

AGING IN PLACE

In the next 20 years, the number of adults age 65 and over will almost double in the United States. Davidson County's population of persons age 65 and over is expected to increase from an estimated 75,199 persons in 2015 to 150,484 by the year 2050. As persons age, the likelihood of having one or more disabilities significantly increases. Many individuals and families will face the difficult choice of where persons will spend the remaining years of their lives. Several studies have indicated that the overwhelming majority of persons wish to remain in their home and communities as long as possible with institutional care usually selected as a last resort.

In *Aging in Place: A Survey of State Livability Policies and Practices* conducted by the National Conference of State Legislatures and the AARP Public Policy Institute, almost 90% of persons age 65 and over indicated they want to stay in their homes as long as possible. Of those, 80% of believed that their current residence is where they will live until death. Many older adults will want to avoid costly institutional care often want to continue to live in their community, even if they have one or more disabilities.

<http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/ppi/liv-com/aging-in-place-2011-full.pdf>

Aging in Place is the ability to live in one's own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level. (U.S. CDC)

Several factors determine whether this population's desire to age in place would be feasible: an accommodating physical environment, available and appropriate long-term care services, and access to caregivers. The report indicated that the majority of aging in place decisions happen after a crisis, such as a fall that results in serious injury, a recent hospitalization, death of a spouse or a sudden income loss.

Nashville Public Television (NPR) – as part of its Aging Matters series, NPR recently aired a documentary on the challenges older adults experience when they desire to age in place. Episodes focused on caregiving, economics of aging, end of life issues, etc.

<http://www.nptinternal.org/productions/agingmatters/about/index.html>



There is often little advance planning on the part of individuals or families about decisions to determine the appropriate level of care for persons to age in place. This is even more challenging for seniors who have limited resources (low-income, limited assets and minimal family support) to obtain caregiver services. There is a need to balance the person's preferences with what is realistic, depending on care needs and deficits in Activities of Daily Living and Instrumental Activities of Daily. <http://asourparentsage.net/2009/12/17/adls-and-iadls-whats-the-difference/>

A significant federal initiative to support aging in place is the Older Americans Act-Title III, with programs that provide home and community based services. Services typically include light housekeeping, homemaker, home delivered meals, personal care services, medical transportation, case management and minor home modifications.

In a report *Aging in Place: Do Older Americans Act Title III Services Reach Those Most Likely to Enter Nursing Homes* Title III participants report that Administration on Aging services are needed in allowing recipients to age in place. Eighty-five percent of persons receiving home and community-based services from these federal programs indicated that the assistance was important in helping them remain at home and in their communities.

http://www.aoa.acl.gov/Program_Results/docs/2010/AoA_1_NursingHomes_041311.pdf

AARP reports that over 80% of current caregiving services are unpaid and provided by family members or volunteers. When older adults consider options that would allow them to age in place, caregiving, transportation and access to healthcare are important.

Caregivers

Caregivers provide a vital connection to seniors and the outside world. Informal caregiver roles range from simple tasks such as companionship, checking on older adults via phone calls or personal visits to more complex tasks such as bed transfers, medication monitoring and wound management. Formal caregivers' role which are generally paid either by the individual or a third party pay source include homemaker services, personal care services, meal preparation, bathing and assistance with activities for daily living.

Personal Care Aides who also serve as paid caregivers are one of the fastest growing occupations according to a Bureau of Labor Statistics report. The report indicates that by the year 2022 there will be a need for nearly an additional 600,000 workers in the United States.

A New York Times 2012 article indicates that there will be an increased need for home health aides and nursing assistants by the year 2022. Job growth in the two occupations is projected to increase

by 424,200 jobs and 312,200 jobs respectively. These positions will be critical to an aging population who wants to age in place.

http://newoldage.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/02/26/a-shortage-of-caregivers/?_r=1

FiftyForward Care Teams provide care coordination for a limited number of persons who do not have family in the area but wish to remain in their homes.

<http://www.fiftyforward.org/about/profile/>

Caring Givers is an organization that provides transportation tips for adults who desire to age in place such as taxicabs, Uber services, grocery deliveries, accessing national senior organizations and home care organizations.

<http://caringgivers.com/caring-stories-1/>



Transportation

Transportation for older adults is challenging both for persons with support, persons who drive and for persons who rely on public transportation. When older adults are no longer able to drive to the grocery store, medical appointments or to familiar places, there is a sense of losing their independence. Recent research shows that older adults live another 10 years after they stop driving. Relying on family members or caregivers to provide transportation to vital destinations significantly influences a person's ability to age in place.

Vital Aging Network, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting self-determination, civic engagement and personal growth for persons as they age, reports several factors threaten mobility, including impaired ability to drive, limited forms of transportation and an unwillingness to be dependent upon others.

http://www.vital-aging-network.org/Resources_for_Vital_Living/Transportation/97/Maintaining_Mobility_in_an_Aging_Population.html

Transportation options for older adults provide access to critical services such as employment, entertainment, social activities, and family activities that prevent isolation and encourage independence. Transportation needs of seniors desiring to age in place are similar to those for the

general population - affordable, reliable and safe. For older adults and persons with disabilities, there are additional transportation needs that include door through door assistance, door-to-door assistance, transportation on demand and ride share programs.

Through its Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA), Nashville provides transportation for older adults through their AccessRide Program. AccessRide is a publicly funded paratransit service for persons with a disability using demand-response van services. In a recent report, Nashville's MTA indicated that only 3% of MTA riders are age 65 and older. Survey participants who were older adults did not see MTA fixed route system as a viable alternative even though all MTA buses are fully accessible.

<http://www.nashvillemta.org/Nashville-MTA-AccessRide-Information.asp>



Folks at Home Program in Sewanee, Tennessee, is non-profit dedicated to assisting its members to remain in their community through coordination of services.

<http://folksathome.org/>

ITN Bluegrass offers seniors and persons with disability transportation to needed services in the Northern Kentucky region for a membership fee. The program offers 24-hour 7-day a week transportation services.

<http://www.itnbluegrass.org/what-we-do>

Health Care Services for Older Adults

For persons who wish to age in place access to health care services will be a vital component. In Tennessee through its TennCare CHOICES program funding for home and community based health care services has increased dramatically. From 2005 to 2013, the percentage of funding for healthcare services that assist older adults to age in place has increased from 3.2% to 37.6% in TennCare Choices.

In Davidson County there are thirty to forty home and community based care service providers at any given time that assist eligible adults to age in place. With the projected increase in the number of older adults and persons with a disability on a local, state and national level, the number of home healthcare agencies will need to grow to meet the demand.

http://www.tn.gov/tenncare/long_choices.shtml