

The 2015 United States of Aging Survey Cincinnati Findings

The 2015 United States of Aging Survey, conducted by the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a), the National Council on Aging (NCOA) and UnitedHealthcare, examines older Americans' perspectives on aging and what communities can do to better support an increasing, longer-living senior population.

Now in its fourth year, the 2015 survey comprised 1,650 telephone interviews, including nationally representative samples of Americans 60 and older, and professionals who work closely with them. Professionals included staff from the Area Agencies on Aging, credit union managers, primary care physicians and pharmacists. To gain community-specific perspectives, the survey also included a representative sample of older adults in Cincinnati and Denver.

Community Preparedness: Lacking Confidence in the Future

Older adults in Cincinnati express low confidence in their community's preparedness to support them as they age, specifically with transportation and long-term care.

- Although 9 in 10 older adults in Cincinnati feel very or somewhat ready for the process of aging themselves, only about half believe the city is doing enough to prepare for the growing number of older adults in the community (90 percent and 49 percent).
- Older adults in Cincinnati and nationally are generally satisfied with their community infrastructure as a whole (84 percent and 78 percent, respectively), and both groups say better public transportation is the most important thing their community could do to make it easier for them to get around (38 percent and 42 percent). Only about half of older adults in Cincinnati find public transportation "acceptable" at best, including one-third rating it as poor (56 percent and 33 percent).
- Both groups also report their communities offer them a good quality of life overall (76 percent in Cincinnati and 79 percent nationally); however, older adults in Cincinnati are less optimistic when it comes to their future, as nearly one-third expect their quality of life to decline compared with less than a quarter of older adults nationally (32 percent and 22 percent, respectively).
- Additionally, older adults in Cincinnati express concerns about their community being able to help them with long-term care. While half of them anticipate needing help with long-term care as they age, only 40 percent say their community has the ability to help them.

Staying at Home: Receiving the Necessary Support

Cincinnati seniors are more proactive with home improvement; however, they express concerns about their community's ability to help them stay in their current homes for the rest of their lives.

- Both groups express similar perspectives on staying at home, as many older adults in Cincinnati and nationally intend to continue living in their current homes (70 percent and 75 percent, respectively).
- Older adults in Cincinnati and nationally are generally confident they are prepared for changes in health as they age (86 percent and 87 percent, respectively); however, when asked about living independently, those in Cincinnati are more concerned about being a burden to others as they age than those nationally (49 percent and 42 percent).
- Cincinnati older adults are more likely than older adults nationally to say they have faced challenges with home maintenance (34 percent and 26 percent, respectively), and both groups



are interested in the expansion of community programs that would help them maintain and upgrade their homes (72 percent and 70 percent).

- However, with the intent to stay in their current homes for the rest of their lives, older adults in Cincinnati appear to be more proactive than the national population, as they have already made home improvements, such as bathroom upgrades (45 percent and 34 percent, respectively) and emergency alert system installations (23 percent and 14 percent).

Cost of Aging: Preparing for Anticipated Health and Aging Expenses

Older adults in Cincinnati are comfortable with their current financial situation, but are less confident with maintaining it due to future health care costs.

- More than 8 in 10 older adults in Cincinnati and nationally report being very or somewhat satisfied with their financial situation (84 percent each), and a majority of Cincinnati older adults expect their financial situation to stay the same in the next five to 10 years (65 percent, compared with 62 percent of seniors nationally).
- However, only a small number of older adults in Cincinnati and nationally report being very confident they will be able to afford their health care costs as they age (35 percent and 43 percent, respectively). Similarly, many older adults in Cincinnati and nationally expect their health care costs to increase (71 percent and 66 percent).
- Among seniors' top worries, both groups agree that increased cost of living (30 percent in Cincinnati and 28 percent nationally) and unexpected medical expenses (25 percent and 24 percent, respectively) keep them "up at night" when it comes to their finances.
- When asked about the challenges or obstacles they face in accessing health care, Cincinnati seniors and older adults nationally are most concerned about not understanding insurance benefits or health coverage (26 percent and 20 percent, respectively), cost of health care services (22 percent and 24 percent) and cost of medication (18 percent and 25 percent).
- Only 27 percent of Cincinnati's older adults think it is important to work with a financial planner to help manage finances, and only 2 percent report having a financial planner manage their finances. Both Cincinnati seniors and their national counterparts report that taking advantage of discounts (46 percent and 43 percent, respectively), sticking to a monthly budget (45 percent and 43 percent) and saving money (38 percent and 39 percent) are the most important ways to manage their finances.

Personal Wellness: Staying Mentally Sharp and Managing Physical Health

Cincinnati seniors rely on a positive attitude and a loving family to keep a positive outlook on life; however, they express more caution and concern for maintaining their physical health as they age.

- When asked about their top concerns for aging, older adults in Cincinnati are most concerned about maintaining their physical health, a concern shared by older adults nationally (48 and 40 percent, respectively).
- Older adults in Cincinnati agree with those nationally that maintaining a positive attitude is the most important factor to staying healthy as they age (78 percent and 72 percent, respectively).
- Older adults in Cincinnati and nationally also credit positivity for staying mentally sharp (58 percent and 53 percent, respectively), but cite several barriers for maintaining it, including depression, loneliness or isolation (58 percent and 47 percent), inactivity (57 percent and 51 percent) and loss of important relationships (51 percent and 42 percent).
- When it comes to staying mentally sharp, Cincinnati's older adults emphasize taking proper vitamins and nutritional supplements more than the national population (41 percent and 30 percent, respectively). For maintaining good health, Cincinnati's seniors also tend to focus on getting sleep, seeing their doctor and taking medicine as prescribed (77 percent, 76 percent and 77 percent, respectively), more so than those nationally (67 percent, 62 percent and 63 percent, respectively).



Professionals and Older Adults Surveyed Nationally: Disconnected on Aging Preparedness

At the national level, the survey finds that older Americans' concerns about their later years differ from those of the professionals who support them. The top three concerns about growing older include:

For adults 60 and older

Maintaining their physical health (40 percent)
Memory loss (35 percent)
Maintaining their mental health (32 percent)

For professionals

Protection from financial scams (43 percent)
Access to affordable housing (38 percent)
Memory loss (38 percent)

A majority of both older adults and professionals feel seniors are prepared overall for the process of aging (86 percent and 77 percent, respectively). Older adults, however, are far more confident: only 10 percent of professionals surveyed feel older Americans are "very prepared" to age, compared with 42 percent of seniors.

For complete survey results, visit www.ncoa.org/UnitedStatesofAging.

About The United States of Aging Survey

The United States of Aging Survey is an annual survey conducted by the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, National Council on Aging, and UnitedHealthcare. For the 2015 survey, Penn Schoen Berland completed 1,650 telephone interviews from March 27, 2015, to May 8, 2015, including nationally representative samples of Americans 60 years old and older (N=1,000) and Aging Influencers (N=150), defined as n4a members, credit union managers, primary care physicians, and pharmacists. In addition, PSB interviewed an oversample of Americans 60 years old and older in Denver (N=250) and Cincinnati (N=250). The margin of error for nationally representative Older Adults is +/-3.1 percent, +/- 8 percent for Aging Influencers, and +/- 6.2 percent for oversampled subpopulations. Data from nationally representative sample of Americans 60 years old and older are weighted to U.S. Census Bureau demographic statistics in terms of age, gender, marital status, and race.

About n4a

The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) is a 501c(3) membership association representing America's national network of 623 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and providing a voice in the nation's capital for the 256 Title VI Native American aging programs. The mission of n4a is to build the capacity of its members so they can better help older adults and people with disabilities live with dignity and choices in their homes and communities for as long as possible. For more information, please visit www.n4a.org.

About the National Council On Aging

The National Council on Aging (NCOA) is a respected national leader and trusted partner to help people aged 60+ meet the challenges of aging. Our mission is to improve the lives of millions of older adults, especially those who are struggling. Through innovative community programs and services, online help, and advocacy, NCOA is partnering with nonprofit organizations, government, and business to improve the health and economic security of 10 million older adults by 2020. Learn more at ncoa.org and @NCOAging.

About UnitedHealthcare

UnitedHealthcare is dedicated to helping people nationwide live healthier lives by simplifying the health care experience, meeting consumer health and wellness needs, and sustaining trusted relationships with care providers. The company offers the full spectrum of health benefit programs for individuals, employers, military service members, retirees and their families, and Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries, and contracts directly with more than 850,000 physicians



and care professionals, and 6,000 hospitals and other care facilities nationwide. UnitedHealthcare is one of the businesses of UnitedHealth Group (NYSE: UNH), a diversified Fortune 50 health and well-being company. For more information, visit UnitedHealthcare at www.uhc.com or follow @myUHC on Twitter.

