



A Statistical Profile of Older African Americans

INTRODUCTION

In 2014, there were 46.2 million Americans aged 65 and over and 6.2 million aged 85 and over. The number of people aged 65 and older is expected to more than double by 2060 to 98.2 million and the number of people aged 85 and older is expected to triple to 19.7 million. Among the population age 65 and over, there are 127 women for every 100 men. At age 85 and over this ratio increases to 192 women for every 100 men.

NOW AND THE FUTURE

The non-Hispanic African American older population was 4 million in 2014 and is projected to grow to 12 million by 2060. In 2014, African Americans made up 9 percent of the older population. By 2060, the percentage of the older population that is African American is projected to grow to 12 percent.

CENTENARIANS

In 2014, there were 8,582 African Americans age 100 years and over (1,558 men and 7,024 women). They comprised 12 percent of all centenarians.

RESIDENCE

In 2013, over 50 percent of older African Americans (1,969,040) lived in just eight states: New York (331,114), Florida (286,438), Texas (255,362), Georgia (252,101), California (248,195), North Carolina (221,725), Illinois (196,584), and Maryland (177,521).

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

The past decade has seen a significant increase in educational attainment among older Americans, including African Americans. In 2014, 74 percent of the African American population aged 65 and older had finished high school and 17 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher. In 1998, only 44 percent of older African Americans were high school graduates and 7 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher. Nonetheless, there are still educational differences among racial and ethnic groups. In 2014, 84 percent of all older persons were high school graduates and 26 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher.

MARITAL STATUS

In 2014, 37 percent of older African Americans were married, 31 percent were widowed, 16 percent were divorced, 5 percent were separated, and 11 percent had never been married.

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

In 2013, 56 percent of older African American men lived with their spouses, 12 percent lived with other relatives, 4 percent lived with non-relatives, and 28 percent lived alone. For older African American women, 26 percent lived with their spouses, 32 percent lived with other relatives, 2 percent lived with non-relatives, and 39 percent lived alone.

INCOME AND POVERTY*

Households containing families headed by African Americans age 65 and over reported a



median income in 2013 of \$42,805. The comparable figure for all older households was \$54,184. The median personal income for older African American men was \$23,026 and \$14,633 for women. The comparable figures for all older persons were \$29,854 for men and \$17,366 for women. The poverty rate in 2013 for African Americans age 65 and older was 18.7 percent which was higher than the rate for all older Americans (10.2 percent).

**Income and poverty estimates are based on redesigned income questions from the Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement.*

SELF-RATED HEALTH STATUS

During 2011-2013, 27 percent of both older African American men and older African American women reported very good/excellent health status. Among older non-Hispanic whites, this figure was 45 percent for men and 47 percent for women. Positive health evaluations decline with age. Among African American men ages 65-74, 31 percent reported very good/excellent health compared with 17 percent among those aged 85 or older. Similarly, among African American women, this rate declined from 30 percent at ages 65-74 to 20 percent at age 85 or older.

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Most older persons have at least one chronic condition and many have multiple conditions. Some of the most frequently occurring conditions among older non-Hispanic African Americans in 2011-2013 were: hypertension (85 percent in 2009-2012), diagnosed arthritis (51 percent), all types of heart disease (27 percent), diagnosed diabetes (39 percent in 2009-2012), and cancer (17 percent). The comparable figures for all older persons were: hypertension (71 percent in 2009-2012), diagnosed arthritis (49 percent), all types of

heart disease (31 percent), diagnosed diabetes (21 percent in 2009-2012), and cancer (25 percent).

ACCESS TO MEDICAL CARE

In 2013, 34 percent of older African Americans had both Medicare and supplementary private health insurance and 11 percent were covered by both Medicare and Medicaid. In comparison, almost 50 percent of all older adults had both Medicare and supplementary private health insurance and 6 percent were covered by both Medicare and Medicaid. In 2011-2013, 4 percent of older non-Hispanic African Americans reported they had no usual source of health care compared with 4 percent of all older Americans.

PARTICIPATION IN OLDER AMERICANS ACT (OAA) PROGRAMS

In 2013, State and Area Agencies on Aging provided services to a total of 11.1 million persons aged 60 and older. Consistent with the targeting requirements of the OAA, state and area agencies on aging placed considerable emphasis on services to persons with the greatest social and economic need, including members of racial and ethnic minority groups, especially those who are poor. Among the older persons who received Title III OAA home and community-based registered services, 12 percent were African American.

Principal sources of data for this Profile are the most current information available from the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Health Statistics as of September 30, 2015.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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