2018 Massachusetts Healthy Aging Data Report
Older Adult Health in Every Community

Reporting on **179** health risk indicators in **379** communities

MASSACHUSETTS IS GETTING OLDER

15% About 15% of people in Massachusetts are **age 65+**, an increase of about 125,000 people since last report.
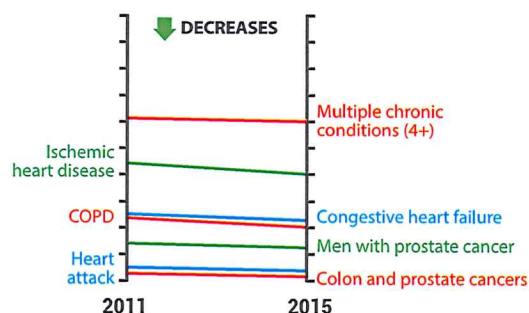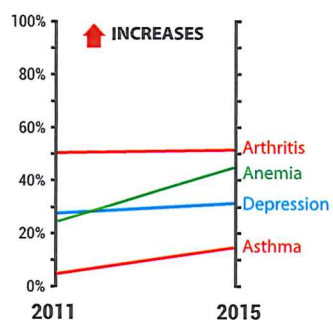
The older population in Massachusetts:
- Is more racially and ethnically **diverse**
- Has more **education**
- Has **higher incomes**, with more people earning $50K+
- Is **younger**, with more 65-74-year-olds

#7 Massachusetts is the 7th healthiest state for older people in the U.S., according to America's Health Rankings Senior Report. Still, there is room to improve!
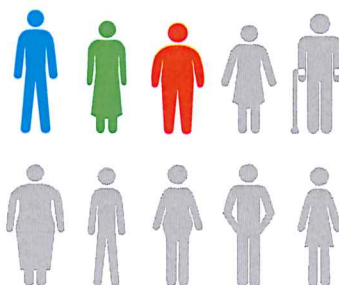
Health challenges are shifting

↑ INCREASES

- Arthritis
- Anemia
- Depression
- Asthma

↓ DECREASES

- Multiple chronic conditions (4+)
- Ischemic heart disease
- COPD
- Congestive heart failure
- Men with prostate cancer
- Heart attack
- Colon and prostate cancers

MENTAL HEALTH IS OVERLOOKED

Mental health is important at every stage of life. It includes **emotional, psychological, and social well-being**. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It influences how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.

6% of all Massachusetts residents 65+ years have some form of **substance use disorder**.

Rates vary widely across the state, from less than 4% to about 16%.

3 out of every 10

older residents have ever been diagnosed with **depression** – the most commonly diagnosed mental health issue among older people.

↑ Higher rates were found in communities with relatively high levels of serious and chronic disease, crime, and older people living alone.

↓ Lower rates were found in communities with higher percentages of older women of Asian descent.

WHERE YOU LIVE MATTERS

Many **rural communities** have higher percentages of people 65+ and limited access to care and transportation options.
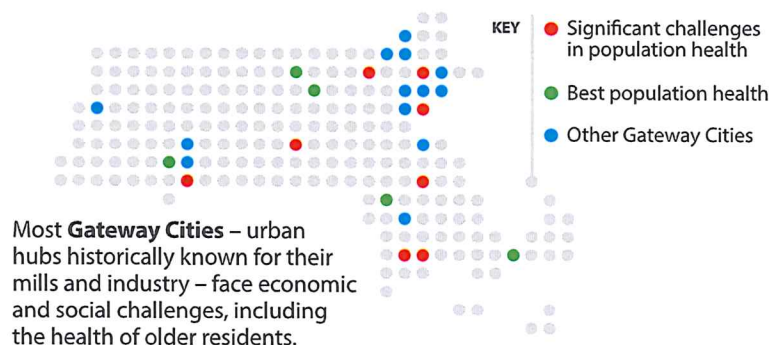
Most **Gateway Cities** – urban hubs historically known for their mills and industry – face economic and social challenges, including the health of older residents.

KEY
- ● Significant challenges in population health
- ● Best population health
- ● Other Gateway Cities

Serious chronic disease rates among older people are **lowest** in cities and towns where people have **more** education and **higher** incomes.

Serious chronic disease rates among older people are **highest** in cities and towns where people have **less** education and **lower** incomes.

BE A PART OF THE CHANGE

UNDERSTAND.
- Download your Community Profile at healthyagingdatareports.org
- Educate yourself and others about the older people who live in your city or town.
- Compare your city or town to state averages.

ENGAGE.
- Start a conversation.
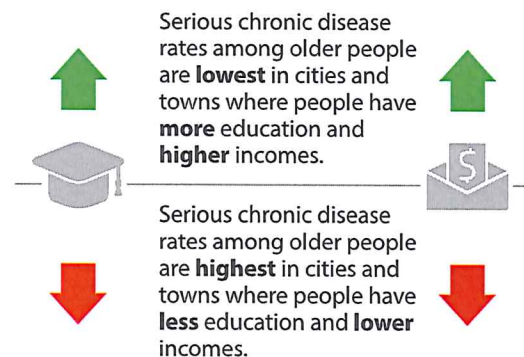- Bring older people, community organizations together.

ACT.
- Join the age-friendly movement.
- Prioritize community needs and resources.
- Collaborate with diverse partners and funders.

The 2015 data above reflect health for adults age 60+ or 65+ in Massachusetts.

Visit **healthyagingdatareports.org** for more.

TUFTS Health Plan

"We need to think differently about aging in Massachusetts. This isn't just about acknowledging a shift in demographics; it's about being intentional in our planning to ensure that those who grew up here, raised families and built communities, can continue to contribute their energy experience and talents where they live and make Massachusetts the most age-friendly state."

- Governor Charles D. Baker, 2018 -

A MOVEMENT, NOT A MOMENT

For the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, coordinating and aligning age-friendly into a statewide movement represents the natural progression of grassroots work that started over 10 years ago. The strength of the commitment to make the Commonwealth age-friendly comes from over a decade of foundational work laid by municipalities, philanthropic, and community-based organizations. In the Commonwealth, the pursuit of age-friendly is a **movement, not a moment**.

AN OPPORTUNITY - DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFT

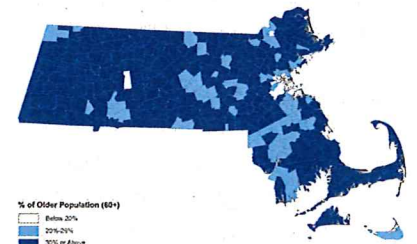Total Massachusetts population:
6,742,143
Population over the age of 60:
1,428,144
Percentage of population over the age of 60:
21.2%

Massachusetts now has more residents over the age of 60 than under the age of 20.

2035 Projections by Municipality

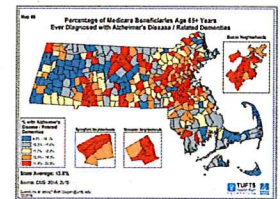Older Population (60+) in Massachusetts, by Town in 2035 Projection

% of Older Population (60+)
Below 20%
20%-29%
30% or Above

Source: Center for Social & Demographic Research on Aging, Gerontology Institute, UMass Boston. Based on data from the Donahue Institute, University of Massachusetts

Timeline: 10+ Years in the Making

2008: Tufts Health Plan Foundation founded with a focus on healthy aging

2012: Tufts Health Plan Foundation partners with UMass Boston to produce Healthy Aging Data Report and Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative is officially launched

2015: Age-Friendly MA Summit with 400 thought leaders

2017: AARP launches Community Challenge to fund local Age Friendly work

2017: Start of Age-Friendly Universities and Health Systems in MA

2017: Governor's Council to Address Aging in MA established under Executive Order 576

10+ Years in the Making

2011: First Memory Café in Massachusetts meets in Marlborough

2014: Dementia Friendly Massachusetts launched

2014: Three Massachusetts communities join Age-Friendly Network (AARP or WHO)

2015/2016: LGBT Aging Commission and Elder Economic Security Commission submit reports

2017: Governor Baker is the first Governor in MA to discuss aging in the State of the Commonwealth

2018: MA receives AARP Age-Friendly State Designation

Residents Living With Dementia

2016
138,268

2025
150,000

Percentage of Medicare Beneficiaries Age 65+ Years Ever Diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease / Related Dementias

MISSION

To **amplify**, **align and coordinate** local, regional and statewide efforts to create a **welcoming and livable Commonwealth** as residents grow up and grow older together.

VISION

Aging in Massachusetts is reimagined.
The Commonwealth is an accountable partner in supporting communities, embedding aging in all policies and empowering residents with opportunities to age meaningfully in the communities of their choice.
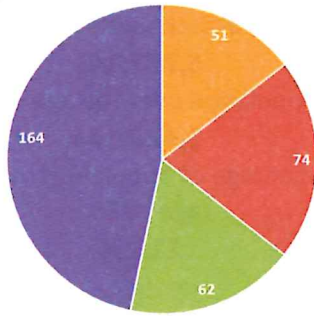
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COMMUNITY-LED AGE- AND DEMENTIA- FRIENDLY EFFORTS

Age-Friendly Communities
Status of the 351 Municipalities in MA
January 2019

■ Active ■ Emerging ■ Informed ■ Opportunity

51 Municipalities are Active Age-Friendly Communities

74 Municipalities are Emerging as Age-Friendly

138 Municipalities are Engaged in Dementia Friendly Activities

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PARTNERS AND INPUTS

Massachusetts is fortunate to have leaders in multiple sectors – housing, transportation, business, technology, healthcare, philanthropy, education, local government, and aging services – committed to the age-friendly mission.

The statewide age-friendly initiative will amplify and strengthen local and regional efforts through enhanced coordination and collaboration. There have been considerable inputs that have led to the creation of the mission, vision, values and goals of the statewide effort.

VALUES

- To **honor and build** on the priorities communities have already identified
- To **integrate initiatives and leverage existing work** where possible
- To emphasize **access, equity and inclusion** in all elements of assessment, planning and execution
- To **embed the voice and perspective of residents and communities** in all decisions and plans
- To **facilitate collaboration** at the state and community levels to identify barriers, address gaps and align resources
- To **share** data, information, resources and disseminate knowledge
- To encourage advocacy, policy and practices that **embed aging** within and across a broad range of issues and sectors
- To leverage **innovation and technology** where possible

GOALS

1. **Community** – Deepen and strengthen age- and dementia-friendly efforts to be inclusive of all communities and populations
2. **Information and Communication** – Communicate information in an accessible and user-friendly manner to residents, organizations, and municipalities
3. **Reframing** – Change the conversation about aging from a "challenge" to an "asset", increase literacy about issues related to aging, and eliminate ageist images and expressions in language and across social, print, and other media
4. **Policy and Practice** – Encourage the adoption of age-friendly policies and practices in all sectors
5. **Economic Security** – Take specific actions to improve economic security of older adults and caregivers
6. **Sustainability** – Leverage existing structures to sustainably guide and support the work of Age-Friendly Massachusetts and partner initiatives

https://www.mass.gov/lists/age-friendly-massachusetts-action-plan
Plan in Development – Subject to Further Review and Changes