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Aging in Place: What the Data Tell Us

More than nine of 10 seniors in the U.S. (93 percent) are living in a home or apartment in their community. And that is exactly where this 65-and-older population wants to stay, surveys show.¹

At the same time, nearly three of four seniors (70 percent) will need long-term services and supports (LTSS) at some point. When this happens, 82 percent would prefer to receive this more intensive and ongoing care in their home rather than in a nursing home. However, home modifications and home health services are expensive. Three-quarters of Americans between 55 and 64 have less than \$30,000 saved in retirement accounts. They will need much more.²

A safe and accessible home is a basic requirement to help Coloradans achieve their goal of aging in place.

Here is a selection of data related to aging in place:

Aging in Colorado

- The number of Coloradans who are 65 and older will more than double from about **700,000 in 2014 to 1.5 million in 2040**.
- In 2013, **36 percent** of seniors reported having a disability or difficulty doing daily tasks like dressing or running errands alone.³
- About **43 percent** of the seniors who report having a disability or having difficulty doing tasks are mortgage-free. They own their homes free and clear.
- **Thirty-eight percent** of Coloradans age 75 and older lived alone in 2012.⁴

Costs of Aging in Colorado

Medicaid Spending

- In FY 2012-2013, the average annual cost to Medicaid for a senior living in a nursing facility was **\$10,242**. There were **14,143** Medicaid clients living in nursing facilities and the total Medicaid spending on nursing facilities was **\$621 million**.
- For seniors living at home or in the community, the average cost to Medicaid was **\$3,071** per person in FY 2012-13. There were **49,575** Medicaid clients receiving long-term services and supports in the community and total Medicaid spending for home and community based services was **\$293 million**.

Average Costs of Care

- According to Genworth, the average daily cost of home health care services in Colorado is **\$138 per day**.
- The average daily cost of nursing home care is **\$252**.⁵

Thirteen percent of nursing home residents in Colorado have low care needs, indicating they could potentially be living in a community setting.⁶

Where the Funding Comes From

- Medicare covers medically necessary home health care, but does not include meals, homemaker, or personal care services. Medicare also pays for 80% of some durable medical equipment.
- Medicaid covers home health care for clients who are low income and have a nursing facility level of need through home and community based services waivers.
- Long-term care insurance policies reimburse policyholders a daily amount (up to a pre-selected limit) for services to assist them with activities of daily living such as bathing, dressing, or eating. About 16 percent of Colorado's seniors with annual incomes above \$20,000 have long-term care policies.⁷

Benefits of Prevention

- More than a quarter (**27 percent**) of Colorado seniors reported a fall in 2014.⁸
- In 2013, **2.5 million** nonfatal falls among older adults in the U.S. were treated in emergency departments. More than **734,000** of these patients were hospitalized.
- In 2012, the direct medical costs of falls in the U.S., adjusted for inflation, were **\$30 billion**.⁹
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends several ways to prevent falls for seniors, including reducing tripping hazards, adding grab bars to the inside and outside of tubs and showers as well as next to the toilet, adding railings on both sides of stairways, and improving lighting.

Endnotes

¹ AARP, "Aging in Place", December 2011.

² AARP, various studies.

³ Defined as responding yes to any of the following: Deaf or has serious difficulty hearing; Blind or has a serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses; Difficulty concentrating, remembering or making decisions because of a physical, mental or emotional condition; Difficulty walking or climbing stairs; Difficulty dressing or bathing; Difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping because of a physical, mental or emotional condition.

⁴ Colorado Health Institute analysis of the American Community Survey, 2013. Includes data on seniors with disabilities.

⁵ Genworth, "Cost of Care Survey", 2014. Home health care costs are for a home health aide for about 6.5 hours per day. Nursing home costs are for a private room in a nursing facility.

⁶ "Raising Expectations: State Scorecard on Long-Term Services and Supports for Older Adults, People with Physical Disabilities, and Family Caregivers"

⁷ LifePlans analysis of Colorado long-term care insurance market.

⁸ America's Health Rankings

⁹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention