



# Needs Assessment Report - DRAFT 1

Alaska State Plan for Senior Services, FY 2016-2019

by: Denali Daniels and Associates, Inc.  
January 21, 2015



## Needs Assessment Activities

### **Senior Survey (p.3-15)**

- Survey Monkey
- 40 questions total, including 10 open ended questions
- Distributed by email and hard copy in Senior Voice and in bulk to senior centers, Native entities, and Pioneer Homes
- September 2014 – January 2015
- Approximately 10% responded online and 90% responded via mail-in hard copy
- 2193 surveys received

### **Provider Survey (p.16)**

- Survey Monkey
- 19 questions, including 3 open-ended
- Distributed to senior centers and long term care facilities December 2014 – ongoing
- 11 surveys received so far

### **Elder-Senior Listening Sessions (p.17-128)**

- Six across state:
  - Copper Center (September 2013)
  - Juneau (February 2014)
  - 2 in Fairbanks (September 2014)
  - Homer (October 2014)
  - Anchorage (December 2014)
- Agenda included demographics and behavioral health background, interactive polling exercise, and small group discussions
- 4 had interactive polling devices

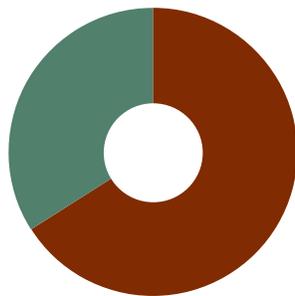
## **Senior Survey**

- Survey Monkey
- 40 questions total, including 10 open ended questions
- Distributed by email and hard copy in Senior Voice and in bulk to senior centers, Native entities, and Pioneer Homes
- September 2014 – January 2015
- Approximately 10% responded online and 90% responded via mail-in hard copy
- 2193 surveys received

## What is your age?

Answered question: **2145**

| Answer Options | Response % | Response Count |
|----------------|------------|----------------|
| ● 55 to 59     | 7.8%       | 168            |
| ● 60 to 65     | 20.3%      | 435            |
| ● 66 to 70     | 19.6%      | 421            |
| ● 71 to 75     | 18.2%      | 390            |
| ● 76 to 84     | 22.5%      | 483            |
| ● 85+          | 11.6%      | 248            |



## Your Gender?

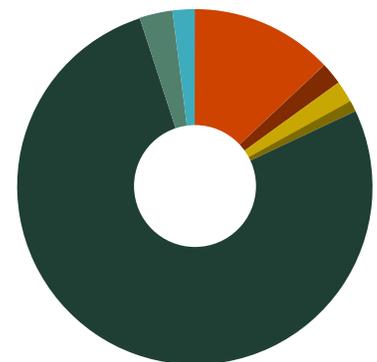
Answered question: **2152**

| Answer Options | Response % | Response Count |
|----------------|------------|----------------|
| ● Female       | 65.5%      | 1410           |
| ● Male         | 34.5%      | 742            |

## What is your race/ethnicity?

Answered question: **2144**

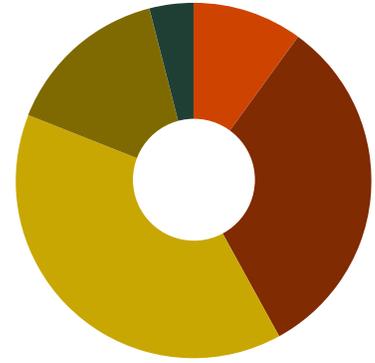
| Answer Options                     | Response % | Response Count |
|------------------------------------|------------|----------------|
| ● American Indian or Alaska Native | 13.4%      | 288            |
| ● Asian or Pacific Islander        | 2%         | 42             |
| ● Black or African American        | 1.8%       | 38             |
| ● Hispanic or Latino               | 1%         | 21             |
| ● White / Caucasian                | 81.4%      | 1746           |
| ● Prefer not to answer             | 3%         | 65             |
| ● Other (please specify)           | 1.6%       | 34             |



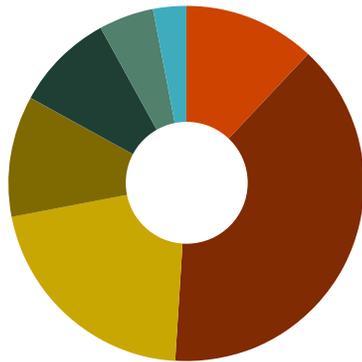
## In general, how would you rate your overall health?

Answered question: **2135**

| Answer Options | Response % | Response Count |
|----------------|------------|----------------|
| ● Excellent    | 10.4%      | 222            |
| ● Very good    | 32%        | 683            |
| ● Good         | 38.8%      | 828            |
| ● Fair         | 15.3%      | 326            |
| ● Poor         | 3.6%       | 76             |



## How long have you lived in Alaska?



Answered question: **1959**

| Answer Options            | Response % | Response Count |
|---------------------------|------------|----------------|
| ● All my life (born here) | 12%        | 235            |
| ● More than 40 years      | 39.2%      | 767            |
| ● 31 to 40 years          | 20.9%      | 410            |
| ● 21 to 30 years          | 11.4%      | 224            |
| ● 11 to 20 years          | 8.5%       | 166            |
| ● 50 to 10 years          | 5.2%       | 102            |
| ● Less than 5 years       | 2.8%       | 55             |

Please rate the following senior concerns based on how much you think they affect Alaskan seniors.

Answered question: 2135

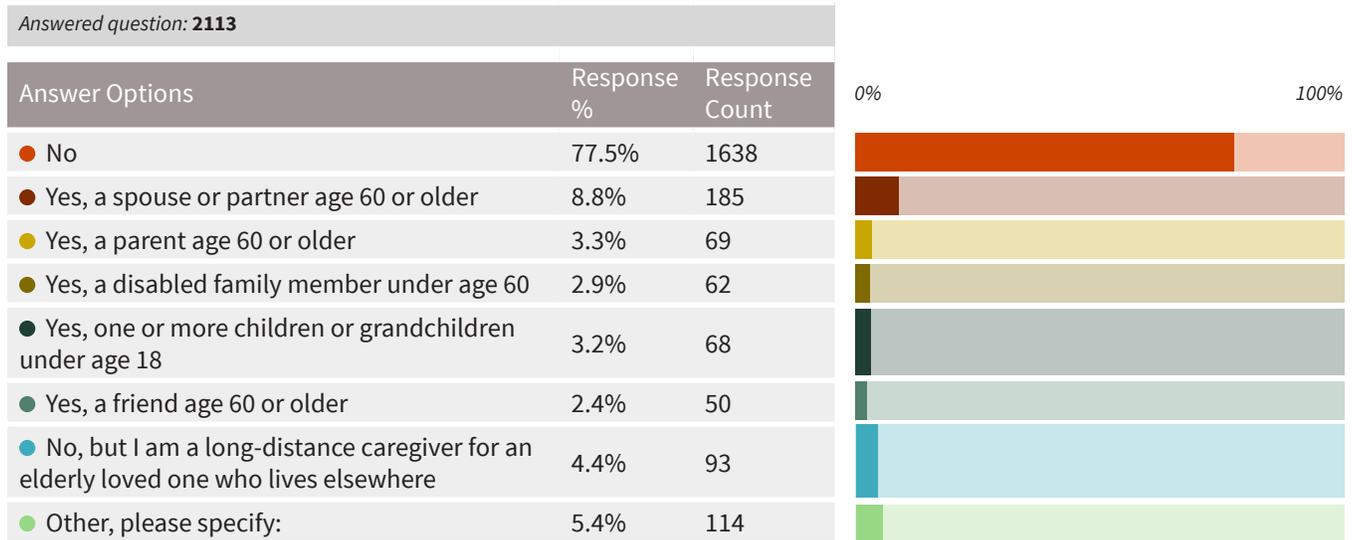
| Answer Options  | Very Important | Somewhat Important | Less Important | Don't Know | Rating Average | Response Count |
|---|----------------|--------------------|----------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Health Care</b>  | <b>1997</b>    | <b>120</b>         | <b>10</b>      | <b>3</b>   | <b>1.07</b>    | <b>2130</b>    |
| <b>Financial Security</b>                                   | <b>1797</b>    | <b>303</b>         | <b>28</b>      | <b>1</b>   | <b>1.17</b>    | <b>2129</b>    |
| <b>Affordable and accessible housing</b>                    | <b>1598</b>    | <b>403</b>         | <b>95</b>      | <b>2</b>   | <b>1.29</b>    | <b>2098</b>    |
| <b>Having enough food to eat</b>                            | <b>1448</b>    | <b>502</b>         | <b>139</b>     | <b>1</b>   | <b>1.37</b>    | <b>2090</b>    |
| <b>Fuel costs</b>   | <b>1342</b>    | <b>617</b>         | <b>124</b>     | <b>6</b>   | <b>1.42</b>    | <b>2089</b>    |
| Availability of in-home services for seniors                | 1325           | 611                | 132            | 7          | 1.43           | 2075           |
| Programs to help prevent Elder abuse and exploitation       | 1302           | 539                | 198            | 10         | 1.47           | 2049           |
| Programs to help seniors with dementia and their families   | 1226           | 618                | 176            | 9          | 1.49           | 2029           |
| Transportation  | 1196           | 755                | 158            | 2          | 1.51           | 2111           |
| Assisted living facilities                                  | 1078           | 744                | 201            | 7          | 1.57           | 2030           |
| Information about programs and services                     | 1116           | 734                | 210            | 6          | 1.57           | 2066           |
| Training for unpaid caregivers                              | 939            | 738                | 297            | 17         | 1.69           | 1991           |
| Programs that give families a break (Adult Day and Respite) | 874            | 753                | 353            | 12         | 1.75           | 1992           |
| Support for grandparents raising grandchildren              | 858            | 712                | 359            | 16         | 1.76           | 1945           |
| Senior center programs and activities                       | 829            | 818                | 355            | 7          | 1.77           | 2009           |
| Help with depression  | 759            | 756                | 452            | 23         | 1.87           | 1990           |
| Senior job training/employment                              | 590            | 790                | 563            | 20         | 2.01           | 1963           |

**Top Five Responses**

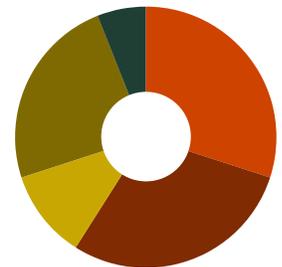
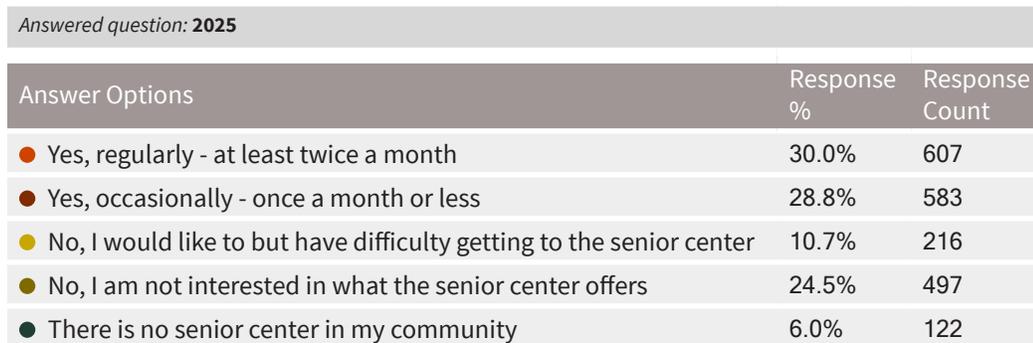
● Very Important  
 ● Somewhat Important  
 ● Less Important  
 ● Don't Know



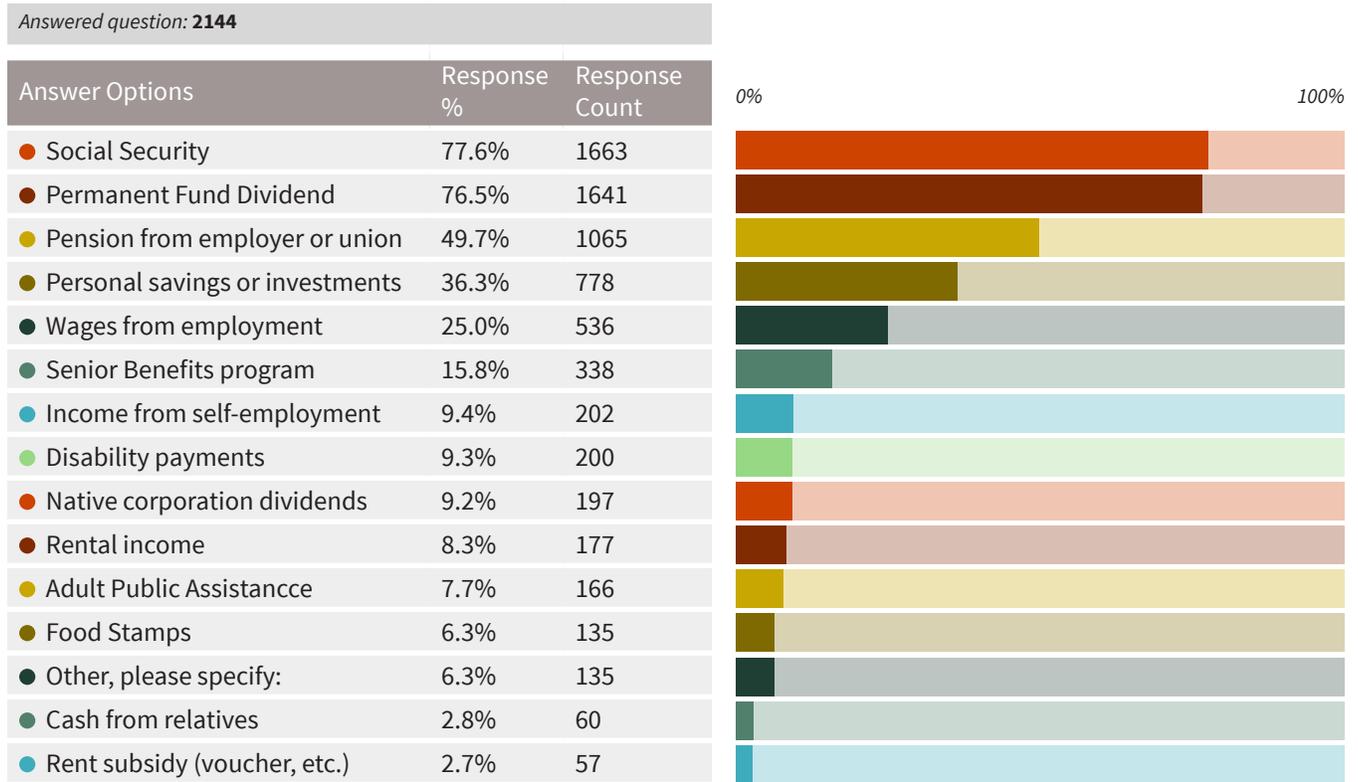
## Do you provide home care for a family member or friend? (Check all that apply.)



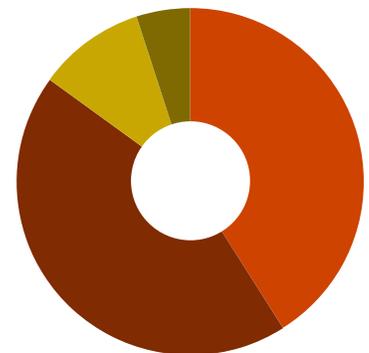
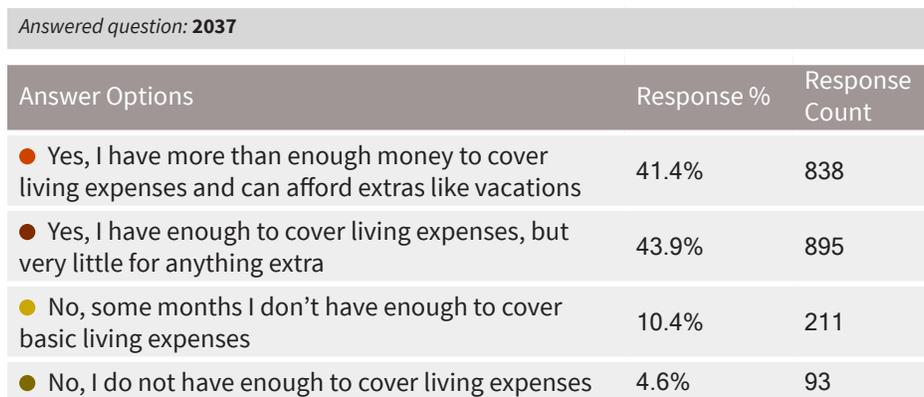
## Do you visit your senior center?



## What are the sources of your household's income? (Check all that apply.)



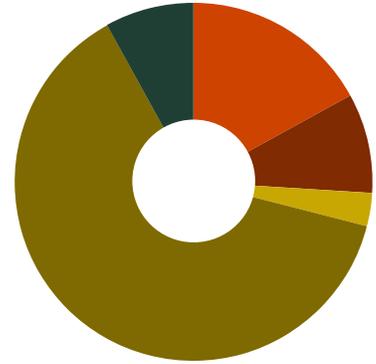
## Is your monthly income enough to meet all your monthly expenses?



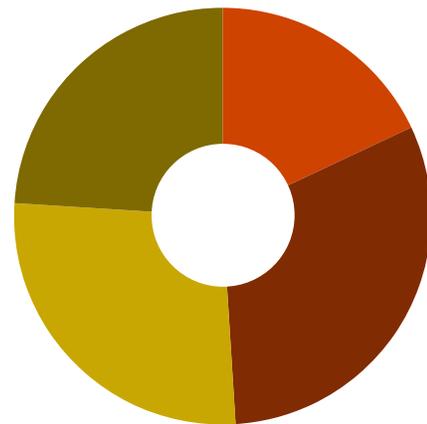
## Are you currently employed or self-employed?

Answered question: 2025

| Answer Options                 | Response % | Response Count |
|--------------------------------|------------|----------------|
| Yes, full-time                 | 17.1%      | 361            |
| Yes, part-time                 | 9.0%       | 190            |
| No, but I am seeking work      | 3.2%       | 68             |
| No, I am retired               | 62.7%      | 1319           |
| Retired, but work occasionally | 7.9%       | 167            |



## If you are currently still working, when do you expect to retire? (Skip this question if you are already retired.)



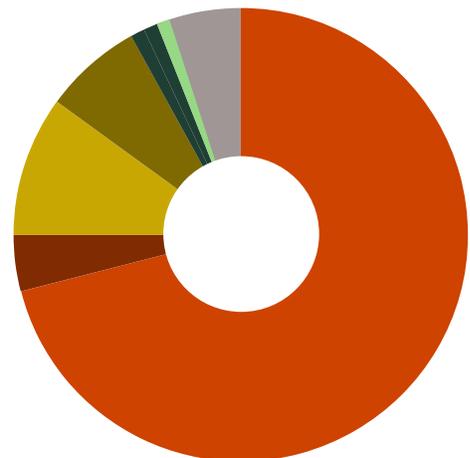
Answered question: 593

| Answer Options                                    | Response % | Response Count |
|---|------------|----------------|
| Within the next year or two                       | 18.0%      | 107            |
| Within the next two to five years                 | 31.2%      | 185            |
| More than five years from now                     | 26.8%      | 159            |
| I do not plan to retire even if I could afford it | 23.9%      | 142            |

## What type of housing do you live in?

Answered question: 2101

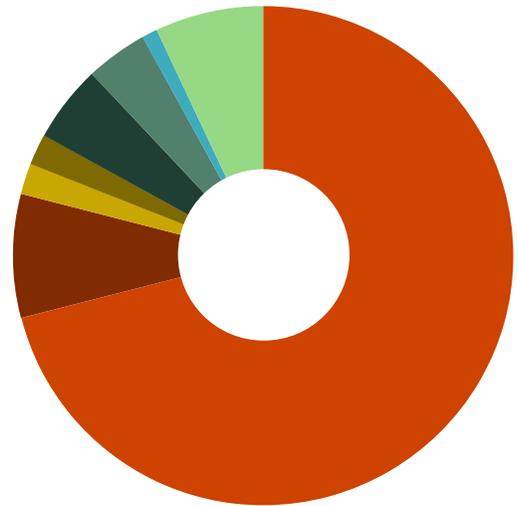
| Answer Options                            | Response % | Response Count |
|---|------------|----------------|
| House/condo that I or a family member own | 70.7%      | 1486           |
| House/condo that I rent                   | 3.9%       | 81             |
| Apartment in senior housing complex       | 10.2%      | 215            |
| Apartment not in senior complex           | 6.6%       | 139            |
| Assisted living facility                  | 1.4%       | 30             |
| Nursing home                              | .8%        | 16             |
| Rooming house or hotel                    | .4%        | 9              |
| Homeless shelter                          | .1%        | 2              |
| Other, please specify                     | 5.9%       | 123            |



## Where do you expect to be living five years from now?

Answered question: 2100

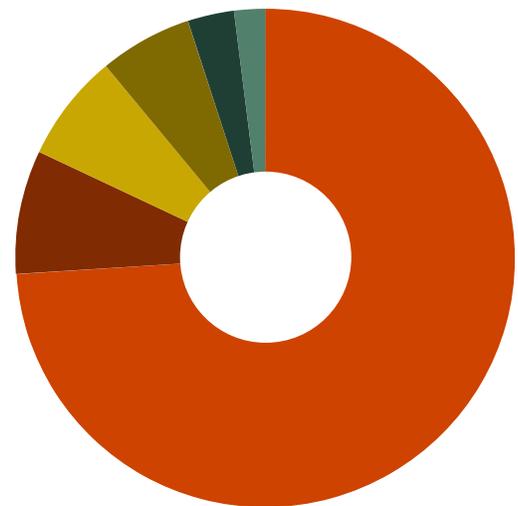
| Answer Options   | Response % | Response Count |
|--|------------|----------------|
| Same home as I live in now                               | 71.8%      | 1507           |
| Same community, but smaller living space                 | 7.7%       | 162            |
| Living independently in a larger community in Alaska     | 1.7%       | 36             |
| Living independently in a smaller community in Alaska    | 1.5%       | 31             |
| Living independently in a different state                | 5.2%       | 109            |
| Move to an assisted living or nursing facility in Alaska | 3.8%       | 79             |
| Move to an assisted living or nursing facility outside   | 1.0%       | 20             |
| Other, please specify:                                   | 7.4%       | 156            |



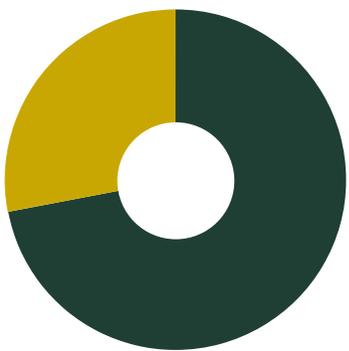
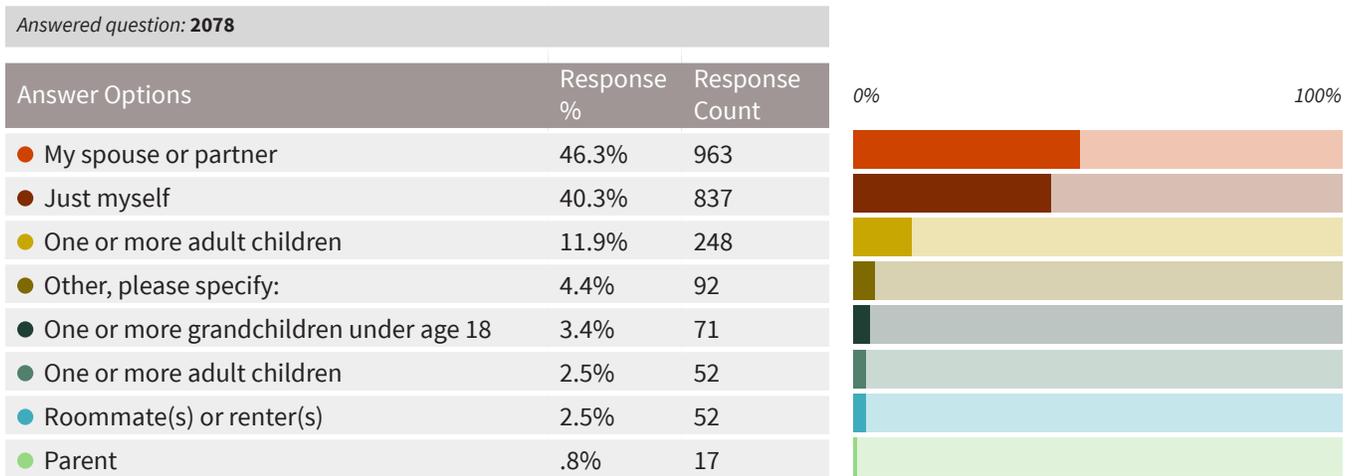
## If you are planning to move out of Alaska please tell us why? (Check the most important reason)

Answered question: 1424

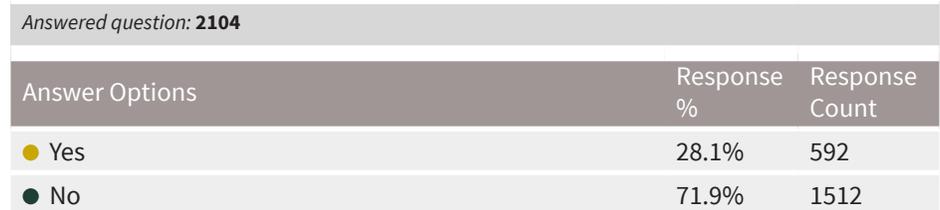
| Answer Options                             | Response % | Response Count |
|--|------------|----------------|
| I am planning to remain in Alaska          | 74.4%      | 1059           |
| High cost of living                        | 7.5%       | 107            |
| Want to be near family living out of state | 6.5%       | 92             |
| Want to live in different climate          | 6.3%       | 90             |
| Limited access to primary health care      | 3.1%       | 44             |
| Problems finding appropriate housing       | 2.2%       | 32             |
| Other (please specify)                     |            | 88             |



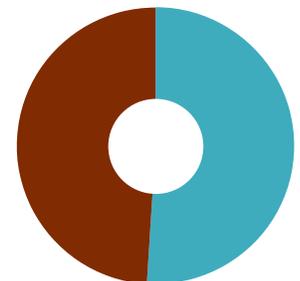
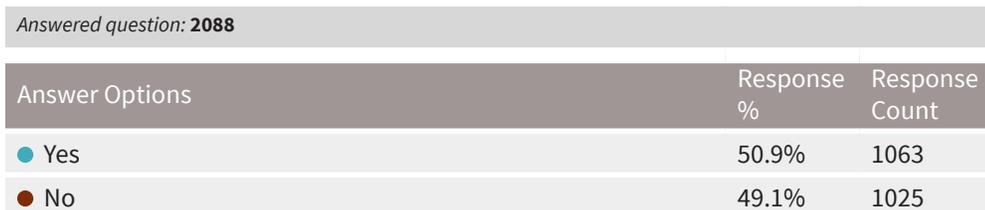
## Besides yourself, who lives in your household? (Check all that apply.)



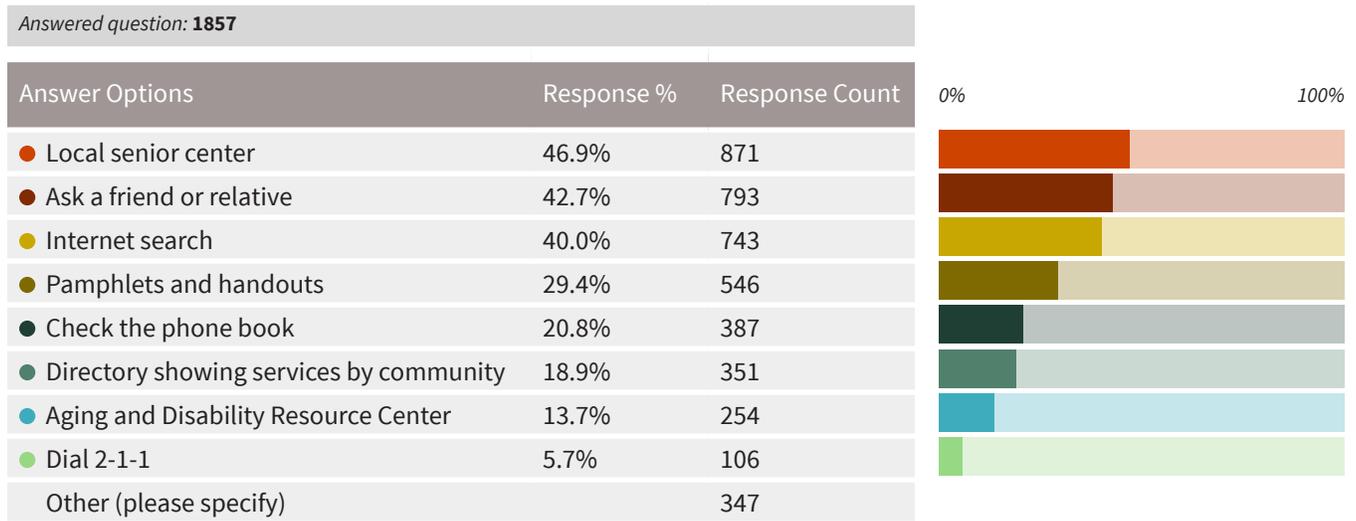
## Do you participate in subsistence activities or does someone provide subsistence food to you?



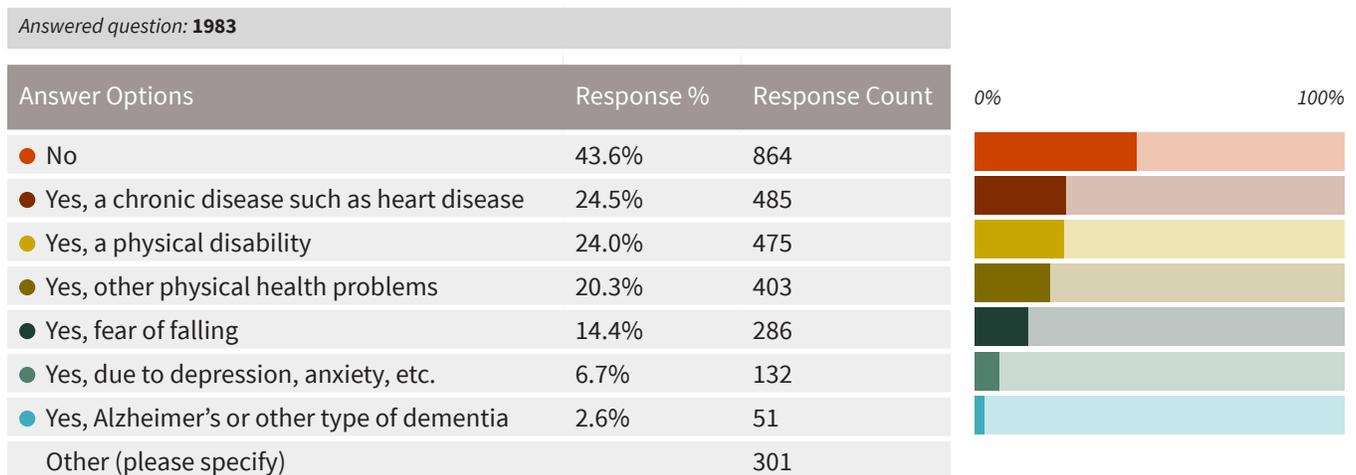
## Do you volunteer at least monthly in your community?



## Where do you go when you have questions about the services available for seniors? (Check all that apply.)



## Do you experience an illness/condition that limits activities you can participate in? (Check all that apply.)

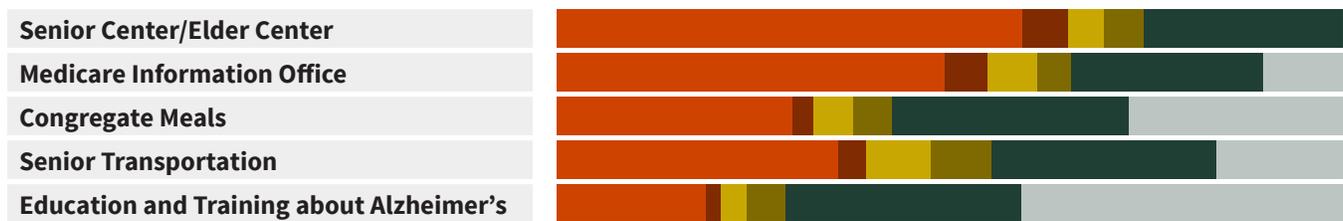


# Have you or the person you care for used any of the following support services? (Please check all boxes that apply.)

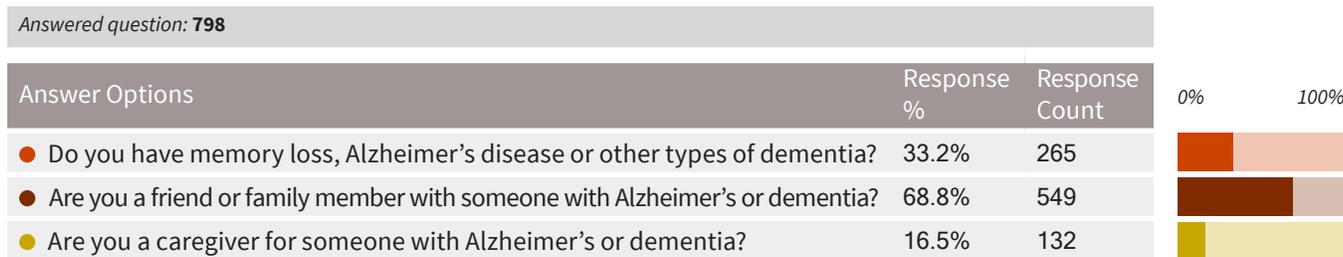
Answered question: 1463 Skipped question: 730

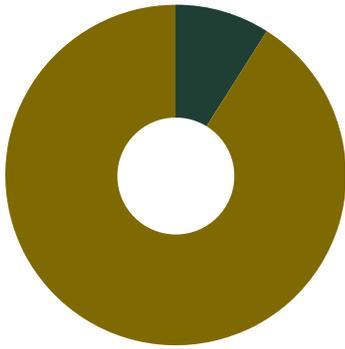
| Answer Options                                  | Self       | Spouse    | Other Family Member | Friend    | N/A        | Rating Average | Response Count |
|---|------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Senior Center/Elder Center</b>               | <b>529</b> | <b>51</b> | <b>41</b>           | <b>45</b> | <b>228</b> | <b>1.40</b>    | <b>894</b>     |
| <b>Medicare Information Office</b>              | <b>441</b> | <b>48</b> | <b>56</b>           | <b>38</b> | <b>217</b> | <b>1.47</b>    | <b>800</b>     |
| <b>Congregate Meals</b>                         | <b>269</b> | <b>23</b> | <b>44</b>           | <b>45</b> | <b>266</b> | <b>1.65</b>    | <b>647</b>     |
| <b>Senior Transportation</b>                    | <b>320</b> | <b>31</b> | <b>73</b>           | <b>69</b> | <b>255</b> | <b>1.78</b>    | <b>748</b>     |
| <b>Education and Training about Alzheimer's</b> | <b>170</b> | <b>16</b> | <b>30</b>           | <b>43</b> | <b>250</b> | <b>1.79</b>    | <b>509</b>     |
| Support Groups                                  | 184        | 22        | 41                  | 47        | 257        | 1.83           | 551            |
| Information/Referral/ADRC                       | 150        | 18        | 37                  | 43        | 258        | 1.89           | 506            |
| Home Modification                               | 165        | 40        | 50                  | 44        | 267        | 1.91           | 566            |
| Caregiver Training and Supports                 | 133        | 21        | 34                  | 41        | 259        | 1.93           | 488            |
| Hoe Health Care                                 | 183        | 57        | 76                  | 47        | 255        | 1.96           | 618            |
| Home Delivered Meals                            | 176        | 17        | 57                  | 62        | 276        | 2.02           | 588            |
| Homemaker/Chore Services                        | 163        | 24        | 60                  | 57        | 266        | 2.04           | 570            |
| Personal Care Assistance                        | 164        | 47        | 90                  | 63        | 265        | 2.14           | 629            |
| Case Management/Care                            | 122        | 34        | 59                  | 60        | 257        | 2.21           | 532            |
| Adult Day                                       | 57         | 23        | 50                  | 44        | 294        | 2.47           | 468            |
| Respite   | 47         | 19        | 38                  | 41        | 287        | 2.50           | 432            |
| Hospice   | 38         | 39        | 61                  | 50        | 270        | 2.65           | 458            |

## Top Five Responses



## Alaska is developing a State plan to address the needs of Alaskans affected by Alzheimer's disease. Please check the boxes below that apply to you.





## Do you provide care for someone with Alzheimer's or dementia?

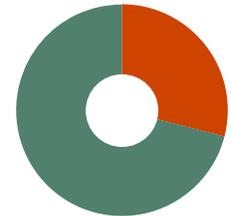
Answered question: 2022

| Answer Options | Response % | Response Count |
|----------------|------------|----------------|
| Yes            | 9.0%       | 182            |
| No             | 91.0%      | 1840           |

## Have you or someone you know experienced elder abuse?

Answered question: 2037

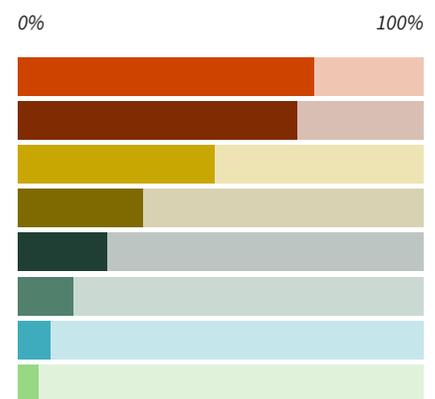
| Answer Options | Response % | Response Count |
|----------------|------------|----------------|
| Yes            | 29.0%      | 590            |
| No             | 71.0%      | 1447           |



## If so, what forms of elder abuse have you noticed? Choose all that apply.

Answered question: 603

| Answer Options         | Response % | Response Count |
|------------------------|------------|----------------|
| Financial exploitation | 73.0%      | 440            |
| Emotional abuse        | 68.8%      | 415            |
| Neglect                | 48.3%      | 291            |
| Physical abuse         | 30.7%      | 185            |
| Abandonment            | 21.9%      | 132            |
| Other explanation      | 13.6%      | 82             |
| Self-abuse             | 8.0%       | 48             |
| Sexual abuse           | 5.1%       | 31             |
| Other (please specify) |            | 55             |

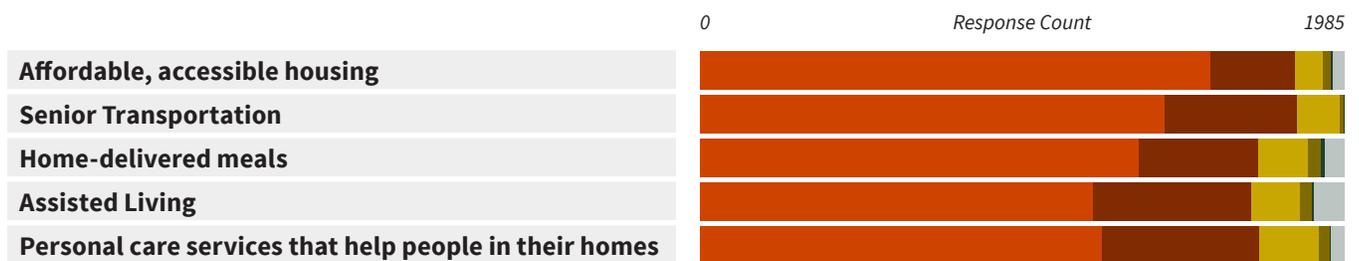
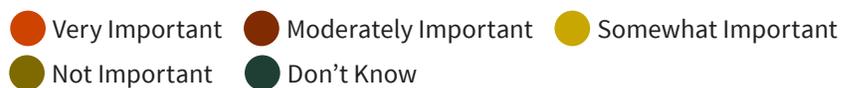


Below is a list of services for seniors offered in Alaska. How important do you believe each of the following services is to the quality of life for older Alaskans?

Answered question: 2041

| Answer Options  | Very important | Moderately important | Somewhat Important | Not Important | Don't Know | Rating Average | Response Count |
|---|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Affordable, accessible housing</b>                               | <b>1573</b>    | <b>261</b>           | <b>85</b>          | <b>26</b>     | <b>3</b>   | <b>1.27</b>    | <b>1948</b>    |
| <b>Senior Transportation</b>  | <b>1432</b>    | <b>407</b>           | <b>130</b>         | <b>15</b>     | <b>1</b>   | <b>1.36</b>    | <b>1985</b>    |
| <b>Home-delivered meals</b>   | <b>1350</b>    | <b>370</b>           | <b>153</b>         | <b>39</b>     | <b>11</b>  | <b>1.44</b>    | <b>1923</b>    |
| <b>Assisted Living</b>  | <b>1212</b>    | <b>486</b>           | <b>150</b>         | <b>37</b>     | <b>3</b>   | <b>1.48</b>    | <b>1888</b>    |
| <b>Personal care services that help people in their homes</b>       | <b>1239</b>    | <b>482</b>           | <b>186</b>         | <b>31</b>     | <b>2</b>   | <b>1.49</b>    | <b>1940</b>    |
| Programs that help people with dementia                             | 1209           | 472                  | 174                | 36            | 4          | 1.50           | 1895           |
| Help with information qualifying for Medicare, Medicaid             | 1196           | 483                  | 192                | 38            | 4          | 1.52           | 1913           |
| Services to prevent elder abuse and exploitation                    | 1209           | 433                  | 200                | 33            | 11         | 1.52           | 1886           |
| Fall prevention   | 1166           | 474                  | 210                | 33            | 4          | 1.53           | 1887           |
| Meals at a senior meal site   | 1155           | 473                  | 246                | 40            | 8          | 1.58           | 1922           |
| Information and referral  | 956            | 465                  | 243                | 55            | 6          | 1.66           | 1725           |
| Help with household chores  | 988            | 594                  | 264                | 51            | 3          | 1.68           | 1900           |
| Senior center activities (recreation, exercise classes)             | 956            | 599                  | 317                | 44            | 4          | 1.72           | 1920           |
| Programs that give a family a break (such as respite care programs) | 941            | 558                  | 258                | 71            | 13         | 1.73           | 1841           |
| Adult Day services  | 891            | 591                  | 303                | 54            | 8          | 1.75           | 1847           |
| Lifelong learning opportunities                                     | 834            | 550                  | 326                | 100           | 8          | 1.84           | 1818           |
| Senior mental health services, drug and alcohol treatment           | 830            | 567                  | 326                | 97            | 14         | 1.85           | 1834           |
| Support for grandparents/other relatives who are raising children   | 809            | 571                  | 309                | 112           | 16         | 1.87           | 1817           |
| Social/volunteer opportunities                                      | 688            | 611                  | 380                | 108           | 7          | 1.96           | 1794           |
| Help finding older adult job training and placement                 | 533            | 616                  | 463                | 176           | 14         | 2.18           | 1802           |
| Other (please specify)  |                |                      |                    |               |            |                | 47             |

**Top Five Responses**



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- 19 questions, including 3 open-ended
- Distributed to senior centers and long term care facilities December 2014 – ongoing
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- Six across state:
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# Alaska State Plan for Senior Services

## 15 Month Public Meeting Timeline

### 1 Copper Center

**September 18, 2013**

*Participants: 8*

*Asset: Sense of Community*

*Challenge: Access to necessities at home*

### 2 Juneau

**February 11, 2014**

*Participants: 27*

*Asset: Care-A-Van Transportation*

*Challenge: Need Personal Care Assistance / Senior Assisted Living*

### 3 Raven Landing (Fairbanks)

**September 16, 2014**

*Participants: 20*

*Urban Assets: Free & low cost transportation*

*Village Assets: Cultural & Subsistence*

*Activities: Berry picking and fish camp*

*Senior Challenges (General): Limited access to primary care due to providers not accepting Medicare*

### 4 Denaakanaaga (Fairbanks)

**September 18, 2014**

*Participants: 25*

*Asset: Alzheimer's Resource Agency*

*Challenge: Economy*

### 5 Homer

**October 9, 2014**

*Participants: 10*

*Asset: Senior Center and services/ opportunities for socialization*

*Challenge: Lack of affordable, independent senior housing*

### 6 Anchorage

**December 12, 2014**

*Participants: 40*

*Asset: Senior property tax exemption*

*Challenge: Shortage of accessible senior housing*



# What's Working Well

| Anchorage                                  | Fairbanks  | Fairbanks:<br>AK Native Elder<br>Outreach                           | Kenai Peninsula   | Copper Center  | Juneau   |
|--|--|---|---|--|--|
| #1 Senior Property Tax Exemption           | #1 Free & low cost senior transportation services      | #1 Services for seniors with dementia (Alzheimer's Resource Agency) | #1 Senior Center services & socialization opportunities | #1 Strong sense of community                                     | #1 Care-A-Van Transportation                           |
| #2 Muni Aging & Disability Resource Center | #1 Community-based senior services                     | #2 Fairbanks Senior Center services                                 | #2 Continuum of Senior Services                         | #2 Access to health care   | #2 Free transportation for seniors (CBJ)               |
| #3 Anchorage Senior Activities Center      | #2 Fairbanks Native Association Elder Program services | #3 Fairbanks Native Association Elder Program services              | #3 Recreational & cultural programs                     | #3 Churches & civic organization who help persons less fortunate | #3 Senior Property Tax Exemption & Sales Tax Exemption |
| #4 Trails & Outdoor Recreation             | #3 Access to health care                               | #4 FNSB Parks & Recreation Senior Activities                        | #3 Close sense of community                             | #4 Local emergency network                                       | #4 Juneau Senior Center                                |
| #5 Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska          |  | #4 Denaakanaaga   | #4 Hospital   | #5 Subsistence lifestyle   | #4 SAIL Taxi Voucher Program                           |

# Areas Needing Improvement

| Anchorage  | Fairbanks   | Fairbanks:<br>AK Native Elder<br>Outreach            | Kenai Peninsula                      | Copper Center  | Juneau  |
|--|---|--|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| #1 Shortage of accessible housing                        | #1 Limited access to primary care                 | #1 High cost of living/economy                       | #1 Lack of affordable senior housing | #1 Seniors having necessities like fire wood, food, heating fuel | #1 Need for Personal Care Assistance, PCA     |
| #2 Transportation  | #2 Lack of appropriate, affordable senior housing | #2 Lack of long-range planning for Native elders     | #1 Rising utility costs              | #2 In-home support services                                      | #2 Limited options for senior assisted living |
| #3 Limited mental health services for seniors            | #3 Transportation                                 | #3 Long-cold winters                                 | #2 High cost of living               | #3 Transportation  | #2 Need larger senior center                  |
| #4 Access to primary health care                         | #4 Air quality                                    | #4 Lack of inter-agency cooperation                  | #3 Distance from family              | #3 Access to medical specialty care                              | #3 Affordable senior housing                  |
| #4 Lack of specialized housing for seniors with dementia |   | #5 No centralized source for information on services | #3 Long, cold icy winters            | #3 Assisted living   | #4 High cost of living                        |

**Alaska Commission on Aging**  
**Elder-Senior Community Forum, Prince William Sound Community College Copper Basin Center**  
**Copper Center Region**  
**September 18, 2013**

**Senior Housing**

Needs:

- Shortage of supportive services to allow/help seniors age at home for as long as possible. Emphasis on home- and community-based services
- Assisted Living – Limited interest. Homesteaders want to remain in own home. Desire supportive services to help with activities of daily living. Not enough workers to staff an assisted living home.
- If new senior housing developed, prefer congregate, independent living with supportive services having a congregate space to gather.
- Hospice care is very important but there is no reimbursement. Some level of hospice is provided by the community.
- Accessibility Improvements is a large need. Ramps, doorway expansion, etc. to make a home accessible for individual in a wheel chair.
- Need for transportation to access health care services
- No problem with senior homelessness for this region.
- Most important need is to for appropriate housing with supportive services so that elders can remain aging in place at home and in their community.

**Healthy Lifestyles**

- Family, community & friends are the most important for successfully aging. Important to foster multiple generations together. Older people and younger people sharing a meal, telling stories, learning from each other.
- Senior center provides multiple activities. Encourages seniors to write memories/stories to pass on to their children.
- Elders/seniors play an important role in this community. Senior center needs more funding to pay for higher cost of services (utilities, heat, food) and provide more activities for seniors.
- Combine youth/elder activities
- Large need for family caregivers. They need training and supports too.
- Important for elder to remain valued, respected.
- Glennallen Chiropractic clinic provides healthy snacks for seniors (fruits and veggies) as part of its “Fountain of Youth Party” held twice monthly that includes community training (on Healthy Body/Healthy Brain) and exercise.
- Isolation is the hardest part for seniors, particularly for nonNatives (who lack family/social connections. Native elders have more family and community ties.) Chore worker may be the only person in the senior’s home all day.
- All older people must be validated. Share stories to be valued.

## **Elder Safety & Protection**

- Elder abuse/exploitation is increasing in the region. Takes APS too long to investigate. Need more APS workers.
- New faces of financial exploitation:
  - Young people taking prescription meds from elders to sell them for cash &/or take them to get high.
  - Scams – Selling products/services that seniors don't need.
  - Seniors may be targeted with implementation of ACA to purchase insurance they don't need. Medicare covers seniors 65+.
  - Need to promote public awareness about this type of abuse/exploitation and how seniors can protect themselves from these exploitation efforts.
- Provide training on how to use technology for seniors (one or two hour classes). Many seniors do not know how to text.
- Elders are shown respect in this community. Doors opening for elders. Meal discounts. Don't observe elder disrespect.

## **Long-Term Support Services**

- Region is a good place to grow old. Have friends, beautiful setting. Have excellent health care facility – Cross Roads Medical Center. Physical therapy is a huge health care need. In some situations, the senior's family wants them to move closer to services but senior reluctant to do so because Copper Center is home.
- Services that work well: (1) Neighbors helping neighbors to help person stay at home and (2) Local weekly newspaper that advertises special events and activities.
- How do people find out about services for seniors?
  - 211
  - ADRC (Kenai ILC). The Kenai ILC serves this area but knowledge about the ADRC is limited. Cross Roads Medical Center provides community information. Kenai ILC serves a large geographic area.
  - Senior Provider Meeting – Providers meet every two months to share information and increase knowledge about services.
- Seniors experience loneliness, depression and turn to alcohol. If seniors reach-out for help, it's only for immediate relief and not for long-term. Significant need for geriatric behavioral health services in the region.
- Behavioral health services available only through Copper River Native Association (provides large array of services) and Cross Roads Medical Center. (There are only two detox facilities in Fairbanks and Anchorage).

## Challenges:

- Being able to age in place at home with supportive services. Services are limited.
- Agencies need more funding for services.
- Need more funding for Cross Roads Medical Center to provide hospice services. Now, hospice is only supported by community.

### **Financial Security**

- Heating fuel and firewood. Big need for elders. Hard winter last year. How do we help elders/seniors who don't qualify for assistance?
- Seniors are not aware of AHFC's weatherization program. (Jim McCall: Average energy rebate is \$7,000 with 30% savings on fuel bill – which is a huge savings for seniors. Have two programs – one for income-qualified applicants and other with no income-restrictions.
- Note: Send Kris Winters information about Senior Benefits (Information sent on 9/23/13)

### **Top Community Assets Identified**

- Strong sense of community – Friends, family, neighbors
- Access to two health facilities (Cross Roads Medical Center & Copper River Native Association)
- Large number of churches & community organizations who help vulnerable people
- Local emergency network planning for service providers
- Subsistence resources, subsistence lifestyle, & subsistence culture

### **Top 5 Community Challenges (by popular vote of participants)**

- Senior access to necessities at home (Having enough firewood, food, heating fuel, electricity) (8 votes)
- Supportive services at home (6 votes)
- Transportation (5 votes)
- Access to medical specialty care (5 votes)
- Assisted living for those who need it (5 votes)

**Alaska Commission on Aging  
Juneau Elder-Senior Community Forum Discussion Notes  
February 11, 2014  
Juneau Senior Center (27 Participants)**

**LONG-TERM SUPPORT SERVICES**

**1. Do you think Juneau is a good place to live and grow old? If yes, what makes this area a special place to live if you are an older person?**

- Yes, there are many things to do.
- Ample volunteer opportunities.
- Outstanding Transportation – Capitol City public transit and Care-A-Van (operated by Southeast Senior Services). Transportation is affordable and free for persons age 65+.
- Early air flights
- SAIL's (Southeast Alaska Independent Living) taxi voucher program. Taxi program fills the void when other transit services are not available such as evening times, holidays, early morning service. Program is affordable for seniors and persons with disabilities – Pay \$.40 on a \$1 for ride. SAIL has one handicapped taxi cab and another is on order.
- Good access to medical care.

**2(a). What services are working especially well for older Alaskans and their families in this community? Please tell us about those services.**

- Transportation, but there are some issues with Borough transportation: Routes are limited; no transportation on holidays; unsafe bus stops that are not clear of snow. Would like to see increased Care-A-Van service. Increased service would require increased grant funds.

**2(b). How do people find out about services in Juneau?**

- Community Resource Network – Meets monthly at Bartlett. Hear information about federal, state, and nonprofit services.
- Juneau Senior Center Newsletter
- Juneau Commission on Aging
- Elders Council
- Senior Voice
- Word of mouth
- 211 – Note: Most of the participants were not aware of this program.
- ADRC which is operated by SAIL (Southeast Alaska Independent Living).

**3. Are there adequate services to help seniors stay at home?**

- No
- Southeast Senior Services is the primary service provider.
- People want/need services immediately but processing takes time.
- Most services are needs-based with respect to income and health. Need more services for seniors who need assistance but don't qualify for needs-based programs.
- More people could age in place if there were more services to help them with simple needs such as house cleaning once a week (homemaker services are not provided in Juneau) and more home-delivered meals. Lack of services could be a cause for people to leave the state.
- Many seniors don't understand the system or how to negotiate and qualify for help.

**4. Do elders and seniors experience loneliness or isolation? Do they have a problem with depression? What do people do when they have this condition?**

- People’s personalities become more who they are as they age. Those who were wallflowers earlier in life remain isolated. Those who are more social, continue to be interactive when they are older.
- It requires a lot of energy to bundle up and go out during the wintertime. Seniors tend to stay indoors during the wintertime.

**5. When elders/seniors are no longer to live safely at home, where do they go for assisted living or other places that provide long-term care? How are older people with dementia cared for in Juneau?**

- Programs identified by participants serving Juneau seniors with dementia: Bridge Program (adult day provided by Southeast Senior Services); Alzheimer’s Resource Agency (provides education about ADRD and family caregiver support); Wildflower Court (nursing home); State’s Medicaid Waiver program but it does not serve income-eligible persons with dementia who do not qualify for nursing home level of care.
- “High-functioning seniors” with dementia (those in early to mid stages) have few services available. They need cueing and supervision because they may wander. It’s a safety issue.

**6. What do you recommend to address long-term care challenges for Juneau seniors?**

- Juneau Commission on Aging and the Assisted Living Task Force are working together to get assisted living in Juneau. Recently, the CBJ (City & Borough of Juneau) released a RFP to determine long-term care assisted living needs for seniors in Juneau. Funding will be used to conduct a needs assessment. This “demand study” is scheduled to be completed by summer 2014 end.
- Adult kids need to provide more help to their elderly parents.
- Juneau has good access to medical care.
- Seniors with family have supports but seniors without family need assistance and supports.
- Isolation brought on by icy conditions in Juneau which keeps seniors at home.

**SENIOR HOUSING**

**1. Do Elders and seniors live in warm and comfortable homes? How are energy costs being addressed?**

- Electric heat is affordable, thanks to hydroelectric power.
- Most homes use oil which is very expensive.
- Some homeowners use wood pellet stoves. Few homes are heated with gas due to limited availability.
- Heating Assistance Programs (Federal LIHEAP and State’s HAP programs) work well. Seniors use these programs and get financial assistance.

**2. Is there enough senior housing in Juneau to meet the need?**

- No, more senior housing is needed - A place to live together, eat together, and is affordable. Weatherization program is helpful seniors with modest incomes but not for those with higher incomes who do not qualify.
- AHFC rebate program and loan program help people who are over-income for grant program (Jim McCall-AHFC).

### **3. What is most desired senior housing in Juneau?**

- Affordable senior housing (rent based on 30% of income) that has private apartments and congregate dining area and living room.
- Affordable housing is a challenge for developer to build. Federal program funding (thru HUD) has been reduced. Focus on using multiple layers of financing from loans, Low-Income Tax Credits, and grant funding. (Jim McCall, AHFC)
- Could long-time senior renters negotiate with landlords to reduce rents when they retire? Incentive to keep a good renter and helpful for a person on a fixed income.

### **4. What needs exist for accessibility modifications to allow for aging in place?**

- Borough's tax break for senior homeowners is much appreciated.
- Build new housing with universal design features. Value-added as it allows people to age in place and addresses needs of persons with disabilities (Jim McCall, AHFC)
- SAIL HomeMap – Assesses private homes for accessibility and provides guidance for reducing fall risk and using assistive technology to extend time living at home. The HomeMap survey can be completed using funding from the SDS Home Modification grant. Retrofits can be paid by using AHFC Senior Assistance grant for income-eligible homeowners.
- Juneau has not used the AHFC home modification program (Jim McCall, AHFC)

### **5. Is “elder/senior homelessness” a problem in Juneau?**

- Homelessness is definitely a problem for younger people but don't know if it is a problem for seniors. AHFC conducts a “point-in-time” homeless study statewide. Results are not yet available for Juneau (Jim McCall, AHFC)

### **6. Do you have any suggestions of ways to improve senior housing in Juneau?**

- Need programs to train volunteers to build senior housing.

## **ELDER SAFETY & PROTECTION**

### **1. For the most part, are elders and seniors in Juneau treated with respect and dignity?**

- Yes, by family and by young people for the most part.
- Care-A-Van Service – Drivers are courteous and respectful to passengers.
- Store help are friendly to seniors.
- Bus drivers wave to seniors. Borough bus passengers offer their seats to seniors and disabled.
- Juneau Commission on Aging working on improving business respect for seniors and disabled.
- Juneau Walmart does not have adequate places for people to sit and rest. Walmart is a big store and seniors can tire by walking from one end to the other. Also, improved lighting is important to read merchandise tags.
- Anchorage Senior Advisory Commission re-starting their “Senior Friendly Business Campaign.” Portland also has a senior friendly business effort. (Jim McCall, AHFC)
- Would like lower speed limits on the corner of Eagan and 10<sup>th</sup> to allow enough time for pedestrians to cross the street. Difficult to cross the street at this intersection.

### **2. What forms does Elder disrespect take in Juneau?**

- Drivers beeping the horn when a senior or disabled person crosses the street.
- Community needs to do a better job in prioritizing sidewalk/street maintenance with regards to icy streets, sidewalks, parking lots, and bus stops.
- “Nonverbal Abuse” – Push person out of the way. Ignore them. Lack of patience/sensitivity for senior drivers.
- Have some senior drivers in Juneau who should give up their license and stop driving.

- Family Abuse?
  - Contact Adult Protective Services. However, senior has to admit they are being abused financially, but many don't report abuse from family members. If the senior does not report, nothing can be done.
  - Families don't visit their elderly family members enough. (Family Relationships)
  - Families take seniors "stuff" without asking such as toiletries (soap, shampoo, deodorant) and medication.
- Unsafe discharges from hospital. Seniors demand to go home before they are ready. Fireweed Place has 67 apartments. Residents are discharged from the hospital with no services set up.
- Some seniors live in unsafe, unclean residences. They may suffer a fall and go to the hospital. They return home to an unsafe living environment where they can fall again.

## **FINANCIAL SECURITY**

### **1. Do you know of a senior who has to choose between buying food and paying for other necessities such as heating fuel or medicine?**

- High cost of fuel, cost of housing, & cost of food – High cost of living is a challenge for Juneau seniors.
- Juneau Commission on Aging hosting a "Food Forum" on March 11<sup>th</sup> to assess how seniors with limited incomes can access food. Food Bank does not have enough resources to meet the need.
- Some seniors save money throughout the year and go without so that they can splurge on gifts for grandchildren at Christmastime.
- Hard to downsize on less income. Need classes to educate people about how to live on a lower income. Also, need information about living together with other seniors and creating senior networks.
- Fireweed Place is set up for independent senior housing. But when they can't pay rent and are frail, where do they go? Limited options in Juneau.
- Important for seniors and baby boomers to plan for the future. Lists for senior housing are long. Waiting time can be two years and longer.
- Need to teach baby boomers how to be elders (UAF Elders-in-Training program)

### **2. Do elders/seniors know about assistance programs such as Senior Benefits and Heating Assistance?**

- Most know where to go when they need help but this may not be true for other areas of the state.

## **HEALTHY LIFESTYLES**

### **1. What are the best ways to encourage healthy lifestyles, disease prevention and disease management for older people living in Juneau?**

- Addictions: "What is the hurt inside that is causing a senior to make poor decisions?" Seniors need counseling and supports to address the hurt. Some seniors are at risk for alcohol and substance misuse and would benefit from counseling.
- Staying active (even more than when one was working) is a good thing. Get involved in community service. New research correlates a reduced risk for Alzheimer's disease with the number of organizations one belongs to. (Reference made to ACoA's Healthy Body, Healthy Brain Campaign.)
- Important to educate baby boomers on planning for retirement. Do you have enough income to retire? What will you do for the next 30 years after retirement? Is it time to re-career?
- Loosening of social responsibilities – Youth not being taught to care for elders as they were in the past. Teach kids to pick up after themselves to reduce fall risk.

- Older people who remain active remain healthy. “Don’t retire from life.”
- Senior Fall Prevention. Identify fall risks and fall-proof one’s home. Remove throw rugs, improve lighting, and install a ramp if necessary. A quick fall can change your life forever and result in hospitalization/nursing home stays and loss of independence.
- Wash hands often.
- Become a gym member. Important to stay physically active.

**2. Do elders/seniors play an important role in this community? What can communities do to encourage and support their involvement?**

- Improve access to services. Seniors don’t like “multiple options” phone trees. Prefer talking to a live person. Agencies need to employ more people to answer the phone.
- It is a common assumption that everyone uses the computer and has access to the Internet, but many seniors don’t use a computer on a regular basis. They do not like to do their banking and pay bills on-line.
- Healthy mental lifestyles. Encourage seniors to stay current and read. Also important for older people to talk more with young people to stay current.
- Baby boomers are the first generation to live long after retirement. Pursue “life long learning.”
- Learning to become an elder is new for us. This is the first time we are experiencing this phase of life.

**TOP 5 ASSETS/CHALLENGES FOR OLDER ALASKANS LIVING IN JUNEAU:** Participants were asked to choose their 5 top choices for community assets and challenges of living in Juneau as an older person using colored dots. The results were tabulated, prioritized and reported to the group.

**COMMUNITY ASSETS**

- #1 Care-A-Van Transportation (n=11)
- #2 Free borough bus service for people age 65+ (n=9)
- #3 Senior Property Tax & Sales Tax Exemptions (n=8)
- #4 SAIL Taxi Voucher Program (n=6)
- #4 Juneau Senior Center (n=6)
- #4 Library (n=6)
- #5 Arts & Cultural Community (n=5)
- #5 “Live in most beautiful place in the world” (n=5)

Other assets identified:

- Swimming pools in downtown and Valley (n=3)
- Home-delivered meals (n=2)
- Small friendly community

**COMMUNITY CHALLENGES**

- #1 Need for Personal Care Assistance, PCA (n=16)
- #2 Limited senior assisted living options (n=11)
- #2 Need larger senior center (n=11)
- #3 Affordable senior housing (n=10)
- #4 High cost of living (n=7)
- #4 Isolation – Takes money to leave Juneau and visit other places (n=7)
- #5 Emergency preparedness for seniors (n=4)

Other challenges identified:

- High cost of medical care (n=3)
- Food insecurity (n=3)
- Being able to downsize to move into smaller senior housing apartments (n=3)
- Winter hazards & sidewalk clearing (n=2)
- Depression from role transitions/status/loss of family & friends (n=1)
- Isolation (n=1)
- Transportation
- Getting a copy of the Senior Voice

**FNSB Elder-Senior Listening Session  
Raven Landing, Round Table Discussion Notes  
September 16, 2014**

Note: Approximately 20 people attended this session with some representing AK Native service providers.

- 1. Do you think Fairbanks is a good place to live and grow old? If yes, what makes this area a special place to live if you are an older person?**
  - Yes, Fairbanks is a good place to live.
  - Rural concern – Schools are closing down and families are moving out of the area.
  - Elders’ homes are in Galena and Tanana but families are leaving the area due to limited employment prospects.
  
- 2. What services are working especially well for older Alaskans and their families in this community? Please tell us about those services. How do Elders, seniors and their families find out about services and assistance offered?**
  - Fairbanks Services that Work Well: Access AK provides information about open beds in Fairbanks assisted living homes. Denakkanaaga, the Senior Center, and Fairbanks Resource Agency also provide valued services for Fairbanks seniors.
  - Home-delivered meals help but elders need subsistence food.
  
- 3. Are elders and seniors able to get the help they need to remain at home or in the community when they are no longer able to care for themselves?**
  - Access to primary care due to doctors not accepting Medicare reimbursements and limited staffing.
  - Interior rural communities are shrinking in size. More people leaving the villages due to lack of employment prospects. Elders have to move too due to limited services and family caregiver supports.
  - Insufficient jobs in rural AK. Low pay and no benefits.
  - Too much competition between tribes for rural jobs. Not what you know, but who you know.
  - Access to primary care – Limited number of providers.
  - No ADRC in Fairbanks – Seniors have to go to multiple places for information about services. No centralized information/referral location.
  
- 4. What would you do if you or your loved one had dementia? How are people with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementia cared for in Fairbanks? What services are available to help them? In your opinion, are there sufficient services for seniors with dementia? Are older people with dementia safe?**
  - Need more staff training in dementia care. Train staff “not to be crabby with elders who may be crabby.”

- Provide more training and education for family caregivers. Provide respite for caregivers so that they can engage in subsistence and fish camp activities.

### **Senior Housing**

**1. Do elders and seniors live in warm and comfortable homes? How are energy costs being addressed? What are the impacts?**

- Most Elders in villages do not live in warm and comfortable homes. Use wood to heat their homes and are now converting to pellets. More FNSB seniors live in warm homes however, fuel is expensive.
- Heating fuel is expensive in the Interior and hard to pay for on fixed incomes.
- FNSB Heating Stove Conversion Program – FNSB reimburses people for converting their wood stoves to newer, more efficient stoves. However that reimbursement is counted as income and people have to include the reimbursement as income on their federal taxes and pay taxes on those funds.
- Participant Recommendation: Conduct more fall safety assessments and implement accessible improvements to reduce falls.

**2. Is there enough senior housing in Fairbanks to meet the needs of elders and seniors?**

- Not enough senior housing in Interior villages.
- Need more assisted living homes in Fairbanks and rural areas that serve people with dementia and memory care needs. Fairbanks Pioneer Home is the primary provider for Elders with dementia.
- Expand Fairbanks Pioneer Home and increase skilled nursing facilities in Fairbanks.

**3. What are your plans for the future? Will you try to remain in your home? If needed, do you plan to move into Assisted Living, stay with family, or hire someone to care for you at home? How do you plan to accomplish this?**

- Majority of Fairbanks and village-based seniors want to age in place.
- Recommendation: Need more funding for local home and community-based services.
- Recommendation: Need more funding for Family Caregiver Support programs to provide more supports and training so family caregivers can care for their elderly loved ones at home longer. Don't want seniors having to relocate due to limited services and untrained family caregivers with limited supports.
- Need to increase training and pay/benefits for direct service providers to increase workforce. Need a "tool box" for senior care.

4. **What type of housing is most desired for elders and seniors who live here? (Some examples might include living in one's current home, living with family, independent living senior housing, senior housing with support services, or other types of housing as defined.)**
    - Seniors want to live in own home. They need accessibility improvements to live/age in place.
  
  5. **Is your home accessible? If you became disabled and needed help to stay in your home, what resources exist to help you do that in Fairbanks?**
    - Many senior homes are not accessible, especially in rural areas. Elders in villages need information & resources to make their homes more accessible.
  
  6. **Do you have any suggestions of ways to improve senior housing in Fairbanks?**
    - Need to increase all levels of senior housing from independent to assisted living and skilled nursing so older people can remain in Fairbanks area.

Additional Discussion:

    - Provider agencies need to hire people who know AK Native languages.
    - More elder housing is needed for rural-based elders.
    - Seniors of upper incomes can't get financial help to modify homes because they don't qualify.
- 

### **Elder Safety & Protection**

1. **For the most part, are elders and seniors who live in Fairbanks treated with appropriate respect and dignity?**
  - Overall, Elders are shown respect and dignity & there are more opportunities for social engagement.
  
2. **What forms of Elder abuse and exploitation take place here? Is elder abuse a problem in Fairbanks?**
  - Exploitation is a problem for rural and urban seniors, particularly financial exploitation and stealing seniors' medication.
  - More information is needed for Power of Attorney, wills (living wills) and advanced directives.
  
3. **What should be done in Fairbanks to make sure older peoples' rights and safety are protected so they are not neglected, exploited or abused?**
  - Increase training/awareness about signs of Elder disrespect and encourage people to move patient when listening to elders/seniors.
  - Participant Recommendations:
    - "Elder Advocates" to bridge the gap between Elders and youth. Need to encourage more youth involvement with elders/seniors.

- “Medical Directives:” Describes how the Elder wants to be treated at end of life. Who will provide care? What song will be sung at church? Don’t wait! Have that family conversation now. Start education/conversation about planning for end of life care when kids are in school.
- Native people bring the family together to decide how person’s items will be passed on. They shop together with Elder for burial clothes.

### **Financial Security**

**1. Do you know of anyone who has to choose between buying food and paying for other necessities such as heating fuel or medicine?**

- Many retired National Guard seniors on SSI don’t qualify for heating fuel assistance because they don’t income-qualify.
- FNA Elders Program is receiving more requests for food boxes.

**2. Do elders/seniors know about assistance programs such as Senior Benefits and Heating Assistance? How do people find out about assistance programs?**

- Information about programs is passed along by word of mouth. Many seniors do not know where to go for information. Need a centralized ADRC in Fairbanks to find out about support services, options counseling, and help with filling out forms.
- Need a “senior navigator” to people seniors through different agencies. Tanana Chiefs (TCC) Tribal Family Youth Services provides some information/referral assistance to rural Elders.
- Need improved agency coordination between rural and urban locations. TCC is rural-based serving 42 villages in the Interior. Fairbanks Native Association (FNA) is urban-based serving elders who live in Fairbanks.
- “Trap-line Chatter” refers to word of mouth providing information between rural areas and Fairbanks.

**3. Based on the people you know, is poverty a problem for older people living in Fairbanks?**

- Yes, for urban & rural seniors. Poverty is a problem for people age 55+, particularly those who have lived subsistence lifestyle and contributed minimally to Social Security.
- TCC “Housing First” Program: Located in Fairbanks to help people with addiction problems and are homeless. The program, located on South Cushman, need cleaning supplies, toilet paper, and subsistence food.
- Elders in rural areas are poor but community makes sure that all elders have food and wood. “In the villages, we take care of our own.”

## Healthy Lifestyles

### **1. What are the best ways to encourage healthy lifestyles, disease prevention and disease management for elders and seniors living in Fairbanks?**

- Teach people how to safely get out of car on to an icy sidewalk. Allow your shoes to get cold to prevent slipping on ice.
- Get your flu shot! Need to explain to Elder why they may feel sick after getting their flu shot.
- Use “yak-tracks” to prevent slipping on ice and snow. Remember to remove them when going inside buildings to prevent falls.
- Rural AK: TCC’s CHOP (Community Health Outreach Program): All elders receive yak tracks and training how to use them safely. The CHOP program also provides education about getting old using “hands-on” training and how to care for elders.

### **2. Do older adults play an important role in this community? What can communities do to encourage and support their involvement?**

- Yes. Native organizations invite elders to event and ask them to speak at events as well. They also provide a little financial incentive to attend by offering them \$20 gift certificates. Attending these events help elders to be in public spaces (like the Tribal Hall) where they receive energy from others.

### **3. Do elders and seniors experience loneliness or isolation? Do they have a problem with depression? What do people do when they have this problem?**

- Yes. Sometimes retirement brings depression and loss of role. Seniors need to talk more about their depression and loneliness instead of keeping that information to themselves.
- When people are depressed, they need to do something positive.
- Sewing is something that elders can do.
- In village, elders are surrounded by family all the time. Fairbanks seniors are not always with their family. In urban areas, we need to visit and spend time with older people.
- Depression is a social stigma. Need to overcome this stigma.
- Men are more at risk for depression. Hearing loss makes it difficult for older people to engage in conversations which leads to depression. Hearing loss for rural seniors caused by snow machines and guns for subsistence. Elderly men in villages are at particular risk. They get the hearing aids but don’t use them (put the hearing aid in their pockets).
- Important to stay connected with elders. Call them to ask how they are doing.

### **4. What are some of the biggest mental health challenges for seniors? Are there services in Fairbanks to address these issues?**

- TCC & Chief Andrew Isaac provider senior behavioral health services.

### **Group Exercise: Identifying Challenges and Opportunities**

(Participants list out community assets and areas needing improvement for local seniors. Then, they independently vote on their top 5 choices with colored dots)

#### **Participant votes for Community Assets that make Fairbanks a good place to live for seniors.**

##### **Urban Assets for Seniors**

- #1 – Free & low cost transportation for seniors
- #1 – Beading & Language classes (Denakanaaga)
- #1 – Local Senior Provider Network (& senior provider brochure)
- #2 – FNA Elder Program activities, transportation & elder meals
- #3 – Access to available health care.
- #3 – Fairbanks Senior Center and local providers.
- Other Mentions:
  - Love Inc.
  - Senior Discounts
  - Medicaid vouchers for medical visits, hotel and transportation
  - Hospice
  - Morris Thompson Cultural Center

##### **Village Assets:**

- #1 - Cultural & Subsistence Activities: Berry picking & fish camp.
- #2 – Wellness Teams
- #3 – Churches

##### **Top Challenges for Seniors**

- #1 – Limited access to primary care in Fairbanks due to providers not accepting Medicare reimbursement.
- #2 – Lack of appropriate, affordable senior housing
- #3 – Transportation
- #4 – Air quality

##### **Rural Challenges:**

- #1 – Providers outside of state and in Anchorage don't always accept Medicaid.
- #2 – Limited health care services
- #3 – Long, cold dark winters
- #4 – Communication, no phones & limited Internet

##### **Urban Challenges:**

- Medicaid coverage for Transportation: Only pay for one trip. Cannot combine multiple stops for transportation paid for by Medicaid. For example, cannot go to doctor and the store on one Medicaid paid trip.

**Fairbanks Native Elder-Senior Listening Session  
Denaakanaaga, Talking Circle Round Table Discussion Notes  
September 18, 2014**

Note: Approximately 25 people attended this session. This session was a special outreach to the AK Native Elder community. Many of the participants included AK Native Elders and providers.

**1. Do you think Fairbanks is a good place to live and grow old? If yes, what makes this area a special place to live if you are an older person?**

- Fairbanks is a close-knit community where everyone knows each other and makes it easier to identify a person who needs assistance.

Challenges:

- Lack of long-term care planning from federal government down to local level.
- Services appear to be capped based on inadequate funding which limits service availability.
- Cost of living is increasing which makes it difficult for older people on fixed incomes.
- Lack of services for AK Native Elders, particularly those who live in rural areas. Oftentimes they need to relocate to Anchorage (or outside of AK) to access services.
- Need more assisted living and nursing home beds.
- Lack of senior behavioral health services.
- Insufficient qualified workforce for senior services.
- Many senior services only available on weekdays, not evenings and weekends.
- Challenge for seniors who are dually-diagnosed with ADRD and behavioral health needs.

Solutions:

- Alzheimer's Disease Resource Agency provides information about resources for seniors.
- AK Native organizations help to get the word out about services.
- Churches help too.

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**Senior Housing**

**1. Do elders and seniors live in warm and comfortable homes? How are energy costs being addressed? What are the impacts?**

- Many seniors live in cold homes. Energy costs are increasing and senior incomes remain fixed.
- Senior Benefits – More seniors need to receive Senior Benefits to help pay for fuel costs.

- 2. Is there enough senior housing in Fairbanks to meet the needs of elders and seniors?**
- No, there is not enough senior housing. Many rural-based Elders have to move to Fairbanks for medical reasons. They can find temporary places to stay but not permanent housing.
  - Fairbanks needs more senior independent housing and assisted living. There is a large senior housing need for AK Native Elders so that they can live together and share a common culture. Fairbanks Native Association (FNA) and Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) are looking into developing an assisted living facility for AK Native Elders in Fairbanks. Denaakanaaga submitted a resolution to AK Federation of Natives (AFN) conference to develop an assisted living facility in Fairbanks for Native Elders.
- 3. What are your plans for the future? Will you try to remain in your home? If needed, do you plan to move into Assisted Living, stay with family, or hire someone to care for you at home? How do you plan to accomplish this?**
- Fairbanks needs a small housing maintenance program to take care of small upkeep needs for senior homes to help them remain in their homes for as long as possible.
- 4. What type of housing is most desired for elders and seniors who live here? (Some examples might include living in one's current home, living with family, independent living senior housing, senior housing with support services, or other types of housing as defined.)**
- Many Native Elders from rural areas stay at motels because it is affordable.
  - Need more affordable senior housing apartments.
  - Need more small senior assisted living homes (5-bed) that is culturally-appropriate like Galena and Tanana.
  - Need an Elder housing navigator to help AK Native Elders find permanent senior housing in Fairbanks.
  - Prefer to have rural-based Elders to be exempt from regulations imposed on senior housing that limit the number of people in the home and ages. This is not culturally appropriate for Native elders.
- 5. Is your home accessible? If you became disabled and needed help to stay in your home, what resources exist to help you do that in Fairbanks?**
- Interior Rural Housing Authority (IRHA) provides assistance to improve accessibility but resources are unknown.
  - Some senior homes are not accessible and modifications are not made until they need it.
  - Need more ways to promote awareness of resources/services/programs for Elders and seniors. Many seniors are not aware of what is available.

## **6. Is senior homelessness a problem?**

- AK Native Elders are known and if an Elder needs help, there are people to help.
- “Housing First” – Seniors and others with alcohol/drug addictions can live at Housing First (Note: Housing First is a TCC program that provides housing for those who are homeless or marginally homeless with addiction problems. The program provides housing and support services. It allows for alcohol on premises and allows people to recover at their own pace.)

## **7. Do you have any suggestions of ways to improve senior housing in Fairbanks?**

- More senior housing is needed in Fairbanks.
- Need to make sure we have opportunities to age in place.
- Need “graduated senior housing” to provide housing that is appropriate for seniors along with services as needed. Independent senior housing with supportive in-home services and assisted living on same campus.
- AHFC’s service coordinator helps seniors navigate the system of services and get legal assistance and other services as needed.

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## **Elder Safety & Protection**

### **1. For the most part, are elders and seniors who live in Fairbanks treated with appropriate respect and dignity?**

- More respect is needed for seniors. Fairbanks needs more senior housing.

### **2. What forms of Elder abuse and exploitation take place here? Is elder abuse a problem in Fairbanks?**

- Need more education about signs of elder abuse and what to do if abuse is suspected.

### **3. What should be done in Fairbanks to make sure older peoples’ rights and safety are protected so they are not neglected, exploited or abused?**

- Senior centers are very important! Senior centers are the “headquarters” for local issues. Senior centers play important role in identifying seniors in trouble and can provide help to get them connected with right services.
- Need more awareness about services to help seniors being abused. Adult Protective Services needs to conduct education to raise awareness about signs of abuse and what to do if abuse is suspected.
- Note: Fairbanks has the North Star Council on Aging Senior Center, Fairbanks Native Association Elders Program, and Fairbanks Resource Agency Adult Day program. These are programs that are referred to as “senior centers.”

## Financial Security

- 1. Do you know of anyone who has to choose between buying food and paying for other necessities such as heating fuel or medicine?**
  - Yes, participants know of seniors who are having to make hard choices on basic needs.
- 2. Do elders/seniors know about assistance programs such as Senior Benefits and Heating Assistance? How do people find out about assistance programs?**
  - Yes and no. For more information, seniors call
    - FNA Elders Program
    - Senior Center
    - Public Assistance
    - Fairbanks Resource Agency
  - Fairbanks needs a centralized place for information/referral for all – Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC). Fairbanks and the Interior need an ADRC.
- 3. Based on the people you know, is poverty a problem for older people living in Fairbanks?**
  - Yes, due to the high cost of living and high energy costs.
  - People feel shame when they have difficulties and get disrespected when asking for help by agencies.
  - Sometimes seniors have to go to multiples places to get help. Need a “one-stop place” for applying for all programs and services.

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## Healthy Lifestyles

- 1. What are the best ways to encourage healthy lifestyles, disease prevention and disease management for elders and seniors living in Fairbanks?**
  - Talk to family members too to encourage their elderly family members to use the information.
  - Elders should attend Fiddlers’ Festival, health fairs. It helps to see people you know who can help seniors get connected.
  - FNSB Parks & Recreation Senior Program – Provides exercise, socially activities, etc.
  - Osher Lifelong Learning Program (UAF). Seniors need to make decision to engage in “healthy aging behaviors” and take advantage of programs offered.
  - Public transportation and special needs transportation are services available to get seniors to senior activities. Services for senior transportation need to be improved for seniors living outside of the FNSB. More funding is needed for transportation. Funding for senior transportation is split between local (45%) and public funds (65%).

- Vehicle insurance is a problem that needs to be addressed. Salcha use to have senior transit services but could not sustain this service due to cost of insurance.
- Transporting seniors to activities is key to healthy aging.\*

**2. Do older adults play an important role in this community? What can communities do to encourage and support their involvement?**

- Yes, older adults play a vital role in their communities.

**3. Do elders and seniors experience loneliness or isolation? Do they have a problem with depression? What do people do when they have this problem?**

- Loneliness and depression are problems for seniors. A person can become isolated when fallen ill which leads to depression.
- Sometimes older people get “crabby” which can cause others to avoid them. Need to help older person to recognize that when they become crabby so that they can change their behavior.
- Long, cold winters can lead to depression and isolation, especially for people who are lower income.
- Retirement – Remain active and fill that void with activities that provide purpose and meaning. Depression can step in with retirement.

**4. What are some of the biggest mental health challenges for seniors? Are there services in Fairbanks to address these issues?**

- Services for senior behavioral health in Fairbanks.
- Need dementia care assisted living facilities.
- Need for more culturally-appropriate senior assisted living.

**Group Exercise: Identifying Challenges and Opportunities**

(Participants list out community assets and areas needing improvement for local seniors. Then, they independently vote on their top 5 choices with colored dots)

**Participant votes for Community Assets that make Fairbanks a good place to live for seniors.**

- Alzheimer’s Resource Agency - #1 (n=10)
- Fairbanks Senior Center - #2 (n=9)
- Fairbanks Native Association - #3 (n=6)
- FNSB Parks & Recreation Program - #4 (n=4)
- Denaakanaaga - #4 (n=4)
- FNSB Van Tran - #4 (n=4)

**Other Mentions**

- Osher Lifelong Learning Program (n=3)

Senior Housing (n=2)

Adult Learning Programs of Alaska – Coordinates the local Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training program (MASST) (n=1)

**Top FNSB Challenges for Seniors**

Economy - #1 (n=8)

Lack of long-range planning in AK Native Elder community - #2 (n=7)

High cost of living - #3 (n=5)

Long, cold winters - #3 (n=5)

Agencies not working together - #3 (n=5)

Lack of dissemination of information - #3 (n=5)

Other Mentions:

Workforce trained in geriatrics (n=0)

Misuse of resources (n=0)

**Southern Peninsula Elder-Senior Listening Session**  
**Discussion Notes**  
**Homer Senior Center Inc.**  
**October 9, 2014**

Note: Although this was a small event with approximately 10 people attending, there was substantive group discussion. Participants included seniors and three senior provider representatives.

**LONG-TERM SUPPORT SERVICES DISCUSSION**

**1. Do you think Homer is a good place to live and grow old? If yes, what makes this area a special place to live if you are an older person?**

- Low Traffic
- Walking (but not in winter)
- Outdoor Activities – Fishing, hunting, handicapped accessible fishing area
- Arts & Cultural Community – “Pier I,” Homer Council on Arts
- Appropriate senior services for increasing needs
- Lots of volunteer opportunities which helps to decrease social isolation
- Always opportunities for seniors to work, paid or as volunteers
- Lots of groups to join – Book clubs, knitting groups
- Farmers Market, “Islands & Oceans” (museum) and walking trails

**2. What services are working especially well for older Alaskans and their families in this community? Please tell us about those services. How do Elders, seniors and their families find out about services and assistance offered?**

Strengths of Homer Senior Services:

- Senior Meals – Congregate and home-delivered meals. Seniors contribute to the cost of meals.  
Homer Senior Center has the best “salad bar” in town. Senior Center has a garden and grows their food used in meals.
- Senior Housing – High quality, but limited. More is needed.
- Hospital provides good medical services.
- Home health, PCA, adult day services provide great care for people at home.
- Hospice
- Aging & Disability Resource Center (Provided by Kenai Independent Living Center)

**3. Are elders and seniors able to get the help they need to remain at home or in the community when they are no longer able to care for themselves? Please tell us about that.**

Challenges for Homer Senior Services:

- Access to waiver services is definitely a problem because not everyone qualifies. Those that don't qualify cannot afford these “gap” services at home.

- Workforce is limited
- Veterans – Limited assisted living for veterans. Can go to nursing home and have access to home- and community-based services at home as VA will pay for these services. VA does not pay for assisted living. Assisted living costs \$4,000/month and nursing home is \$26,000 month. Because VA does not pay for assisted living, some veterans end up living at nursing home – but do not need this level of service. Homer Senior Center just received 5-year contract with VA to offer adult day services for veterans.
- Transportation is a huge issue. Only one cab is handicapped accessible.
- KARTS (Kenai Area Regional Transportation System) is limited (Operated by Kenai ILC). KARTS employs one accessible van in Homer and also contracts with cab companies.
- Senior Center has one van and transportation services are limited. “Seniors don’t feel safe using cabs.

**4. What would you do if you or your loved one had dementia? How are people with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementia cared for in Homer? What services are available to help them? In your opinion, are there sufficient services for seniors with dementia? Are older people with dementia safe?**

- Homer has excellent services for people with early to middle stage dementia (adult day, assisted living, home health care, respite, and supports for family caregiver) but does not have the capacity to serve people with higher needs (especially those with challenging behaviors) and have to send them outside the community.
  - Loss to families when elders have to relocate.
  - Hospital tries to fill the void but can’t for people in later stages of dementia.

**5. What do you recommend to address these long-term care challenges for older people in Homer?**

- Homer needs a music therapy program to serve people with dementia.
- Need a long-term care facility to serve people with dementia, 24-7 medical care for those in the later stages of disease.
- Need to increase workforce for all senior services – nurses, higher levels of health care workers, more specialized services in dementia care.
- Definitely need a geriatric physician to serve senior patients living on the Peninsula!
- Homer needs more intergenerational opportunities – Bring high school kids to senior center where seniors and teens have an opportunity to converse. Can develop into an oral history project.

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### Senior Housing

**1. Do elders and seniors live in warm and comfortable homes? How are energy costs being addressed? What are the impacts?**

- Some seniors live in homes without water and have no central heat. They use a wood stove – no electricity/oil heat.

- Some seniors have outhouses.
  - Some seniors use heat with electricity or propane but they don't turn on the heat because heat costs are too high. Natural gas costs less than electrical heat, but conversion costs are high and prohibitive.
- 2. Is there enough senior housing in this area to meet the needs of elders and seniors?**
- Homer has 45 units of independent senior housing but that is not sufficient for need. Homer Senior Citizens Inc. has waitlist of 120 people for four senior housing projects. Takes only one hour to complete the application. A senior can be on the waitlist for 5 years.
  - Big demand for affordable senior independent senior housing. Limited demand for market rents.
  - Living in congregate senior housing provides social opportunities for seniors to talk to each other. Reducing the risk of social isolation is a benefit of senior housing.
  - Homer Senior Inc. has no waitlist for assisted living in terms of physical facility, but beds are left open due to insufficient workforce (staff) to care for residents. Homer Senior Inc. is exploring the option to become a CNA (certified nursing assistant) training site to increase local senior workforce.
- 3. What are your plans for the future? Will you try to remain in your home? If needed, do you plan to move into Assisted Living, stay with family, or hire someone to care for you at home? How do you plan to accomplish this?**
- Encourage seniors to remain at home for as long as possible. Get home health care when needed.
  - Some seniors move closer to town and in a smaller place to help with upkeep and maintenance.
  - Limited workforce to provide home health care.
- 4. What type of housing is most desired for elders and seniors who live here? (Some examples might include living in one's current home, living with family, independent living senior housing, senior housing with support services, or other types of housing as defined.)**
- Independent affordable senior housing with support services like chore, homemaker, meals, etc.
  - Snow shoveling is a big need for seniors along with "sanding" on stairs and sidewalks due to icy conditions.
- 5. Is your home accessible? If you became disabled and needed help to stay in your home, what resources exist to help you do that in Homer?**
- Lots of senior homes need accessible improvements. Alzheimer's grants provide help with modifications.
  - More people are buying "smarter" and purchasing homes with accessible features.

**6. Is “elder/senior homelessness” a problem for this region? How would you know that a senior/elder is homeless?**

- There are some seniors who are “marginally homeless” and live with families. Families pass their “seniors around” with seniors living for a time with different family members.
  - Homer has chronic senior alcoholics who “choose to be homeless.” “It’s their choice but may have mental health needs.” These seniors live in tents or cardboard houses out on the Spit. One participant noted that he is living in a van right now and is looking for permanent housing.
  - Aging baby boomers use of recreational drugs is increasing and may contribute to the problem of senior homelessness.
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**Elder Safety & Protection**

**1. For the most part, are elders and seniors who live here treated with appropriate respect and dignity?**

- Yes, most seniors are treated with respect. Few are exploited. Those who experience financial exploitation is due to misuse of power of attorney (POA).

**2. What forms of Elder abuse and exploitation take place here? Is elder abuse a problem for the Southern Peninsula?**

- Some caregivers befriend seniors and take advantage of them.
- Seniors who are isolated are more vulnerable to abuse because they want someone to talk to them. Will give them money. Seniors will pay unskilled caregivers even though they do not care well for them.
- Some families (who have POA) exploit their elderly family members. They don’t use the senior’s money to pay for services and medication when needed.
- Some family members with POA use the senior’s money to purchase alcohol/drugs for self and senior (to limited degree). Most families care well for their elderly loved ones. There is a “Pioneer Ethic” among Alaskans to care for seniors.

**3. What should be done to make sure older peoples’ rights and safety are protected so they are not neglected, exploited or abused?**

- More and better education for families not to take elders’ money. And more training directed to seniors “to know they should not give their money away.”
  - Educate kids in school about the importance of elder respect to prevent elder abuse and exploitation.
  - Encourage reporting of “suspected” abuse. This is an important role for Adult Protective Services (APS). APS needs to conduct more training about the signs of elder abuse – unpaid loans, unexplained bruises.
  - Neglect is abuse. Allowing a vulnerable senior to stay home alone is a safety issue and form of abuse.
-

## ECONOMIC/FINANCIAL SECURITY

- 1. Do you know of anyone who has to choose between buying food and paying for other necessities such as heating fuel or medicine?**
    - Biggest problem is for people with incomes just above income threshold to qualify for services. They don't have enough to pay for services and go without. They don't have enough income to pay for medication, food, dental, and vision health care services and go without. Increases in Social Security are not sufficient to keep pace with the cost of living and rising costs of health care.
    - Seniors need more education/awareness about senior assistance programs.
    - Some seniors are very impoverished. There are many seniors who have never worked to qualify for Social Security and Medicare.
    - Some seniors who have worked in the public sector (local, state, and federal governments) have limited pensions. Due to their public employment, they have lost some of their Social Security benefits and their public retirement is not enough to cover expenses ("Windfall Tax"). Seniors who have worked in both public and private sectors lose some of their Social Security.
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## HEALTHY AGING/HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

- 1. What are the best ways to encourage healthy lifestyles, disease prevention and disease management for elders and seniors?**
  - Seniors benefit from the socialization they receive by attending congregate meals served at senior center. Residents of senior independent housing and assisted living benefit from socializing with other senior residents.
  - "Special topics" is offered periodically during congregate senior meals to provide information to seniors on a variety of topics of interest provided by local professionals and community members.
  - Younger seniors are more aware about benefits of healthy nutrition and exercise. Older seniors don't like to eat processed foods because they did not eat that when they were younger. Older seniors did more manual physical labor too.
- 2. Do older adults play an important role in this community? What can communities do to encourage and support their involvement?**
  - Yes. Seniors play an important role in community. "Seniors provide big economic boost and help the community to be more inclusive of all generations and more compassionate." Kids are showing more interest in wanting to be part of senior community. There is growing interest among youth to volunteer at the senior center.

**3. Do elders and seniors experience loneliness or isolation? Do they have a problem with depression? What do people do when they have this problem?**

- Yes, isolation is a problem for some seniors especially for those who live outside of town. This is a particular problem for Viet Nam veterans who live outside of town and experience social isolation. These seniors say they want to be left alone and do not want services.

**4. What are some of the biggest mental health challenges for seniors? Are there services in Homer to address these issues?**

- Depression, anxiety, and social isolation.
- Health problems lead to reduced intellectual functioning that can develop into mental health issues.
- Increased fear that develops from financial insecurity and health problems.
- Lack of knowledge about health conditions leads to fear of going to the doctor to find out.
- Some seniors do not have care coordination because they can't afford to pay for services and don't qualify for the waiver. (Note: Unsure whether these seniors are able to access grant-funded care coordination services.)
- Seniors must have access to opportunities to exercise their creative urges.

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**COMMUNITY FORUM SUMMARY: IDENTIFYING COMMUNITY ASSETS AND CHALLENGES**

**Top Community Assets for Seniors Living on the Peninsula:**

- #1 Senior Center and services/opportunities for socialization (n=6)
- #1 Continuum of Senior Services (n=6)
- #2 Good recreational/cultural activities/educational programs ("Island Oceans" public education program) (n=4)
- #3 Close sense of community & community support (n=3)
- #3 Hospital (n=3)
- #3 Great Public Radio (n=3)
- #4 Friendly business community that helps people in need (n=1)

**Top Challenges for Seniors Living on the Peninsula:**

- #1 Lack of affordable, independent senior housing (n=5)
- #1 Rising costs of utilities (n=5)
- #2 Muni is economically challenged (n=4)
- #3 Distance from family who live in Anchorage and elsewhere outside of Peninsula (n=2)
- #3 Long, cold icy winters (n=2)
- #4 Lack of "big box stores" for shopping (where goods are lower priced) (n=2)
- #5 Lack of accessible transportation services (n=1)

**Anchorage Elder-Senior Listening Session  
Anchorage Senior Activities Center, Round Table Discussion Notes  
December 12, 2014**

Note: Approximately 40 people attended this session. Participants included seniors, providers, and representatives from the Muni. We had small group discussions that addressed topics and below are notes that were reported out from each discussion group.

**Long-Term Support Services**

**1. Do you think Anchorage is a good place to live and grow old? If yes, what makes this area a special place to live if you are an older person?**

**Positive Attributes:**

- Yes, because there is better access to services than what other communities can offer.
- Family support
- Anchorage provides more services for seniors.
- Trail system.

**Negative Attributes:**

- Many people are affected by cold and darkness.
- Because there is a lack of services in rural areas, many seniors have to move to Anchorage to obtain services.

**2. What services are working especially well for older Alaskans and their families in this community? Please tell us about those services. How do Elders, seniors and their families find out about services and assistance offered?**

- Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) and 211 help seniors get connected with appropriate senior services in the community.
- Word of mouth from private services. There are more than 45 private senior services in Anchorage.
- Older Persons Action Directory
- Increase in Medicaid fraud reports. There is a need to increase licensing requirements for assisted living homes.
- Anchorage has improved access to primary health care compared to earlier times with decreased wait times. There is more focus on geriatric healthcare.
- Alzheimer's Resource Agency of Alaska is a good resource.
- Areas in need of improvement include:
  - Need more training and better supports for family caregivers, especially respite.

- Need to increase number of long-term care beds for persons with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias (ADRD) that specialize in dementia care.
  - “211” is not recognized by outside cell phones. People have to call the “800” number if they have an out of state phone number.
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### **Senior Housing**

**1. Do elders and seniors live in warm and comfortable homes? How are energy costs being addressed? What are the impacts?**

- Need data/waitlists for senior housing. There is a growing population of “fast aging” senior homeless population (“street people”)
  - Some seniors live in co-housing situations, particularly seniors with larger homes.
  - Significant need for senior assisted living homes. The group was divided in their opinions. Some members said that we can decrease demand for assisted living by increasing in-home supports, while others felt that demand for senior housing will increase regardless due to growing senior population.
  - Advocacy: Group members wanted to expand services, but realize that the budget deficit issue will make this advocacy difficult.
- 

### **Elder Safety & Protection**

**1. For the most part, are elders and seniors who live in Fairbanks treated with appropriate respect and dignity?**

- Yes, for those who live independently but less so for seniors who live in assisted living.
- Need to increase accessibility for seniors who live independently to prevent falls. Utilize Home Maps to identify areas in the home that pose a fall risk.

**2. What should be done in Fairbanks to make sure older peoples’ rights and safety are protected so they are not neglected, exploited or abused?**

- Reform Power of Attorney law. Legislation may be introduced by Rep Hughes this legislative session.
- Ensure that conservator is honest to prevent financial exploitation.
- Increase unscheduled visits by OLTCO (Office of Long-Term Care Ombudsman) in assisted living homes to check on senior residents.
- Strengthen assisted living regulations. Small homes are not well-regulated. Increase protection for residents in larger homes too, including Pioneer Homes.
- Increase requirements for PCA certification.
- Increase dementia care training to improve care for dementia residents in assisted living homes.

## Healthy Aging/Lifestyles

### 1. Do elders and seniors experience loneliness or isolation? Do they have a problem with depression? What do people do when they have this problem?

- Social isolation, mental illness, hoarding are problems for seniors.
- Isolation can lead to depression.
- Seniors are at risk for overmedication.
- Need more mental health assessments.
- Depression is an increasing problem for many seniors.
- Hoarding is a problem too. Can be a symptom of dementia.
- Health Literacy – Seniors should bring a family member or friend (advocate) with them for doctor visits to ensure that they understand the provider’s medical instructions. Also important for advocate to communicate the medical needs of senior patient with the senior’s health care provider.

#### Other Thoughts

- Loss of hearing can increase social isolation and depression.
  - Seniors need more vegetables/fruits/health nutrition at congregate meal sites and Food Bank donations. Many seniors are not getting proper nutrition.
  - Need to increase intergenerational interaction. Bring youth to senior centers. Students visit with Elders in rural schools.
  - Encourage seniors to participate in community gardens.
  - Important to enhance social connections.
- 

## Economic Security

### 1. Do you know of anyone who has to choose between buying food and paying for other necessities such as heating fuel or medicine?

- Yes. Anchorage seniors need more financial assistance with purchasing medication than the basics like food and heating fuel.

### 2. Do elders/seniors know about assistance programs such as Senior Benefits and Heating Assistance? How do people find out about assistance programs?

- The following are information resources on programs for seniors:
  - Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs)
  - Service providers and other senior service professionals.
  - Too many acronyms – Need to spell out names of services and programs.
  - Older Persons Action Group (OPAG) Senior Service Directory
  - Senior Voice
  - Anchorage Senior Activities Center

**Other Thoughts:** Important to prepare for aging by finding out about senior services before they are needed and family is operating in “crisis mode.”

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**Group Exercise: Identifying Challenges and Opportunities**

(Participants list out community assets and areas needing improvement for local seniors. Then, they independently vote on their top 5 choices with colored dots)

**Participant votes for Community Assets that make Anchorage a good place to live for seniors.**

- #1 Property Tax Exemption for Seniors (n=14)
- #2 Muni Aging & Disability Resource Center (n=13)
- #2 Anchorage Senior Activities Center (n=13)
- #3 Anchorage Trail System & Outdoor Recreation (n=11)
- #4 Alzheimer’s Disease Resource Agency (n=10)
- #5 Entertainment Opportunities (n=8)

**Other Anchorage Assets Identified for Seniors**

- Public Library (n=6)
  - Independent Living Services for Seniors (n=4)
  - Opportunities for Lifelong Learning (UAA’s OLE Program), University System (n=4)
  - Medicare Information Office (n=4)
  - Churches (n=3)
  - Access to Primary Health Care (n=3)
  - Transportation (n=2)
  - AARP Tax Preparation Help (n=2)
  - “Senior Friendly Program” to create senior friendly businesses (n=1)
  - Senior Voice (n=1)
  - Adult Day Services (n=0)
- 

**Anchorage Community Challenges for Seniors**

- #1 Shortage of accessible housing to all aging in place (n=17)
- #2 Transportation (n=14)
- #3 Limited mental health supports/services for seniors (n=13)
- #4 Health care providers that accept Medicare (n=12)
- #4 Specialized senior housing for persons with dementia &/or mental illness (n=12)
- #5 High cost of health care (n=10)

**Other Mentions**

- Limited geriatric health care providers in Anchorage (n=8)
- Need to build “Intergenerational Housing” for seniors raising grandkids (n=4)
- Weather (n=2)
- Split level housing (n=2)

Limited preference providers for insurance companies (n=2)  
Fixed income, high cost of living (n=1)  
Large in-migration of seniors to Anchorage (n=1)  
Growing homeless senior population (n=1)  
Technology challenges for seniors (n=1)

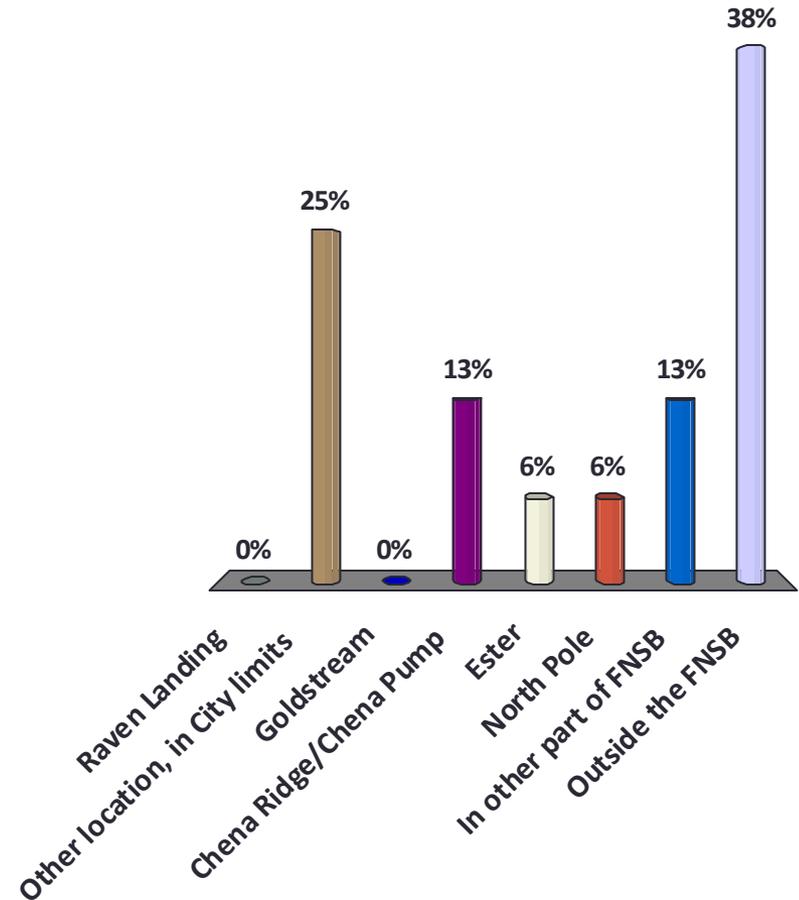
# **FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SENIOR- ELDER LISTENING SESSION**



**Hosted by  
Fairbanks North Star Borough Senior Advisory Commission &  
Raven Landing Senior Community  
with the Alaska Commission on Aging  
September 16, 2014**

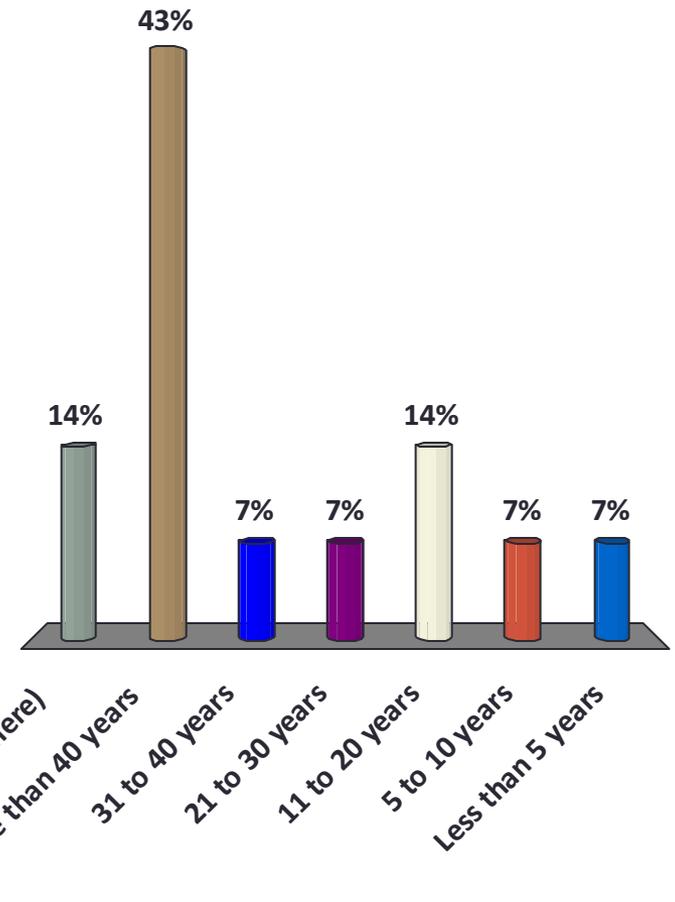
# What part of Fairbanks do you live?

1. Raven Landing
2. Other location, in City limits
3. Goldstream
4. Chena Ridge/  
Chena Pump
5. Ester
6. North Pole
7. In other part of FNSB
8. Outside the FNSB



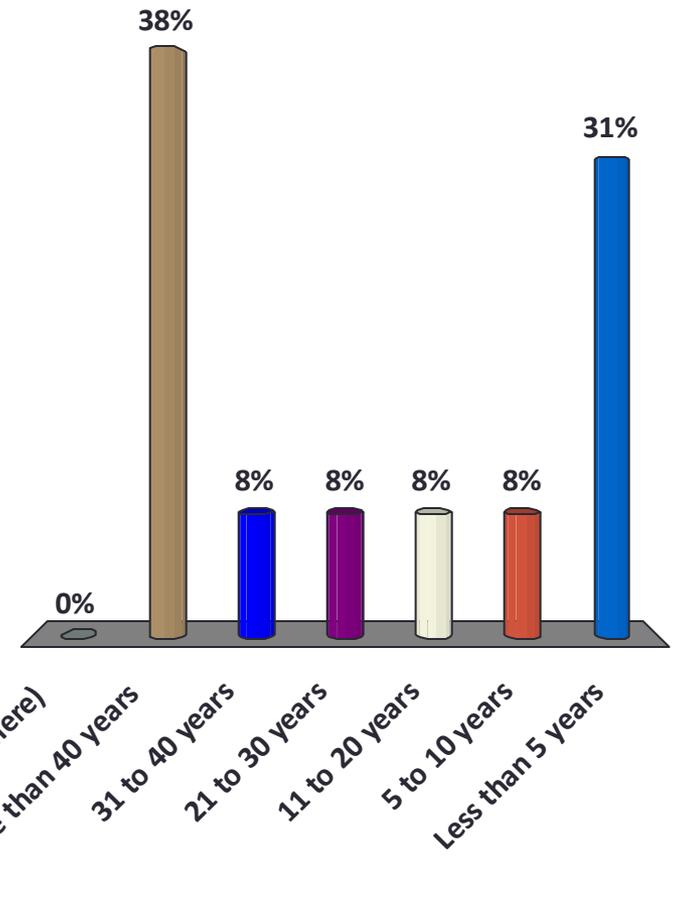
# How long have you lived in Alaska?

1. All my life (born here)
2. More than 40 years
3. 31 to 40 years
4. 21 to 30 years
5. 11 to 20 years
6. 5 to 10 years
7. Less than 5 years



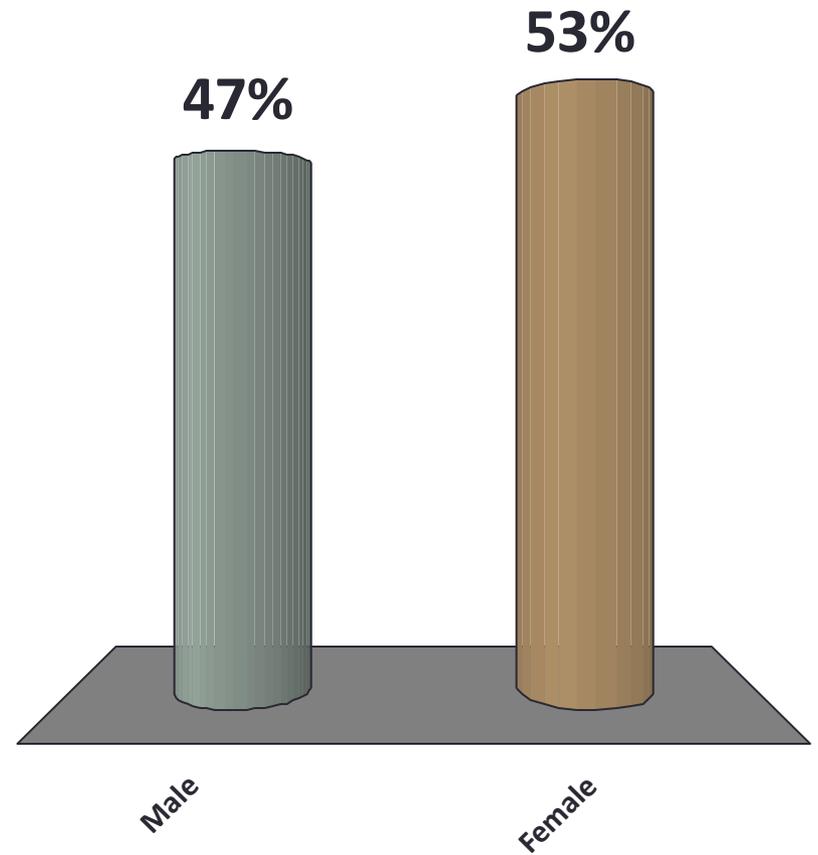
# How long have you lived in Fairbanks?

1. All my life (born here)
2. More than 40 years
3. 31 to 40 years
4. 21 to 30 years
5. 11 to 20 years
6. 5 to 10 years
7. Less than 5 years



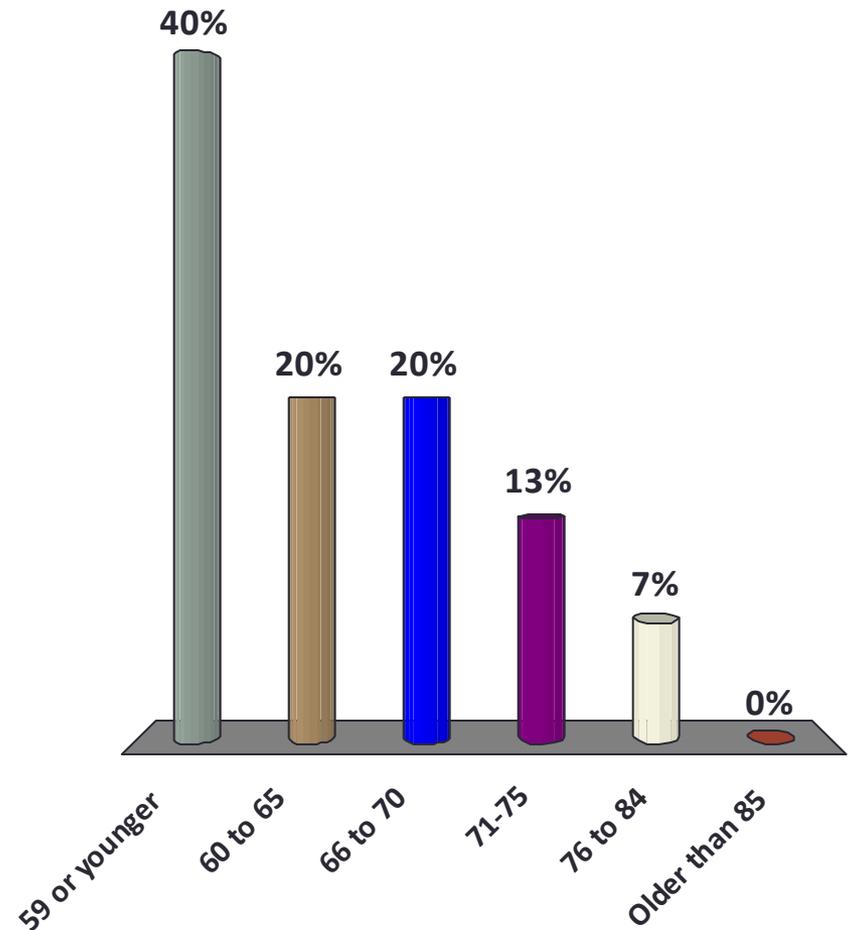
# What is your gender?

1. Male
2. Female



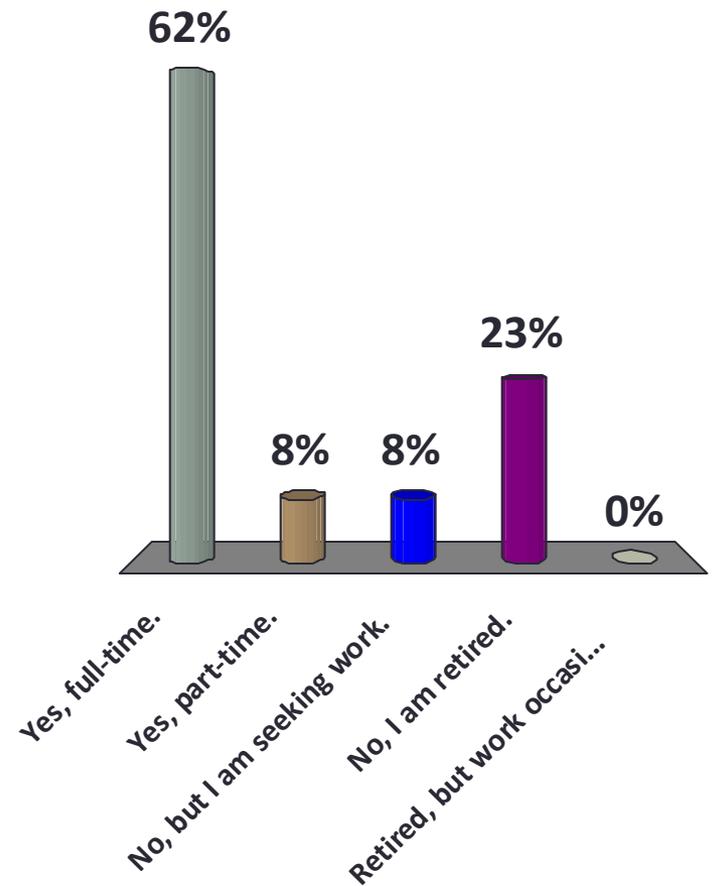
# What is your age?

1. 59 or younger
2. 60 to 65
3. 66 to 70
4. 71-75
5. 76 to 84
6. Older than 85



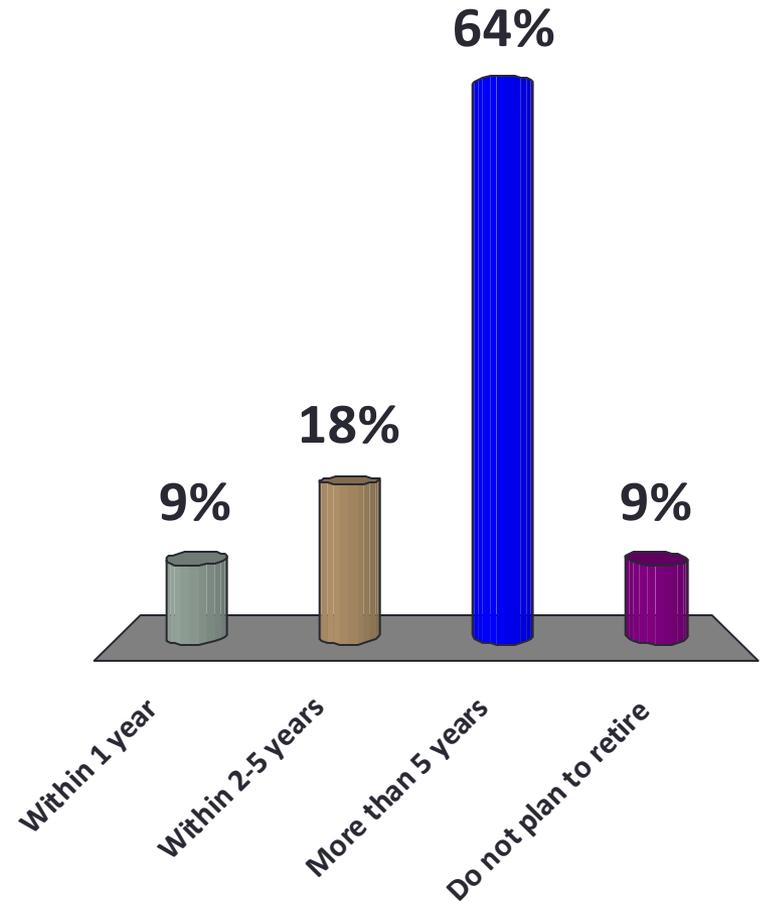
# Are you currently employed or self-employed?

1. Yes, full-time.
2. Yes, part-time.
3. No, but I am seeking work.
4. No, I am retired.
5. Retired, but work occasionally to make ends meet.



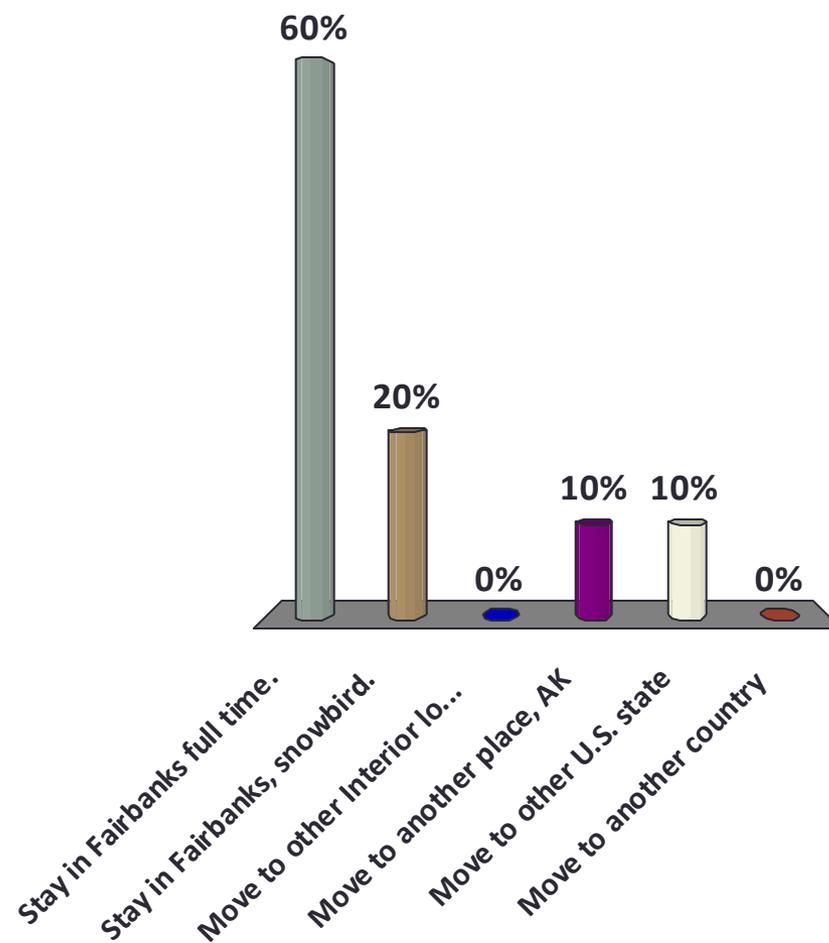
# If still working, when do you plan to retire?

1. Within 1 year
2. Within 2-5 years
3. More than 5 years
4. Do not plan to retire



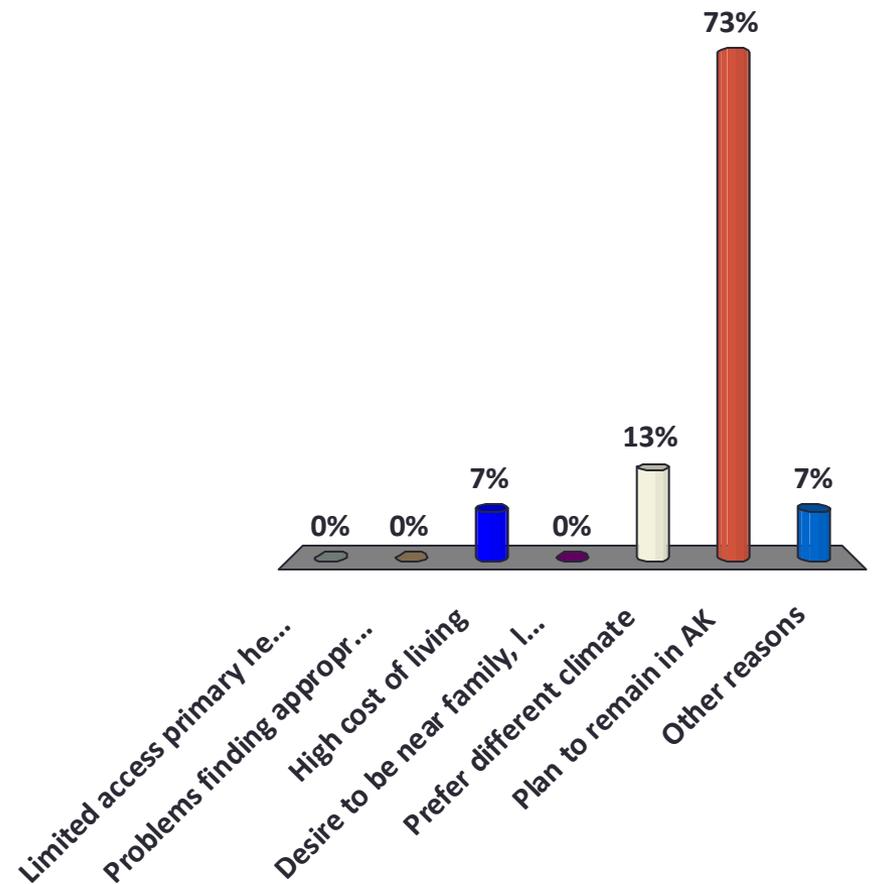
# Where do you expect to be living five years from now?

1. Stay in Fairbanks full time.
2. Stay in Fairbanks, snowbird.
3. Move to other Interior location
4. Move to another place, AK
5. Move to other U.S. state
6. Move to another country



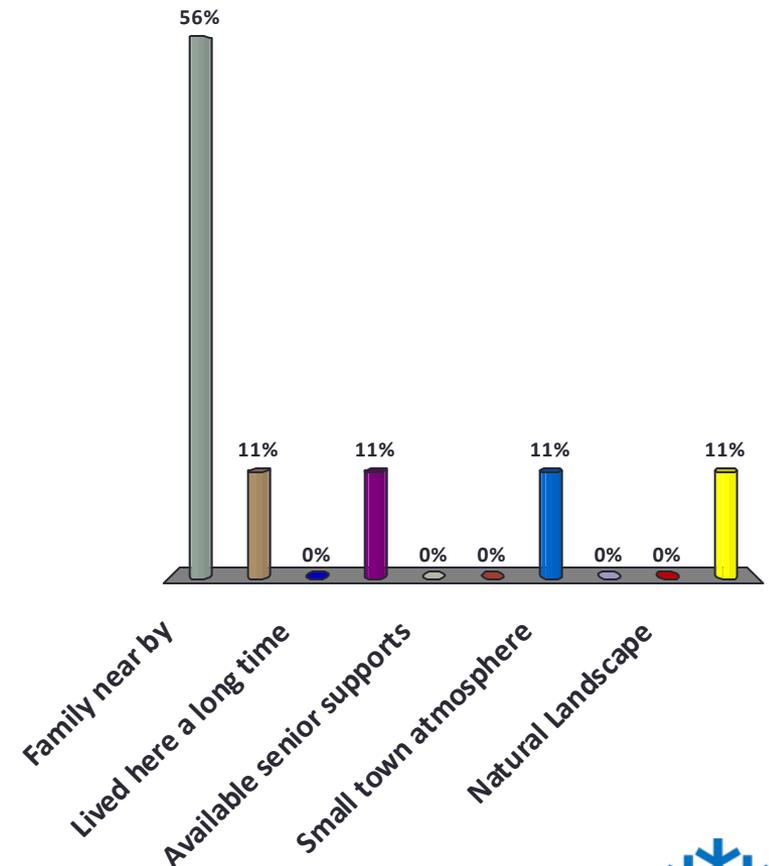
# If you are planning to move out of Alaska, what is the reason?

1. Limited access primary health care
2. Problems finding appropriate housing
3. High cost of living
4. Desire to be near family, living out of AK
5. Prefer different climate
6. Plan to remain in AK
7. Other reasons



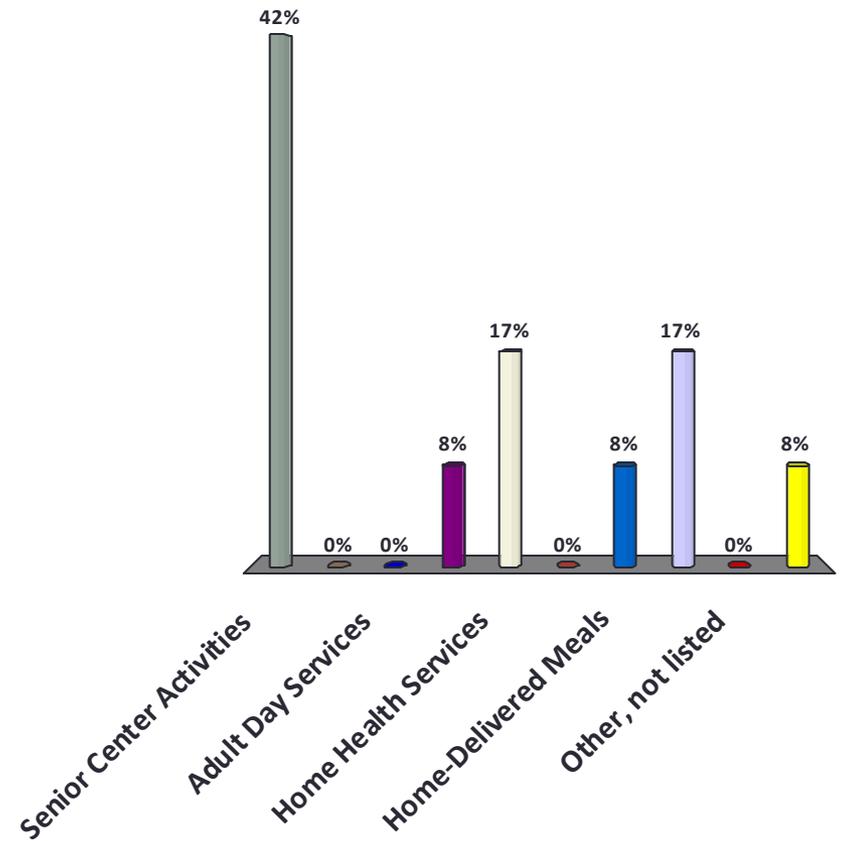
# What is the most important factor to your decision to continue living in Fairbanks as you age?

1. Family near by
2. Work
3. Lived here a long time
4. Want to live in my own home
5. Available senior supports
6. Available medical services
7. Small town atmosphere
8. Recreational opportunities
9. Natural Landscape
10. Other



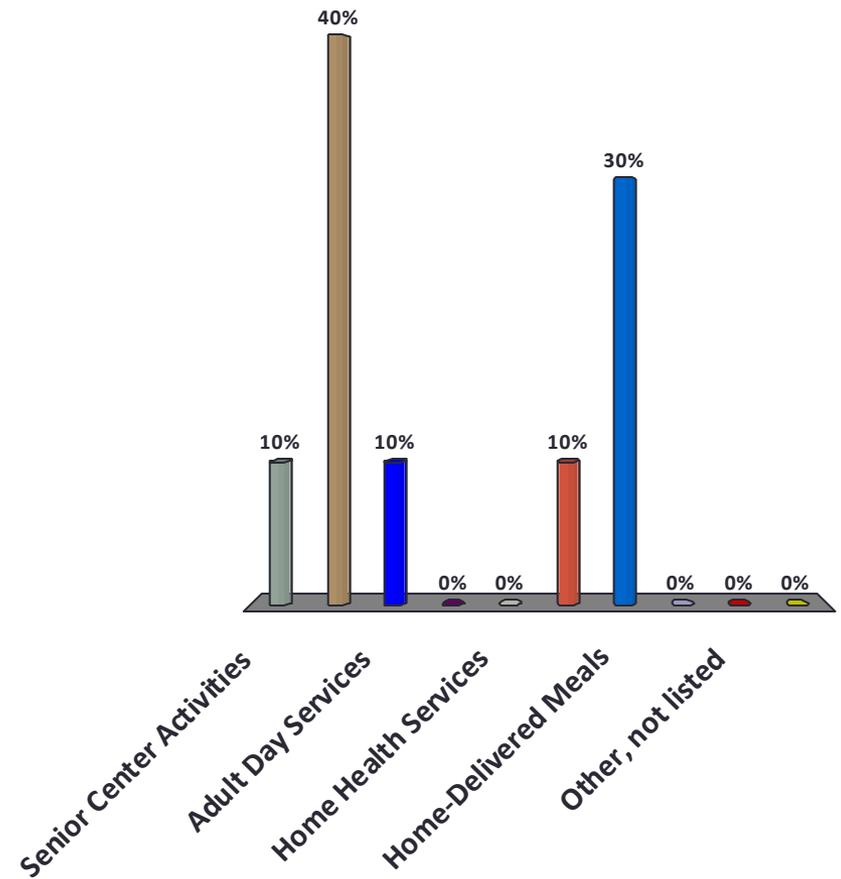
# Which of the following services have you used the most?

1. Senior Center Activities
2. Senior Transportation
3. Adult Day Services
4. Care Coordination
5. Home Health Services
6. Personal Care Assistance
7. Home-Delivered Meals
8. Alzheimer's Support Groups
9. Other, not listed
10. None



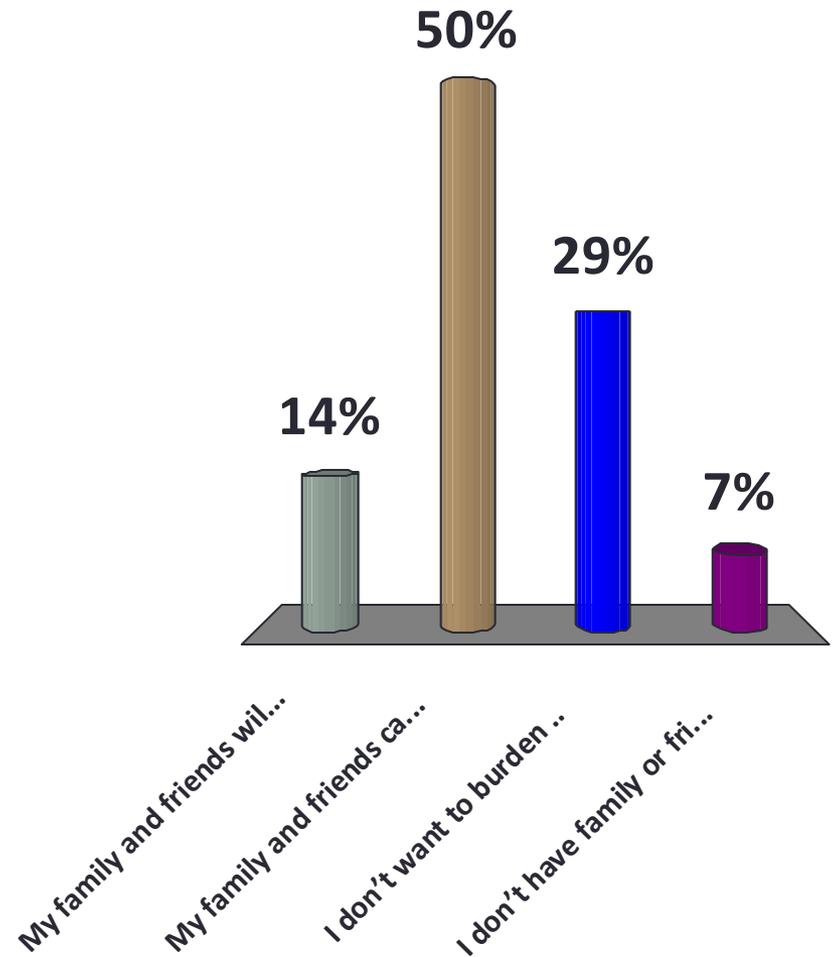
# Is there another service that you use often?

1. Senior Center Activities
2. Senior Transportation
3. Adult Day Services
4. Care Coordination
5. Home Health Services
6. Personal Care Assistance
7. Home-Delivered Meals
8. Alzheimer's Support Groups
9. Other, not listed
10. None



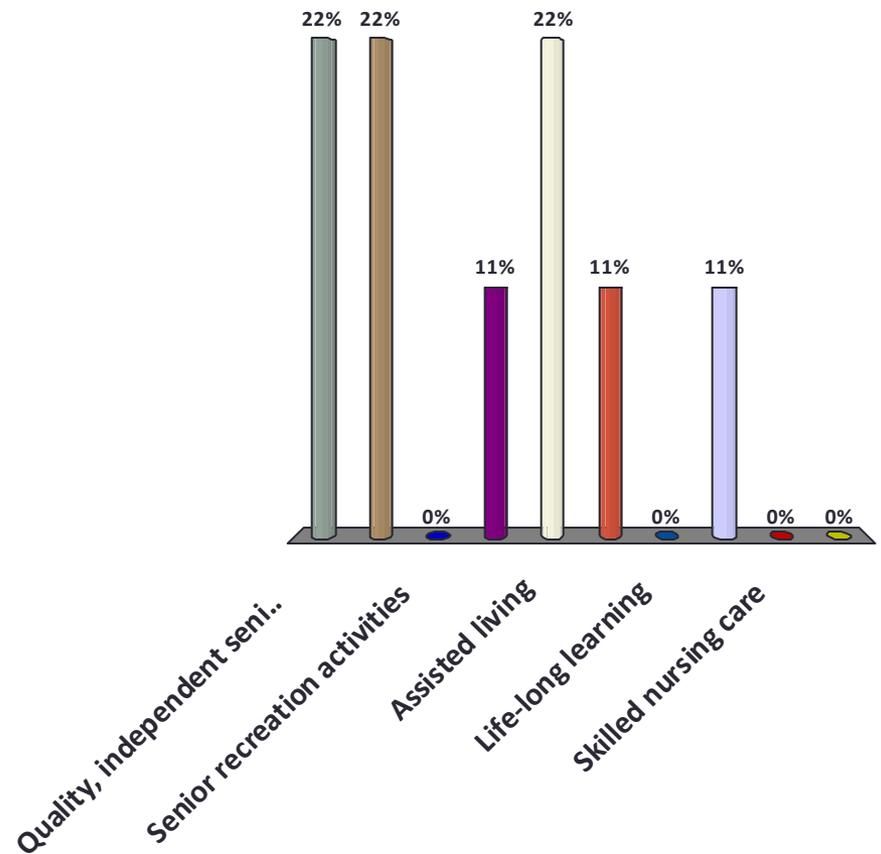
# Which statement below most closely captures your opinion about the role of family and friend caregivers?

1. My family and friends will be my main source of support as I age.
2. My family and friends can provide some services and supports but do not have the resources or time to do everything that could be required.
3. I don't want to burden my family and friends with care and would rather hire caregivers.
4. I don't have family or friends who can provide services and supports as I age.



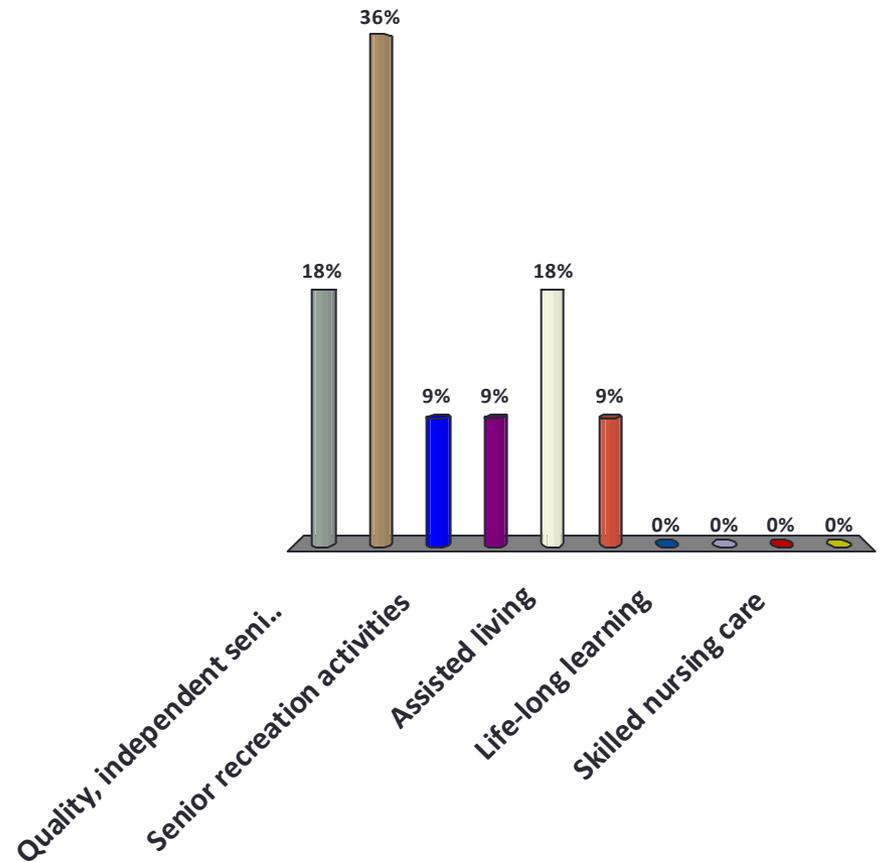
# What do you think is the **most important** service & support for Fairbanks seniors as they age?

1. Quality, independent senior housing
2. Services such as meals, rides, & homemaker
3. Senior recreation activities
4. Services for older people with dementia
5. Assisted living
6. Housing close to services/activities
7. Life-long learning
8. Information services
9. Skilled nursing care
10. Other, not listed



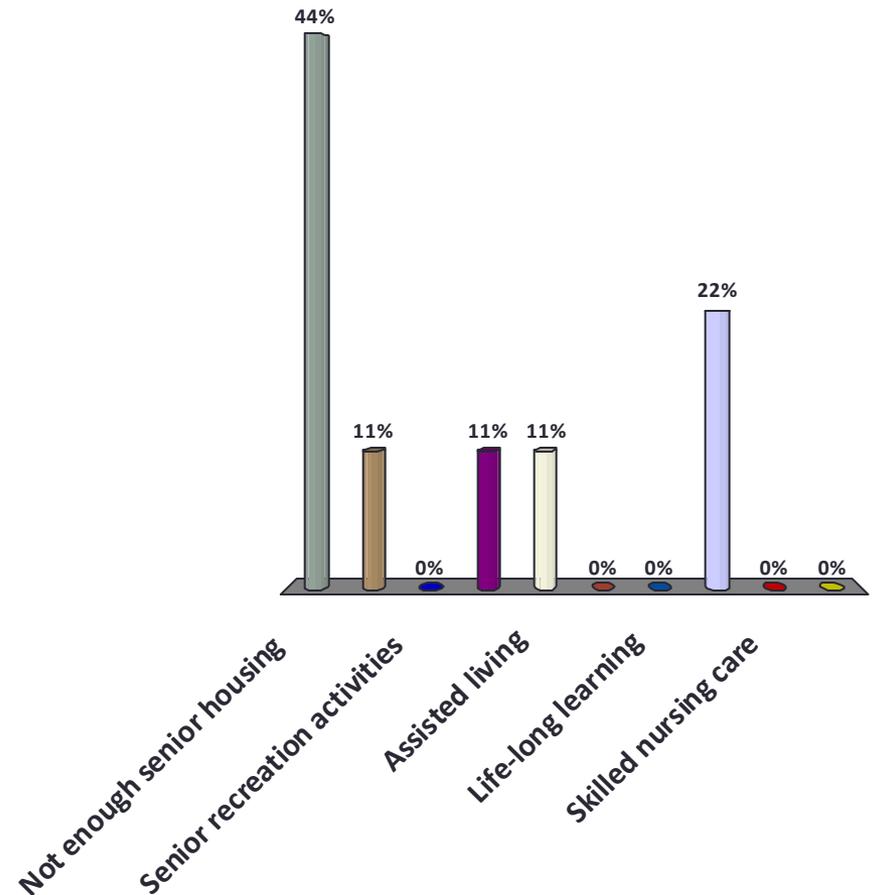
# What do you think is the **second** most important service & support for Fairbanks seniors as they age?

1. Quality, independent senior housing
2. Services such as meals, rides, homemaker
3. Senior recreation activities
4. Services for older people with dementia
5. Assisted living
6. Housing close to services/activities
7. Life-long learning
8. Information services
9. Skilled nursing care
10. Other, not listed



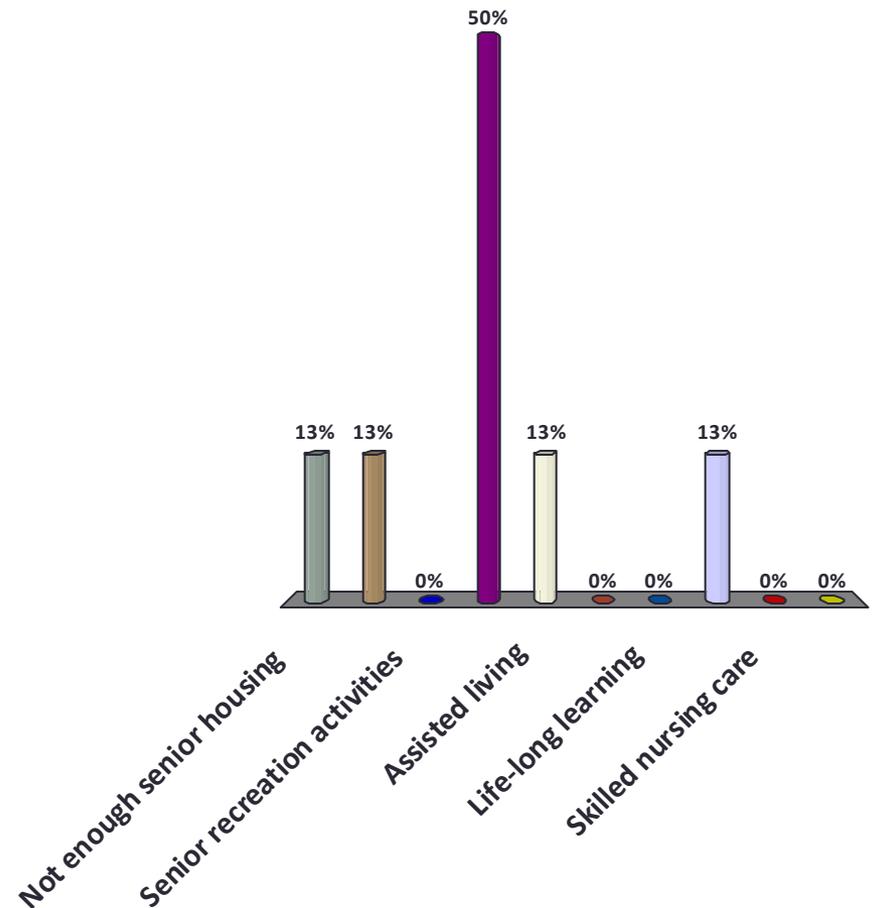
# What is the **biggest** gap in services for Fairbanks seniors?

1. Not enough senior housing
2. Services such as meals, rides, homemaker
3. Senior recreation activities
4. Services for older people with dementia
5. Assisted living
6. Housing close to services/activities
7. Life-long learning
8. Information services
9. Skilled nursing care
10. Other, not listed



# What is the next biggest service gap for Fairbanks seniors?

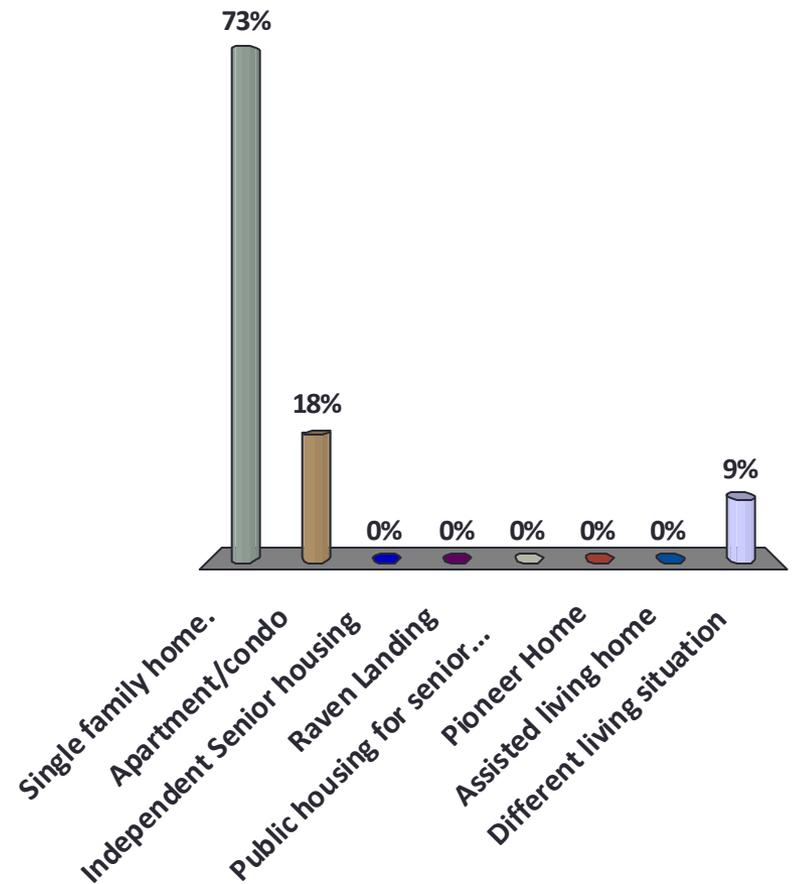
1. Not enough senior housing
2. Services such as meals, rides, homemaker
3. Senior recreation activities
4. Services for older people with dementia
5. Assisted living
6. Housing close to services/activities
7. Life-long learning
8. Information services
9. Skilled nursing care
10. Other, not listed



# What is your current housing situation?

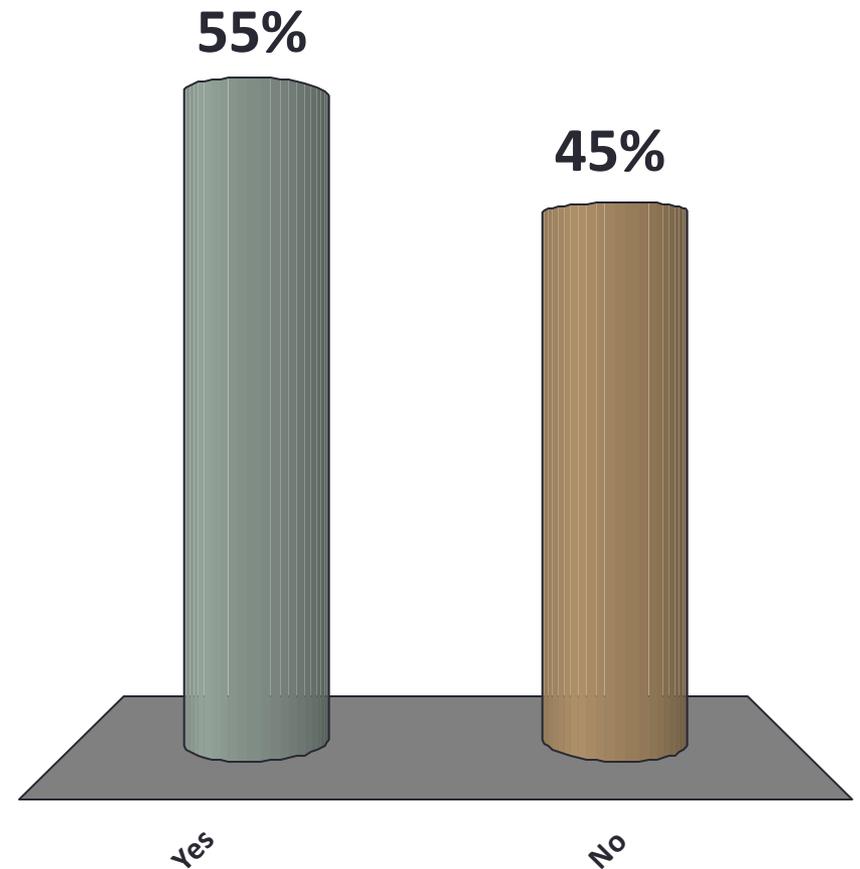
Only answer if you are 55 or over.

1. Single family home.
2. Apartment/condo
3. Independent Senior housing
4. Raven Landing
5. Public housing for seniors/disabled persons
6. Pioneer Home
7. Assisted living home
8. Different living situation



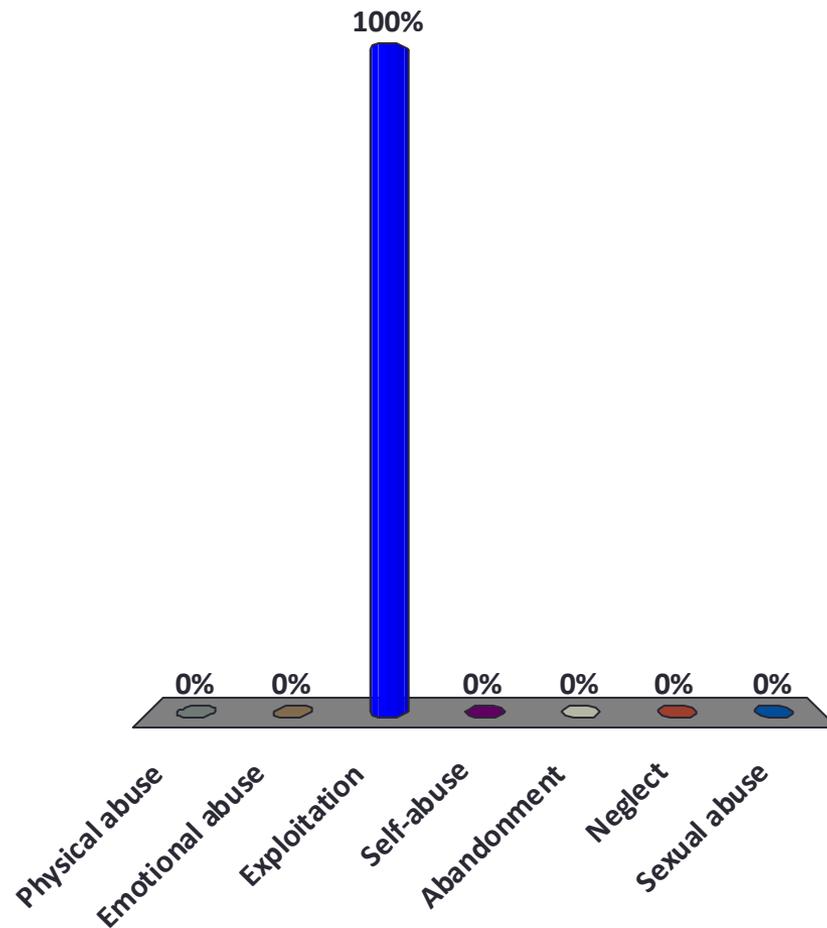
# Have you or someone you know experienced elder abuse?

1. Yes
2. No



# If you answered “yes” to the last question, which form of elder abuse have you noticed the **most**?

1. Physical abuse
2. Emotional abuse
3. Exploitation
4. Self-abuse
5. Abandonment
6. Neglect
7. Sexual abuse



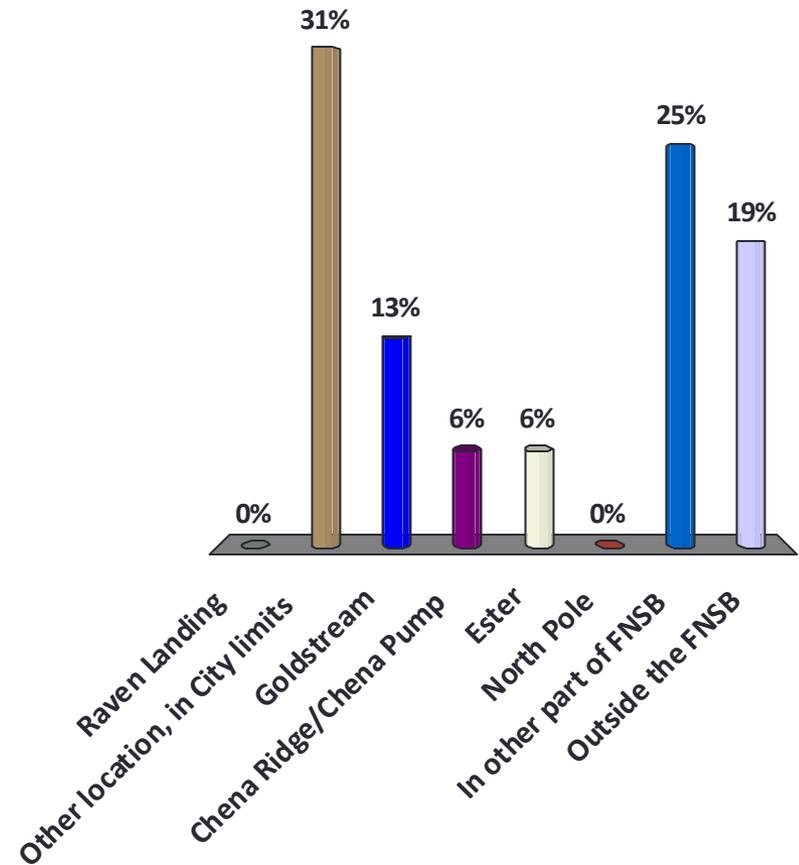
# TALKING CIRCLE LISTENING FORUM ON ALASKA NATIVE ELDER ISSUES



**Hosted by  
Denakkanaaga with the Alaska Commission on Aging  
September 16, 2014**

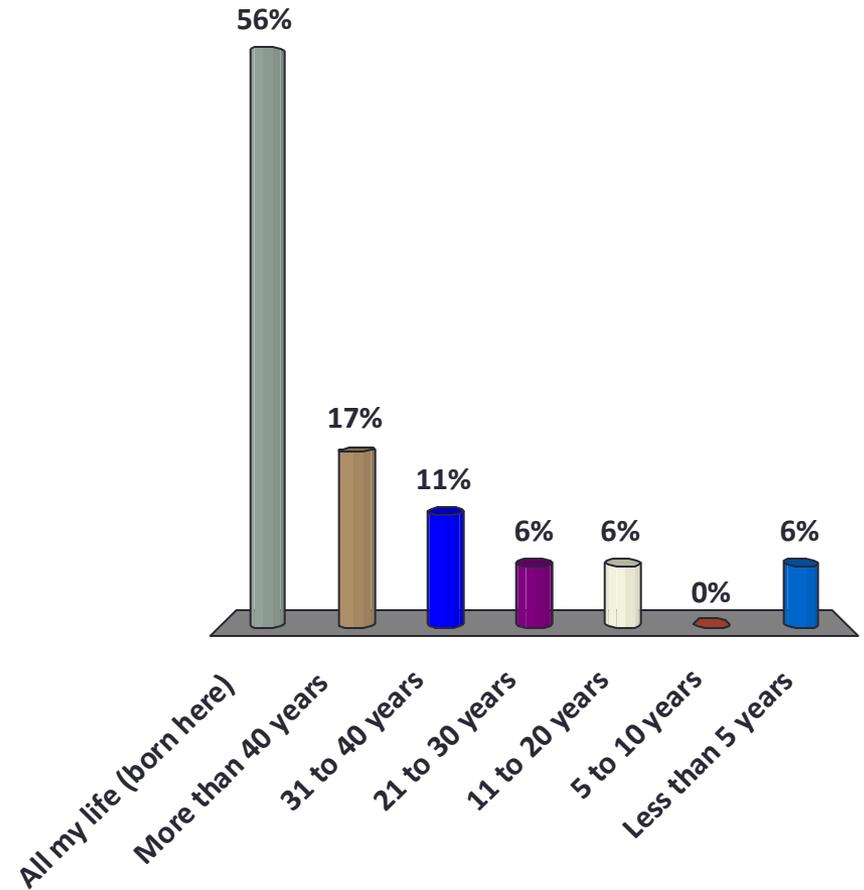
# What part of Fairbanks do you live?

1. Raven Landing
2. Other location, in City limits
3. Goldstream
4. Chena Ridge/  
Chena Pump
5. Ester
6. North Pole
7. In other part of FNSB
8. Outside the FNSB



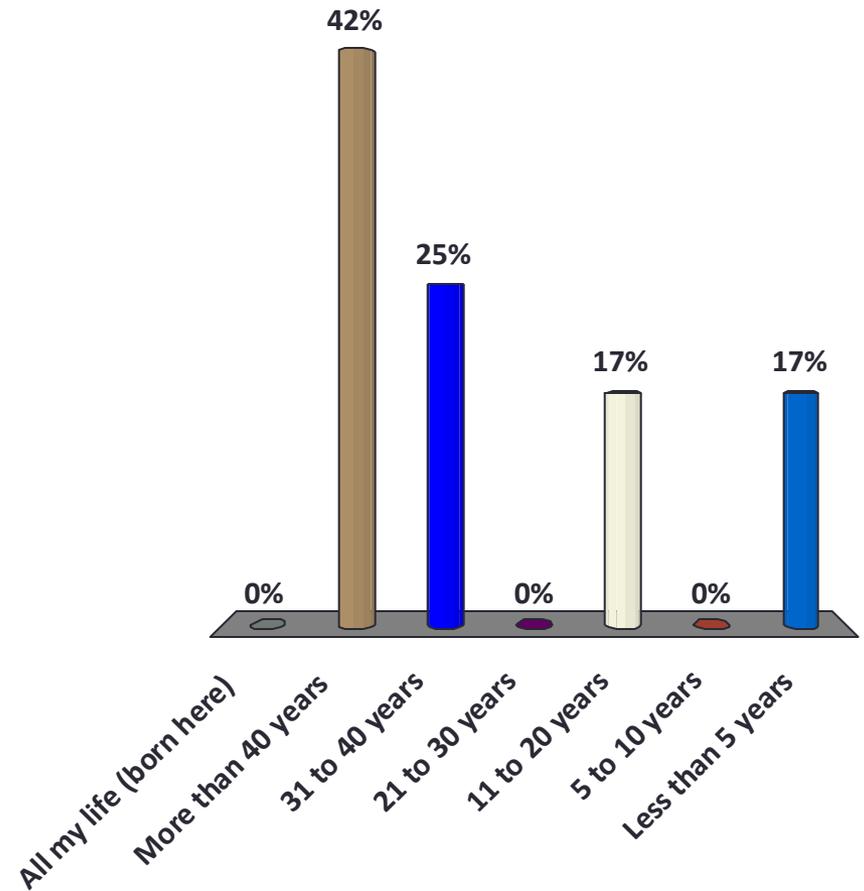
# How long have you lived in Alaska?

1. All my life (born here)
2. More than 40 years
3. 31 to 40 years
4. 21 to 30 years
5. 11 to 20 years
6. 5 to 10 years
7. Less than 5 years



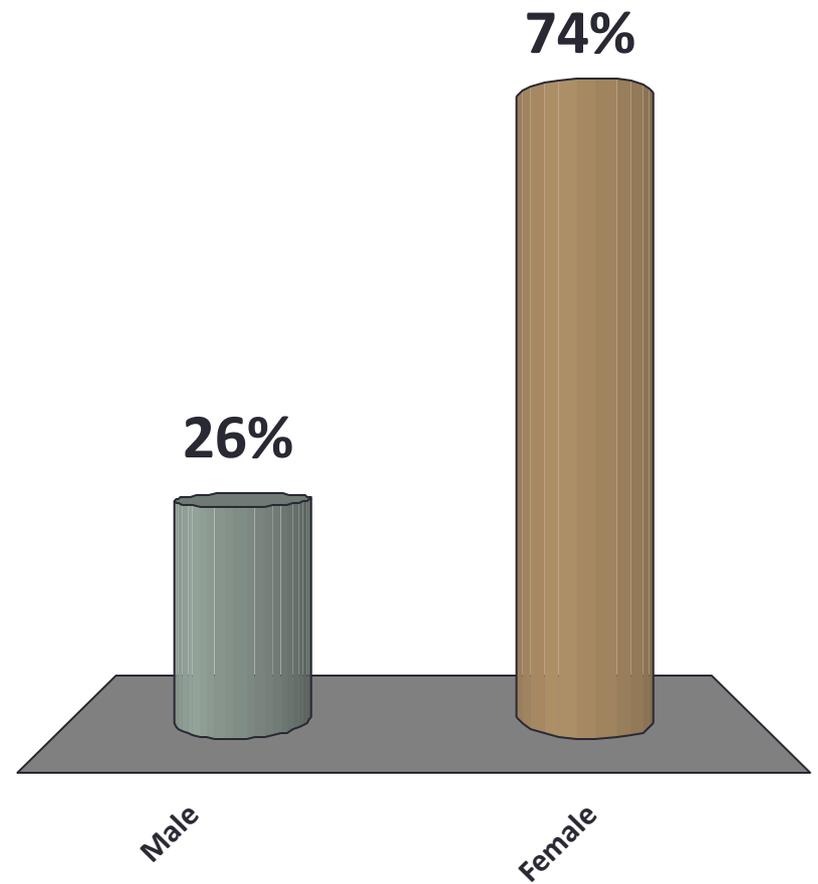
# How long have you lived in Fairbanks?

1. All my life (born here)
2. More than 40 years
3. 31 to 40 years
4. 21 to 30 years
5. 11 to 20 years
6. 5 to 10 years
7. Less than 5 years



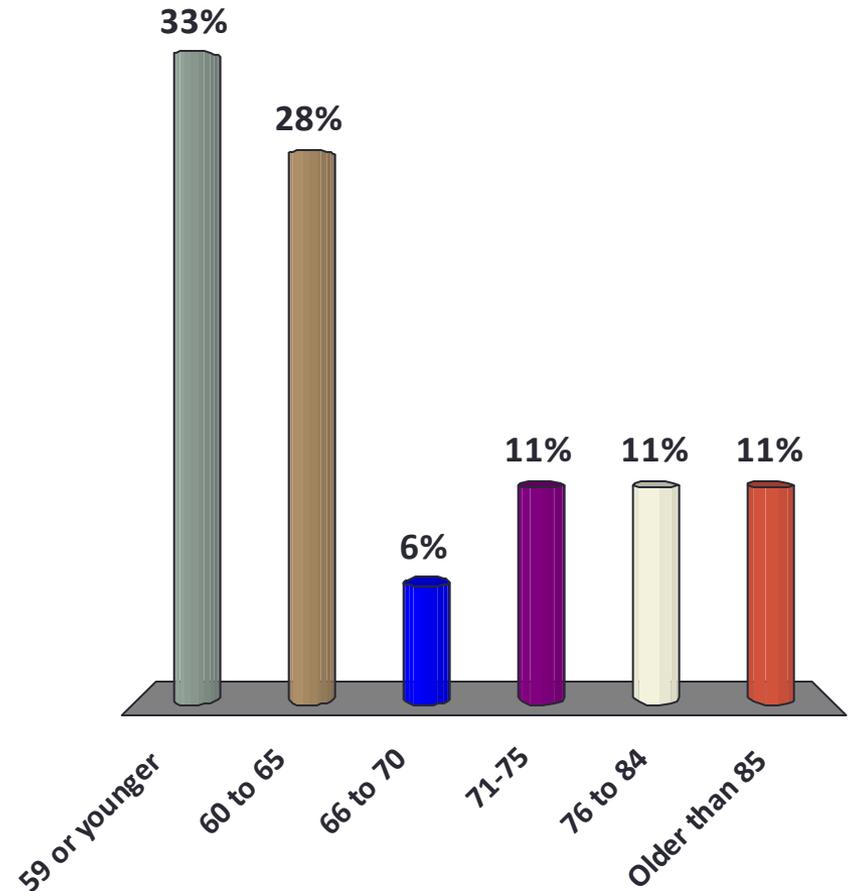
# What is your gender?

1. Male
2. Female



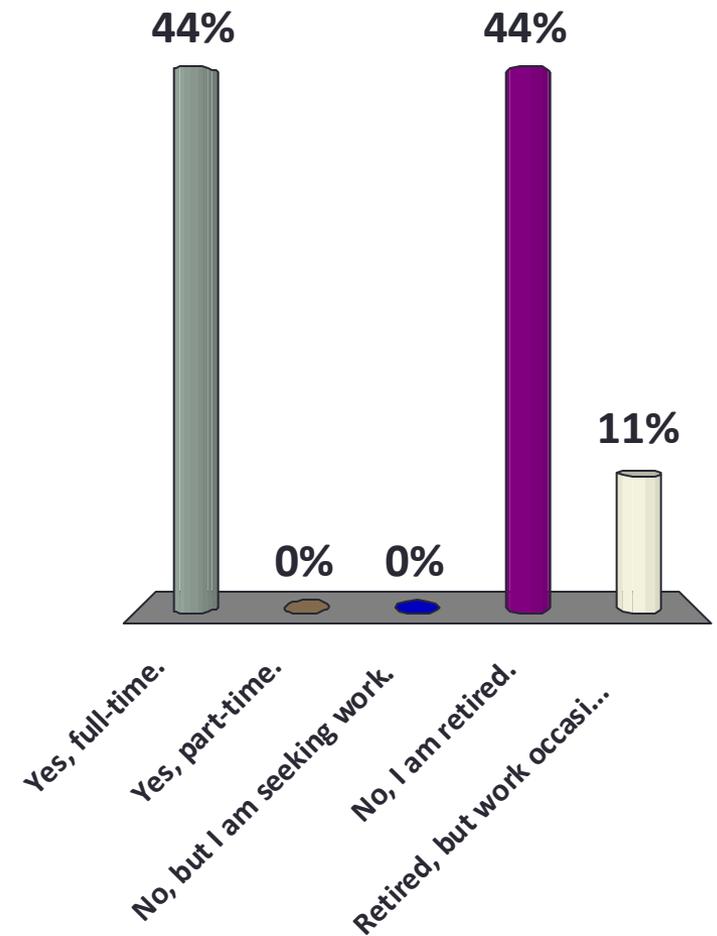
# What is your age?

1. 59 or younger
2. 60 to 65
3. 66 to 70
4. 71-75
5. 76 to 84
6. Older than 85



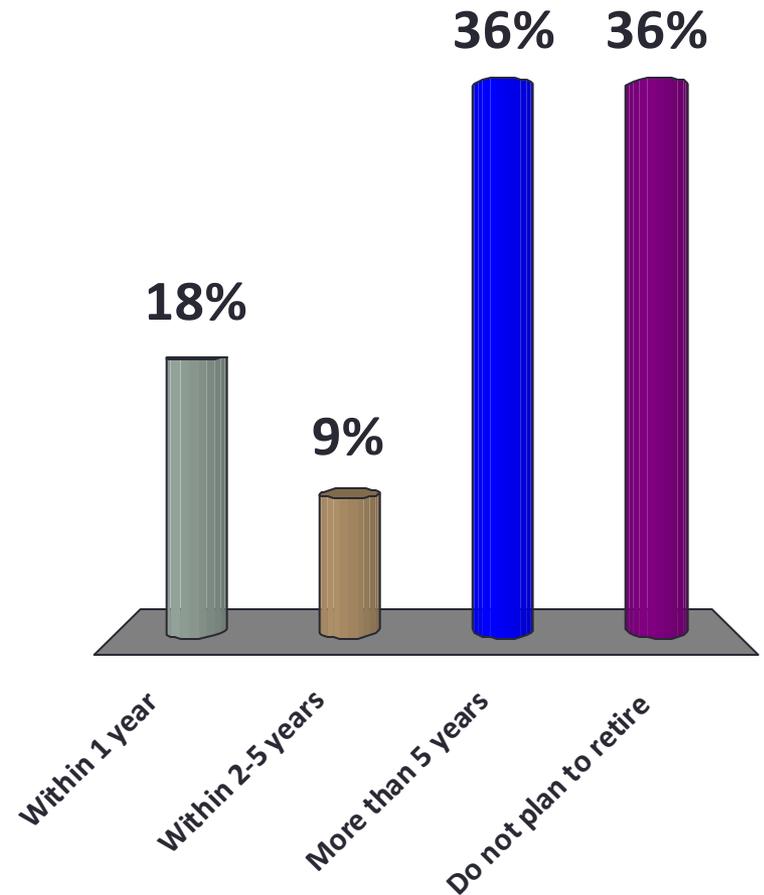
# Are you currently employed or self-employed?

1. Yes, full-time.
2. Yes, part-time.
3. No, but I am seeking work.
4. No, I am retired.
5. Retired, but work occasionally.



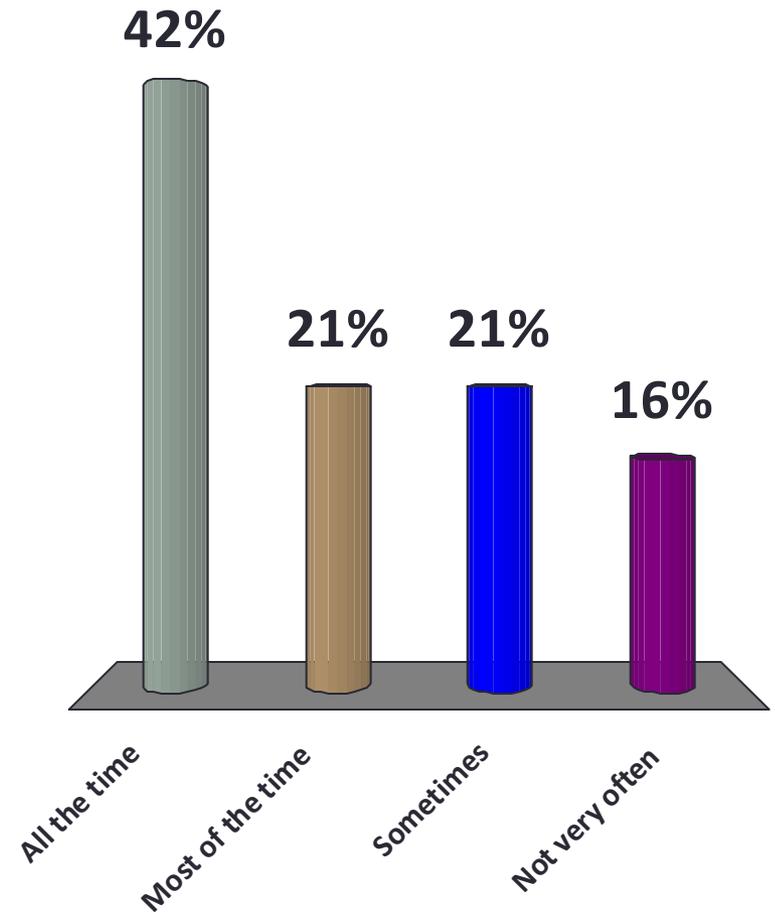
# If still working, when do you plan to retire?

1. Within 1 year
2. Within 2-5 years
3. More than 5 years
4. Do not plan to retire



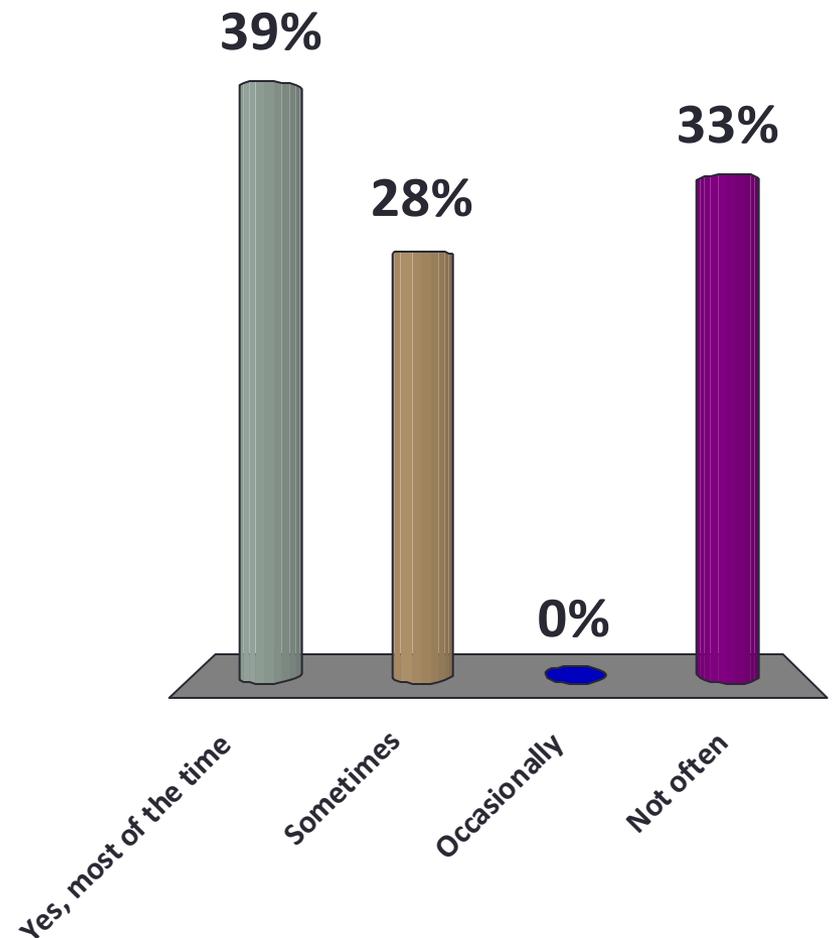
# Do you participate in cultural activities that include traditional food, music and customs?

1. All the time
2. Most of the time
3. Sometimes
4. Not very often



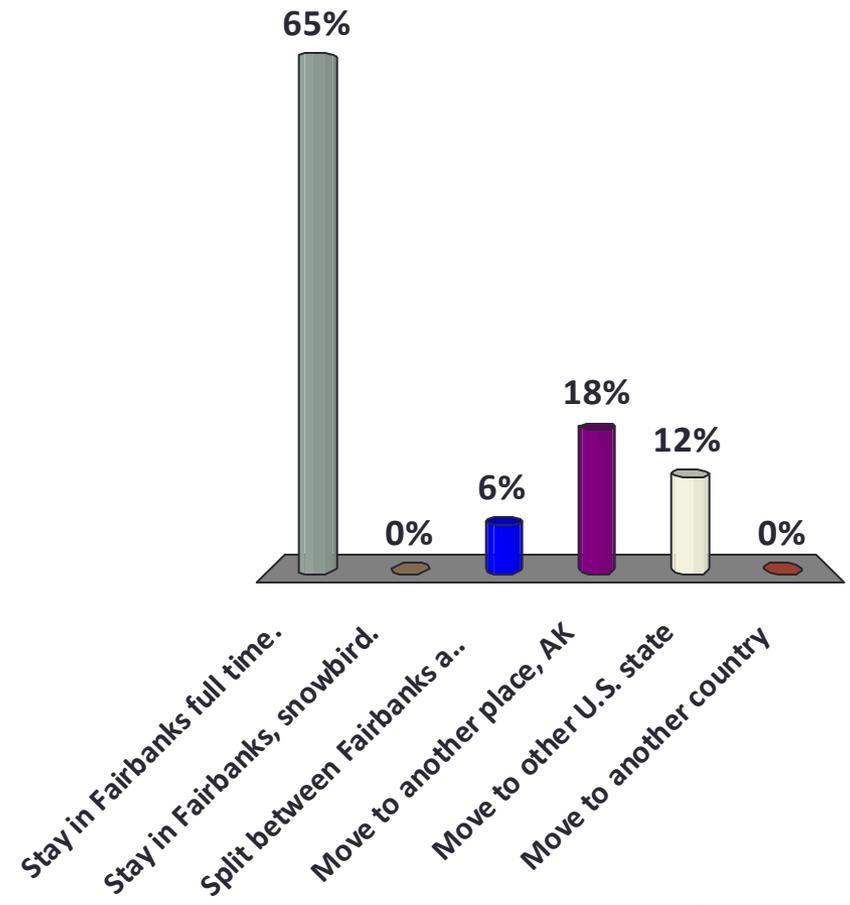
# Do you participate in subsistence activities or does someone provide subsistence food to you?

1. Yes, most of the time
2. Sometimes
3. Occasionally
4. Not often



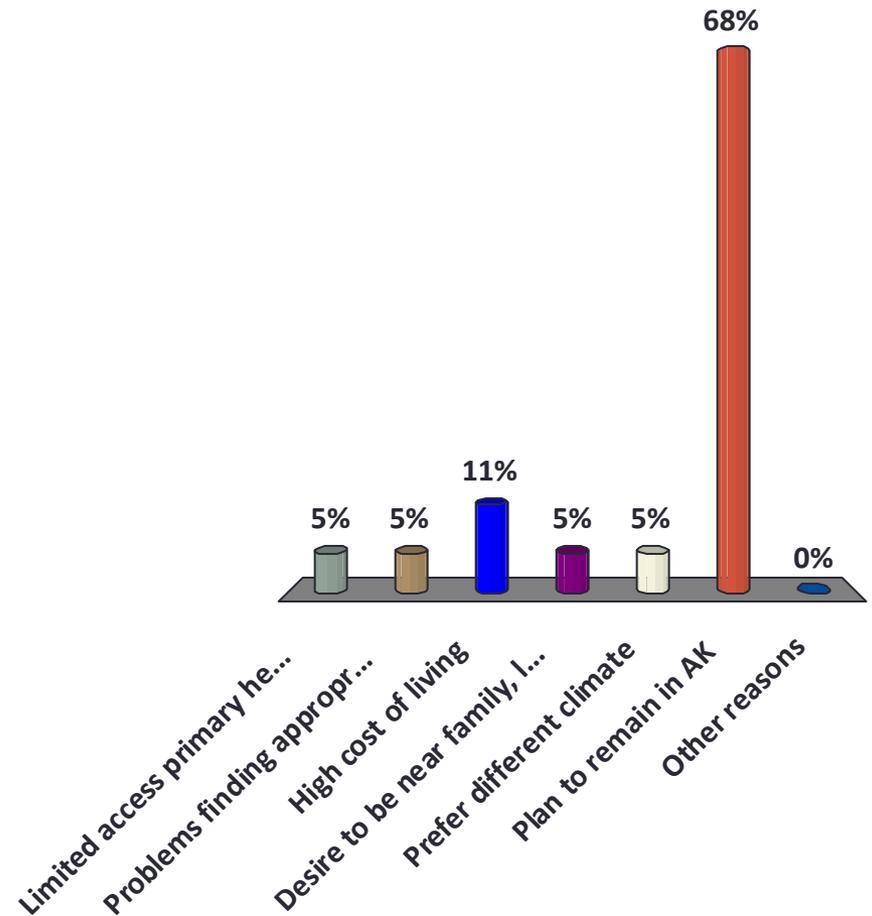
# Where do you expect to be living five years from now?

1. Stay in Fairbanks full time.
2. Stay in Fairbanks, snowbird.
3. Split between Fairbanks and home village
4. Move to another place, AK
5. Move to other U.S. state
6. Move to another country



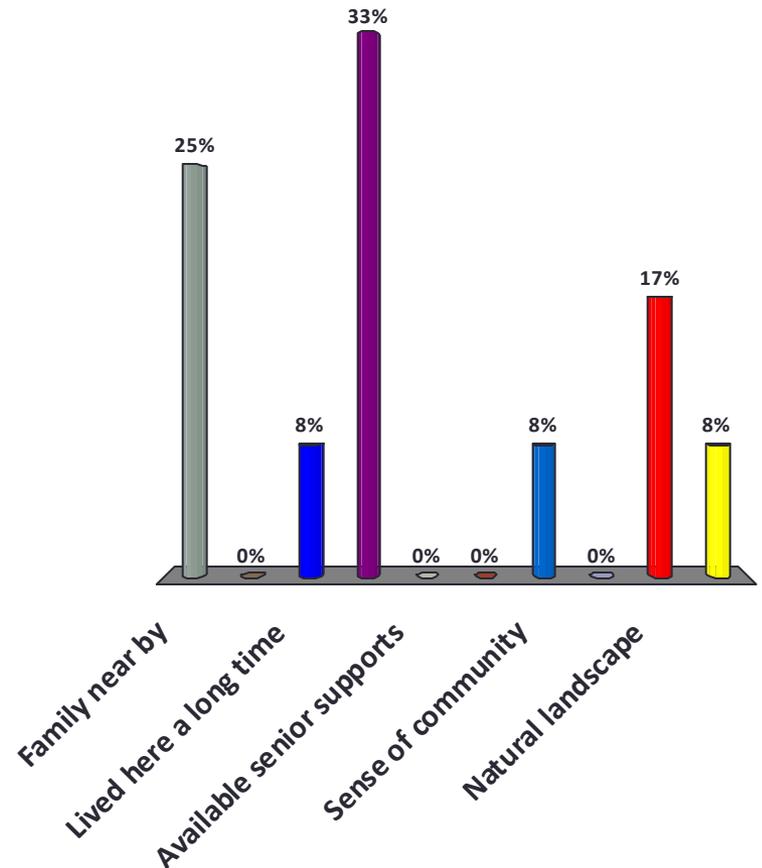
# If you are planning to move out of Alaska, what is the reason?

1. Limited access primary health care
2. Problems finding appropriate housing
3. High cost of living
4. Desire to be near family, living out of AK
5. Prefer different climate
6. Plan to remain in AK
7. Other reasons



# What is the most important factor to your decision to continue living in Fairbanks as you age?

1. Family near by
2. Work
3. Lived here a long time
4. Want to live in own home
5. Available senior supports
6. Available medical services
7. Sense of community
8. Recreational Opportunities
9. Natural landscape
10. Other



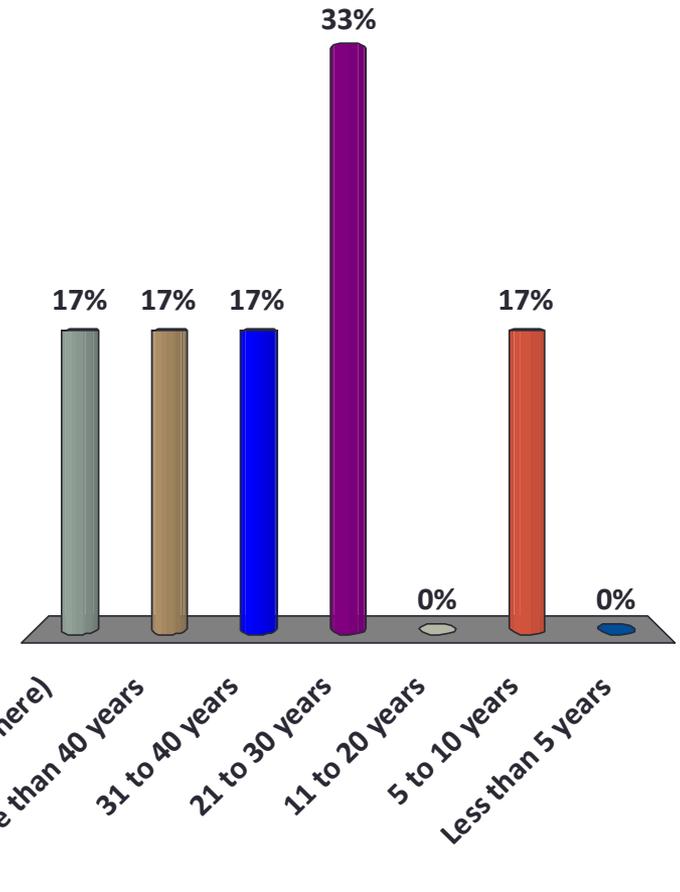
# HOMER SENIOR-ELDER LISTENING SESSION



**Hosted by  
Homer Senior Citizens, Inc.  
with the Alaska Commission on Aging  
October 9, 2014**

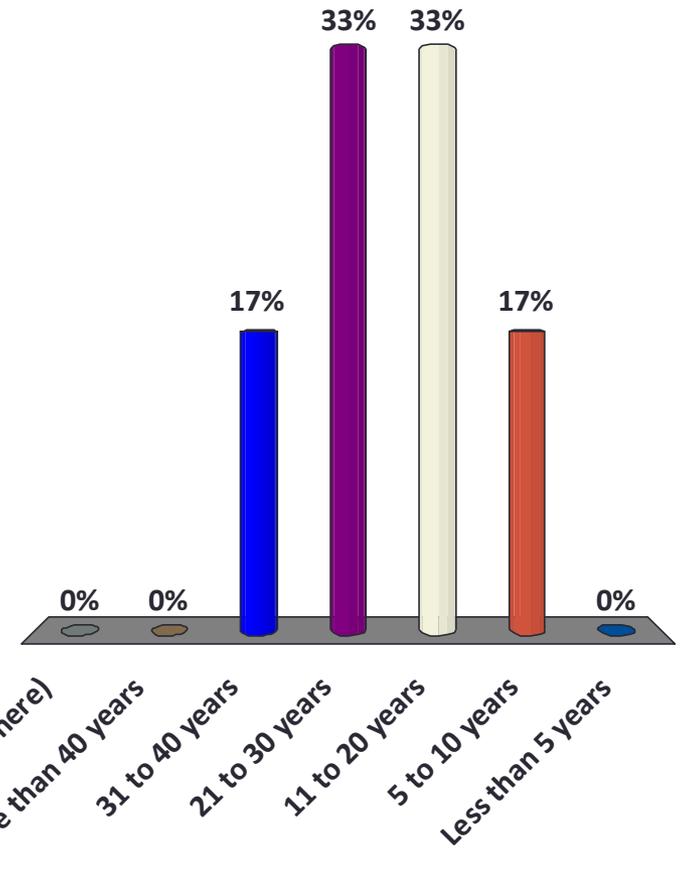
# How long have you lived in Alaska?

1. All my life (born here)
2. More than 40 years
3. 31 to 40 years
4. 21 to 30 years
5. 11 to 20 years
6. 5 to 10 years
7. Less than 5 years



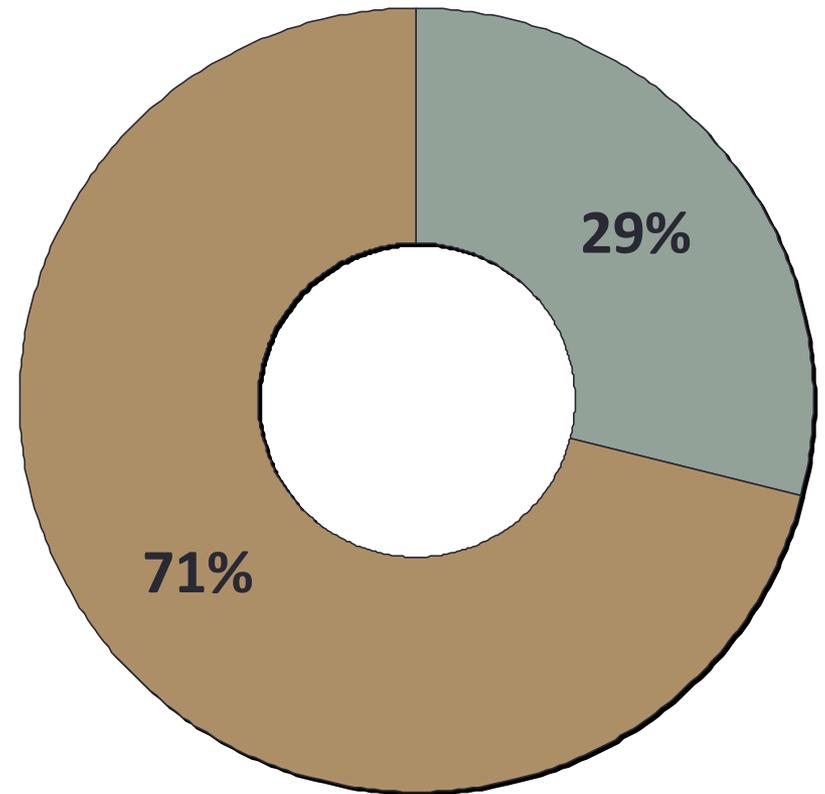
# How long have you lived in Homer?

1. All my life (born here)
2. More than 40 years
3. 31 to 40 years
4. 21 to 30 years
5. 11 to 20 years
6. 5 to 10 years
7. Less than 5 years



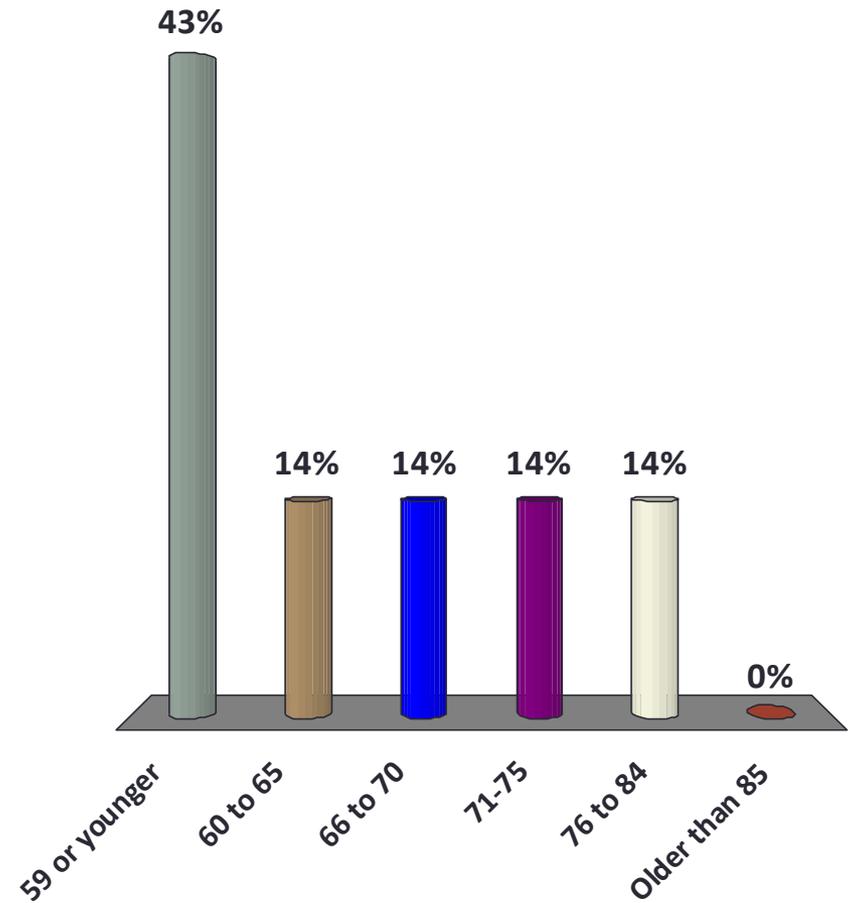
# What is your gender?

1. Male
2. Female



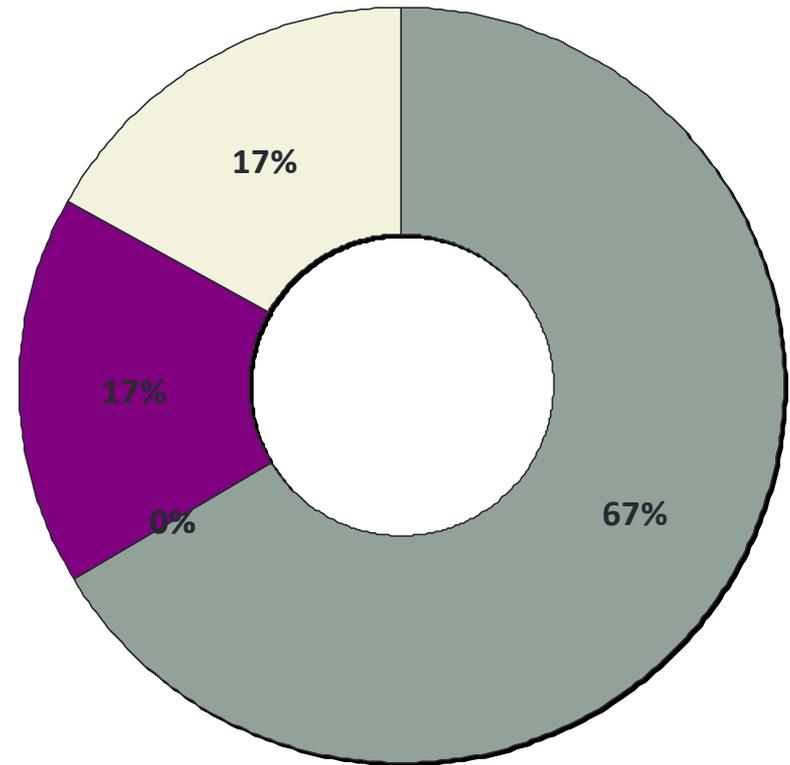
# What is your age?

1. 59 or younger
2. 60 to 65
3. 66 to 70
4. 71-75
5. 76 to 84
6. Older than 85



# Are you currently employed or self-employed?

1. Yes, full-time.
2. Yes, part-time.
3. No, but I am seeking work.
4. No, I am retired.
5. Retired, but work occasionally.



■ Yes, full-time.

■ Yes, part-time.

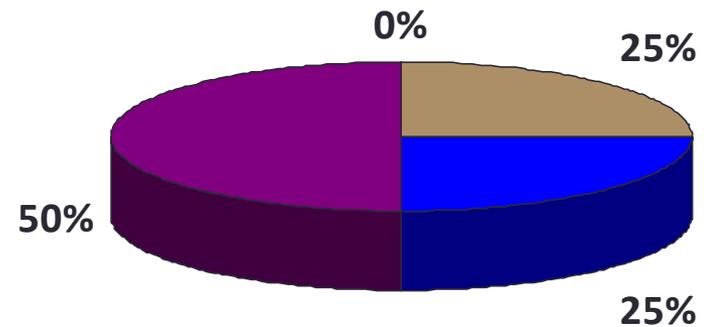
■ No, but I am seeking work.

■ No, I am retired.

■ Retired, but work occasionally.

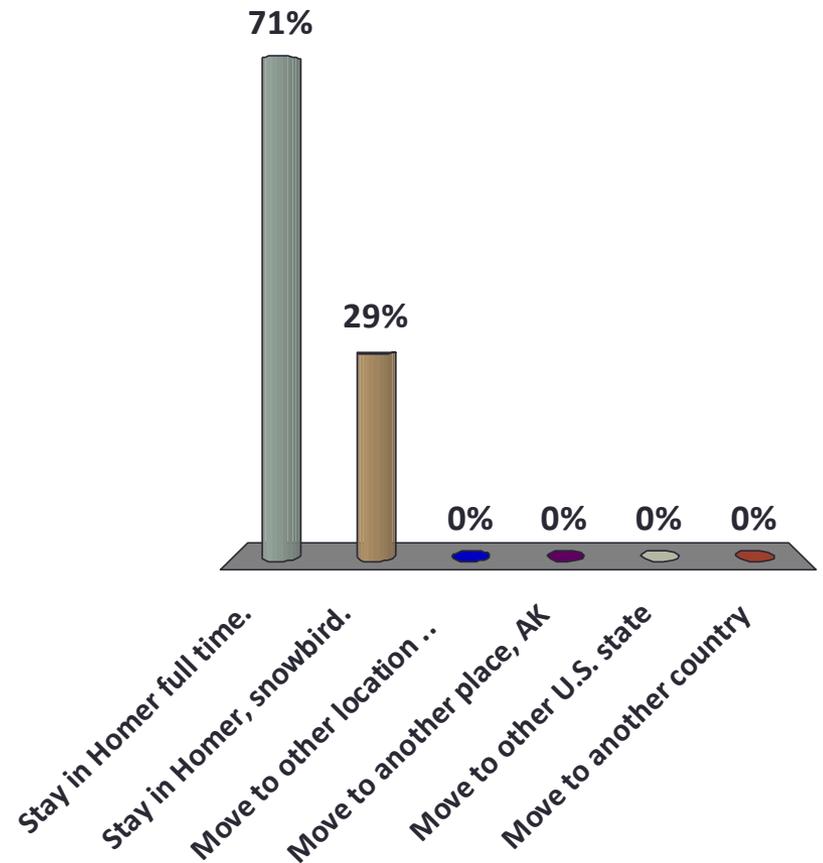
# If still working, when do you plan to retire?

1. Within 1 year
2. Within 2-5 years
3. More than 5 years
4. Do not plan to retire



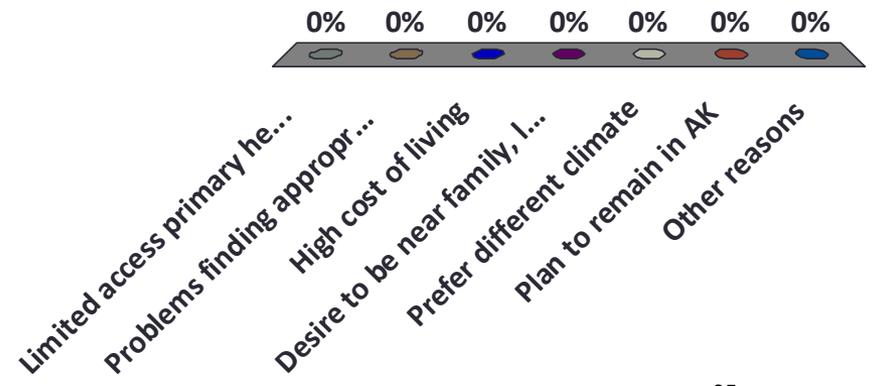
# Where do you expect to be living five years from now?

1. Stay in Homer full time.
2. Stay in Homer, snowbird.
3. Move to other location on the Peninsula
4. Move to another place, AK
5. Move to other U.S. state
6. Move to another country



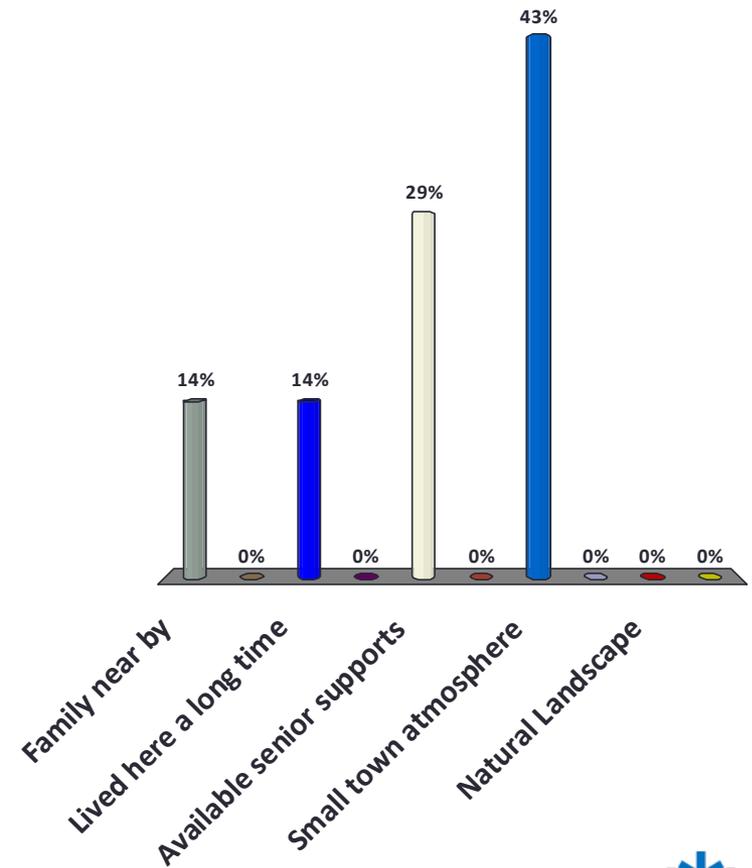
# If you are planning to move out of Alaska, what is the reason?

1. Limited access primary health care
2. Problems finding appropriate housing
3. High cost of living
4. Desire to be near family, living out of AK
5. Prefer different climate
6. Plan to remain in AK
7. Other reasons



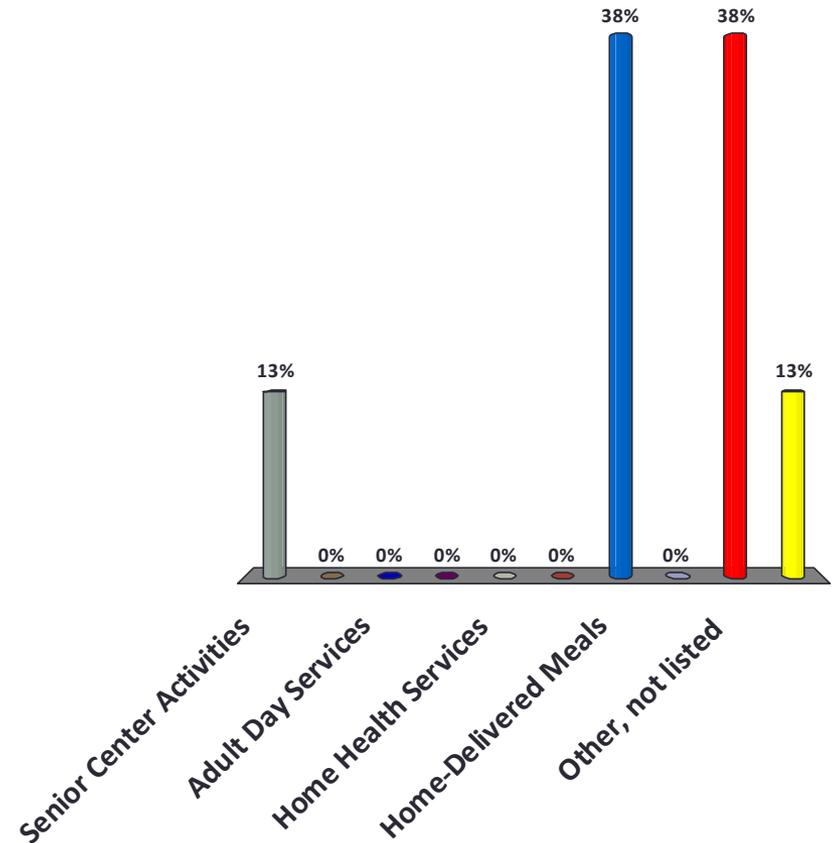
# What is the most important factor to your decision to continue living in Homer as you age?

1. Family near by
2. Work
3. Lived here a long time
4. Want to live in my own home
5. Available senior supports
6. Available medical services
7. Small town atmosphere
8. Recreational opportunities
9. Natural Landscape
10. Other



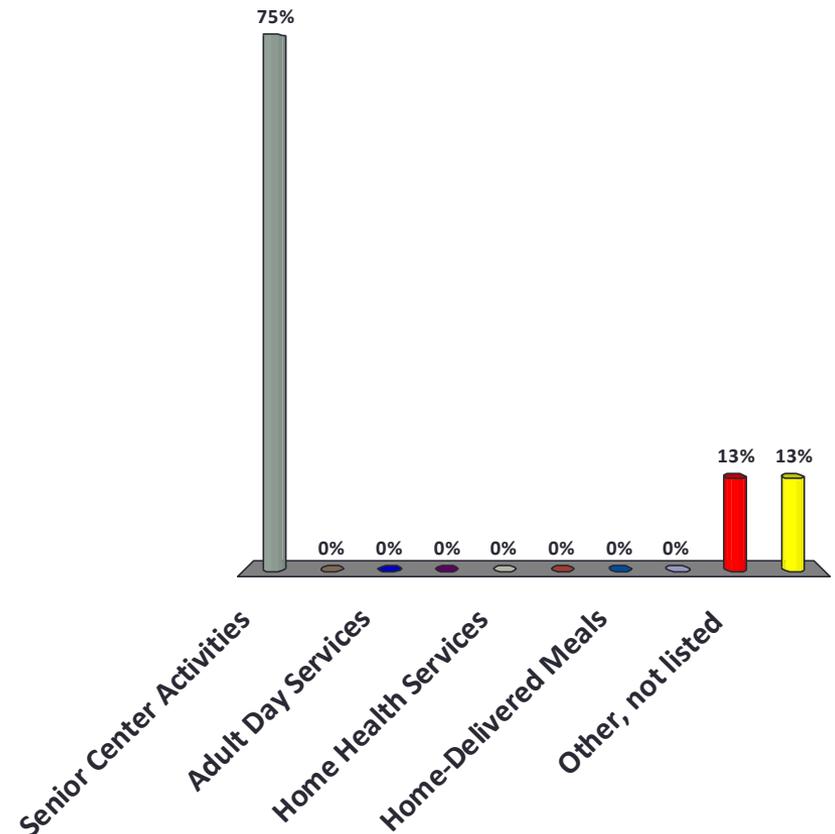
# Which of the following services have you used the most?

1. Senior Center Activities
2. Senior Transportation
3. Adult Day Services
4. Care Coordination
5. Home Health Services
6. Personal Care Assistance
7. Home-Delivered Meals
8. Alzheimer's Support Groups
9. Other, not listed
10. None



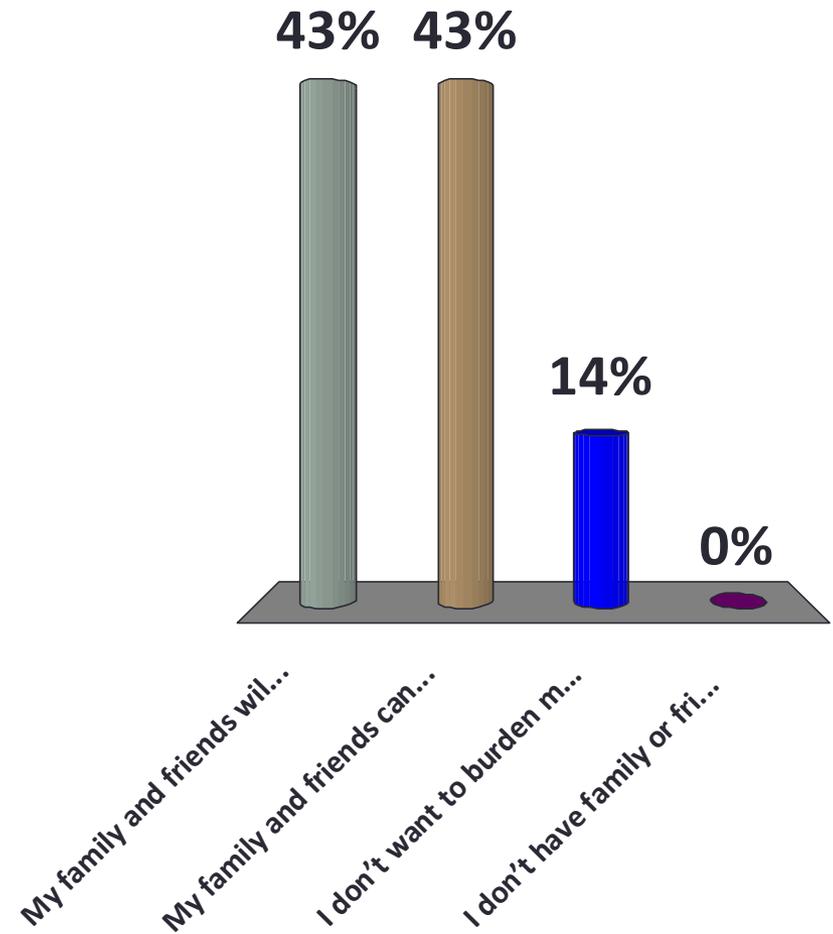
# Is there another service that you use often?

1. Senior Center Activities
2. Senior Transportation
3. Adult Day Services
4. Care Coordination
5. Home Health Services
6. Personal Care Assistance
7. Home-Delivered Meals
8. Alzheimer's Support Groups
9. Other, not listed
10. None



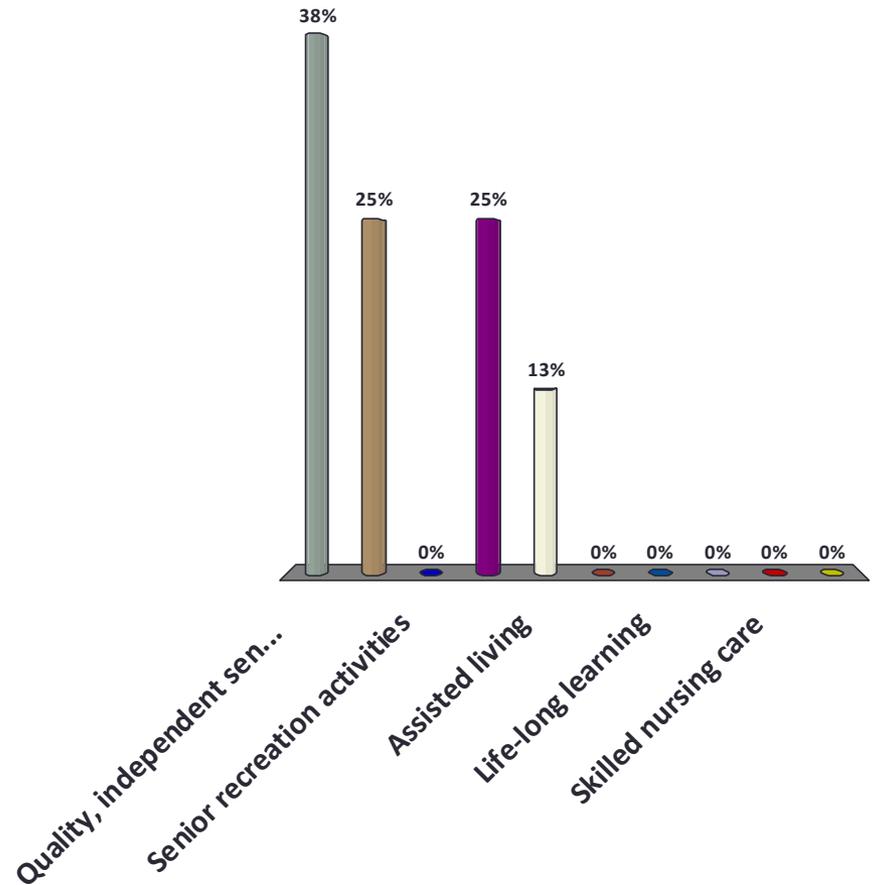
# Which statement below most closely captures your opinion about the role of family and friend caregivers?

1. My family and friends will be my main source of support as I age.
2. My family and friends can provide some services and supports but do not have the resources or time to do everything that could be required.
3. I don't want to burden my family and friends with care and would rather hire caregivers.
4. I don't have family or friends who can provide services and supports as I age.



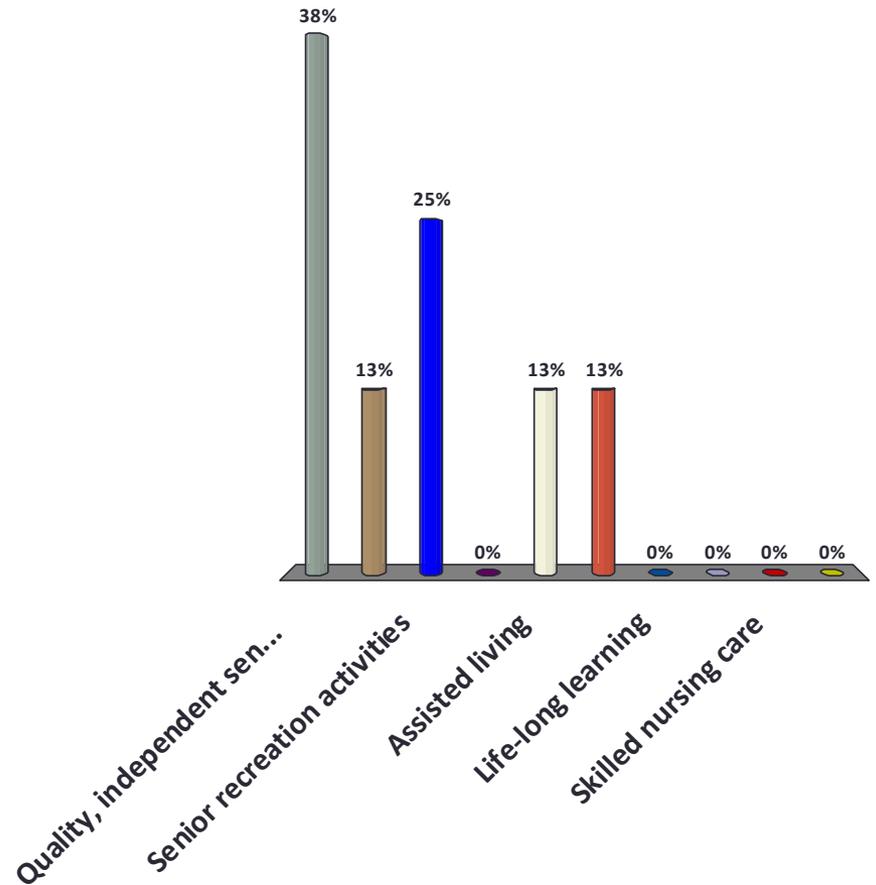
# What do you think is the **most important** service & support for Homer seniors as they age?

1. Quality, independent senior housing
2. Services such as meals, rides, & homemaker
3. Senior recreation activities
4. Services for older people with dementia
5. Assisted living
6. Housing close to services/activities
7. Life-long learning
8. Information/Referral
9. Skilled nursing care
10. Other, not listed



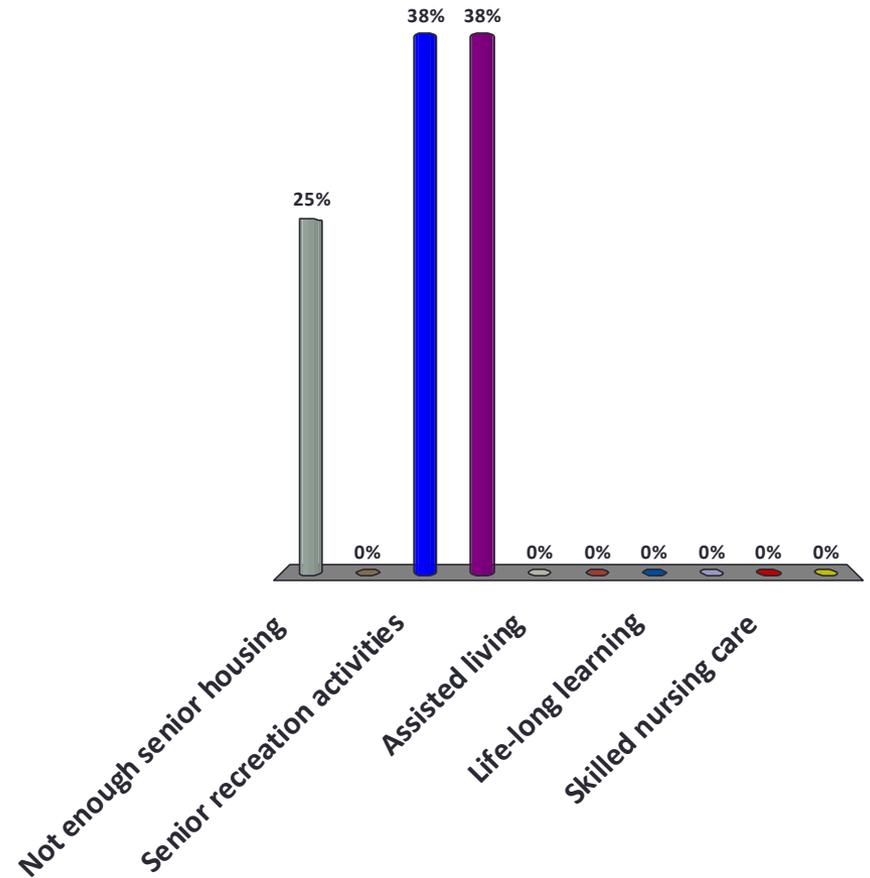
# What do you think is the **second** most important service & support for Homer seniors as they age?

1. Quality, independent senior housing
2. Services such as meals, rides, homemaker
3. Senior recreation activities
4. Services for older people with dementia
5. Assisted living
6. Housing close to services/activities
7. Life-long learning
8. Information/Referral
9. Skilled nursing care
10. Other, not listed



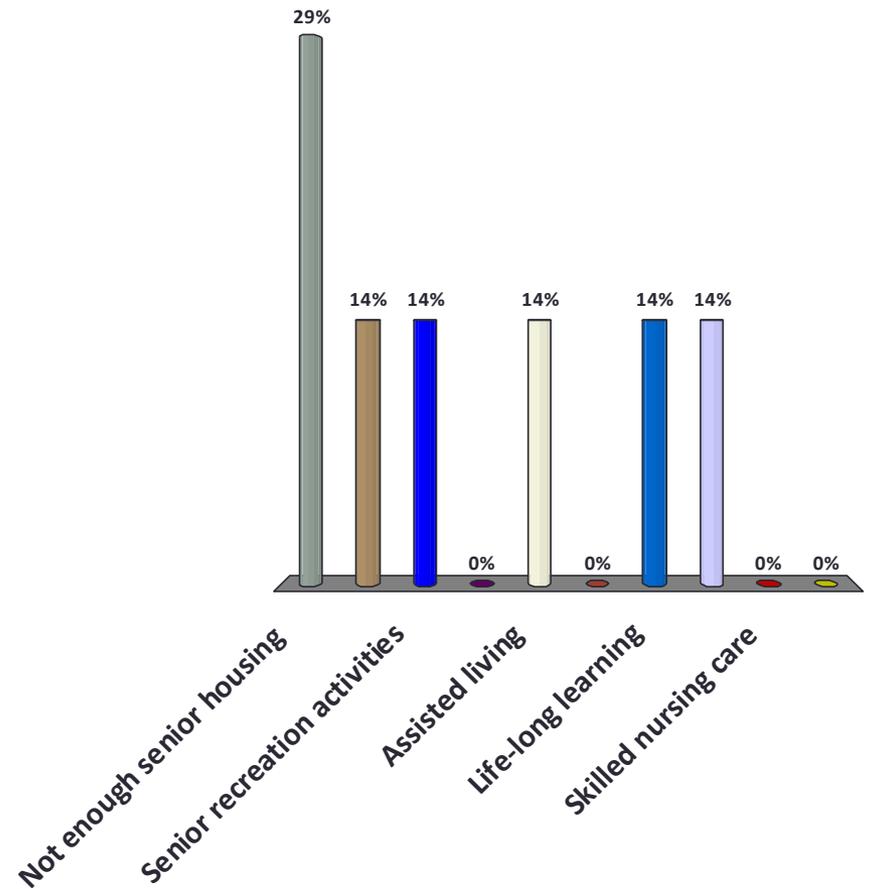
# What is the **biggest** gap in services for Homer seniors?

1. Not enough senior housing
2. Services such as meals, rides, homemaker
3. Senior recreation activities
4. Services for older people with dementia
5. Assisted living
6. Housing close to services/activities
7. Life-long learning
8. Information/Referral
9. Skilled nursing care
10. Other, not listed



# What is the next biggest service gap for Homer seniors?

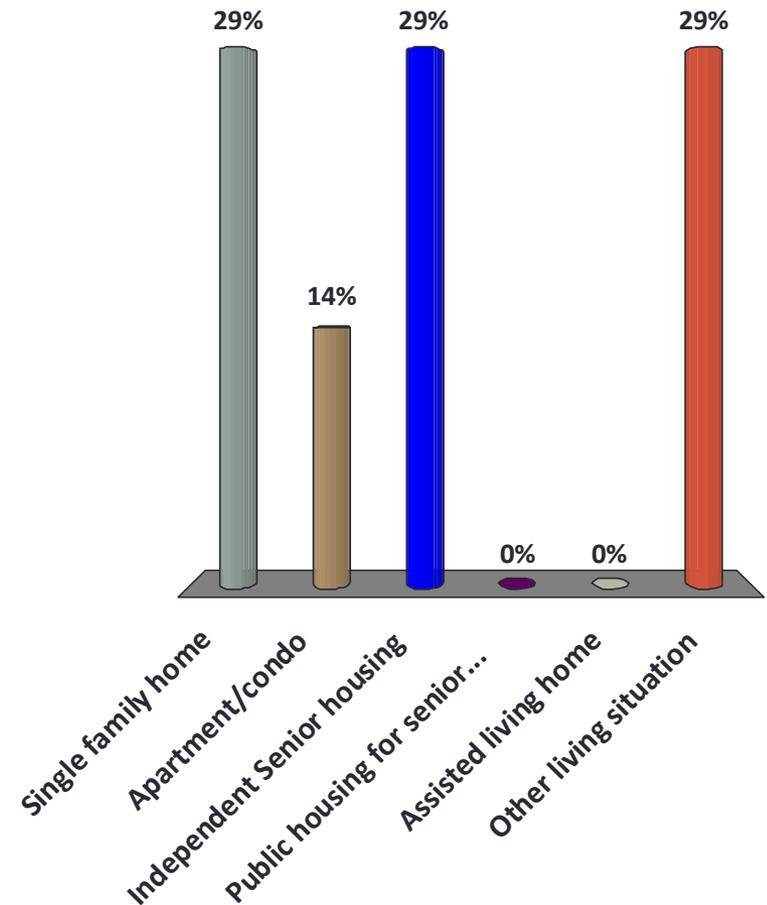
1. Not enough senior housing
2. Services such as meals, rides, homemaker
3. Senior recreation activities
4. Services for older people with dementia
5. Assisted living
6. Housing close to services/activities
7. Life-long learning
8. Information/Referral
9. Skilled nursing care
10. Other, not listed



# What is your current housing situation?

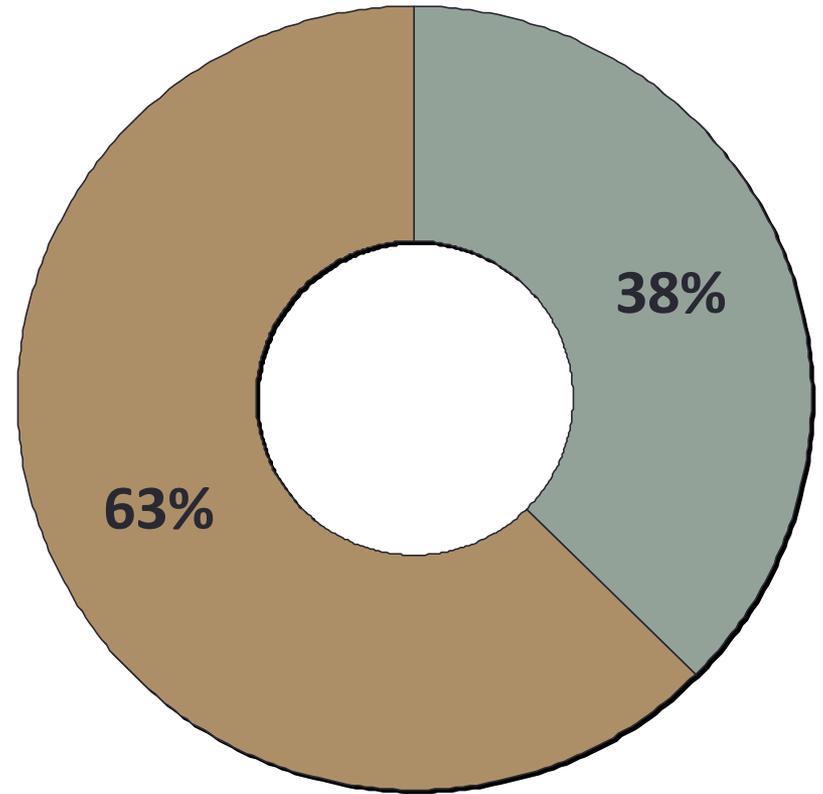
Only answer if you are 55 or over.

1. Single family home
2. Apartment/condo
3. Independent Senior housing
4. Public housing for seniors/disabled persons
5. Assisted living home
6. Other living situation



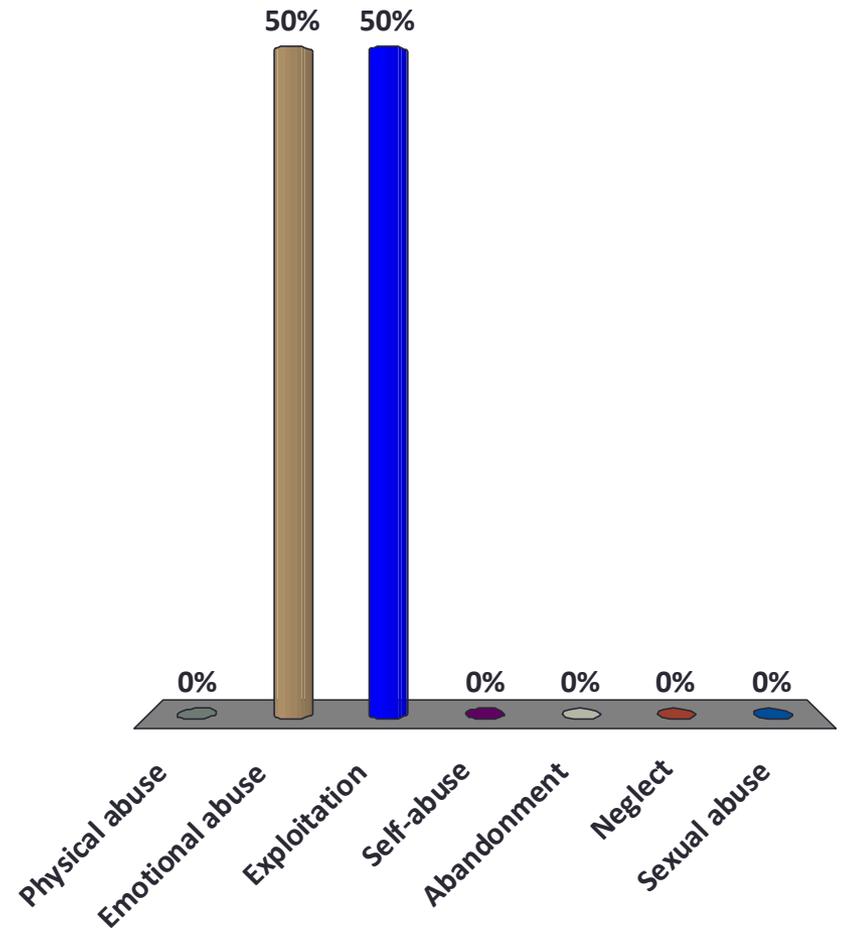
# Have you or someone you know experienced elder abuse?

1. Yes
2. No



# If you answered “yes” to the last question, which form of elder abuse have you noticed the **most**?

1. Physical abuse
2. Emotional abuse
3. Exploitation
4. Self-abuse
5. Abandonment
6. Neglect
7. Sexual abuse



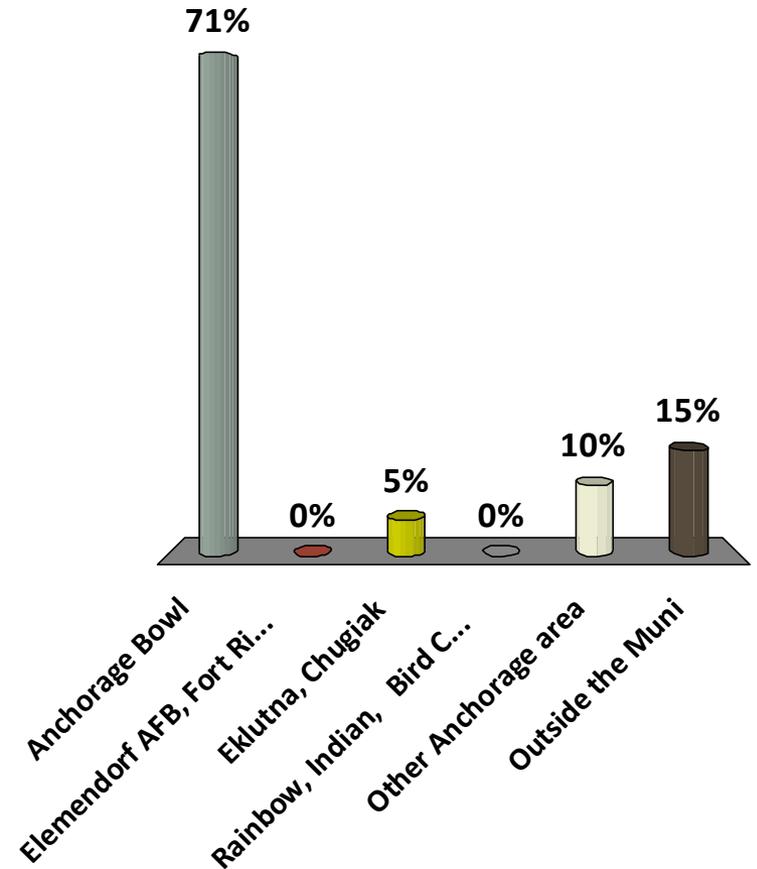
# **ANCHORAGE ELDER-SENIOR LISTENING SESSION**



**Hosted by  
Anchorage Senior Citizens Advisory Commission  
with the Alaska Commission on Aging  
Thursday, December 11, 2014**

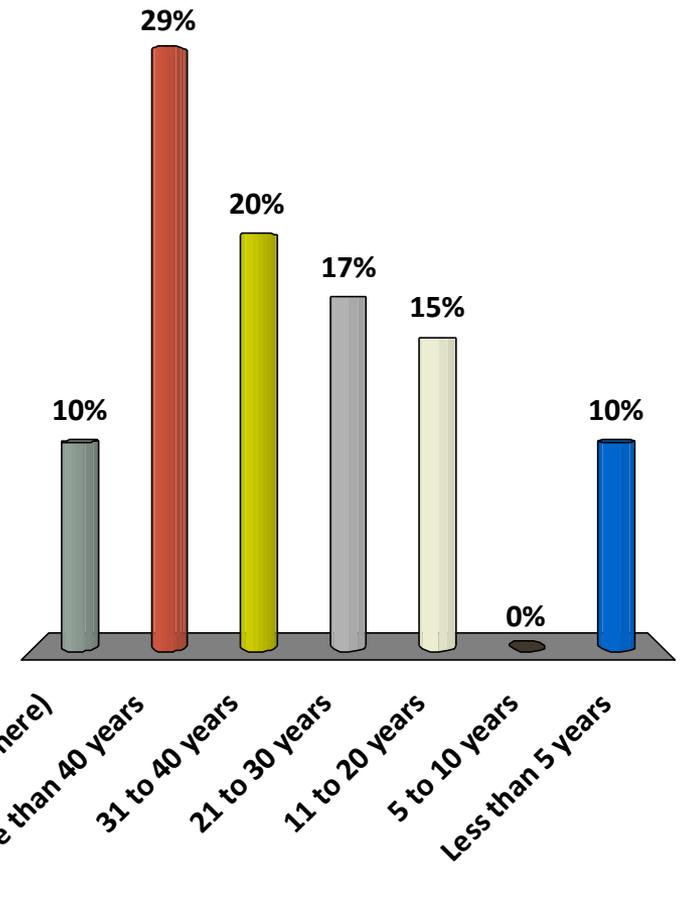
# What part of Anchorage do you live?

1. Anchorage Bowl
2. Elemendorf AFB, Fort Richardson
3. Eklutna, Chugiak
4. Rainbow, Indian, Bird Creek, Girdwood
5. Other Anchorage area
6. Outside the Muni



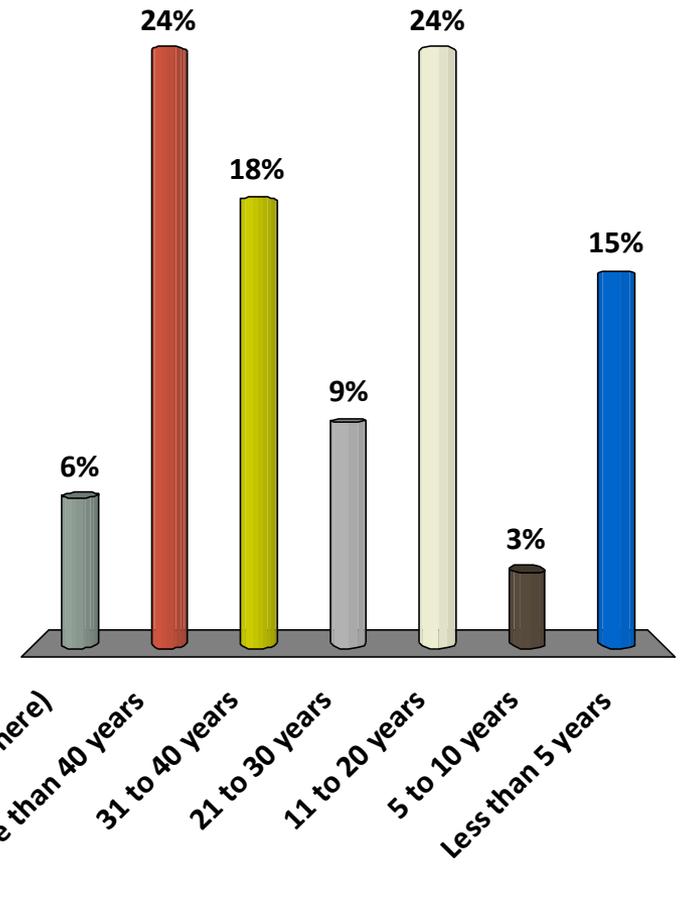
# How long have you lived in Alaska?

1. All my life (born here)
2. More than 40 years
3. 31 to 40 years
4. 21 to 30 years
5. 11 to 20 years
6. 5 to 10 years
7. Less than 5 years



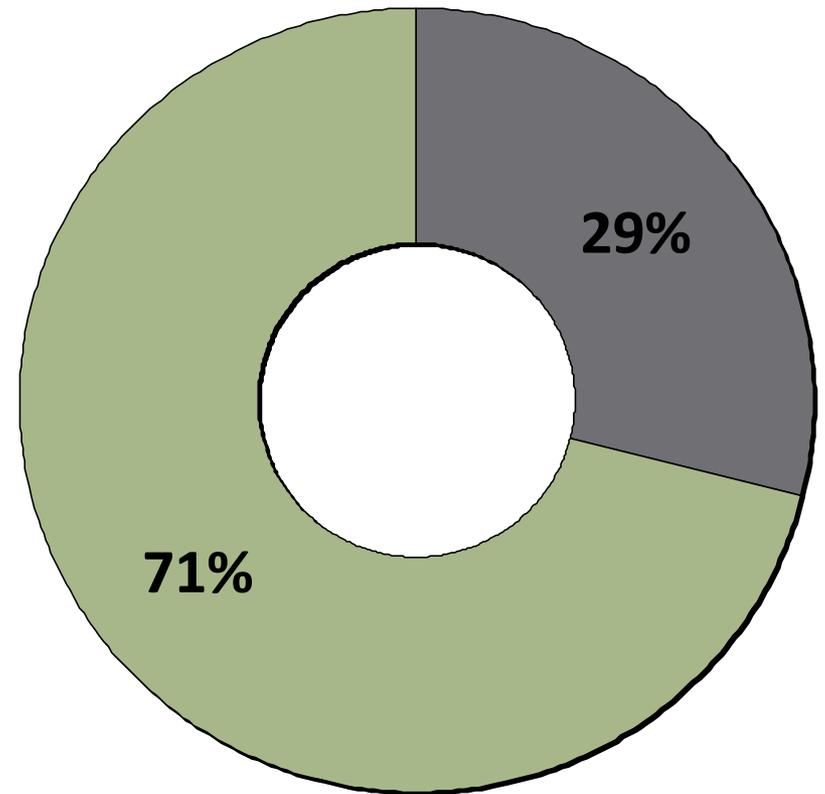
# How long have you lived in Anchorage?

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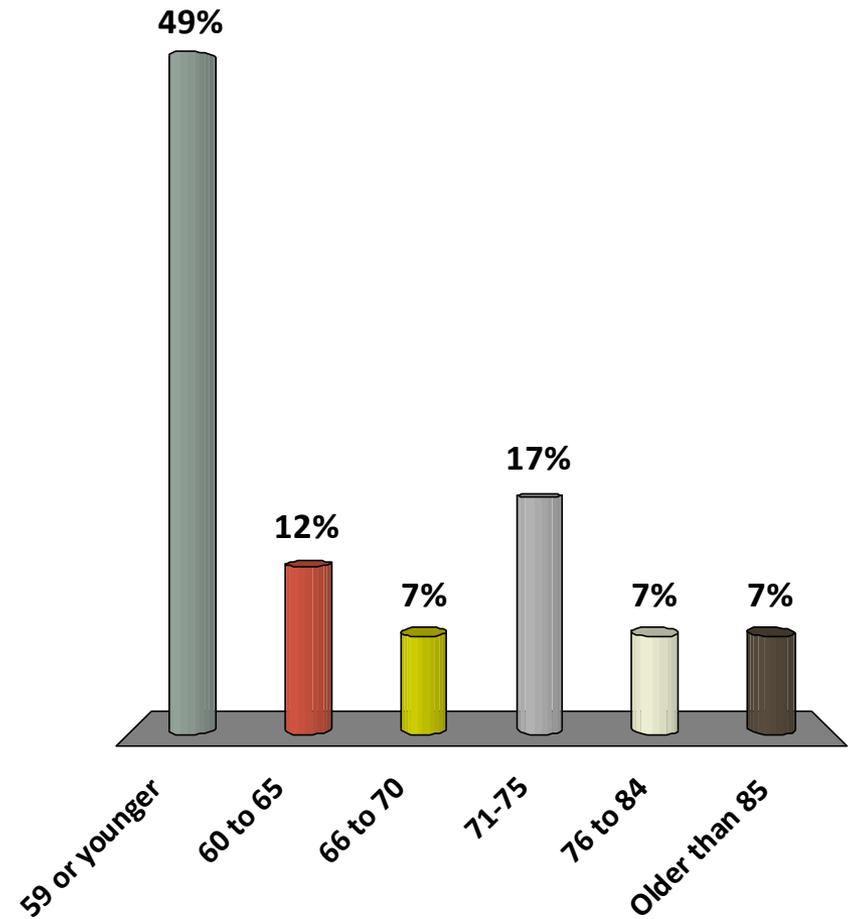
# What is your gender?

1. Male
2. Female



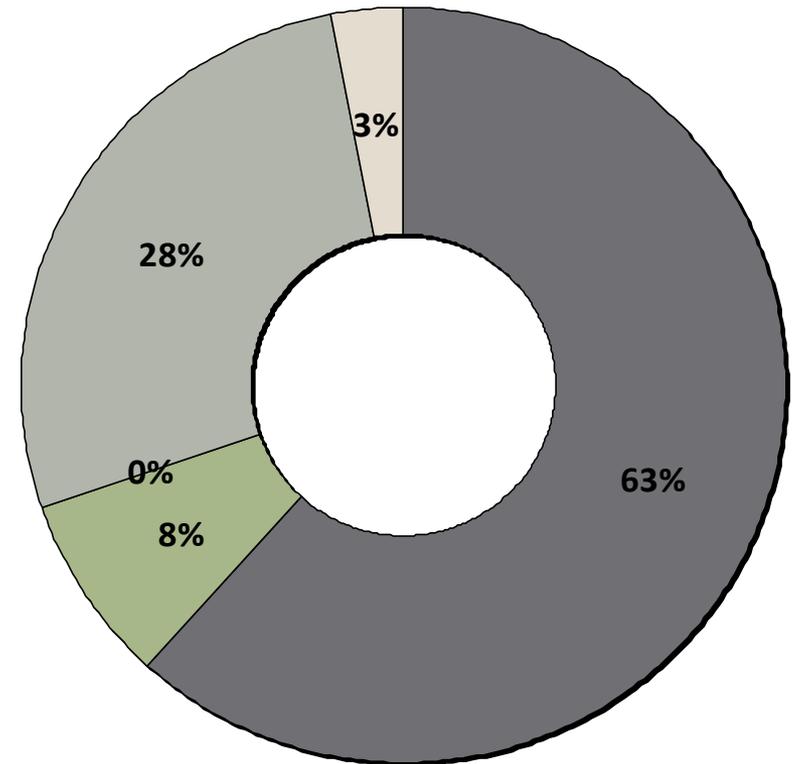
# What is your age?

1. 59 or younger
2. 60 to 65
3. 66 to 70
4. 71-75
5. 76 to 84
6. Older than 85



# Are you currently employed or self-employed?

1. Yes, full-time.
2. Yes, part-time.
3. No, but I am seeking work.
4. No, I am retired.
5. Retired, but work occasionally.

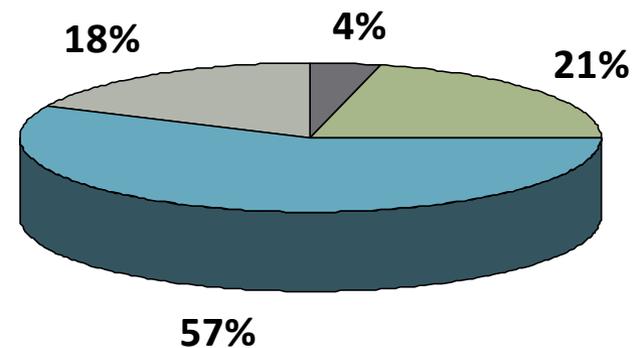


|                                   |                     |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| ■ Yes, full-time.                 | ■ Yes, part-time.   |
| ■ No, but I am seeking work.      | ■ No, I am retired. |
| ■ Retired, but work occasionally. |                     |

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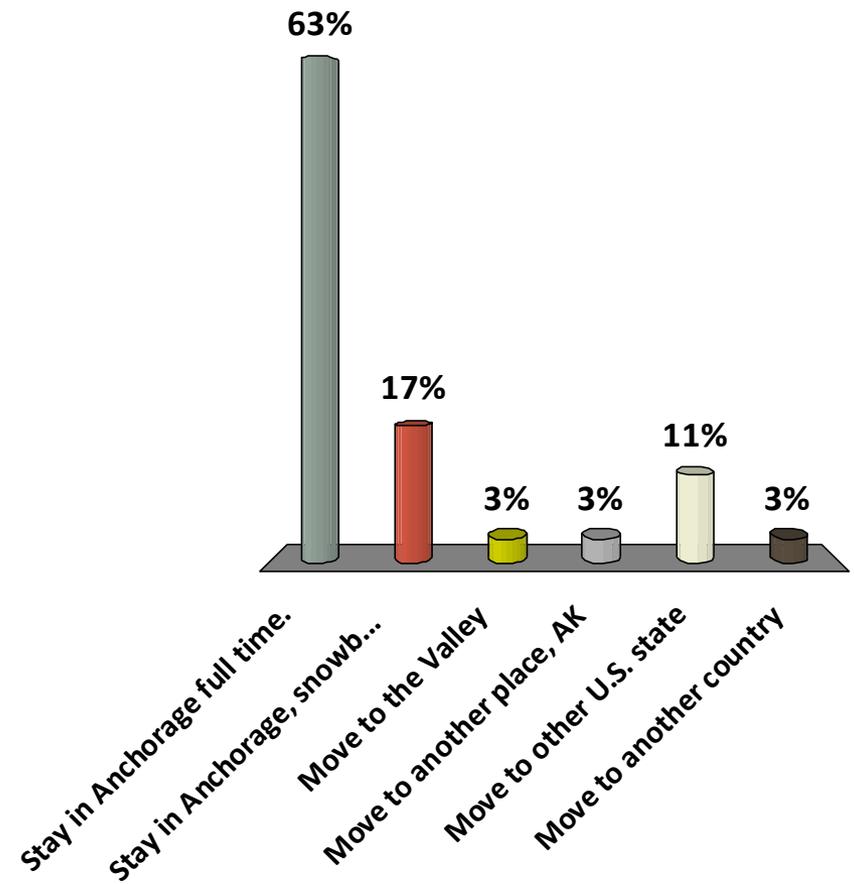
# If still working, when do you plan to retire?

1. Within 1 year
2. Within 2-5 years
3. More than 5 years
4. Do not plan to retire



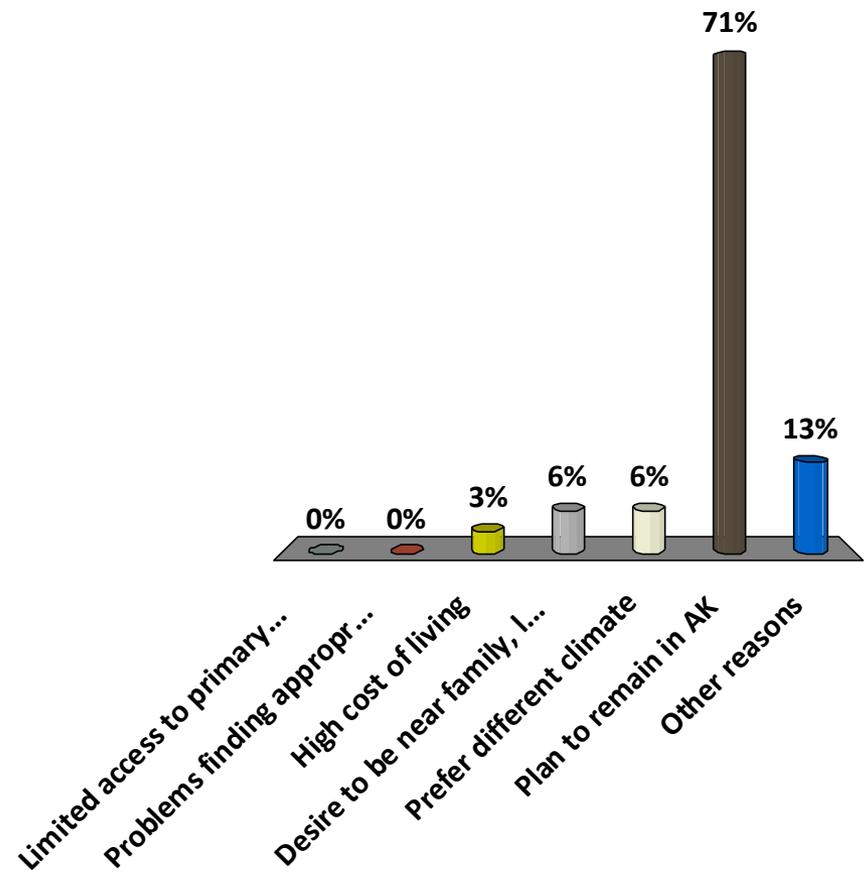
# Where do you expect to be living five years from now?

1. Stay in Anchorage full time.
2. Stay in Anchorage, snowbird.
3. Move to the Valley
4. Move to another place, AK
5. Move to other U.S. state
6. Move to another country



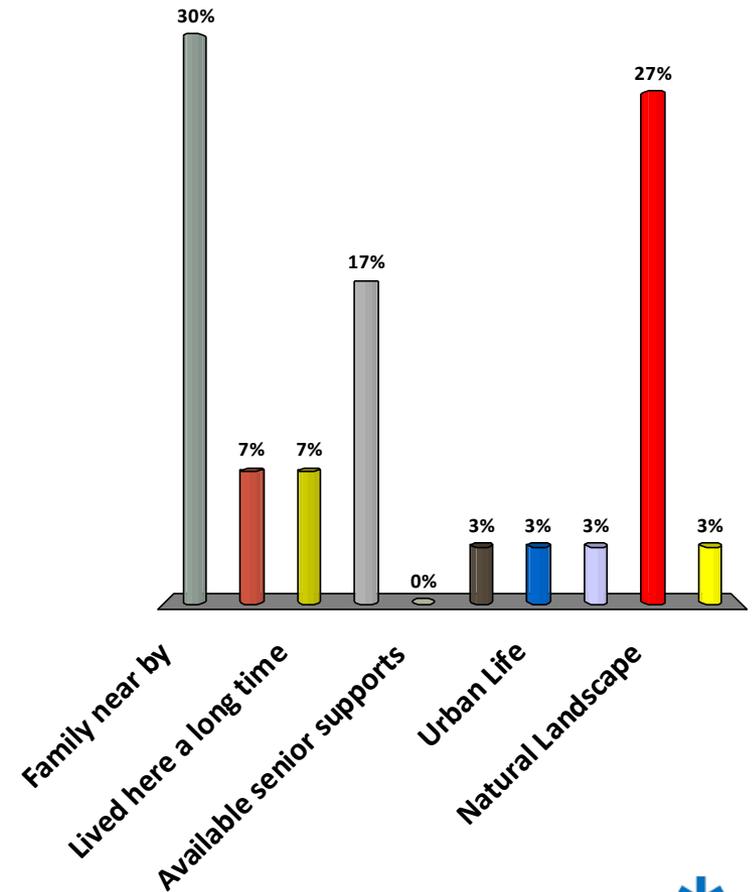
# If you are planning to move out of Alaska, what is the reason?

1. Limited access to primary health care
2. Problems finding appropriate housing
3. High cost of living
4. Desire to be near family, living out of AK
5. Prefer different climate
6. Plan to remain in AK
7. Other reasons



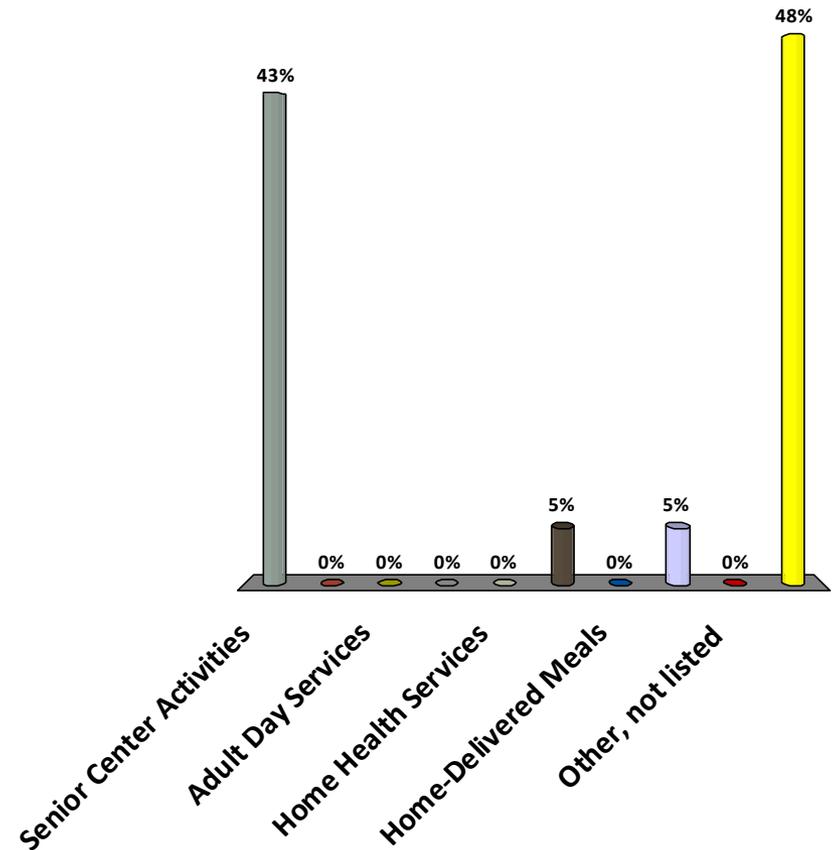
# What is the most important factor to your decision to continue living in Anchorage as you age?

1. Family near by
2. Work
3. Lived here a long time
4. Want to live in my own home
5. Available senior supports
6. Available medical services
7. Urban Life
8. Recreational opportunities
9. Natural Landscape
10. Other



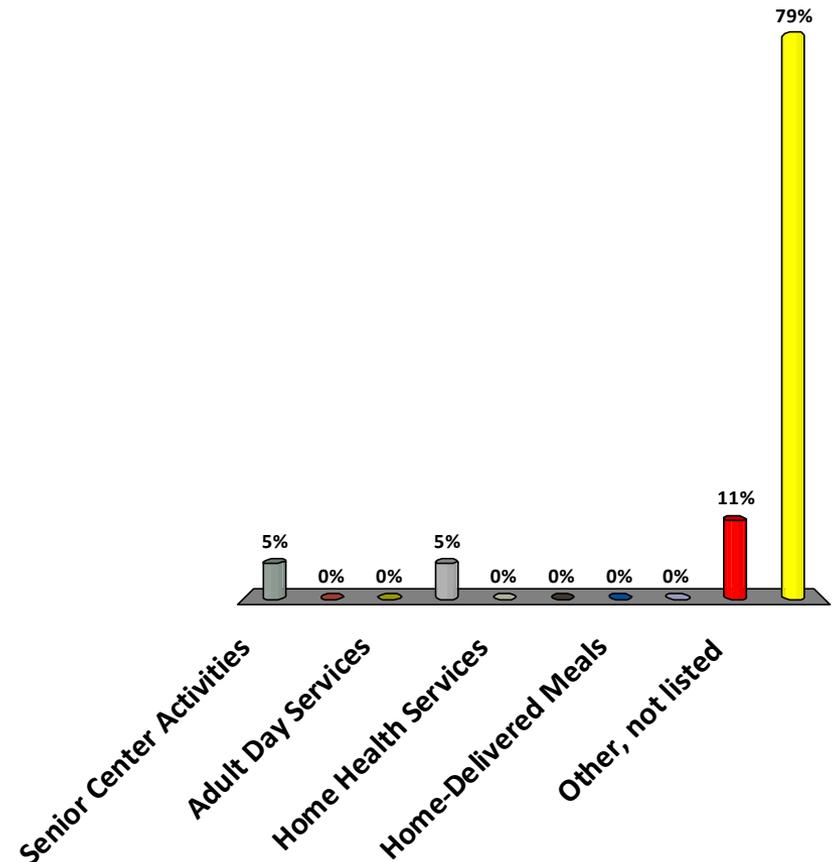
# Which of the following services have you used the most?

1. Senior Center Activities
2. Senior Transportation
3. Adult Day Services
4. Care Coordination
5. Home Health Services
6. Personal Care Assistance
7. Home-Delivered Meals
8. Alzheimer's Support Groups
9. Other, not listed
10. None



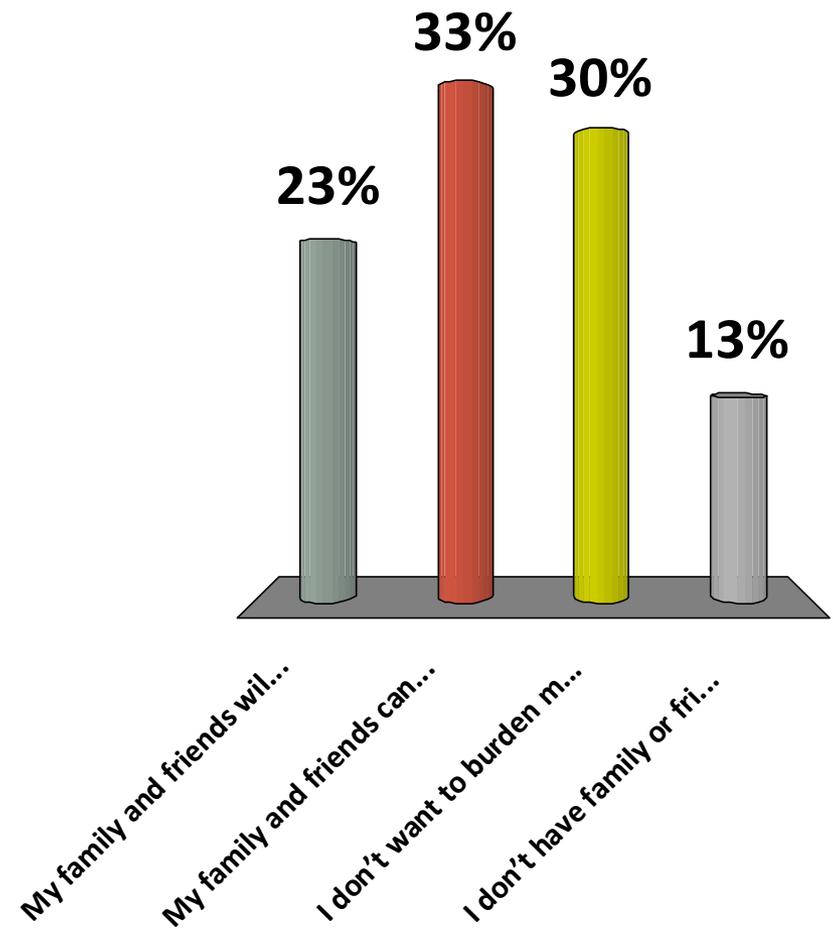
# Is there another service that you use often?

1. Senior Center Activities
2. Senior Transportation
3. Adult Day Services
4. Care Coordination
5. Home Health Services
6. Personal Care Assistance
7. Home-Delivered Meals
8. Alzheimer's Support Groups
9. Other, not listed
10. None



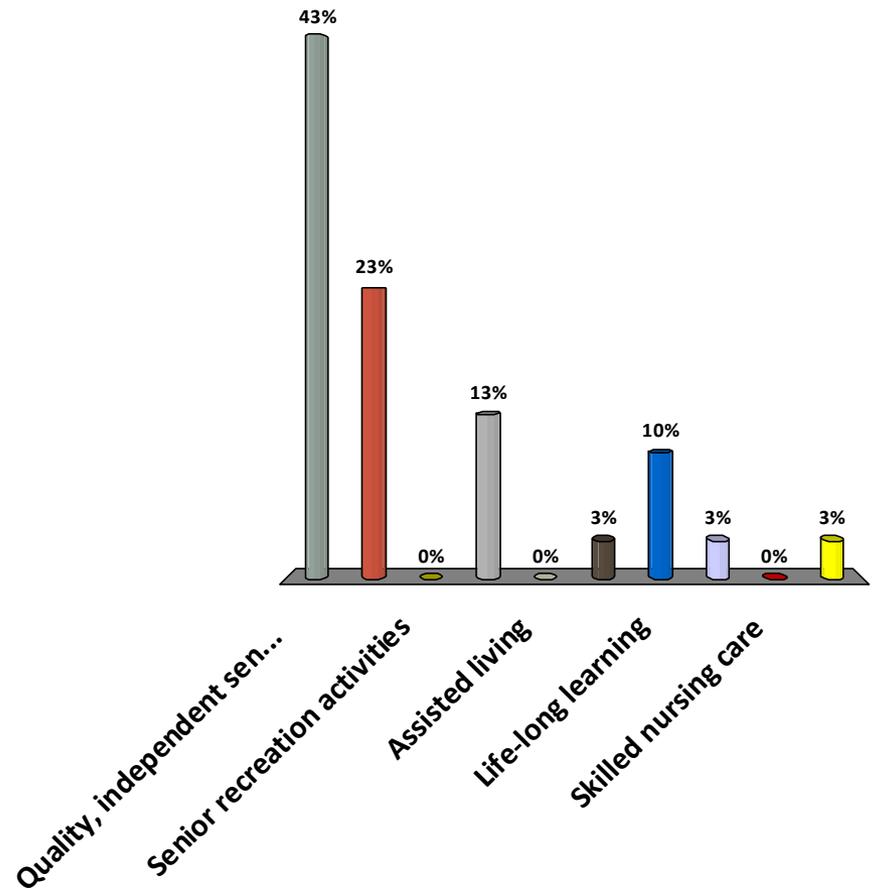
# Which statement below most closely captures your opinion about the role of family and friend caregivers?

1. My family and friends will be my main source of support as I age.
2. My family and friends can provide some services and supports but do not have the resources or time to do everything that could be required.
3. I don't want to burden my family and friends with care and would rather hire caregivers.
4. I don't have family or friends who can provide services and supports as I age.



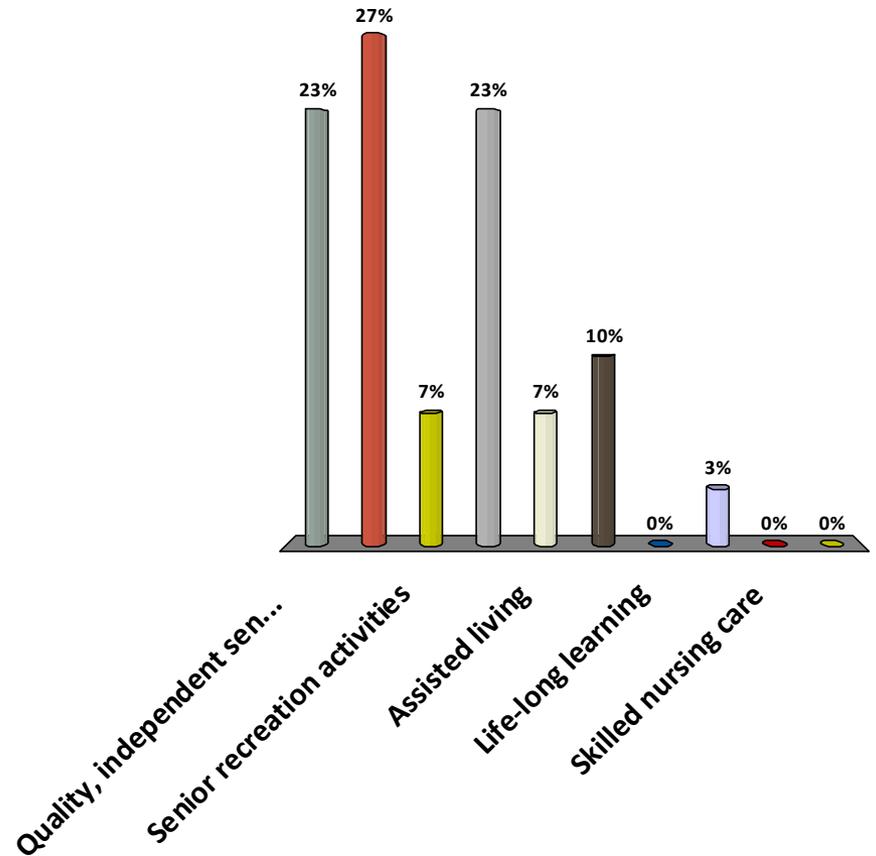
# What do you think is the **most important** service & support for Anchorage seniors as they age?

1. Quality, independent senior housing
2. Services such as meals, rides, & homemaker
3. Senior recreation activities
4. Services for older people with dementia
5. Assisted living
6. Housing close to services/activities
7. Life-long learning
8. Information services
9. Skilled nursing care
10. Other, not listed



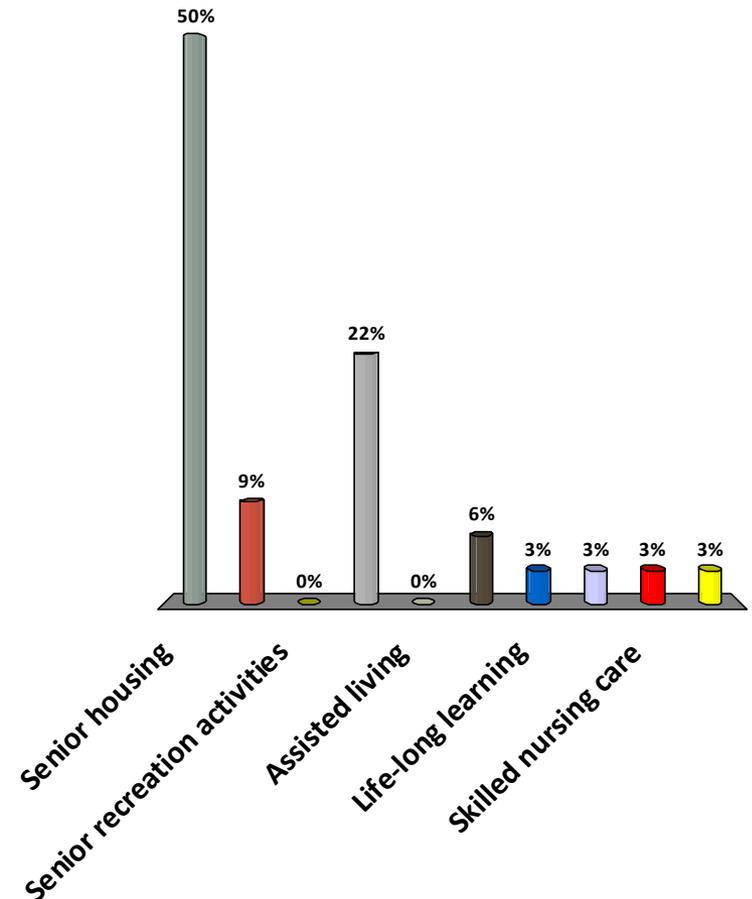
# What do you think is the **second** most important service & support for Anchorage seniors as they age?

1. Quality, independent senior housing
2. Services such as meals, rides, homemaker
3. Senior recreation activities
4. Services for older people with dementia
5. Assisted living
6. Housing close to services/activities
7. Life-long learning
8. Information services
9. Skilled nursing care
10. Other, not listed



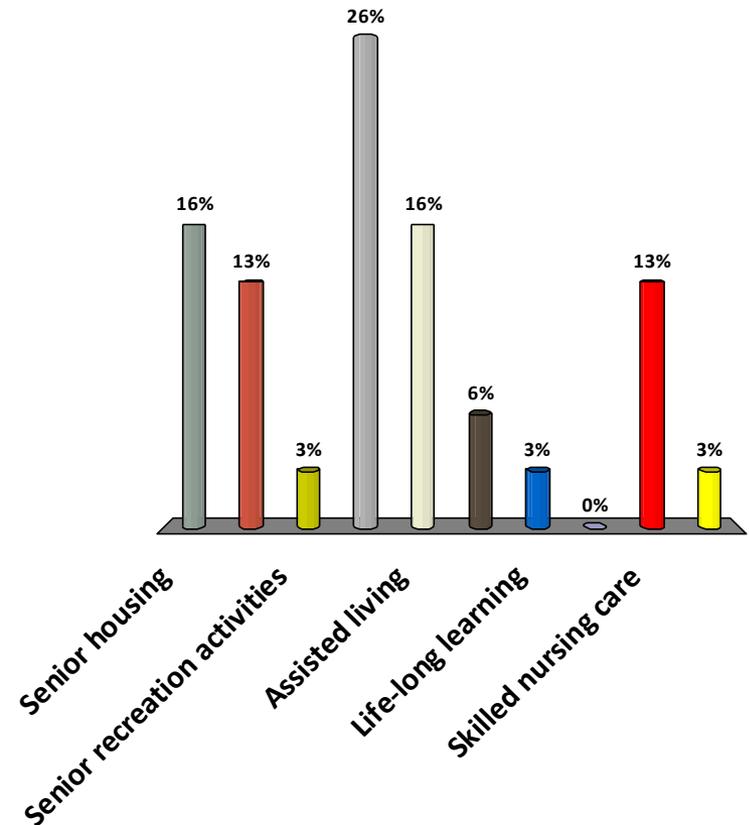
# What is the **biggest** gap in services for Anchorage seniors?

1. Senior housing
2. Services such as meals, rides, homemaker
3. Senior recreation activities
4. Services for older people with dementia
5. Assisted living
6. Housing close to services/activities
7. Life-long learning
8. Information services
9. Skilled nursing care
10. Other, not listed



# What is the **next biggest** service gap for Anchorage seniors?

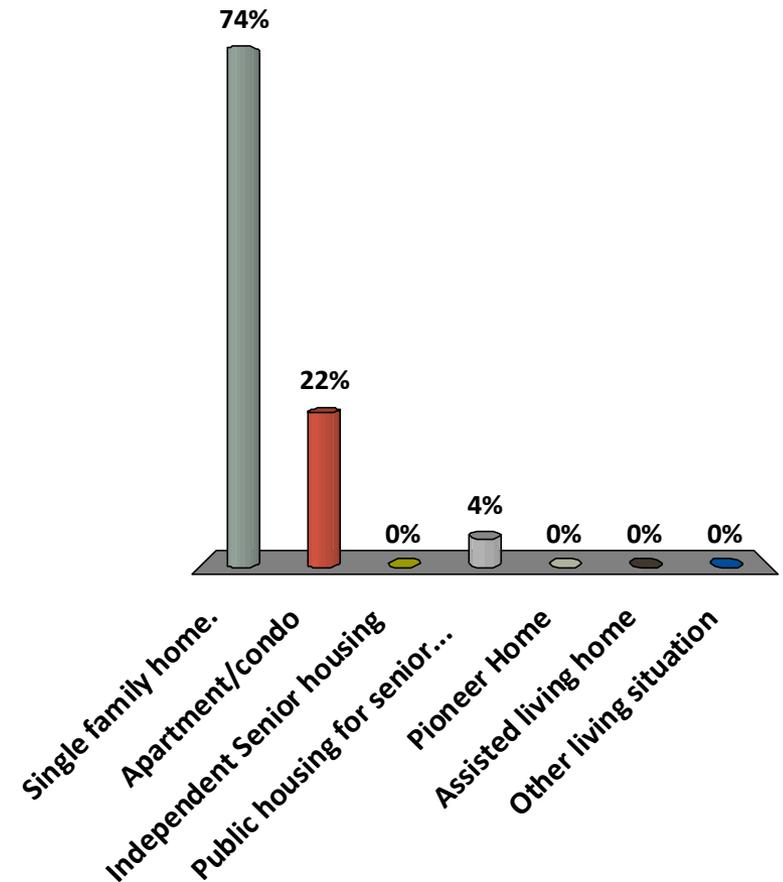
1. Senior housing
2. Services such as meals, rides, homemaker
3. Senior recreation activities
4. Services for older people with dementia
5. Assisted living
6. Housing close to services/activities
7. Life-long learning
8. Information services
9. Skilled nursing care
10. Other, not listed



# What is your current housing situation?

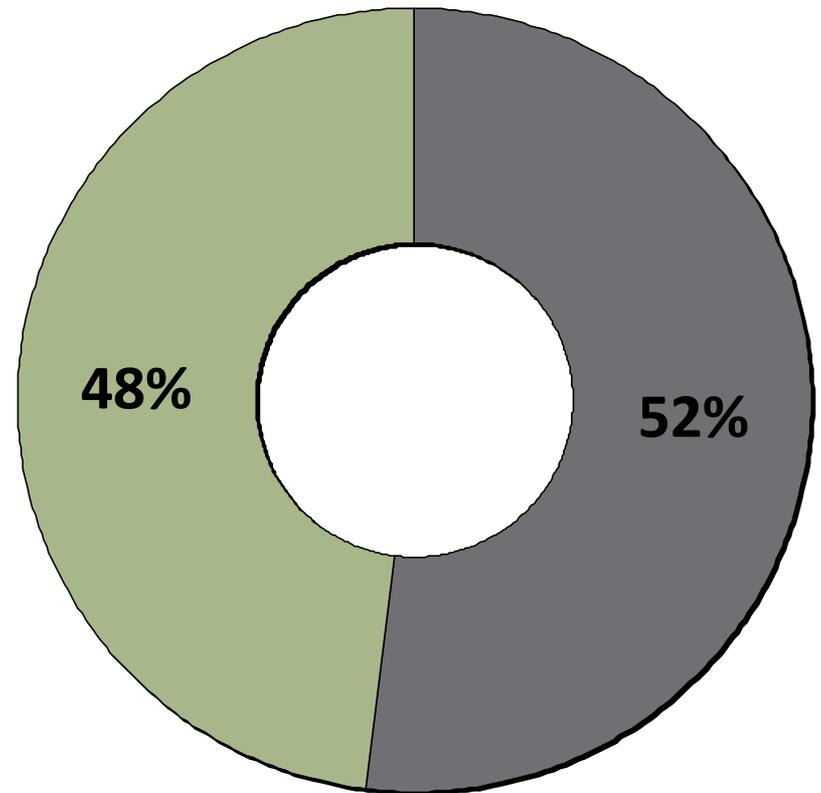
Only answer if you are 55 or over.

1. Single family home.
2. Apartment/condo
3. Independent Senior housing
4. Public housing for seniors/disabled persons
5. Pioneer Home
6. Assisted living home
7. Other living situation



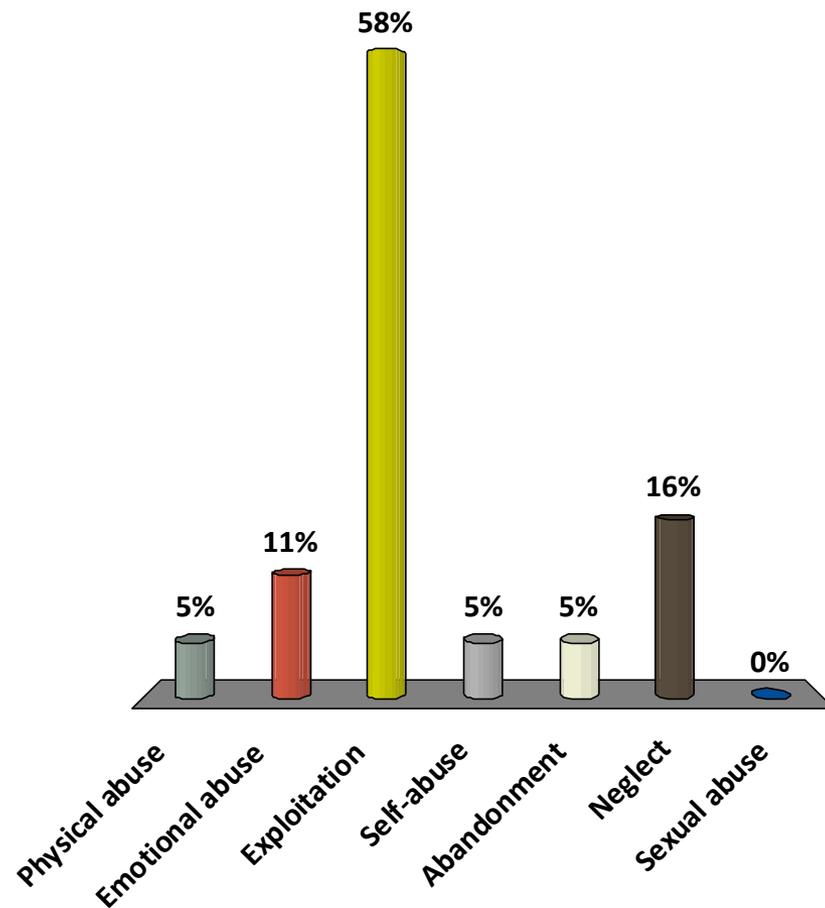
# Have you or someone you know experienced elder abuse?

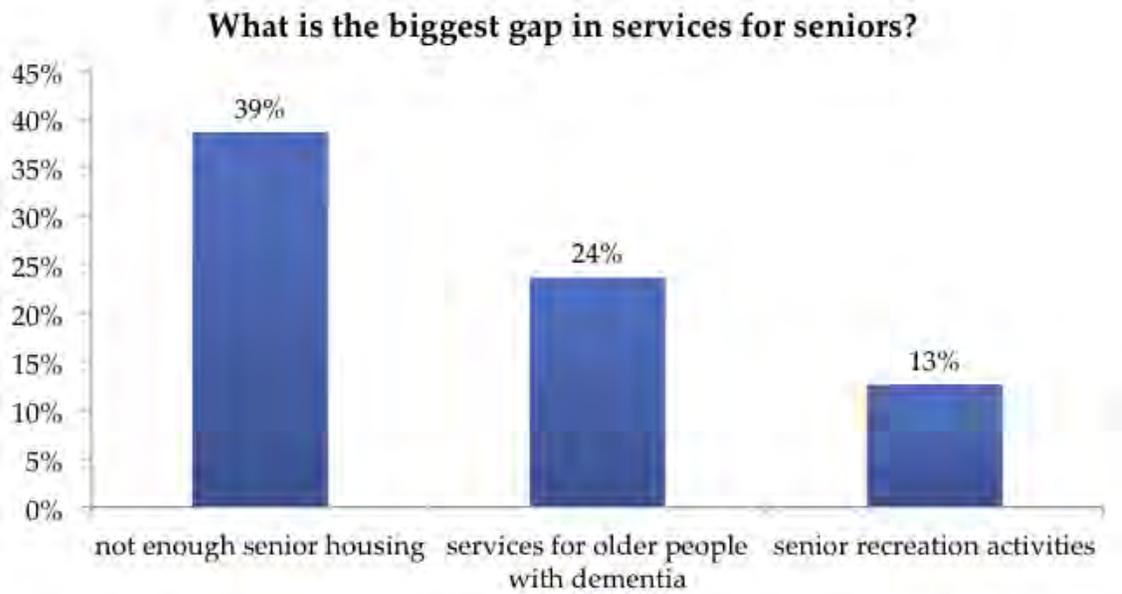
1. Yes
2. No



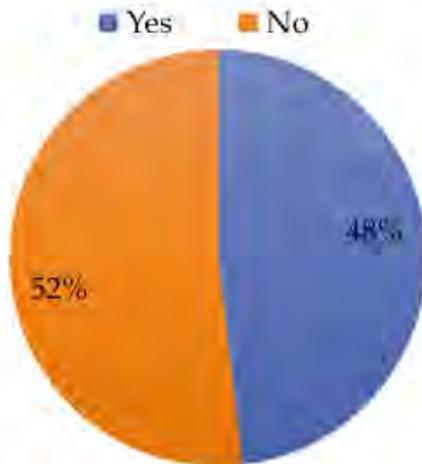
# If you answered “yes” to the last question, which form of elder abuse have you noticed the **most**?

1. Physical abuse
2. Emotional abuse
3. Exploitation
4. Self-abuse
5. Abandonment
6. Neglect
7. Sexual abuse





### Have you or someone you know experienced elder abuse?



### If you answered "yes" to the last question, which form of elder abuse have you noticed the most?

