of services that keep pace with a growing senior population.
- ❖ **Vulnerable Alaskans with Challenging Behaviors:** In collaboration with advocacy partners, ACoA supported this joint advocacy priority to secure base funding in the amount of \$525,000 for the Complex Behavior Collaborative to continue training and consultation services for community providers and caregivers who serve vulnerable Alaskans with difficult to manage behaviors – such as persons with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia and mental illness.
- ❖ **Capital Budget.** ACoA advocated successfully for the following capital budget items in coordination with our advocacy partners:
 - ❖ **Senior Housing** in the amount of \$4.5 million for the Senior Citizen Housing Development Grant Fund administered by the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation to provide gap funding for the construction of senior housing projects and weatherization/rehabilitation programs for seniors and disabled residences.
 - ❖ **Community Transportation** services, administered by the Department of Transportation, in the amount of \$1.05 million to provide transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities.
 - ❖ **Deferred Maintenance and Accessibility Improvements Program**, administered by the Department of Health and Social Services, in the amount of \$2 million to fund structural renovations (such as roof repairs, accessible doors, fire safety) that improve or maintain the safety, security, and accessibility of premises for facilities of providers that serve Trust beneficiaries, including older Alaskans with dementia.

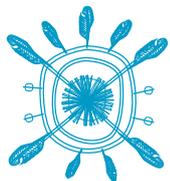
❖ **Alaska Heating Assistance Program**, administered by the Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Assistance. ACoA advocated to maintain funding for this program with no reductions to ensure heating assistance for Alaskans qualifying for this assistance, especially seniors who live on a fixed income so that they may afford to comfortably heat their homes and not resort to cost-cutting measures that could jeopardize senior health and safety. In FY2013, this program served 13,678 income-eligible households of which 4,179 (31%) had an elderly member.

❖ **Legislation.** The ACoA and our partners advocated successfully for passage of the following legislation:



HB 263
Representative
Hawker

Sunset extension for the Alaska Senior Benefits Payment Program: The Senior Benefits program provides a critical safety net for seniors with greatest financial need by the provision of tiered monthly payment amounts of \$75, \$125, and \$250 for seniors (age 65+) with incomes up to 175% federal poverty level. This program helps seniors pay for food, energy costs, housing, and medication. In FY2013, the program served 10,954 seniors with an average recipient age of 75 years old.



SB 169
Senator
Giessel

Establish a Statewide Immunization Program: Using a cost-effective public-private partnership model, SB 169 establishes a self-sustaining statewide immunization program to provide vaccines for Alaskans of all ages and creates a permanent solution to fill the fiscal gap of reduced federal funding for Alaska's immunization program. Former legislation sponsored by Senator Giessel (and supported by ACoA) used state funding to fund the program as a temporary measure that will expire on July 1, 2015. ACoA advocated for SB 169 to increase senior access to vaccines such as pneumonia, influenza, and shingles for seniors who are low income, not eligible for Medicare, and those who receive services by providers who do not accept Medicare.



Paula Pawlowski
ACoA Commissioner,
Director "Serve Alaska"
Commerce, Community &
Economic Development,
Anchorage

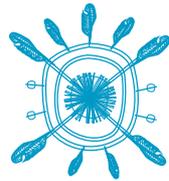
Seniors are a powerful force in Alaska, they work, they volunteer, they contribute, they vote and they want to stay in Alaska with their families.



David Blacketer
ACoA Commissioner,
Public Member,
Kodiak



*People must prepare
oneself for older age
by starting early.
Keep yourself
in good health
and be social by
volunteering and
being a visual part of
the community.*



SB 159
Senator
Stedman

Air Ambulance Services: This legislation allows for the continuation of affordable membership programs to insure Alaskans who require air ambulance services. This service is particularly important for critically ill and injured patients residing in rural and remote areas who require emergency transport to hospitals when levels of care are not locally available. The cost of Medevac services is expensive and often exceeds \$100,000. The Commission advocated in support of this legislation to protect older Alaskans and other patients living in rural communities with limited incomes from financial hardship resulting from paying for the total cost of these services out-of-pocket.



HB 301
Representative
Herron

Autopsies & Death: HB 301 amends current law that requires deaths occurring outside of a medical facility to be reported to the Medical Examiner's Office located in Anchorage to establish the cause of death and issue a death certificate. This process can be stressful, complicated, and costly for a rural family, especially those with elderly loved ones who pass away at home. HB 301 allows death certificates to be issued in the region and allows Tribal officials to declare death and complete the death certificate form in consultation with the Medical Examiner's Office.

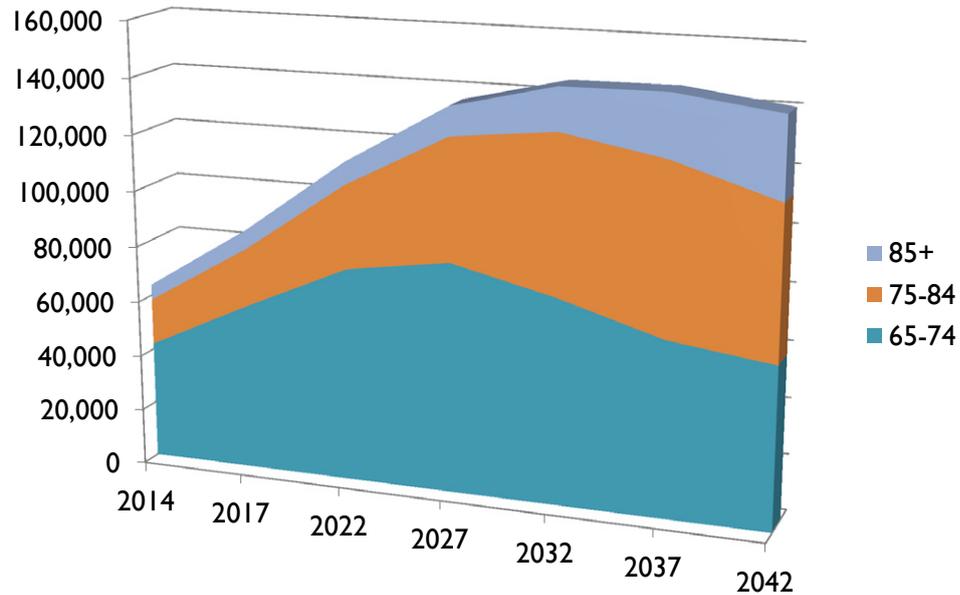


SB 135
Senator
Olson

Extend Alaska Health Care Commission (AHCC): SB 135 provides for a 3-year extension of the Alaska Health Care Commission. The purpose of this Commission is to increase understanding and knowledge about Alaska's health care system and make policy recommendations to improve quality, affordability, and access to health care. ACoA supported the extension to continue the work of the Alaska Health Care Commission to promote strategies that will improve access to primary health care and long-term support services for Alaska seniors.

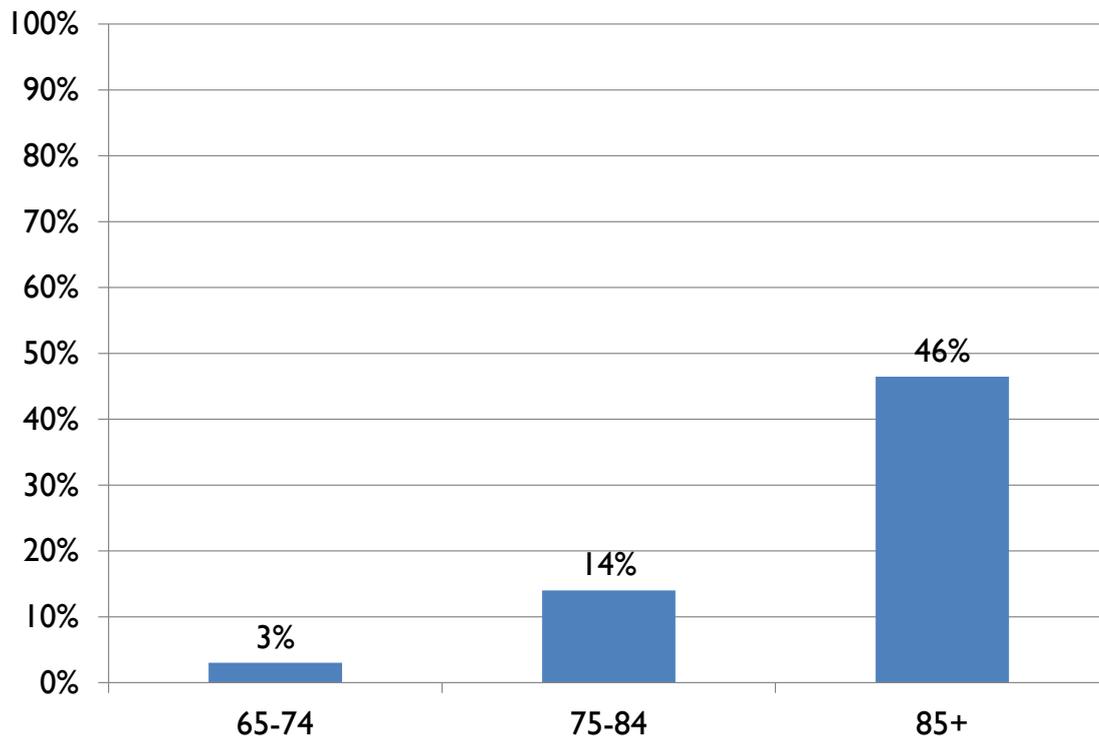


Projected Alaska Senior Population, 2014-2042



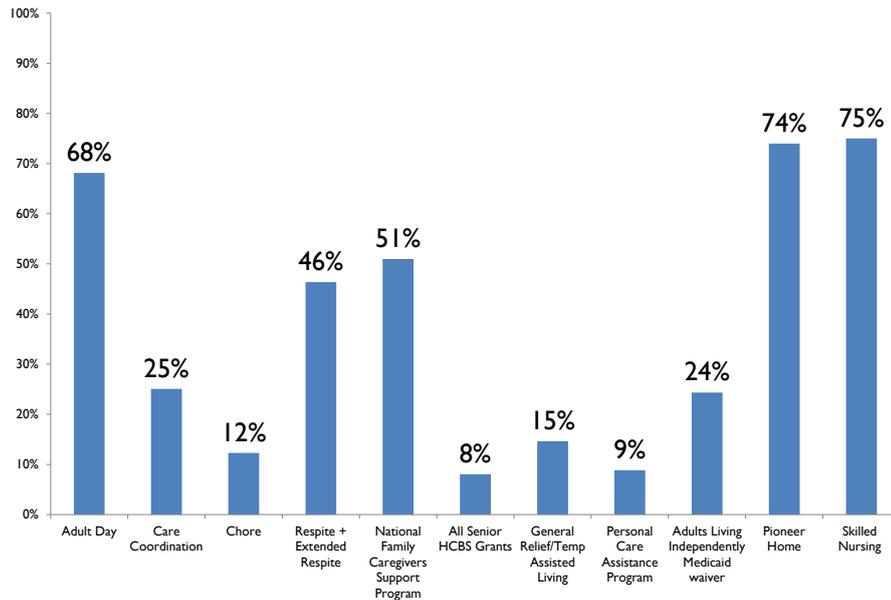
Source: Alaska Population Projections 2012 to 2042, Department of Labor and Workforce Development, State of Alaska, 2014

Alaska's Alzheimer's Disease Rates by Age



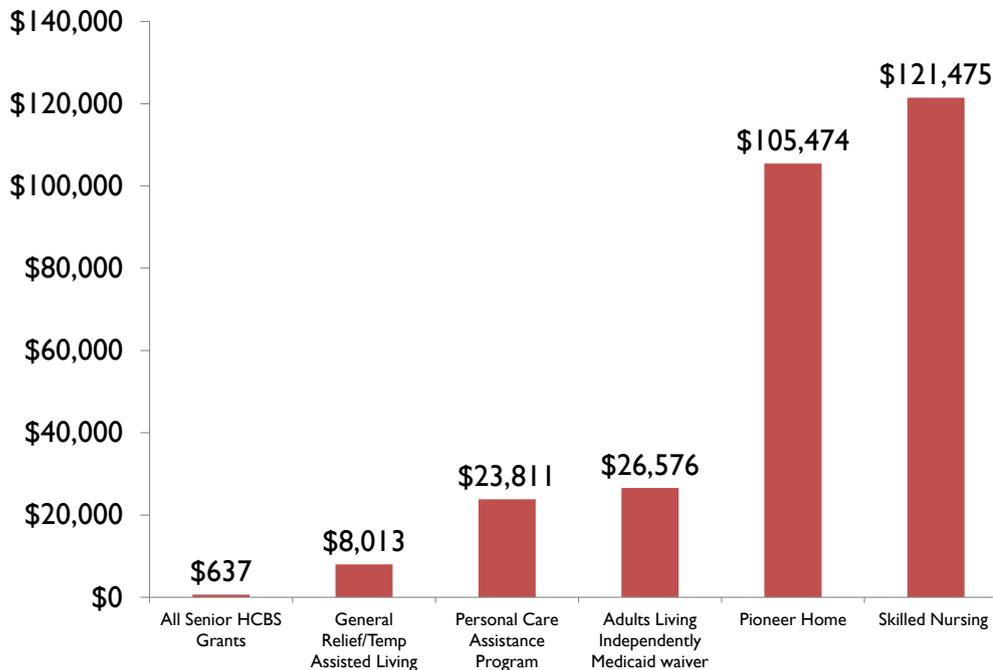
Source: 2014 Alaska Alzheimer's Statistics, Alzheimer's Association

ADRD Prevalence in State Programs



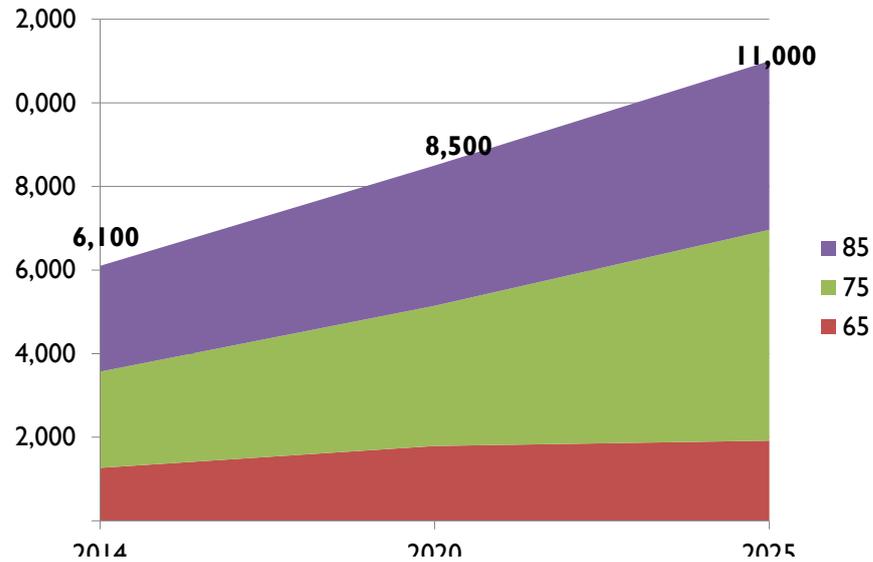
Source: SAMS (Home and Community Based Services programs); DHSS 7/2014 (Medicaid and General Relief); Pioneer Home 7/2014; Dennis Murray, ASHNA, October 22, 2014 (Skilled Nursing)

Cost per Recipient of State Programs



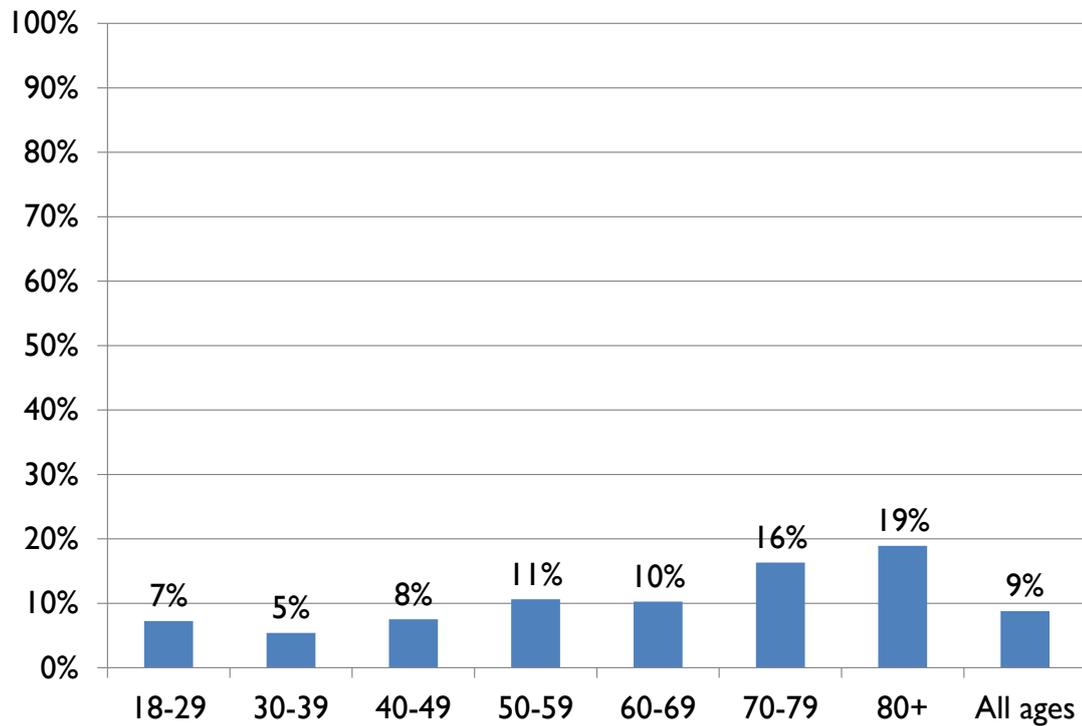
Source: Counts of recipients and costs of programs from Fiscal Year 2015 State Budget. Federal dollars reimburse the state for half the costs of Medicaid programs, which include waiver programs in home and community based settings, including the Pioneer Home. Pioneer Home costs include private pay and Payment Assistance. Skilled nursing cost are from a presentation by SDS from April 2014 and do not include private pay.

Alaska Alzheimer's Disease Prevalence, Ages 65+ 2014-2025



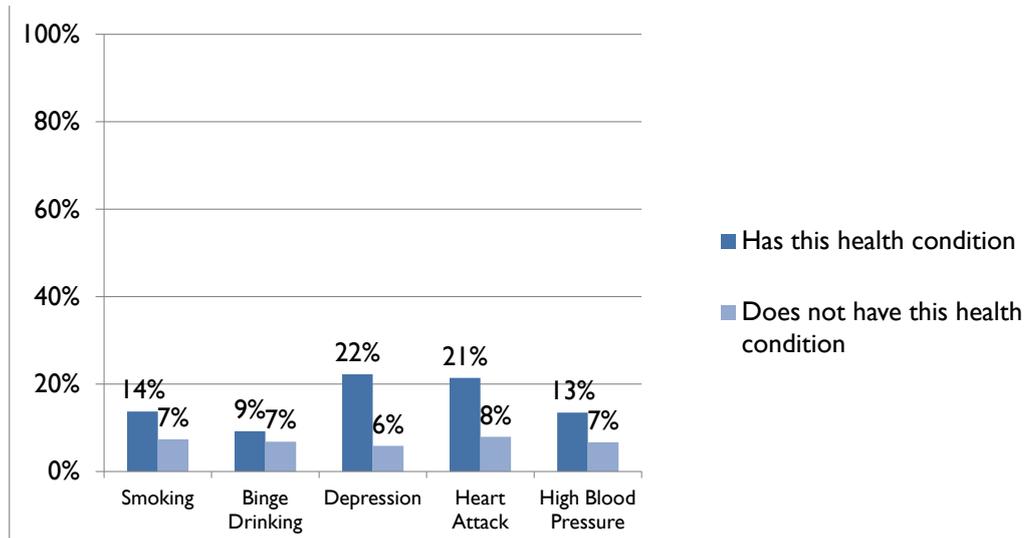
Source: 2014 Alaska Alzheimer's Statistics, Alzheimer's Association

Percent of Population with Perceived Cognitive Impairment by Age Category



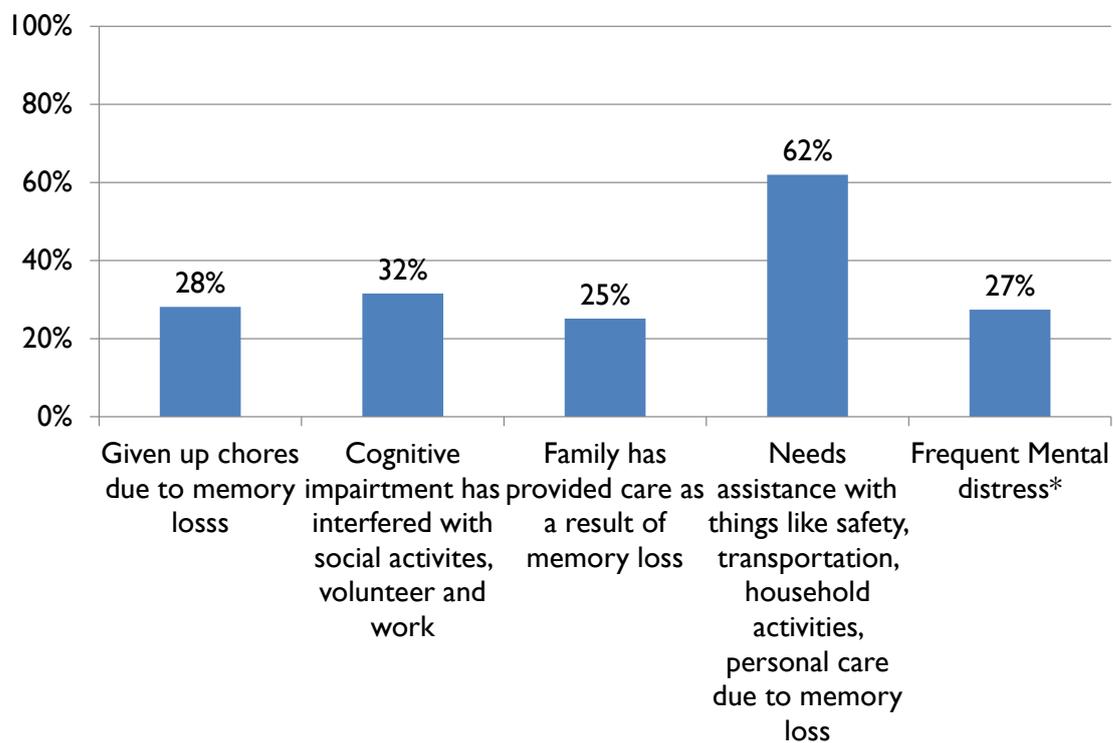
Source: 2013 BRFSS Cognitive Impairment Module, SOA/DHSS/DPH/CDPHP

Percent of Population with Perceived Cognitive Impairment by Health Condition



Source: 2013 BRFSS Cognitive Impairment Module, SOA/DHSS/DPH/CDPHP

Impacts to Daily Life as a Result of Perceived Cognitive Impairment



Source: 2013 BRFSS Cognitive Impairment Module, SOA/DHSS/DPH/CDPHP



What you can do to prevent falls:



Begin a regular exercise program.



Have your health care provider review your medicines.



Have your vision checked.



Make your home safer.

Many falls can be prevented. By making some changes, you can lower your chances of falling.

For more information, please call the Aging and Disability Resource Center at 1-877-6AK-ADRC (1-877-625-2372) or visit our website at www.alaskaaging.org.

PUBLIC AWARENESS/COMMUNITY EDUCATION

✧ **Power of Aging in Alaska Symposium:** The purpose of the Symposium was to provide Alaska seniors and those who care about them with the knowledge and tools to have a strong voice to make Alaska the best place to live, contribute, and grow old with dignity. The Symposium encouraged seniors to be active community members to achieve this goal. The Symposium was structured in panel formats with subject matter experts discussing a variety of topics of interest to Alaska seniors and baby boomers. Topics included innovations in health care and long-term supports; preparing for an aging workforce; economic impact of the retirement industry; value of family caregiving; senior housing development; and strategies to challenge communities to become more senior-friendly. The Symposium was sponsored by the Alaska Commission on Aging in a public-private partnership with ConocoPhillips, the Department of Health and Social Services, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, University of Alaska Anchorage, AARP Alaska, and the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority.

✧ **National Alzheimer's Advocacy Forum:** The Commission's Executive Director participated in the national Alzheimer's Advocacy Forum held in Washington DC, March 2014 and made a presentation regarding Alaska's efforts to address the impacts of dementia through passage of the Silver Alerts legislation and development of "Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia." The Commission also advocates to Alaska's Congressional delegation in support of federal legislation to improve the quality of life for people affected by Alzheimer's disease.

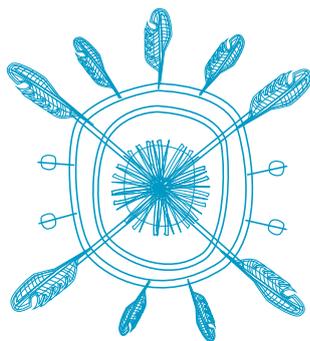


✧ **Alaska Senior Fall Prevention Coalition:** ACoA participated in community awareness efforts to promote ways to reduce the risk of senior falls through regular exercise, medication review, annual vision and hearing exams, and modifications to improve accessibility at home. The Commission also requested a Governor's Proclamation that designated September 21-27, 2014 as "Senior Falls Prevention Awareness Week: Strong Today, Falls Free Tomorrow."

✧ **Older Alaskans Month:** The Commission requested a Governor’s Proclamation to designate May 2014 as “Older Americans Month in Alaska” and collaborated with senior advisory commissions to promote the month-long celebration. The theme for this celebration was “Safe Today, Healthy Tomorrow” which focused on the importance of senior fall prevention.

✧ **Employ Older Alaskan Workers:** The Department of Labor Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training Program (MASST) and ACoA partnered to celebrate “Employ Older Alaskan Workers Week,” September 21-27, 2014. The MASST and ACoA collaborated to obtain a Governor’s Proclamation to honor older workers’ contributions to the State, published informational articles about the value of the older worker in the Senior Voice and the Commission’s newsletter, and publicly recognized MASST participants and their host sites in local community events.

✧ **Statewide Legislative Advocacy Teleconferences:** The Commission sponsored nine statewide senior legislative advocacy teleconferences during session that provided legislative updates on bills related to senior issues, sought input from seniors about those bills to inform the Commission’s positions, and encouraged seniors to advocate for legislation of importance to them.



2014
Senior Legislative Meeting Schedule

Call-In number: 1-800-315-6338
Meeting code: 53250#
Time: 9:30–11:00 a.m.

- ✧ January 23 & 29
- ✧ February 14 & 27
- ✧ March 13 & 27
- ✧ April 10, 16, & 23



Celebrating Older Alaskans Month:

- ✧ **Power of Aging in Alaska Symposium**
May 1, 2014: Hotel Captain Cook, Anchorage
- ✧ **Older American’s Month Kickoff**
May 1, 2014: Senior Activity Center: Anchorage
- ✧ **Fairbanks Senior Recognition Day**
May 8, 2014: Carlson Center, Fairbanks



Bob Sivertsen
ACoA Commissioner,
Pioneer Home Advisory
Board Chair,
Ketchikan



Seniors as a group can embody community action, and by doing so change people's lives. Through their experiences, with the connections to their community, they can inspire hope.

By organizing as a senior block they can influence decision-makers within their community to the benefit of the senior population. By their actions they can promote programs dedicated to helping people help themselves and promote senior awareness.

✧ **Quarterly Board Meetings:** ACoA held four quarterly meetings in the following locations and met with older Alaskans, family caregivers, senior providers, and other public members during each meeting.



The Commission held its first-ever rural outreach meeting in Valdez-Glennallen and conducted an Elder-Senior Listening Session to learn about health care and long-term care needs from seniors and Elders in the region. ACoA also held a separate forum with providers to gather information about regional service gaps.



The ACoA met at the Anchorage Senior Activity Center and held an orientation for new Commission members.



The ACoA met at the Goldbelt building and visited with legislators and their staff to discuss senior issues and advocate for their concerns. The Commission and AgeNet, the senior service provider coalition, held a "legislative advocacy fly-in" to jointly advocate for senior needs.



The Commission met at the Anchorage Senior Activity Center and reviewed outcomes from the Power of Aging Symposium, discussed strategies on ways to promote senior engagement in the community, and held ACoA officer elections. Mary Shields and Rolf Numme were elected as ACoA's Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively.

INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION

- ✧ **“Alaska First Aging and Disabilities Resource”**
Project: ACoA partnered with Senior & Disabilities Services and other agency partners to implement this pilot project that uses a formalized screening process to help vulnerable Alaskans connect with appropriate services using conflict-free case management to reduce denial rates for waiver eligibility in addition to providing options counseling for individuals requiring behavioral health services as well as long-term supports.
- ✧ **Healthy Alaskans 2020:** The Commission continued participation in this project of the Division of Public Health and the Alaska Native Health Tribal Consortium by providing data and other resources for senior health needs.
- ✧ **Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA):**
As a statutory advisory board partner, the Commission provides budget and policy recommendations to the AMHTA regarding matters affecting Senior Trust beneficiaries including older persons with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias and other behavioral health conditions. The Commission provides information to the Trust that examines service utilization and gaps in service regarding long-term support services for Senior Trust beneficiaries across the continuum of care. As a result, the Trust expanded its Housing Focus Area to include an emphasis on long-term support services. Commission members and staff also serve as representatives for Trust focus area workgroups and committees including the Housing and Long-Term Support Focus Area, Workforce Development, Disability Justice, and the Trustee Applicant Review Committee.
- ✧ **Aging and Disabilities Resource Centers (ADRCs):**
The Commission provides support to Senior and Disabilities Services for the ongoing development of the ADRCs as the single point of entry for the State’s long-term support services serving seniors and disabled persons and advocated for continued funding. ACoA’s executive director serves as a member of the ADRC Advisory Council.





A reminder from ACoA Chair
Mary Shields:

*Speak up!
Talk to your
legislative
representatives and
assembly members.
Keep them informed
as to what is going
on with the older
adults in their
towns.*

- ❖ **Collaboration with Local Senior Advisory Commissions:** The Commission coordinates with the Fairbanks North Star Borough Senior Advisory Commission, the Anchorage Senior Advisory Commission, and the Juneau Commission on Aging regarding advocacy for statewide issues affecting Alaska seniors. Local senior commissions work with their local governing bodies to pass resolutions in support of legislative priorities that benefit older Alaskans statewide. These resolutions are then forwarded to the Legislature.
- ❖ **Memberships on Other Boards and Commissions:** The Pioneer Home Advisory Board and the Alaska Commission on Aging work closely together on senior issues as seats are reserved for each Chair on both boards. Commissioner Banarsi Lal, Chair of the Pioneer Home Advisory Board, and Mary Shields, ACoA's Chair, serve on both boards. In addition, Commissioner Lal serves on the board of the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education and as Chair of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Senior Advisory Commission. Denise Daniello, ACoA's executive director serves on the board for the Alaska Brain Injury Network, a nonprofit organization promoting education, prevention, and advocacy for a service system to address the needs of brain injury survivors and their caregivers.



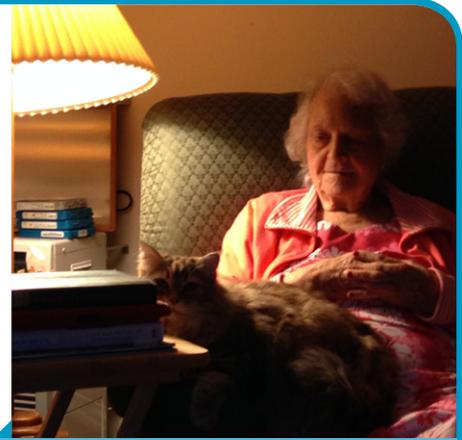
On the Horizon: Challenges & Opportunities for Successful Aging in Alaska

Alaska seniors continue to be the fastest growing demographic in the nation as well as in Alaska. Seniors who are age 60 years and older total more than 116,900 Alaskans and comprise fifteen percent of the state's total population. Alaskans age 85 and older are the fastest growing age segment of the senior population that increased more than six-fold comparing 1980 (n=619) to 2013 (n=4,697). Alaska's senior demographic surge is attributed to the aging of the large baby boomer population, longer life expectancy due to medical advances and healthier lifestyles, and shifting migration patterns. In recent years, an increasing number of Alaskans have reached their senior years, and a greater number of them are choosing to remain in Alaska.

Alaska is becoming a preferred state for older people to live due to a more moderate climate and recreational opportunities in addition to a favorable economic environment including comparatively lower taxes, enhanced job prospects, senior-friendly businesses, and better-funded services for seniors according to a report published by the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce (Fall 2014). This is good news for Alaska seniors as they will live longer and more productive lives surrounded by their families and friends and for the State as seniors contribute significantly to the wealth and prosperity in the communities where they live.

Overall, seniors have a dramatic cash impact on the State's economy. Annually, senior retirement income contributes approximately \$2.4 billion to the State's economy from retirement earnings and savings. Seniors spend their retirement income locally and year-round on a broad range of goods and services that has an economic multiplier effect resulting in job creation and income generation that expands the economy. The retirement industry creates approximately 13,000 jobs in health care, long-term care, housing, and other employment sectors.

More Alaska seniors are in the labor force than are seniors nationally, and they are engaged in a wide variety of work including healthcare, education, public administration, and retail. Currently, 22% of Alaska seniors are still working in



ACoA Chair Mary Shields on
affordable housing in Alaska:

*Affordable housing
and all that goes
with it - electricity,
heat, taxes, etc.
This applies to all
areas of Alaska.*



*As an older
Alaskan, I
learned that you
don't need to
retire because
of age.*

*—Anchorage resident,
Age 85*

comparison to 16% of seniors nationwide. Alaska seniors in the labor force contribute an additional \$633 million for a total senior economic impact of \$3 billion annually. The retirement industry compares favorably with other industries in the state including commercial fishing (\$2.2 billion), construction (\$2.1 billion), retail trade (\$2.1 billion) and tourism (\$1.9 billion).

Moreover, seniors also enhance the economy through volunteer activities and through caring for family members and friends. Retirees comprise about 24% of all volunteers in Alaska. They contribute an estimated 86 hours per person annually (or 4 million hours in total) that is equivalent to \$90 million (estimated at \$22 per volunteer hour of services rendered). Alaska ranks #12 in the nation with having the highest senior volunteer activity.

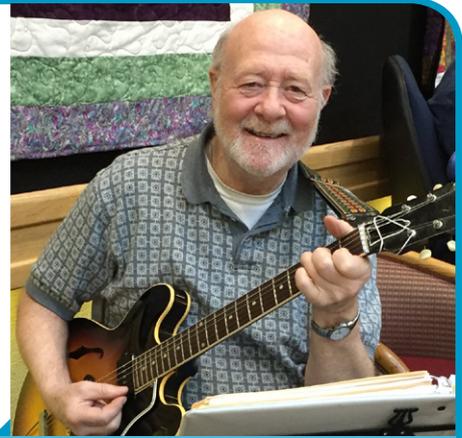
As more seniors live to an advanced age, access to appropriate health care and long-term support services becomes of greater importance that will increase demand on resources to pay for them. The need for these services has been identified as a primary challenge by seniors participating in the Elder-Senior Listening Sessions and responding to the 2014 Senior Survey. Many seniors still experience challenges in finding primary care providers that accept Medicare reimbursement. Others struggle with depression and addictions, particularly boomers who are at high risk for substance and alcohol abuse that is projected to increase as they age. Incorporating behavioral health care services in the primary care setting using a multi-disciplinary health care team approach through the Patient Centered Medical Home model provides a central place for older adults to receive appropriate care that has demonstrated positive outcomes for older patients.

Family caregiving is the essential bedrock for long-term care for seniors and a rapidly growing component of our health care system. In Alaska, an estimated 128,000 family caregivers provide unpaid care valued at \$1.1 billion. While the need for long-term care will increase substantially as baby boomers reach their 80s, the pool of family caregivers is expected to drop dramatically from the current 7 potential family caregivers for every person age 80 years and older to 4 family caregivers per senior by 2030 due to the increasing number of older people and smaller family size. Caregiving often exerts a heavy emotional, physical and financial toll that puts family caregivers at risk. Moreover, caregiving has dramatically expanded in

recent years and now includes a broad array of nursing tasks such as giving injections, wound care, preparing special diets, and managing medications. The majority of family caregivers receive little or no training to perform these complex tasks. Without family caregivers, the cost of long-term supports would increase astronomically. In FY2015, the Commission will advocate for policies that provide family caregivers with more meaningful supports and training as Alaska's population ages.

Lack of appropriate and affordable senior housing is another primary challenge that continues to be identified by Alaska seniors according to surveys and community forums conducted by ACoA over the last ten years. Alaska has a statewide shortage of accessible, affordable housing options for seniors. In some regions of the state, there is inadequate availability of senior assisted living homes, particularly those that offer memory care. In other areas, affordable housing is the major obstacle. Alaska continues to have the highest median annual costs for nursing home care at \$237,250 and \$66,000 for assisted living compared to \$77,380 and \$42,000 respectively for the country (Genworth Cost of Care Survey 2014). While many seniors prefer to age in place in their own home for as long as possible, demand is growing for senior housing that provides supportive services on site. Continuing care retirement communities, a residential model that combines residential care options providing a continuum of care for residents so that they may age in place as their needs change, is an innovative housing model growing in popularity nationwide.

Access to accessible housing based on universal-designed principles and a host of supportive services including home- and community-based services, tele-health care, and assistive technology are instrumental to keeping seniors healthy, independent, and able to live in their own homes. Innovative funding strategies that include a mix of grant funds, loan financing, tax credits and public-private partnerships are required to build Alaska's senior housing stock across the continuum of care. Providing appropriate and affordable senior housing is an important strategy for sustaining a healthy community, promoting intergenerational relations, and allowing older Alaskans to maintain a high quality of life in communities of their choice.



*Keep working
past 65 years
- be involved
in community
affairs!*

*—Anchorage resident,
Age 85*



Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2014

Annually, the ACoA gathers data to provide a sketch of the health and well-being of Alaskan residents, age 60 years and older. Below are observations on the information for the 2013/2014 Senior Snapshot.

- ✧ Alaska continues to be the fastest growing senior population per capita for the 5th year in a row. The seven states with the fastest-growing senior populations 65+ in 2013 were Alaska (58.9%), Nevada (49.3%), Colorado (41.7%), Georgia (40.1%), Arizona (39.6%), Idaho (39.1%), and South Carolina (39.1%).
- ✧ The number of Alaskan seniors age 60+ continues to increase. From the 2000 census to the 2014 projected population data, the Alaskan senior population increased 117.4% statewide. The highest regional growth rate over this period was in the Aleutians (176.3%) followed by Southcentral (163.3%). Southeast Alaska has the highest concentration of seniors at 19.8% where almost one in 5 residents in the region is an adult age 60 years and older.
- ✧ The number of Alaskans age 60 to 64 has grown to 44,200 in 2014 from 17,327 in 2000, a 155.1% increase.
- ✧ The 85-and-older Alaskan cohort increased at a fast pace. These seniors are generally frail, at risk for developing Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD), and are the most likely to depend on home- and community-based and long-term support services. The 85-and-older cohort doubled from 2,634 in 2000 to 5,860 in 2014, for an increase of 112.5%.
- ✧ Retired seniors as a whole contribute at least \$2.4 billion annually to Alaska's economy which includes their retirement income, health care spending and revenue from other sources. The retirement industry is one of the state's top economic sectors.
- ✧ The number of Alaskans age 65 and older receiving monthly cash supplemental payments from the Senior Benefits Program continues to increase. To qualify for this program, seniors must be 65 or older and have incomes below the 175% of the federal poverty level for Alaska.
- ✧ The number of seniors receiving food stamps continues to grow at a high rate from 2013 to 2014 the amount has grown by 4.3% although it has not kept up the with increase in seniors. The amount of food stamps provided to each senior is based on the need and income of the entire household.

Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2014

- ✧ The number of seniors (age 65+) receiving monthly cash supplemental payments from the Old Age Assistance program (Adult Public Assistance) has decreased this past year by 34 seniors for a total of 5,546 individuals receiving \$239.02 month.
- ✧ There were 475 applicants on the Pioneer Home active waitlist in 2012. To be eligible for the Pioneer Homes one must be 65 years or older, be a resident for at least one year and complete an application. To qualify for the active wait list, the senior must be willing and ready to move into a Pioneer Home within 30 days of an offer.
- ✧ Alaska continues to have the highest nursing home costs in the country at \$660 per day or \$240,900 per year in 2014. The average annual cost in the United States is \$87,600.
- ✧ Alaska has the highest cost for assisted living home care at \$66,000 per year as compared to the national average of \$42,000 per year.
- ✧ The 2013 average daily rate for adult day services in Alaska dropped from \$113 to \$103 daily rate in 2014. The national average is \$65 per day.
- ✧ The number of cases opened in the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman (consisting of mostly elderly people living in long-term care facilities) continues to increase each year to a total of 734. The number of new cases increased 97% since 2011. Alaska has 17 skilled nursing facilities and 636 licensed assisted living homes. The top complaints against facilities were accidents/injuries/falls/improper handling.
- ✧ The number of intakes of reports of harm by the Department of Health and Social Services, Adult Protective Services of adults 60 and older is the highest since the program was created. In FY2014, there were 3,085 cases, an increase of 18.7% over the past year.
- ✧ Falls continue to be the number one cause of non-fatal hospitalized injuries for Alaskans age 65 and older and the primary cause of fatal injury for Alaskans age 75 years and older. The Alaska Trauma Registry reported 3,356 cases of fall-related injury hospitalizations among Alaskans age 65 and older, representing a 24% increase hospitalizations compared to the preceding 5-year time period.

Note: The Senior Snapshot incorporates the latest data available however not all items are updated on an annual basis.

Population by Region and Age Group

Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2014

Population Age 60+	60+ % of Regions 2014 Pop.	CY 2014	CY 2013	CY 2012	CY 2000	% Seniors Change 2000-2014	Comments
Statewide Total	15.7%	115,280	110,794	104,807	53,026	117.4%	Over a 14 year period. Note 1
I. Bethel Area	10.1%	2,635	2,495	2,416	1,661	58.6%	Bethel, Wade Hampton
II. Interior	15.0%	16,853	16,191	15,228	7,169	135.1%	Fairbanks NSB, Yukon-Koyukuk, Denali, SE Fairbanks
III. North Slope	10.3%	1,001	983	926	481	108.1%	North Slope Borough
IV. Anchorage	14.5%	43,727	42,287	40,153	21,160	106.6%	Municipality of Anchorage
V. Southcentral	18.3%	30,179	28,620	26,809	11,463	163.3%	Kenai Peninsula, Mat-Su, Valdez-Cordova
VI. Northwest	11.3%	1,996	1,937	1,844	1,274	56.7%	Nome, Northwest Arctic
VII. Southwest	14.2%	3,048	2,919	2,805	1,656	84.1%	Bristol Bay, Dillingham, Kodiak, Lake & Peninsula
VIII. Aleutians	13.3%	1,166	1,168	1,041	422	176.3%	Aleutians East, Aleutians West
IX. Southeast	19.8%	14,675	14,194	13,585	7,740	89.6%	Haines, Juneau, Ketchikan, Prince of Wales, Sitka, Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon, Wrangell-Petersburg, Yakutat
Age 60-64 % of senior pop.	6.0%	44,200	43,031	40,975	17,327	155.1%	
Age 65-74	6.5%	47,605	44,967	41,957	22,507	111.5%	
Age 75-84	2.4%	17,615	17,151	16,427	10,558	66.8%	
Age 85+	0.8%	5,860	5,645	5,448	2,634	112.5%	
			2013	2012	2011	2010	Comments
Rank Among States in Growth of the Senior Population			1 (58.9%)	1 (58%)	1 (50%)	1 (52.1%)	Note 2

Economic Factors

Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2014

Economic Factors					Comments
Seniors' Economic Contribution to Alaska	CY 2013: \$2.5 billion	CY 2012: \$2.1 billion	CY 2011: \$1.9 billion	CY 2010: \$1.712 billion	Note 3
Average Monthly Social Security Payment Age 65+	AK, Dec. 2013 \$1,215	AK, Dec. 2012 \$1,195	AK, Dec. 2011 \$1,180	AK, Dec. 2010 \$1,101	Note 4
Average Monthly PERS Payments	AK, Sept. 2014: \$1,676 # of seniors: 14,377	AK, Sept. 2013: \$1,605 # of seniors: 13,568	AK, Sept. 2012: \$1,553 # of seniors: 12,893	AK, Sept. 2011: \$1,509 # of seniors: 12,084	Average payment per person retirement PERS payments. Note 5
Average Monthly Teachers Retirement System (TRS) Payment	AK, Sept. 2014: \$2,831 # of seniors: 5,217	AK, Oct. 2013: \$2,756 # of seniors: 5,046	AK, Sept. 2012: \$2,717 # of seniors: 4,843	AK, Sept. 2011: \$2,680 # of seniors: 4,583	Teachers Retirement System: Information includes average payment per person. Note 6

Senior Benefits by Region

Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2014

Senior Benefits Recipients 65+	Oct. 2014:	Oct. 2013:	Oct. 2012:	Sept. 2011:	Alaska Division of Public Assistance. Note 7
Statewide	11,298	11,123	10,882	10,566	Statewide
I. Bethel Area	775	778	802	805	Bethel, Wade Hampton
II. Interior	1,306	1,311	1,275	1,239	Fairbanks NSB, Yukon-Koyukuk, Denali, SE Fairbanks
III. North Slope	36	40	41	44	North Slope Borough
IV. Anchorage	4,154	4,053	3,977	3,803	Municipality of Anchorage
V. Southcentral	2,795	2,687	2,627	2,494	Kenai Peninsula, Mat-Su, Valdez-Cordova
VI. Northwest	425	395	378	411	Nome, Northwest Arctic
VII. Southwest	415	449	459	457	Bristol Bay, Dillingham, Kodiak, Lake & Peninsula
VIII. Aleutians	60	61	52	45	Aleutians East, Aleutians West
IX. Southeast	1,332	1,341	1,264	1,260	Haines, Juneau, Ketchikan, Prince of Wales, Sitka, Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon, Wrangell-Petersburg, Yakutat
Unknown Region	0	8	7	8	Unknown Region

Food Stamps and Other Senior Assistance Programs

Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2014

Other assistance				Comments
Seniors in Alaska (age 60+) on Food Stamps	Nov. 2014: 2,802 (60-64) 3,746 (65+) Total 6,548	Nov. 2013: 2,711 (60-64) 3,570 (65+) Total 6,281	Nov. 2011: 2,312 (60-64) 3,108 (65+) Total 5,372	Alaska Division of Public Assistance. Note 7
Avg. dollar monthly benefit for Alaskan seniors on Food Stamps	FY 2014: \$167.52 (Age 60-64) FY 2014: \$91.33 (Age 65+)	FY 2013: \$158.97 (Age 60-64) FY 2013: \$97.61 (Age 65+)	FY 2011: \$157.22 (Age 60-64) FY 2011: \$98.00 (Age 65+)	Alaska Division of Public Assistance. Note 7
Seniors Receiving Old Age Assistance 65+	Nov. 2014: Average amt. \$239.02 # 65+: 5,546	Nov. 2013: Average amt. \$237.26 # 65+: 5,580	Nov. 2012: Average amt. \$236 # 65+: 5,395	Alaska Division of Public Assistance. Note 7

AHFC and Senior Housing

Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2014

Housing				Comments
AHFC total units of senior/disabled housing (statewide)	Dec. 2014: 610 units	Dec. 2013: 610 units	Dec. 2012: 610 units Dec 2011: 610 units	Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC). Note 9
AHFC wait list for senior/disabled housing (statewide)	Nov. 2014: 567	Nov. 2013: 1,501	Nov 2012: 1,281 Oct. 2011: 1,144 Nov.	The data for 2013 represents only senior housing units in Anchorage for Alaska Housing Finance Corporation. Note 10
AHFC wait list for housing vouchers	Nov. 2014: 2,448 Families	Nov. 2013: 4,743 Families	Nov. 2012: 3,341 Families Oct. 2011: 5,344 Families	Alaska Housing Finance Corporation. Note 11
AHFC senior housing units funded for development	FY 2014: 95 Units	FY 2013: 40 Units	FY 2012: 110 Units FY 2011: 58 Units	Alaska Housing Finance Corporation. From 2001 thru 2014, 866 units in total were developed with AHFC funding by developers.

Senior Health

Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2014

Senior Health	Alaska	Alaska	U.S. Comments	Comments
Number with Alzheimer's Disease & Related Dementia (ADRD) (estimate)	CY 2014 6,100	CY 2010: 5,000 CY 2000: 3,400	CY 2014: 200,000 Total ADRD nation-wide	AK ADRD estimate based on national prevalence rates for persons age 65+. One in nine older Americans has Alzheimer's disease. 81% increase in Alzheimer's deaths since 2000. Note 12
Suicide rate (per 100,000 seniors age 65+)	CY 2013: 23.6; 16 deaths	CY 2012: 18.8; 12 deaths	CY 2011: 18.4; 7 deaths	Per 100,000, age 65+. Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics. Rates based on fewer than 20 occurrences are statistically unreliable and should be used with caution.
Fatal fall rate (accidental)	CY 2013: 22.1 15 Deaths	CY 2012: 21.9 14 Deaths	CY 2011: 17.0 10 Deaths	Per 100,000, age 65+. Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics.
Other accidental deaths (per 100,000 age 65+)	CY 2013: 59.0 40 Deaths	CY 2012: 78.4 50 Deaths	CY 2011: 71.4 42 Deaths	Per 100,000, age 65+. Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics.
Alcohol-induced deaths	CY 2013: 26.6 18 Deaths	CY 2012: 25.1 16 Deaths	CY 2011: 20.4 12 Deaths	Per 100,000, age 65+. Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics.
Drug-induced deaths	CY 2012: 3 Deaths*	CY 2011: 1 Death*	CY 2010: 4 Deaths	Per 100,000, age 65+. Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics. *Rates based on fewer than 6 occurrences are not reported.
Leading Causes of Death	2013 (AK):	2012 (AK):	2011 (AK):	Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics
Cancer	861.8 584 Deaths	893.6 570 Deaths	1007.8	Per 100,000, age 65+
Heart Disease	647.8 439 Deaths	667.8 442 deaths	749.9 412 deaths	Per 100,000 age 65+
Stroke	215.9 146 Deaths	229.3 145 Deaths	229.3 145 Deaths	Per 100,000 age 65+
Influenza & Pneumonia	72.3 49 Deaths	45.5 29 Deaths	59.5 35 Deaths	Per 100,000 age 65+
Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases	221.4 150 Deaths	239.9 153 Deaths	251.6 148 Deaths	Per 100,000 age 65+
Alzheimer's disease	101.8 69 Deaths	156.8 100 Deaths	110.5 65 Deaths	Per 100,000 age 65+
Diabetes mellitus	101.8 69 Deaths	101.9 65 Deaths	110.5 65 Deaths	Per 100,000 age 65+

Senior Health (continued)

Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2014

Senior Health	Alaska	Alaska	U.S. Comments	Comments
Parkinson's Disease	48.7 33 Deaths	47.0 30 Deaths	40.8 24 Deaths	Per 100,000 age 65+
Accident/ Unintentional injuries	88.4 52 Deaths	134.7 74 Deaths	101.3	Per 100,000 age 65+
Hospital admissions for all non-fatal injuries, age 60+.	AK, 2010: 923	AK, 2009: 998	U.S., 2010: 645,570	Alaska Trauma Registry; Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) data base (CDC). U.S. total reflects top 20 causes of injury.
Hospital admissions for non-fatal falls, 60+	AK, 2010: 706	AK, 2009: 753	565,029	Alaska Trauma Registry; WISQARS data base (CDC)
Suicides	18.4% 12 Deaths	25.5% 14 Deaths	14.89% 5,994 Deaths	Per 100,000 age 65+

Senior Behavioral Health

Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2014

Senior Behavioral Health	2013 (AK)	(AK)2012 (AK)2011	2008 (U.S.)	Comments
Binge drinkers	7.7%	4.2% 8%	7.7%	Age 65+ - 2010 BRFSS. Note 13
Heavy drinkers	6.6%	4.8% 7%	6.6%	Age 65+ - 2010 BRFSS. Note 14
Smokers	9.9%	10.0% 12%	9.9%	Age 65+ - 2010 BRFSS. Note 15
Disabled seniors	37.1%	38.7% 45%	37.1%	Age 65+ who are "limited in activities because of physical, mental or emotional problems or need special equipment such as a cane, a wheelchair, special bed or telephone" – 2012 BRFSS. Note 16
Obese seniors	30.5%	30.4% 30%	30.5%	Age 65+ - 2010 BRFSS. Note 17

Long Term Care

Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2014

Long Term Care	Alaska			Comments
Pioneer Home residents at Level III	Oct. 2014: 55.9% Oct 2013: 56%	Oct. 2012: 53% Oct. 2011: 50.4%	Dec. 2004: 46.1%	Level III is the most advanced level of care. Data provided by the Division of Pioneer Homes. Note 18
Average age of Pioneer Home resident	Oct, 2014: 86.2 years	Oct, 2013: 86.2 years	1998: 76 years	Total number of beds available is 542. Note 18
Pioneer Home Applicants on Active Wait List	2014 – 276 2013 - 369	2012 – 475 2011 - 508	2008 – 374 2007 - 339	Applicants must be 65 years or older, be a resident for at least one year and fill out an application. Active wait list is when senior is willing and ready to move into a Pioneer Home within 30 days of an offer. Note 18
Nursing home costs – private room, average daily rate	AK, 2014: \$660 per day \$240,900/year	AK, 2013: \$701 per day \$255,891/year	U.S., 2014: \$240 per day \$87,600/year	Amount is based on a private room. Alaska has the highest cost of skilled nursing facility care in the U.S. Note 19
Assisted Living Home costs – average monthly base rate	AK, 2014: \$5,500 Per month \$66,000 year	AK, 2013: \$6,000 Per month \$72,000 year	U.S., 2014: \$3,500 per month \$42,000 year.	Based on Median costs. Alaska went from 3rd highest cost in the U.S. in 2010 to 7th highest cost of Assisted Living Homes in 2012. Most expensive average is Washington DC at \$5,933 per month. Note 19
Home Health Care Costs: Homemaker Services	AK, 2014: \$56,125 per year or \$154 average daily rate	AK, 2013: \$56,056 per year \$153.50 average daily rate	U.S., 2014: \$43,472 per year or \$19 average rate per hour	Alaska has the highest cost per year. Average cost of care based on 44 hours per week by 52 weeks. Note 19
Adult Day Services Costs	AK, 2014: \$103 average daily rate	AK, 2013: \$113 average daily rate	US, 2014: \$65 average daily rate	Alaska has the highest cost for adult day services. This amount is based on 5 days per week by 52 weeks. Note 19
Older Alaskans Medicaid waiver recipients	FY 2014: 2,384	FY 2013: 2,692	FY 2012: 2,425	To qualify for services under the Older Alaskans Medicaid Waiver program, individuals must be age 65 or older, income-eligible for Medicaid, and must meet nursing home level-of-care requirements. Note 20

Long Term Care (continued)

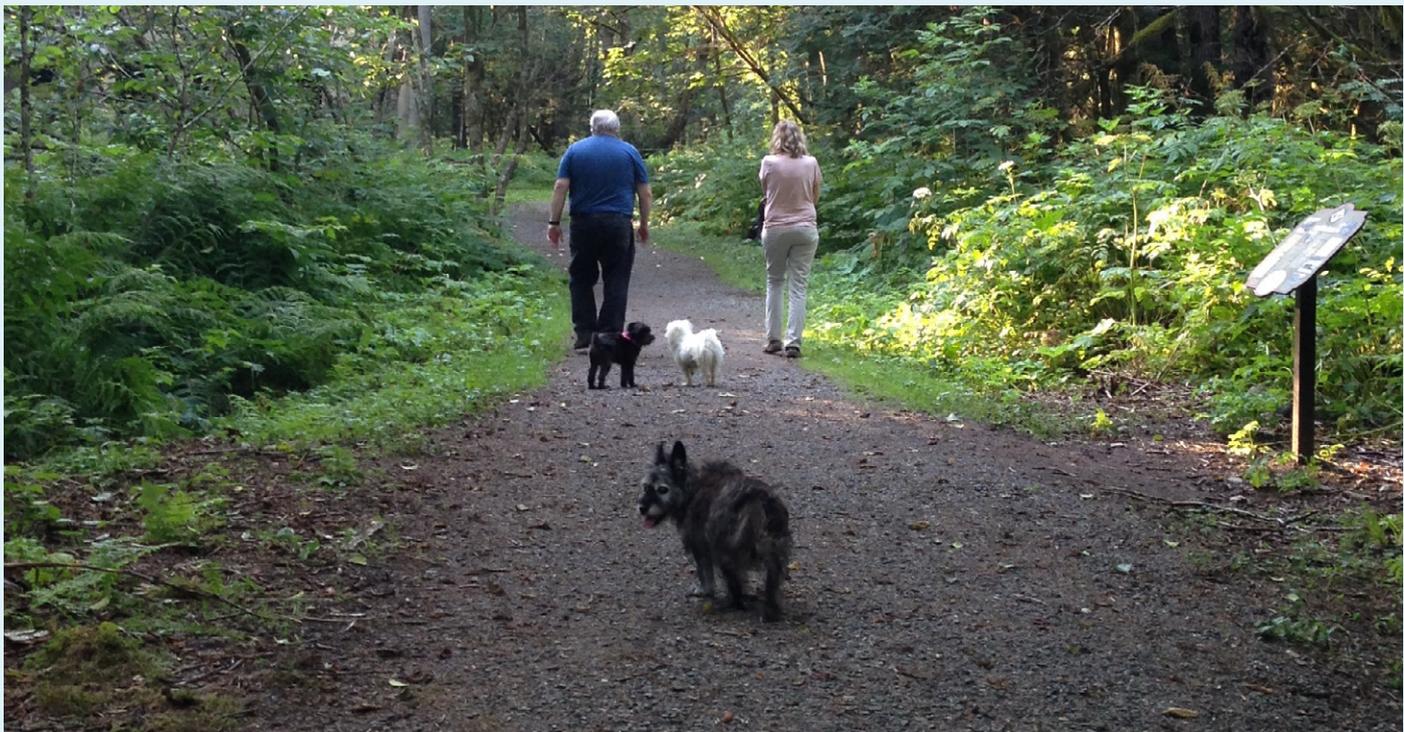
Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2014

Long Term Care	Alaska			Comments
Senior grants clients served by Senior and Disability grants	FY14: 31,679 Total cost \$14,894,610 Per Client \$470 average	FY 2013: 33,795 Total cost \$14,419,340 Per Client \$427 average	FY 2012: 31,000 Total cost \$13,504,376 Per Client \$436 average	FY 2013 financial total was funded the following way: Federal 87%, State 11% and MHTAAR 2%. Note 21
Alaskans on Medicare	CY 2013: 73,434	CY 2011: 68,417	CY 2008: 58,842	The number of Alaskans has increased steadily over the years with an increase of 24.8% over the past 6 years. Info from Medicare Office. Note 22
Aging and Disability Resource Center	FY2013 11,497	FY2012 10,367	FY2011 9,615	Clients Served. Info from Senior & Disabilities Services at a cost of \$791,120 in FY2013. Note 21

Senior Safety

Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2014

Senior Safety			Comments
Long-Term Care Ombudsman complaints	FY 2014: Cases open – 734 Complaints – 1,311 FY 2013: Cases open – 619 Complaints – 1,417	FY 2011: Cases open – 379 Complaints – 980 FY 2012: Cases open – 535 Complaints – 1,416	Complaints involving seniors (age 60+) in long-term care in the 17 skilled nursing facilities and 636 licensed assisted living homes. The top complaint against facilities was accidents/injuries/falls/improper handling. In closed cases for FY13, 85% were resolved to the satisfaction of the resident or complainant. Only 2% were not resolved. Note 23
Adult Protective Services Reports of harm	FY 2014: Intakes 3,085 FY 2013: Intakes 2,598	FY 2011: Intakes 2060 FY 2012: Intakes 2,301	Intakes age 60+. Adult Protective Services (APS). Note 24

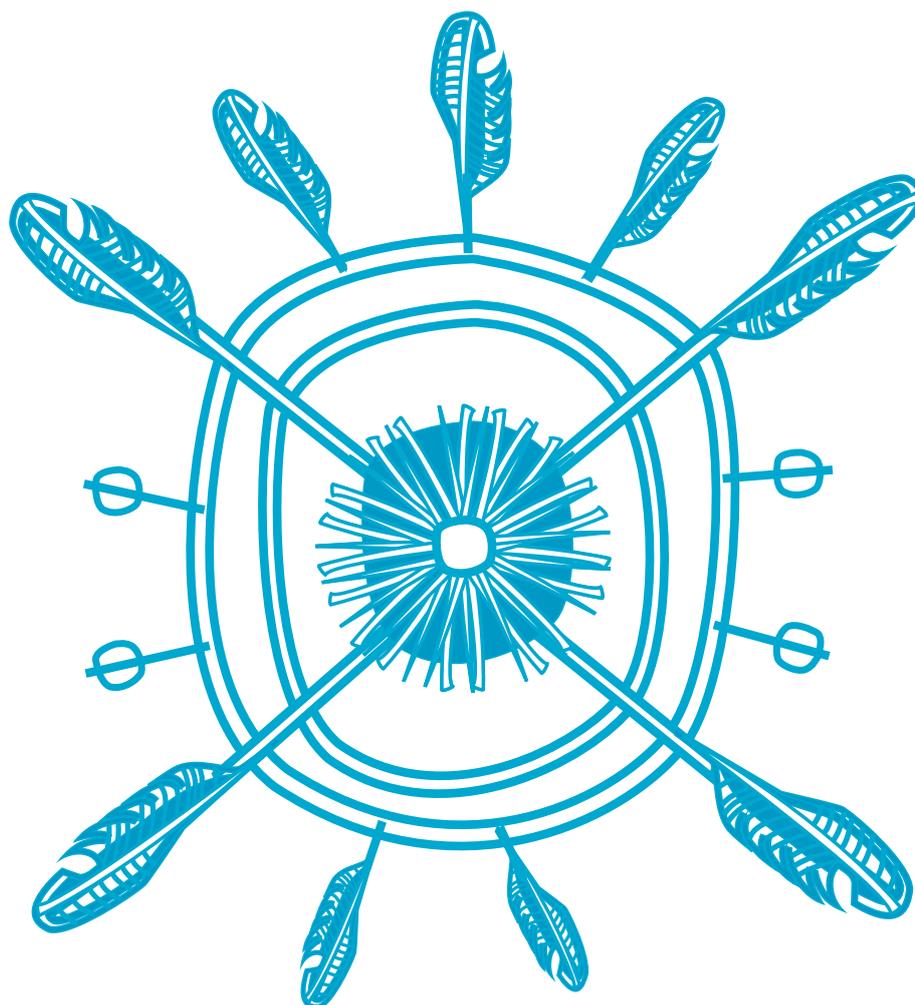


Senior Snapshot Notes

1. Data from Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's 2014 population estimates. Regions are those used by the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services. "The Alaska State Plan for Senior Services, FY2012 – FY2015" prescribes funding by region for senior grant programs which include federal Older Americans Act money.
2. Data from "A Profile of Older Americans: 2013," Administration on Aging, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
3. *The University of Alaska Anchorage's Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) estimated the 2004 cash contribution of Alaska retirees age 60 and older at \$1.461 billion. The estimate is contained in the 2007 ACoA-commissioned "Report on the Economic Well-Being of Alaska Seniors" available on the Commission's website at: <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/acoa/documents/seniorWellbeingReport.pdf>. **The ACoA estimated the 2011 cash contributions of older Alaskans to the state's economy using the following formula: (Alaskans 65+ 2010 population X 6.97% population growth rate for 2011) X (2011 retirement salary) X (Alaska senior medical cost in 2009 times two years of growth rate at 8.9% annual). The Alaska 2010 senior (65+) population is 55,237 according to the Alaska Department of Labor with an estimated annual growth rate of 6.97%. The average Alaskan retirement income in 2011 was \$28,459 (2011 American Community Survey One-Year Estimates). The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) 2009 estimated the average Alaskan senior health care cost per person at \$9,128. The CMS calculated the annual growth rate for senior health care costs to be 8.9% per year from 2004-2009. MMRR 2011: Volume 1 (4), Cuckler, G., Martin, A., Whittle, L., Heffler, S., Sisko, A., Lassman, D., Benson, J. E8, Health Spending by State of Residence, 1991–2009.
4. SOURCE: Social Security Administration, Master Beneficiary Record, 100 percent data. Data obtained from Social Security Administration's website. Data from "OASDI Beneficiaries by State and County, 2013. The Alaska average monthly payment may be lower because of the high percentage of Alaska retirees who are subject to the "Windfall Elimination Provision," which limits Social Security retirement benefits for many individuals receiving public employee pensions.
5. Figures on PERS (Public Employee Retirement System) benefits include PERS retirees age 60 and older who currently reside in Alaska. AK Dept. of Administration, Div. of Retirement & Benefits.
6. Figures on TRS (Teachers Retirement System) benefits include TRS retirees age 60 and older who currently reside in Alaska. AK Dept. of Administration, Div. of Retirement & Benefits.
7. Information from the Alaska Division of Public Assistance.

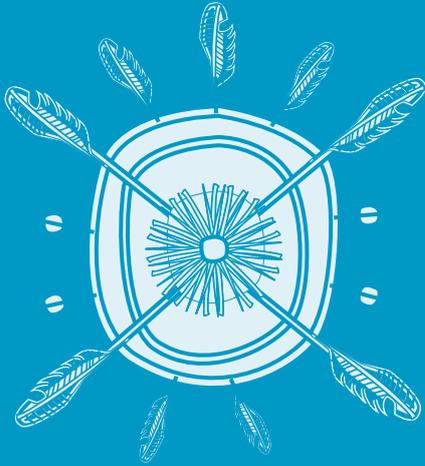
8. Adult Public Assistance is a supplement to SSI, so recipients must be either certified as disabled by the Social Security Administration (with severe long-term disabilities that impose mental or physical limitations on their day-to-day functioning) or be age 65 and older. There are income limits for the program, which is intended to assist aged or disabled individuals in attaining self-support or self-care.
9. Includes only HUD properties managed by AHFC. The total number of units has not changed for many years.
10. Includes individuals age 62+ as well as individuals of any age with a disability.
11. All families, regardless of age, in this wait list count.
12. Data from Alzheimer's Association – Alaska Alzheimer's Statistics report.
13. The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is an ongoing multi-state phone survey conducted in Alaska by the Division of Public Health. The 2013 data include cell phone data and use a new weighting methodology that allows adjustment for more demographic variables. Because of this – they are not directly comparable to past years that did not use these methods. Binge drinking is defined as males having five or more drinks on one occasion or females having four or more drinks on one occasion.
14. The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is an ongoing multi-state phone survey conducted in Alaska by the Division of Public Health. The 2013 data include cell phone data and use a new weighting methodology that allows adjustment for more demographic variables. Because of this – they are not directly comparable to past years that did not use these methods. Heavy drinking is defined as adult men having more than two drinks per day or adult women having more than one drink per day.
15. The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is an ongoing multi-state phone survey conducted in Alaska by the Division of Public Health. The 2013 data include cell phone data and use a new weighting methodology that allows adjustment for more demographic variables. Because of this – they are not directly comparable to past years that did not use these methods. Smokers are defined as current smokers.
16. The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is an ongoing multi-state phone survey conducted in Alaska by the Division of Public Health. The 2013 data include cell phone data and use a new weighting methodology that allows adjustment for more demographic variables. Because of this – they are not directly comparable to past years that did not use these methods. Seniors with disabilities include those age 65 and over who say that they are limited in their activities because of physical, mental, or emotional problems.

17. The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is an ongoing multi-state phone survey conducted in Alaska by the Division of Public Health. The 2013 data include cell phone data and use a new weighting methodology that allows adjustment for more demographic variables. Because of this – they are not directly comparable to past years that did not use these methods. “Obese” individuals are defined as those with a body mass index (BMI) of 30.0 or greater.
18. Information from the Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes.
19. Genworth Financial 2014 & 2013 Compare Long Term Care Costs Across the United States. In 2012 MetLife Mature Market Institute, 2012 Market Survey of Long-Term Care Costs was used.
20. Information from the Division of Health Care Services.
21. FY12 & FY13 information from Senior & Disabilities Services. FY11 info from DHSS Budget Overview. Senior grant programs include Nutrition, Transportation and Support Services (NTS), Senior In-Home Services, Adult Day Services, Family Caregiver, and ADRD Education and Support. The senior grant programs are available to individuals age 60 and older. Seniors (age 60+) need not be Medicaid-eligible in order to receive grant services. Over the past three years, this number has also included seniors served by ADRCs.
22. Information from the Medicare Information Office.
23. The Long Term Care Ombudsman believes that the rise in complaints is related to the Department of Health and Social Services diligent efforts to get assisted living homes to submit critical incident reports (CIR) when residents are missing, injured, or deceased. The CIRs can lead to additional cases being opened when there is a concern that the homes did not provide adequate supervision and care. So the rise in complaints reflects the additional safeguards DHSS has put in place to ensure resident safety.
24. Information from Adult Protective Services, State of Alaska Health and Social Services.



**Alaska Commission on Aging
FY 2014 Annual Report**

<http://www.alaskaaging.org/>



FY 2014

**Alaska Commission
on Aging
150 Third St.
PO Box 110693
Juneau, AK 99811-0693
Phone: (907) 465-3250
Fax: (907) 465-1398**

**www.alaskaaging.org
hss.acoa@alaska.gov**

ACoA's Guiding Principles:

- ◆ *Highlight Seniors' Community Contributions.*
- ◆ *Keep Seniors Strong and Healthy.*
- ◆ *Promote Independence, Empowerment and Choice.*
- ◆ *Focus on Partnerships.*
- ◆ *Build Community-Centered Agencies.*
- ◆ *Provide Home-and Community-Based Care.*
- ◆ *Offer a Full Continuum of Care.*
- ◆ *Individualize the Response.*
- ◆ *Include Younger Generations.*
- ◆ *Target Services to the Most Vulnerable Seniors.*
- ◆ *Support High-Quality Staff.*
- ◆ *Respect Rights.*
- ◆ *Aim for Excellence.*
- ◆ *Give Fair Reimbursement.*