

SAN DIEGO COUNTY SENIOR HEALTH REPORT

Executive Summary and Indicators

HEALTH AND HUMAN
SERVICES AGENCY



PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

MAY 2009



AGING AND INDEPENDENCE SERVICES

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DIANNE JACOB

CHAIRWOMAN
SUPERVISOR, SECOND DISTRICT
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May 27, 2009

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Dear San Diego County Residents,

I am pleased to present the *San Diego County Senior Health Report*. This report represents a close collaboration between the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency Aging & Independence Services and Public Health Services to assess the current health status of our seniors in San Diego County.

This report identifies 17 key health indicators that will be monitored to measure the health status of San Diego's seniors. These indicators were selected because they represented areas where various programs of the Health and Human Services Agency could have measurable impacts on the health of seniors.

San Diego County is home to many agencies, organizations, groups, services, and individuals who are interested in improving the health of our seniors. The Health and Human Services Agency has a wide variety of resources available, including extensive data, scientific and programmatic expertise, and a history of successful collaboration among organizations. It is my hope that this collaboration will continue in order to ensure a safer, healthier San Diego.

Aging & Independence Services offers a wide variety of programs for seniors. For information on these programs, please call (800) 510-2020 or visit the website at: www.sandiego.networkofcare.org. While this document focuses on health indicators for seniors, additional local data for seniors and other groups are available through the Health and Human Services Agency's Community Health Statistics Unit and can be found online at www.sdhealthstatistics.com.

Sincerely,

Dianne Jacob
Chairwoman

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The San Diego County Senior Health Report brings together health indicators for seniors in San Diego County in one place. The purpose for this compilation is to better understand the current health of seniors, opportunities for enhancements to existing programs, and areas needed for intervention. Highlights of the data are presented below. To review all of the data and sources please see the comprehensive San Diego County Senior Health Report document.



DEMOGRAPHY

In 2000, 313,750 persons ages 65 years or older lived in San Diego County. This number is expected to double by the year 2030 to 741,362.

As dramatic as this increase is, it is overshadowed by the increase in persons 85 years and older in San Diego County from 36,407 in 2000 to a projected 101,260 in 2030. Many of these residents 65 years or older live in communities in the North Regions of the County as well as communities in the East Region. The senior population percentage in San Diego is lower than it is in the United States as a whole – 11.1% versus 12.4%.

For all ten year age groups of adults 55 years and older, females outnumber males, with the proportion of females increasing with each older age group. In 2007, 72% of all San Diego County seniors were White. This percentage is expected to



decrease between now and 2030, primarily because of an increase in the number of Hispanic seniors (from 13.3% in 2007 to an expected 22.9% in 2030). More than half of all seniors in San Diego County have completed at least some college education with only 21% having never graduated from high school. Most seniors only speak English (72%) with 17% of seniors unable to speak English very well.

In San Diego County, 14% of seniors ages 65 and older remain in the labor force. While 7% of seniors in San Diego County live with grandchildren under the age of 18 years, only 21% of these seniors are responsible for their grandchildren. Overall, 44% of seniors live alone, the vast majority female (71%). The median income of senior householders is \$36,955, with seniors living alone having significantly lower median incomes than those who live with others. Nearly all seniors have social security income, more than half have income from retirement, and one third have earnings.

23.1% of San Diego seniors reported 21 days or more in poor health during the past month.

7.3% of San Diego seniors reported 14 or more days of poor mental health during the past month.

HEALTH STATUS

San Diego seniors reported good to excellent health more than California seniors overall (74% versus 71%). Nearly all seniors reported a usual place to go when sick or needing health advice. A different story is seen in dental health with nearly 30% of San Diego County seniors not seeing a dentist, hygienist, or orthodontist in the previous year. In San Diego County, 7.3% of seniors reported frequent mental distress, lower than the 9% in California.

HEALTH BEHAVIORS

Being overweight or obese can contribute to or worsen many other health conditions. The percent of San Diego seniors who were overweight or obese is similar to that of California seniors. In San Diego, 38% of seniors were overweight and 18% were obese. A higher percentage of seniors in San Diego compared to California reported that they engaged in at least moderate physical activity – 30% versus 27%. In San Diego County less

55.3% of San Diego seniors are overweight or obese.

than half of seniors eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily. Slightly more than half of all seniors in San Diego County had at least one drink of any alcoholic beverage in the past 30 days.

30.1% of San Diego seniors engage in at least moderate physical activity.

46.7% of San Diego seniors eat ≥ 5 fruits and vegetables daily.

Only 3.2% of San Diego County seniors engaged in binge drinking during the past month. In 2005, 7% of San Diego County seniors were current smokers, lower than the Healthy People 2010 goal of 12%.

PREVENTION

In 2007/2008, 72.3% of seniors in San Diego County received a flu shot, lower than the Healthy People 2010 target of 90%. The pneumonia vaccination rate of 60.7% for seniors was also lower than the Healthy People 2010 goal of 90%. In 2005, 89% of San Diego County seniors reported that their cholesterol was checked in the previous 12 months, exceeding the goal that 80% have cholesterol screening in the previous 5 years in Healthy People 2010. Slightly more than 60% of seniors in the county have ever been told that they have high blood pressure with 89% of those taking medication to control it.

7.1% of San Diego seniors currently smoke.

72.3% of San Diego seniors have had a flu shot in the past 12 months.

There are several cancer screenings that are recommended for seniors. At the time of recommendation by their doctor, 73% of seniors in San Diego County were compliant with recommendations for colorectal cancer screening. In San Diego County, 28% of senior men had never had a Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) test to screen for prostate cancer. The percent of females aged 65 and older in San Diego County who had a mammogram in the past two years was 86%, higher than the Healthy People 2010 goal of 70%.

86.2% of San Diego senior women had a mammogram in the past 2 years.

UTILIZATION OF MEDICAL SERVICES

Seniors in San Diego County use the 9-1-1 system at higher rates than any other age group. In 2007, 58,060 calls were made to 9-1-1 for seniors in need of prehospital care in San Diego County. This represents a call for one out of every six seniors. That same year there were 83,906 seniors treated and discharged from a San Diego County emergency department, representing one out of every four senior residents. In 2005, 93,725 seniors were hospitalized for any cause in San Diego County, a rate of 28.00 per 100,000. Also in 2005, 10,643 seniors died of all causes. The leading cause of death for seniors aged 55-64, 65-74, and 75-84 years was cancer, followed by diseases of the heart. These two causes were reversed for seniors aged 85 years and older.

CHRONIC DISEASE INDICATORS



In San Diego County, 21% of seniors have been told by a doctor that they have any kind of heart disease, about the same as California seniors. In 2005, the rate of hospitalization for San Diego County seniors was 2,227 per 100,000. The rates were highest for those aged 75 years and older, males, and Hispanics. The death rate for heart disease was 947 per 100,000. This rate was highest in those aged 85 and older, males, and Blacks.

A doctor has told 31% of San Diego County seniors that they have had or currently have some form of cancer. The most common diagnoses were skin cancer (38%), breast cancer (14%), and prostate cancer (8%). The death rate from cancer in San Diego County was 987 per 100,000. Death rates were highest among those aged 85 years and older, males, as well as Blacks and Whites.

In San Diego County, 15% of seniors were ever told by a doctor that they had diabetes, slightly lower than the 18% of seniors in California. The rate of emergency department discharge for patients with a principal diagnosis of diabetes was 390 per 100,000 while the rate of hospitalizations was 372



per 100,000. Hospitalizations were higher for those aged 75-84 years old, males, as well as Hispanics and Blacks. The death rate from diabetes for San Diego County seniors was 139 per 100,000. The death rate increased with age, was highest for males and Blacks.

**138.6 per 100,000
San Diego seniors
died due to
diabetes.**

The percentage of seniors in San Diego County who have ever had a stroke was 7.5%, lower than the 9% of California seniors. The hospitalization rate for stroke among San Diego County seniors was 1,375 per 100,000. The hospitalization rate was highest for seniors aged 85 years and older, Hispanics, and Blacks. The death rate for San Diego County seniors due to stroke was 320 per 100,000. This rate increased with age, and was higher for females and Whites.

The emergency department discharge rate for San Diego County seniors with a principal diagnosis of chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases (COPD) was 503 per 100,000. Rates were higher for seniors aged 75 years and older as well as Blacks and Hispanics. The hospitalization rate for COPD was 637 per 100,000, and was higher among those aged 65-74 years old and Whites. The death rate for San Diego County seniors was 292.5 per 100,000 and increased with age.

461.7 per 100,000 San Diego seniors were discharged from an emergency department with a principal diagnosis of depression.

547.1 per 100,000 San Diego seniors were discharged from an emergency department with a diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease.

Nearly half of San Diego County seniors have been told that they have some form of arthritis, gout, lupus, or fibromyalgia. The rate of emergency department discharge for seniors in San Diego County was 646 per 100,000 and the hospitalization rate was 1,313 per 100,000. The hospitalization rate was highest among seniors aged 75-84 years old and Whites.

MENTAL HEALTH INDICATORS

The emergency department discharge rate for San Diego County seniors with a mental illness or depression diagnosis was 462 per 100,000. The rate increased with age and was highest among females, Hispanics and Blacks. The hospitalization rate for seniors in San Diego County with a principal diagnosis of mental illness or depression was 595 per 100,000. The rate increased with age and was highest among females and Blacks.

96.8 per 100,000 San Diego seniors were discharged from an emergency department with a principal diagnosis of substance use or abuse.

INJURY INDICATORS

Unintentional injuries are among the leading causes of deaths for seniors in San Diego County. The rate of emergency department discharge for unintentional injury was 5,176 per 100,000 while the hospitalization rate was 2,502 per 100,000. The hospitalization rate increased with age and was highest for females and Whites.

64.2 per 100,000 San Diego seniors died because of an unintentional injury.

3,627 per 100,000 San Diego seniors were discharged from an emergency department due to a fall.

One subset of unintentional injuries is falls. The San Diego County senior emergency department discharge rate for seniors was 3,267 per 100,000 while the hospitalization rate was 1,116 per 100,000. Emergency department discharge and hospitalization rates both increased with age and were highest for females and Whites. The hospitalization rate due to hip fracture for San Diego County seniors was 626 per 100,000, increased with age and was highest for females and Whites.

Treatment for assault injuries for seniors in San Diego County was low with an emergency department discharge rate of 34 per 100,000 and a lower hospitalization rate (12 per 100,000). There were 9,883 reports of abuse of seniors and dependent adults to Adult Protective Services of which 70% were for seniors and 52% were for self neglect.

625.6 per 100,000 San Diego seniors were hospitalized due to hip fracture.

20.0 per 100,000 San Diego seniors died due to suicide.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

In 2005, 37% of San Diego County seniors aged 55-64 years and 24% of those 65-74 years old were tested for HIV. In 2007, there were 303 seniors aged 55-74 years old in San Diego County known to be living with HIV. In contrast, in 2005 only 4.4% of San Diego County seniors aged 65 years and older said they have been tested for a sexually transmitted disease other than HIV during the previous 12 months. There were only small numbers of chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis reported in San Diego County among seniors. In 2005, there were 64 new active cases of tuberculosis reported in San Diego County among seniors aged 65 years and older.

AGING & INDEPENDENCE SERVICES

Aging and Independence Services (AIS) offers more than 30 programs for seniors and disabled adults. These programs are in the following areas: protection and advocacy, health independence, home-based services, enrichment and involvement, and caregiver services. AIS offers a single phone number, (800) 510-2020, as the gateway for services and to report elder abuse. In fiscal year 2007/2008 there were 61,271 calls made to the AIS Call Center.

There were 6,910 confirmed cases of elder abuse in San Diego County.

SELECTED SENIOR HEALTH INDICATORS



The following table contains some of the leading health indicators contained in this report. These indicators were selected because they represent areas where programs of the Health and Human Services Agency could have measurable impacts on the health of seniors. These indicators cut across different areas and are compiled for quick reference. These selected indicators will be tracked over time.

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO SENIOR HEALTH REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND INDICATORS

	INDICATOR	MEASURE	SD	CA
<i>General Health</i>				
1	Days in Poor Health	Percent of population reporting ≥ 21 days in poor health during the past month	23.1%	20.3%
2	Frequent Mental Distress	Percent of population having ≥ 14 days of poor mental health during the past month	7.3%	9.0%
<i>Health Behaviors</i>				
3	Overweight and Obese	Percent of population that is overweight and/or obese by age group.	55.3%	55.6%
4	Physical Activity	Percent of population that engages in at least moderate physical activity	30.1%	27.2%
5	Fruits and Vegetables	Percent of population eating ≥ 5 servings fruits and vegetables daily	46.7%	47.5%
6	Smoking	Percent of population that currently smokes	7.1%	7.5%
<i>Prevention Activities</i>				
7	Flu vaccination	Percent of population that has had a flu shot in past 12 months	72.3%	65.6%
8	Mammogram screening	Percent of female population who had a mammogram in past 2 years	86.2%	81.4%
<i>Chronic Disease Indicators</i>				
9	Diabetes	Rate of death due to diabetes	138.6 per 100,000	143.4 per 100,000

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO SENIOR HEALTH REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND INDICATORS

	INDICATOR	MEASURE	SD	CA
<i>Mental Health Indicators</i>				
10	Mental Illness/ Depression	Rate of ED discharges with depression as a principal diagnosis	461.7 per 100,000	n/a
11	Alzheimer's Disease	Rate of ED Discharge with Alzheimer's as any diagnosis	547.1 per 100,000	n/a
12	Substance Use/ Abuse	Rate of ED Discharge with SUA as a principal diagnosis	96.8 per 100,000	n/a
<i>Injury Indicators</i>				
13	Unintentional Injury	Rate of Death due to unintentional injury	64.2 per 100,000	68.8 per 100,000
14	Unintentional Fall Injury	Rate of ED Discharge due to fall	3,267 per 100,000	n/a
15	Hip Fracture	Rate of Hospitalization due to hip fracture	625.6 per 100,000	n/a
16	Suicide	Rate of Death due to suicide	20.0 per 100,000	16.4 per 100,000
<i>Service Indicators</i>				
17	Elder Abuse	Incidence of confirmed elder adult abuse	N = 6,910	n/a

Source: All data contained in this Executive Summary were derived from the County of San Diego Senior Health Report. Copies of the report are available on www.sdhealthstatistics.com.

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