State of Aging, Disability, and Family Caregiving in Westmoreland County

University of **Pittsburgh**

PREPARED BY

Scott R. Beach, PhD
University Center for Social and Urban Research

National Rehabilitation Research & Training Center on Family Support

Christopher Briem, MPA
Janet Schlarb, MS
University Center for Social and Urban Research

Everette James, JD, MBA
Meredith Hughes, JD, MPH
Health Policy Institute

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Executive Summary

Understanding the characteristics of Westmoreland County's aging residents and individuals with disabilities is critical to planning for a healthy and prosperous future for the country. While the broad demographics of the population being older with more prevalent disability than other U.S. counties is known, current detail on the perspectives of these individuals, their unmet needs, and socio-demographic and geographical disparities is lacking. Information on vulnerable sub-groups and key issues like housing, workforce participation, transportation, retirement savings, and access to healthcare and social supports is essential to informed program planning, policymaking, and resource allocation.

This report details findings from the 2023 State of Aging, Disability, and Family Caregiving in Westmoreland County project, funded by the Richard King Mellon Foundation. The study was conducted by the University Center for Social & Urban Research (UCSUR) and Health Policy Institute (HPI) at the University of Pittsburgh in partnership with various local organizations. Collaborating stakeholders include Westmoreland County Area Agency on Aging, PA Senate Majority Leader Kim Ward, AARP, Westmoreland County Transit Authority, Westmoreland Chamber of Commerce, Westmoreland Food Bank, The Provider Alliance, UPMC Senior Services, Laurel Faith in Action, Excela Health, Westmoreland County Industrial Development Corporation, and the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg.

The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive analysis of aging, disability, and family caregiving in Westmoreland County. To this end, we use survey data collected from a sample of older County residents and secondary data available from Federal, State, and County agencies to characterize older individuals on multiple dimensions, many of which are related to social determinants of health.
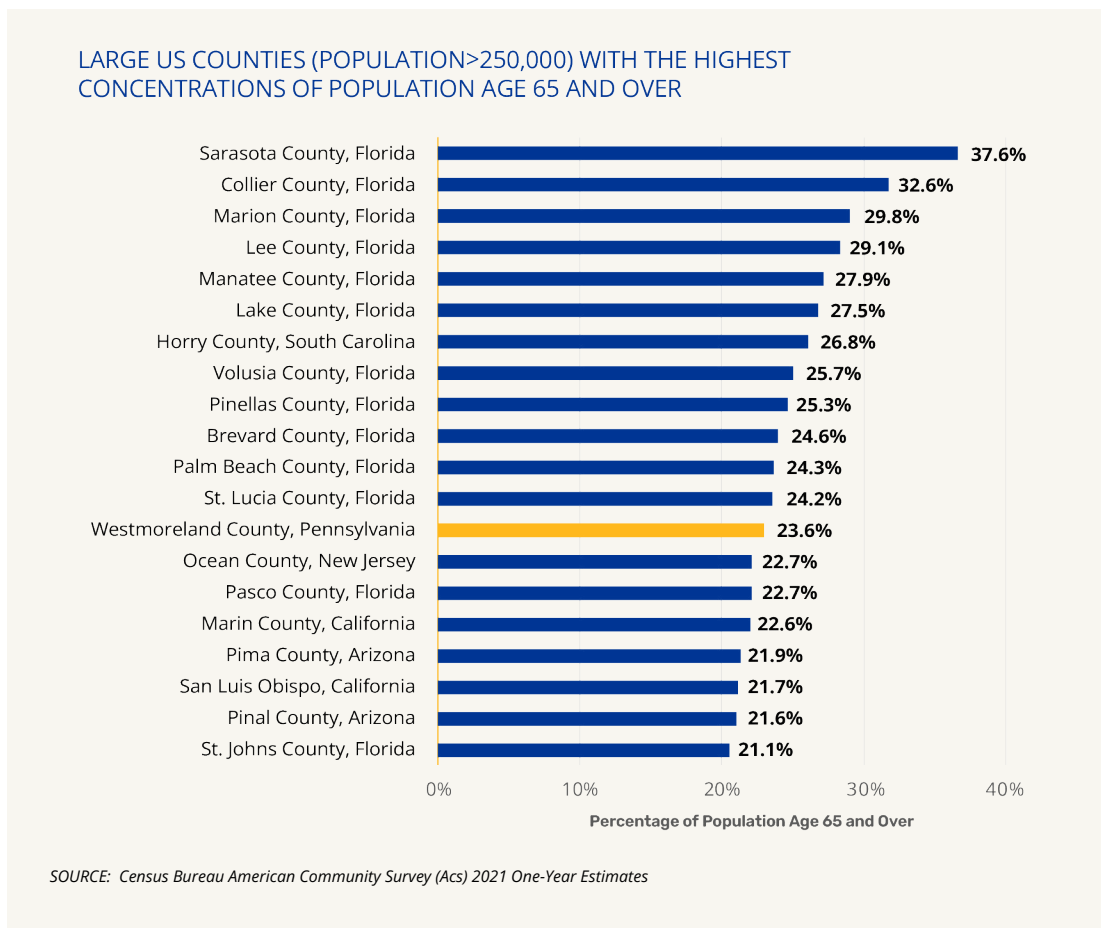
These include demographic change and population projections, income and poverty, work and retirement, neighborhoods and housing, transportation, physical health, health care access, health behaviors, mental health, social support/health, elder mistreatment, senior service use, and internet and technology use, among others. In a companion supplemental report, we characterize the "age-friendliness" of Westmoreland County neighborhoods using World Health Organization-developed criteria in the domains of outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing, social participation and inclusion, and neighborhood community and social services. We use Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping and analysis to integrate age-friendliness with selected survey findings. We hope that county residents, program developers, researchers, and policymakers will find the 2023 State of Aging, Disability, and Family Caregiving in Westmoreland County and the companion Age Friendly Community Index for Westmoreland County reports valuable data resources to inform future planning for the well-being of the county.

Contents

Westmoreland County's Older Population Today

As of 2020, an estimated 23.6% of the population of Westmoreland County is age 65 or over. Past economic and demographic trends have contributed to giving Westmoreland County one of the highest concentrations of older residents among large counties in the United States. Today, Westmoreland County has the highest concentration of older adults among all large counties – counties with populations greater than 250,000 – in the United States outside of either Florida or Horry County, SC, home to Myrtle Beach.

LARGE US COUNTIES (POPULATION>250,000) WITH THE HIGHEST CONCENTRATIONS OF POPULATION AGE 65 AND OVER

County	Percentage
Sarasota County, Florida	37.6%
Collier County, Florida	32.6%
Marion County, Florida	29.8%
Lee County, Florida	29.1%
Manatee County, Florida	27.9%
Lake County, Florida	27.5%
Horry County, South Carolina	26.8%
Volusia County, Florida	25.7%
Pinellas County, Florida	25.3%
Brevard County, Florida	24.6%
Palm Beach County, Florida	24.3%
St. Lucia County, Florida	24.2%
Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania	23.6%
Ocean County, New Jersey	22.7%
Pasco County, Florida	22.7%
Marin County, California	22.6%
Pima County, Arizona	21.9%
San Luis Obispo, California	21.7%
Pinal County, Arizona	21.6%
St. Johns County, Florida	21.1%

Percentage of Population Age 65 and Over

SOURCE: Census Bureau American Community Survey (Acs) 2021 One-Year Estimates

Unlike retirement destinations, communities across southwestern Pennsylvania attract little migration of older adults and the high concentrations of older residents in local communities reflect populations that have aged in place in their current communities, in many cases in the same home, for decades.

While many counties and communities across Western Pennsylvania have higher than typical concentrations of older adults, Westmoreland County today has one of the oldest populations across the region.

The size and characteristics of Westmoreland County's older population will continue to change. Westmoreland County's future population continues to be impacted by past regional trends, but will also be impacted by national trends, including the aging of the Baby Boom generation, lower fertility levels, and potentially lower levels of international immigration in coming years.

Here a snapshot of Westmoreland County's older population is presented across a range of demographic and economic metrics. These metrics are presented in comparison to the current demographics of the United States and the population of the remaining six counties of the Pittsburgh Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) – currently defined as the seven counties of southwestern Pennsylvania.
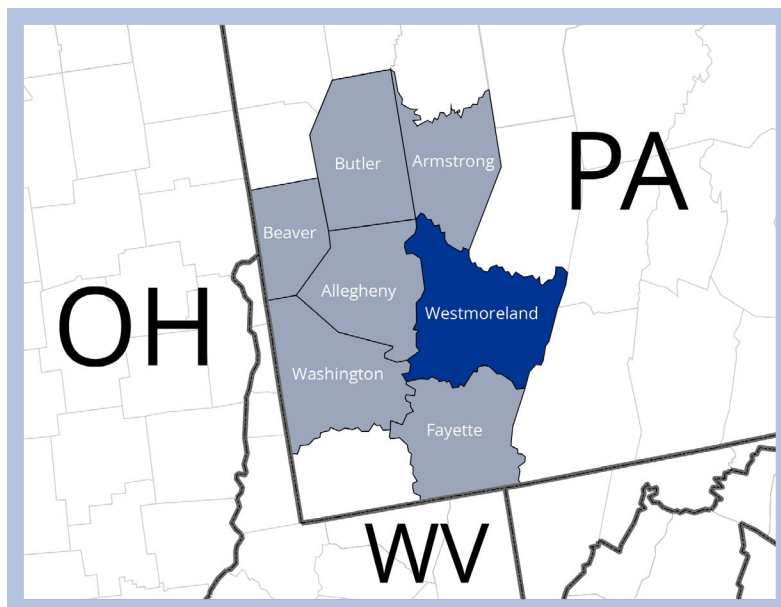
POPULATION AGE 65 AND OVER, SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COUNTIES

	Total Population	Population Age 65 and Over	Percent
Allegheny	1,250,578	242,860	19.4%
Armstrong	65,558	14,956	22.8%
Beaver	168,215	37,264	22.2%
Butler	193,763	38,675	20.0%
Fayette	128,804	28,939	22.5%
Greene	35,954	7,264	20.2%
Indiana	83,246	17,207	20.7%
Lawrence	86,070	19,555	22.7%
Washington	209,349	45,236	21.6%
Westmoreland	**354,663**	**83,673**	**23.6%**

SOURCE: 2020 Decennial Census

In addition, UCSUR has developed a baseline forecast of Westmoreland County's projected population. This forecast highlights key demographic shifts that are expected in the county through the year 2050. The summary of this forecast is presented later in this report. Detailed population forecasts by age, race, and gender are included as an Appendix, and a detailed technical document on the development of the forecast is available as a separate document.

PITTSBURGH METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA (MSA)

Population Trends Shaping Westmoreland County

Westmoreland County, along with much of southwestern Pennsylvania, experienced a period of rapid deindustrialization that culminated in the 1980s. The concentrated loss of regional jobs precipitated the out-migration of workers and population loss that impacted all counties across the region. Most who relocated to other regions were younger workers, while older workers and those already retired were more likely to remain. These younger workers took their families and their future families with them, shifting the demographic trends of nearly all local communities.

As a result, the concentration of older adults in Westmoreland County dramatically increased through the 1980s. By the early 1990s, the percentage of the population age 65 and over was significantly above comparable levels for the nation and has remained so through the subsequent three decades.

Beginning in the 1990s, aging and demographic trends for Westmoreland County have diverged from comparable trends across the Pittsburgh Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Prior to the 1990s, the concentration of older adults in Westmoreland County was similar to or lower than the comparable concentration of older adults across the Pittsburgh region. Through the 1990s and into the first decade of this century, the number and concentration of older adults residing in Westmoreland County has grown faster than trends in the remainder of the Pittsburgh region.

Over the most recent decade, Westmoreland County has been impacted by these regional trends, but also by the aging of the large baby boom generation, which has resulted in a higher and growing concentration of older adults across the nation.

PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION AGE 65 AND OVER — 1970 TO 2020
Westmoreland County, the Remainder of the Pittsburgh MSA, and the United States
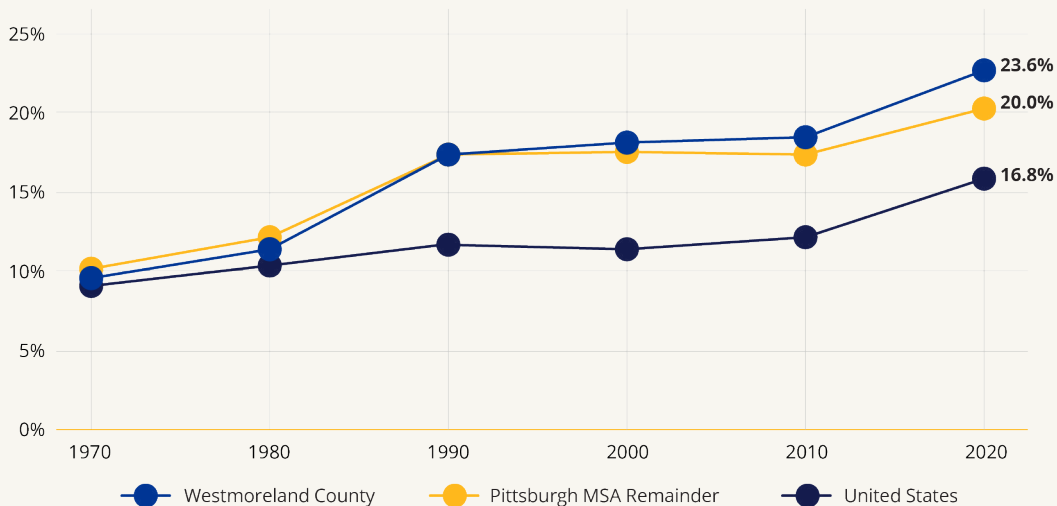
SOURCE: Decennial Census, Various Years

Recently released data from the 2020 Decennial Census shows that a total of 141,314 Westmoreland County residents are age 55 or over, or just under 40% of the county's total population. A total of 83,673 county residents are age 65 and over, or 23.6% of the county's total population. A total of 10,799, or 3% of the county's population were among the older-old, or those age 85 and over.

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE OLDER POPULATION
Westmoreland County, the remainder of the Pittsurgh MSA, and the United States (2020)

	WESTMORELAND COUNTY		REMAINDER OF THE PITTSBURGH MSA		UNITED STATES	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under 55	213,349	60.2%	1,312,356	65.1%	232,248,372	70.1%
Age 55-64	57,641	16.3%	295,981	14.7%	43,408,408	13.1%
Age 65 and over	83,673	23.6%	407,930	20.2%	55,792,501	16.8%
Age 65-74	48,233	13.6%	236,466	11.7%	33,111,965	10.0%
Age 75-84	24,651	7.0%	116,705	5.8%	16,344,101	4.9%
Age 85+	10,799	3.0%	54,759	2.7%	6,336,435	1.9%
Total	**354,663**		**2,016,267**		**331,449,281**	

SOURCE: 2020 Decennial Census

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE OLDER POPULATION
Westmoreland County, the remainder of the Pittsburgh MSA, and the United States (2020)
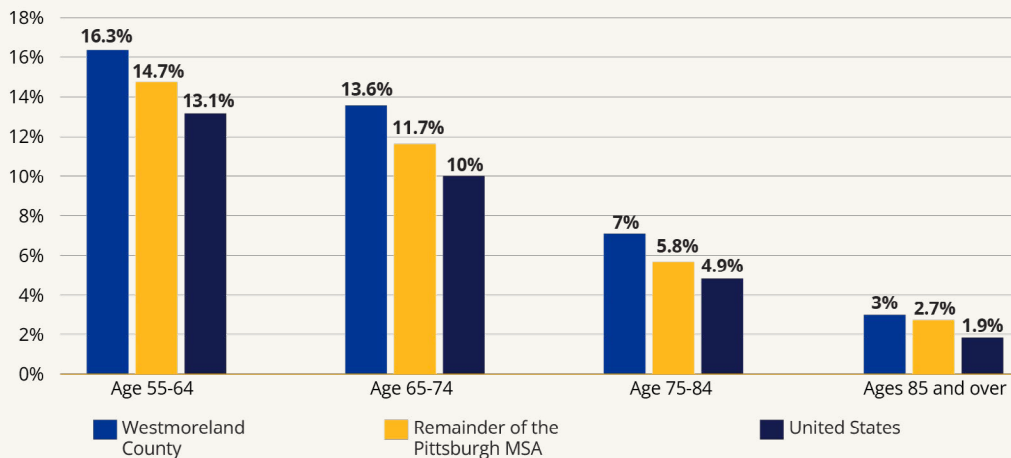
SOURCE: 2020 Decennial Census

Aging in Westmoreland County Communitites

The concentration of older adults varies significantly across Westmoreland County, but aging impacts all local communities. The proportion of the population age 65 and over today ranges from a low of 14.3% in Manor Borough to over 37.7% in Laurel Mountain Borough. Population aging is currently impacting nearly all communities within Westmoreland County. Only Trafford Borough – a borough that partially spans both Allegheny and Westmoreland Counties – did not experience an increase in the proportion of the population age 65 and over between 2010 and 2020. Over this decade, Cook Township experienced the greatest increase in the concentration of older adults, jumping from 16.4% to over 29% of the population being age 65 or over.
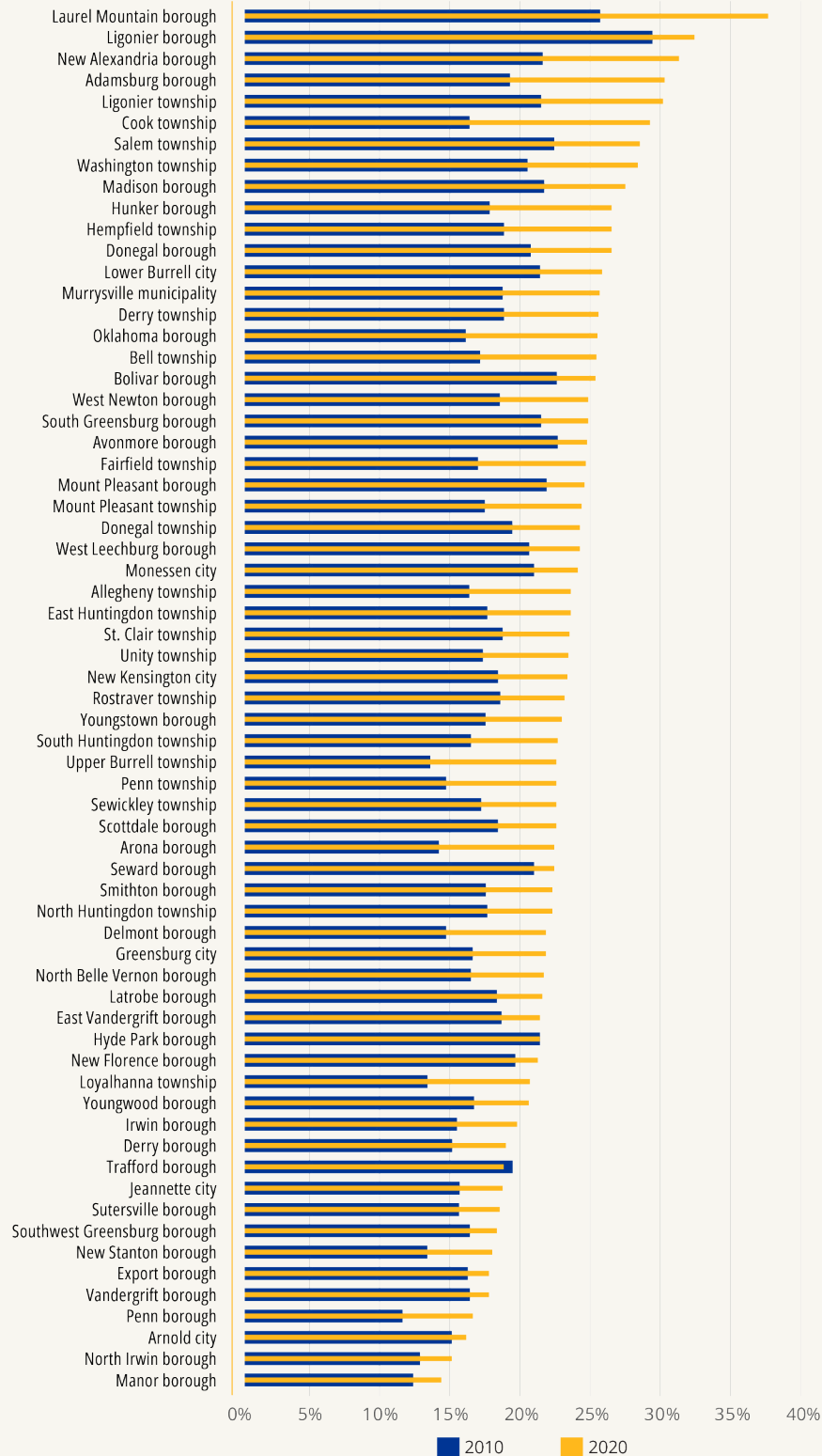
WESTMORELAND COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES RANKED BY PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION AGE 65 AND OVER (2020)

	Total	Age 65+	Percent		Total	Age 65 +	Percent
Laurel Mountain borough	146	55	37.7%	Youngstown borough	252	58	23.0%
Ligonier borough	1,513	492	32.5%	South Huntingdon township	5,418	1,232	22.7%
New Alexandria borough	501	157	31.3%	Sewickley township	5,647	1,279	22.6%
Adamsburg borough	142	43	30.3%	Upper Burrell township	2,164	490	22.6%
Ligonier township	6,056	1,820	30.1%	Penn township	20,079	4,544	22.6%
Cook township	1,896	553	29.2%	Scottdale borough	4,430	1,002	22.6%
Salem township	6,093	1,734	28.5%	Seward borough	411	92	22.4%
Washington township	6,883	1,949	28.3%	Arona borough	255	57	22.4%
Madison borough	364	100	27.5%	Smithton borough	351	78	22.2%
Hempfield township	41,466	11,002	26.5%	North Huntingdon township	31,880	7,084	22.2%
Donegal borough	102	27	26.5%	Greensburg city	14,976	3,287	21.9%
Hunker borough	310	82	26.5%	Delmont borough	2,596	569	21.9%
Lower Burrell city	11,758	3,044	25.9%	North Belle Vernon borough	1,873	408	21.8%
Murrysville municipality	21,006	5,390	25.7%	Latrobe borough	8,060	1,744	21.6%
Derry township	13,631	3,485	25.6%	East Vandergrift borough	602	129	21.4%
Oklahoma borough	788	201	25.5%	Hyde Park borough	509	109	21.4%
Bell township	2,080	528	25.4%	New Florence borough	671	143	21.3%
Bolivar borough	435	110	25.3%	Loyalhanna township	2,088	434	20.8%
South Greensburg borough	2,135	532	24.9%	Youngwood borough	2,975	614	20.6%
West Newton borough	2,665	663	24.9%	Irwin borough	3,902	776	19.9%
Avonmore borough	900	223	24.8%	Derry borough	2,639	501	19.0%
Fairfield township	2,046	505	24.7%	Trafford borough	3,227	609	18.9%
Mount Pleasant borough	4,245	1,043	24.6%	Jeannette city	8,780	1,654	18.8%
Mount Pleasant township	10,119	2,455	24.3%	Sutersville borough	561	104	18.5%
West Leechburg borough	1,269	307	24.2%	Southwest Greensburg	2,219	404	18.2%
Donegal township	2,192	530	24.2%	New Stanton borough	2,339	422	18.0%
Monessen city	6,876	1,656	24.1%	Export borough	894	159	17.8%
East Huntingdon township	7,721	1,823	23.6%	Vandergrift borough	5,075	901	17.8%
Allegheny township	8,328	1,962	23.6%	Penn borough	435	72	16.6%
St. Clair township	1,340	315	23.5%	Arnold city	4,772	768	16.1%
Unity township	21,606	5,063	23.4%	North Irwin borough	823	124	15.1%
New Kensington city	12,170	2,838	23.3%	Manor borough	3,585	512	14.3%
Rostraver township	11,393	2,627	23.1%				

SOURCE: 2020 Decennial Census

CHANGE IN PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION AGE 65 AND OVER
Westmoreland County Municipalities, 2010-2020

Laurel Mountain borough
Ligonier borough
New Alexandria borough
Adamsburg borough
Ligonier township
Cook township
Salem township
Washington township
Madison borough
Hunker borough
Hempfield township
Donegal borough
Lower Burrell city
Murrysville municipality
Derry township
Oklahoma borough
Bell township
Bolivar borough
West Newton borough
South Greensburg borough
Avonmore borough
Fairfield township
Mount Pleasant borough
Mount Pleasant township
Donegal township
West Leechburg borough
Monessen city
Allegheny township
East Huntingdon township
St. Clair township
Unity township
New Kensington city
Rostraver township
Youngstown borough
South Huntingdon township
Upper Burrell township
Penn township
Sewickley township
Scottdale borough
Arona borough
Seward borough
Smithton borough
North Huntingdon township
Delmont borough
Greensburg city
North Belle Vernon borough
Latrobe borough
East Vandergrift borough
Hyde Park borough
New Florence borough
Loyalhanna township
Youngwood borough
Irwin borough
Derry borough
Trafford borough
Jeannette city
Sutersville borough
Southwest Greensburg borough
New Stanton borough
Export borough
Vandergrift borough
Penn borough
Arnold city
North Irwin borough
Manor borough

0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25% 30% 35% 40%

■ 2010 ■ 2020

SOURCE: 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census

Household Structure and Living Arrangements

As of 2020, within the 152,000 households of Westmoreland County, 58,867 households (38.5%) include individuals age 65 years or over, a higher percentage than for the United States (31.3%) or for the remainder of the Pittsburgh MSA (33.6%). Of the households that include individuals age 65 and over, 23,246 of these are situations in which a householder is living alone.

Among Westmoreland County's population age 65 and over, the vast majority (92.3%) live in households as either the householder – the person in whose name the home is owned, being bought, or rented – or as the spouse of the householder.

PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH INDIVIDUALS AGE 65 OR OVER
Westmoreland County, the remainder of the Pittsburgh MSA, and the United States (2020)
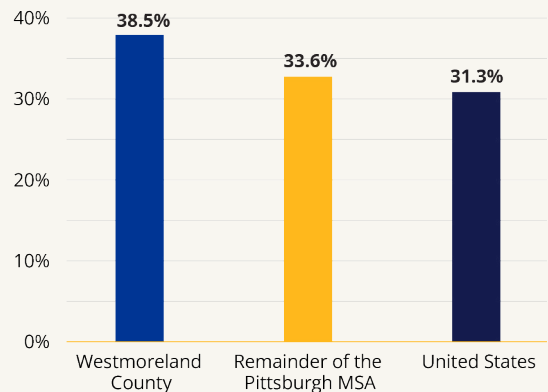
Nearly 3% of the county's population age 65 and over live in households where an older parent or parent-in-law is the householder. 2.7% live in institutionalized or non-institutionalized group quarters.

RELATIONSHIP BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE, POPULATION AGE 65 AND OVER
Westmoreland County, the remainder of the Pittsurgh MSA, and the United States (2020)

	WESTMORELAND COUNTY		REMAINDER OF THE PITTSBURGH MSA		UNITED STATES	
	Number	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Total Population 65+	**83,673**		**407,930**		**55,792,501**	
In Households	81,405	97.3%	393,309	96.4%	54,008,176	96.8%
Householder	53,718	64.2%	265,415	65.1%	34,406,112	61.7%
Living Alone	23,260	27.8%	123,400	30.3%	14,118,074	25.3%
Not Living Alone	30,458	36.4%	142,015	34.8%	20,288,038	36.4%
Spouse or Partner	23,563	28.2%	104,448	25.6%	14,390,308	25.8%
Partner or Parent-in-law	2,476	3.0%	14,099	3.5%	3,334,832	6.0%
Other Relatives	266	0.3%	1,728	0.4%	474,805	0.9%
Other Nonrelatives	637	0.8%	3,232	0.8%	746,117	1.3%
In Group Quarters	2,268	2.7%	14,621	3.6%	1,784,325	3.2%

SOURCE: 2020 Decennial Census

SOURCE: 2020 Decennial Census

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS BY SELECTED HOUSEHOLD TYPE, POPULATION AGE 65 AND OVER
Westmoreland County, the remainder of the Pittsburgh MSA, and the United States (2021)

Living Alone
- Westmoreland County: 27.8%
- Remainder of the Pittsburgh MSA: 30.3%
- United States: 25.3%

Living With Parent or Parent-in-Law
- Westmoreland County: 3.0%
- Remainder of the Pittsburgh MSA: 3.5%
- United States: 6.0%

In Group Quarters
- Westmoreland County: 2.7%
- Remainder of the Pittsburgh MSA: 3.6%
- United States: 3.2%

Legend:
- Westmoreland County
- Remainder of the Pittsburgh MSA
- United States
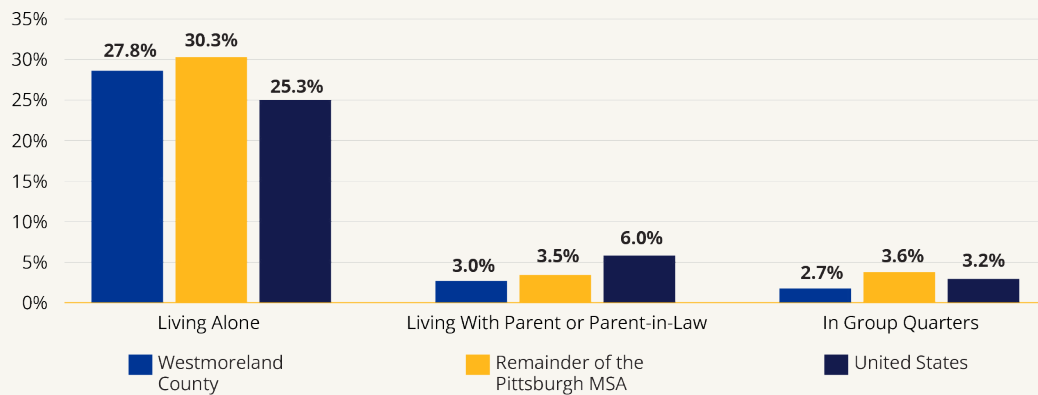
SOURCE: 2020 Decennial Census

Disability Prevalence in the Older Population

As is typical across the nation, disability rates are significantly higher for older adults in Westmoreland County compared to younger age groups. The Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) asks respondents to report whether they experience any of six different types of disability. Over 24,735, or 31.4%, of Westmoreland County's population age 65 and over report at least one form of disability.

For the older-old population, disability prevalence continues to increase with just 46.6% of the population age 75 and over in Westmoreland County reporting some form of disability. Compared to the U.S., adults under 65 in Westmoreland County are slightly more likely to report a disability. While further study is needed, this differential could indicate the need for greater supports across the lifespan for younger individuals with disabilities.

Across the six types of disabilities, for both Westmoreland County and the U.S., older residents are most likely to report having some form of ambulatory difficulty – defined as a serious difficulty with walking or climbing stairs. An estimated 11.7% of Westmoreland County residents age 65-74 self-report having ambulatory difficulties, rising to over 29.7% of residents aged 75 and over.

CENSUS BUREAU DISABILITY DEFINITIONS

- **Hearing difficulty:** deaf or has serious difficulty hearing
- **Vision difficulty:** blind or has serious difficulty seeing, even with glasses
- **Cognitive difficulty:** has serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- **Ambulatory difficulty:** has serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs
- **Self-care difficulty:** has difficulty dressing or bathing
- **Independent Living difficulty:** has difficulty doing errands alone, such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping

DISABILITY PREVALENCE BY AGE GROUP AND GENDER
Westmoreland County and the United States (2017-2021)

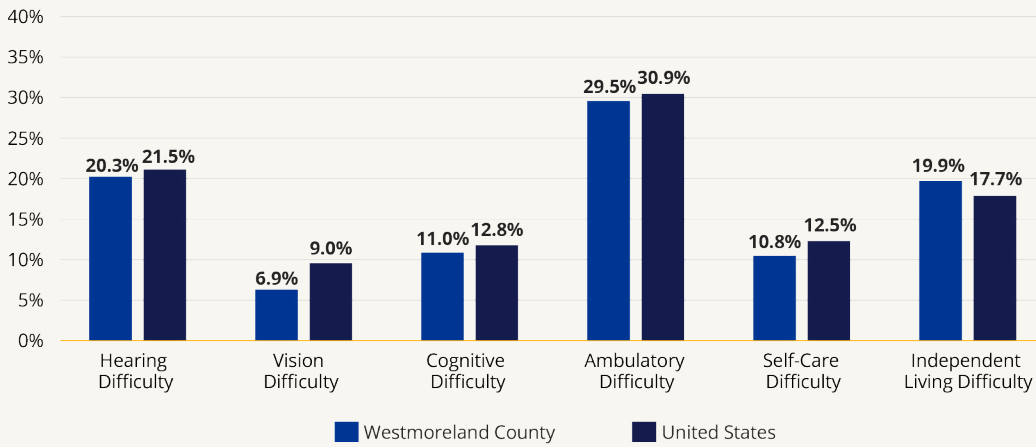|	WESTMORELAND COUNTY			UNITED STATES		
	Total	With Any Disability	Percent	Total	With Any Disability	Percent
Male						
Under age 65	138,015	14,893	10.8%	136,261,891	12,245,947	9.0%
Age 65 and over	35,461	10,748	30.3%	23,322,048	7,738,693	33.2%
Age 65-74	22,141	4,769	21.5%	14,703,506	3,767,157	25.6%
Age 75 and over	13,320	5,979	44.9%	8,618,542	3,971,536	46.1%
Female						
Under age 65	135,172	14,113	10.4%	136,850,948	11,562,460	8.4%
Age 65 and over	43,296	13,987	32.3%	28,383,678	9,508,392	33.5%
Age 65-74	24,093	4,825	20.0%	16,557,058	3,782,013	22.8%
Age 75 and over	19,203	9,162	47.7%	11,826,620	5,726,379	48.4%
Total						
Under age 65	273,187	29,006	10.6%	273,112,839	23,808,407	8.7%
Age 65 and over	78,757	24,735	31.4%	51,705,726	17,247,085	33.4%
Age 65-74	46,234	9,594	20.8%	31,260,564	7,549,170	24.1%
Age 75 and over	32,523	15,141	46.6%	20,445,162	9,697,915	47.4%

SOURCE: American Community Survey 5-year (2017-2021) Estimates

DISABILITY PREVALENCE BY TYPE OF DISABILITY IN THE OLDER POPULATION
Westmoreland County and the United States (2017-2021)

AGES 65-74
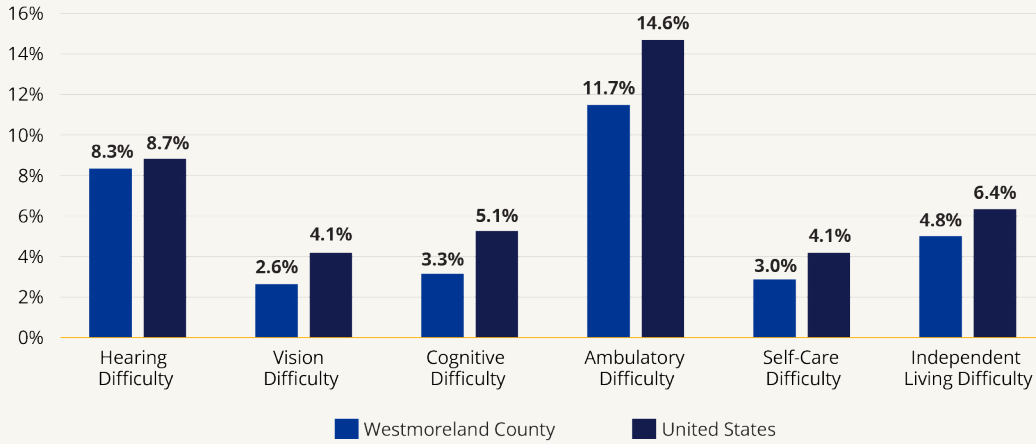
AGES 75 AND OVER

SOURCE: American Community Survey 5-year (2017-2021) Estimates

Migration and Residential Mobility

As is typical across the nation, older residents in Westmoreland County experience low rates of migration and typically are living in the same communities they have lived in for extended periods of time. Just under 96% of Westmoreland County residents age 65 and over live in the same home they resided in the previous year. Just over 5% of Westmoreland County residents age 65 and over lived in a different house the year prior, but most of those who moved into a new place of residence previously lived elsewhere within the county.

Westmoreland County also experiences extremely low levels of in-migration of older adults. Just 1.4% of the county's residents age 65 and over lived outside of Pennsylvania in the prior year.

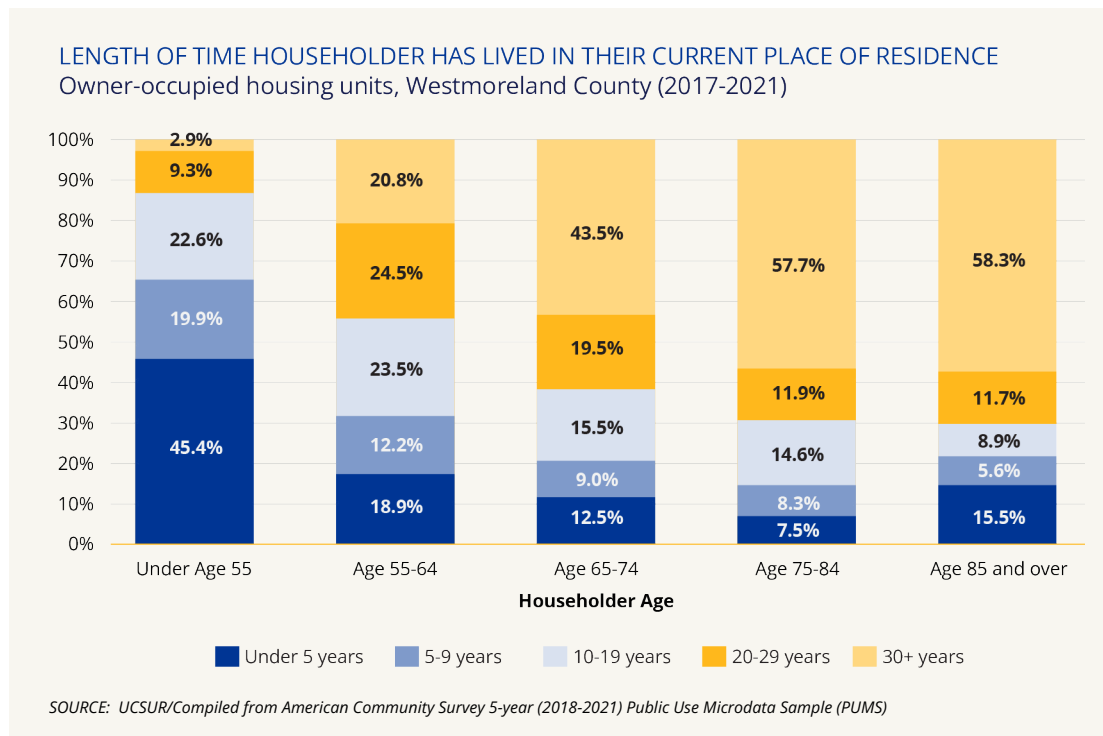## PLACE OF RESIDENCE ONE-YEAR PRIOR FOR CURRENT RESIDENTS
Westmoreland County, the remainder of the Pittsburgh MSA, and the United States (2017-2021)

	WESTMORELAND COUNTY	REMAINDER OF PITTSBURGH MSA	UNITED STATES
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Same house one year prior			
Under age 55	88.8%	84.1%	83.8%
Age 55-64	95.9%	94.7%	93.9%
Age 65 and over	96.5%	95.5%	94.1%
Age 65-75	95.1%	93.6%	93.5%
Age 75 and over	88.8%	84.1%	83.8%
Moved from elsewhere within same country			
Under age 55	6.2%	9.5%	8.9%
Age 55-64	2.5%	3.7%	3.3%
Age 65 and over	2.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Age 65-75	3.3%	4.6%	3.7%
Age 75 and over	6.2%	9.5%	8.9%
Moved from another country within same state			
Under age 55	37%	3.1%	3.9%
Age 55-64	0.9%	0.9%	1.3%
Age 65 and over	0.9%	0.7%	1.3%
Age 65-75	0.9%	1.2%	1.4%
Age 75 and over	3.7%	3.1%	3.9%
Moved from outside current state (includes overseas)			
Under age 55	1.3%	3.2%	3.4%
Age 55-64	0.6%	0.6%	1.4%
Age 65 and over	0.5%	0.8%	1.6%
Age 65-75	0.7%	0.4%	1.1%
Age 75 and over	1.3%	3.2%	3.4%

SOURCE: American Community Survey 5-year (2017-2021) Estimates

Older homeowners, particularly in Westmoreland County, have typically lived in their current place of residence for many decades. Of householders age 55-64 living in owner-occupied housing units, over 45% have lived in their current place of residence for 20 or more years, and 20.9% have lived in their current home for 30 or more years.

Older-old homeowners are even more likely to have been living in their current home for extended periods of time. Over 69% of homeowners age 75-84 have been living in their current place of residence for 20 or more years, while over 57% have been living in their current place of residence for 30 years or longer.

LENGTH OF TIME HOUSEHOLDER HAS LIVED IN THEIR CURRENT PLACE OF RESIDENCE
Owner-occupied housing units, Westmoreland County (2017-2021)

	Under Age 55	Age 55-64	Age 65-74	Age 75-84	Age 85 and over
30+ years	2.9%	20.8%	43.5%	57.7%	58.3%
20-29 years	9.3%	24.5%	19.5%	11.9%	11.7%
10-19 years	22.6%	23.5%	15.5%	14.6%	8.9%
5-9 years	19.9%	12.2%	9.0%	8.3%	5.6%
Under 5 years	45.4%	18.9%	12.5%	7.5%	15.5%

Householder Age

Legend: ■ Under 5 years ■ 5-9 years ■ 10-19 years ■ 20-29 years ■ 30+ years

SOURCE: UCSUR/Compiled from American Community Survey 5-year (2018-2021) Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS)

Workforce and Economy

Older workers are playing an increasing role in the labor force of southwestern Pennsylvania just as they are across the nation. Nationally, older adults make up the fastest growing segments of the labor force due to the aging of the large Baby Boom era population cohort, along with increasing labor force participation rates for older workers.

Between 2011 and 2021 – a period when the total number of workers employed in Westmoreland County declined by just under 1% – the number of workers age 65 and over increased by over 3,182, an increase of over 45%. Over this same period, the number of workers age 55-65 increased by 1,577 (+7.1%). The increase in older workers stands in contrast to a decline of over 6,658 workers age 35-54 (-12.7%), and only a modest increase of 579 (+0.9%) workers age 18-24 over the same period. As the workforce in Westmoreland County contracts and ages, investment in policies to support and retain aging workers, such as educational resources and job placement programs, can help to ensure that essential positions remain filled.

CHANGE IN NUMBER OF WAGE AND SALARY WORKERS BY AGE GROUP, WESTMORELAND COUNTY 2011-2021
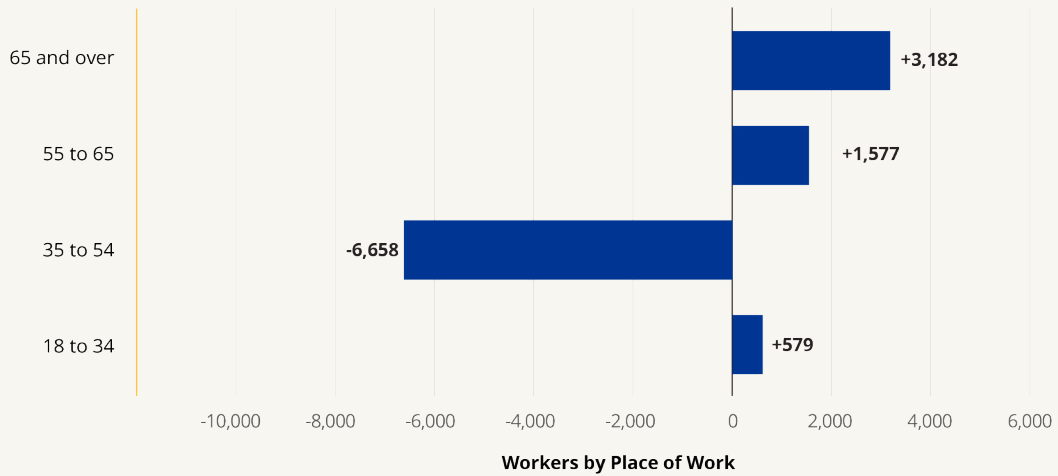
SOURCE: Census Bureau LEHD, Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI)

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 ended what had been a multi-decade period of annual increases in the number of employed workers age 65 and over. Between 1998 and 2019, the number of older wage and salary workers in Westmoreland County increased annually. Health impacts caused by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, along with increased levels of retirement from the workforce, are among the reasons that the increase in older workers was arrested in 2020 and only increased modestly in 2021. The ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the workforce are continuing to evolve, and there is already some evidence that older workers have begun to return to the workforce.

WAGE AND SALARY WORKERS AGE 65 AND OVER, WESTMORELAND COUNTY Q3 OF 1998-2022
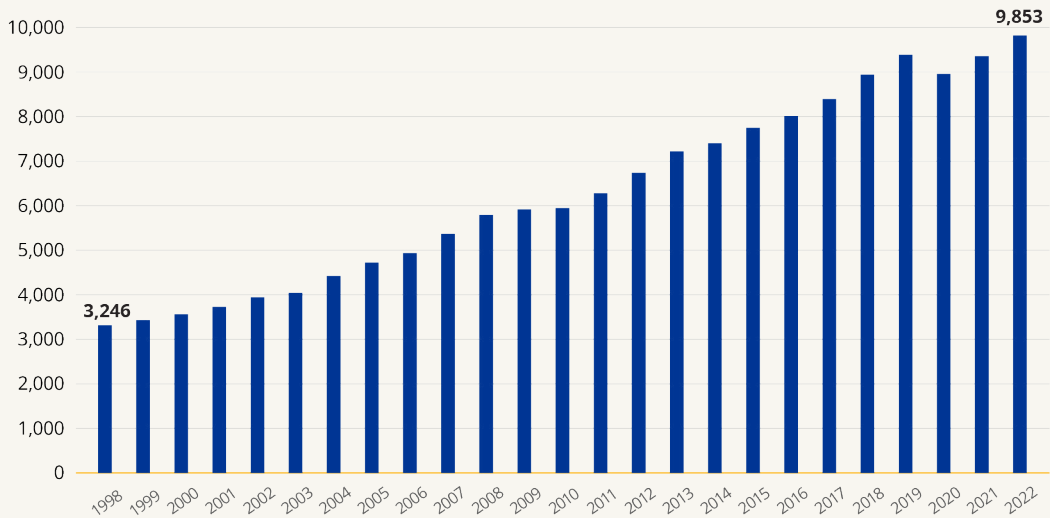
SOURCE: Census Bureau LEHD, Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI)

Poverty

Poverty rates are an important measure of economic well-being, and being poor has implications for all other aspects of life. Poverty rates are based on a set of income thresholds that vary for individuals and for families of different sizes based on the number of adults and child dependents and are adjusted annually for inflation using data from the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U).

Over the 2017-2021 period, an estimated 7.7% of Westmoreland County residents age 65 and over were living in poverty, significantly less than the poverty rate for older adults nationally (9.6%). Poverty rates for older residents in Westmoreland County have declined significantly over the last fifty years and have generally tracked below comparable rates for the U.S.

POVERTY STATUS OF THE POPULATION AGE 65 AND OVER 1969
Westmoreland County and the United States
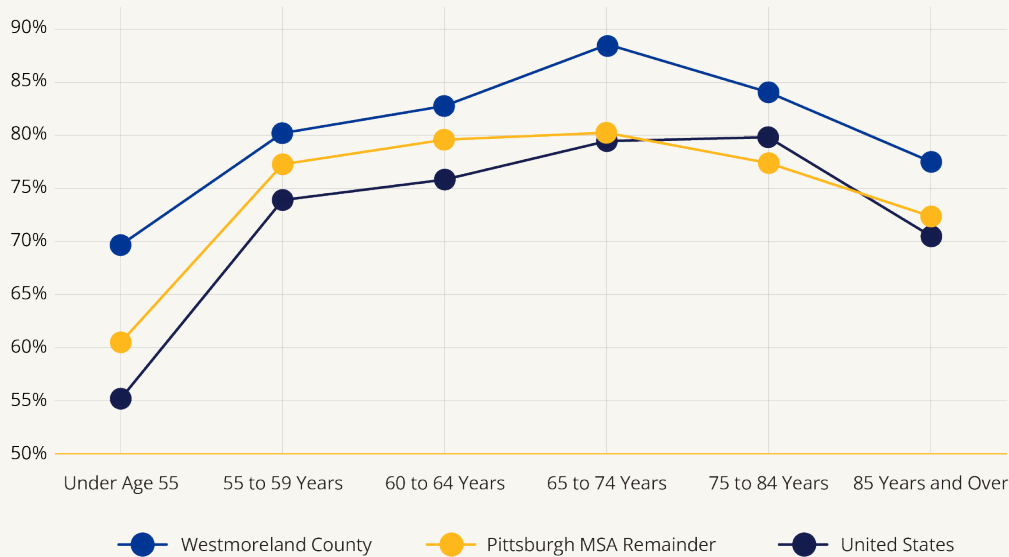

Legend: ● Westmoreland County ● United States
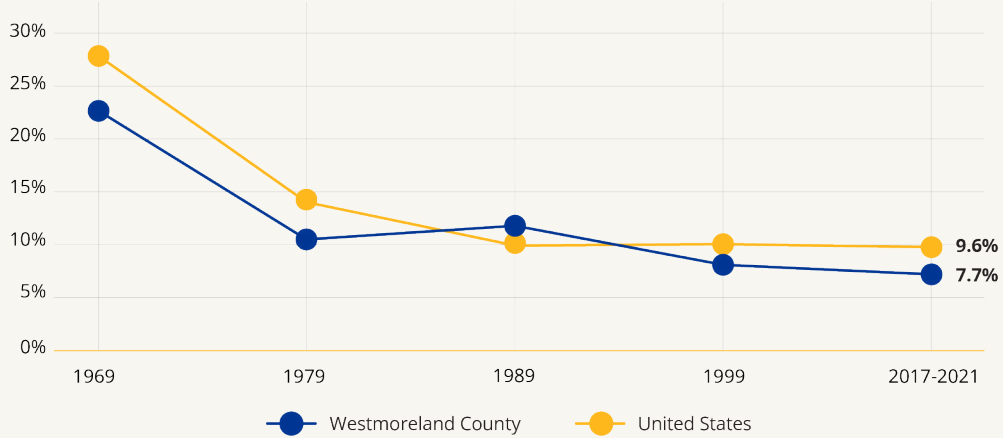
Source: 1969, 1979, 1989 1999 Data From Decennial Census 1970, 1980, 1990, And 2000, Respectively. 2017-2021 Data From U. S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Note: Poverty Status Is Calculated For The Population For Whom Poverty Status Is Determined. Poverty Thresholds Are The Dollar Amounts Of Pre-Tax Income Used To Determine The Poverty Status Of Individuals And Families. Poverty Thresholds Are Set Annually And Vary For Individuals Living Alone And For Families Of Different Sizes Based On Number Of Adult And Child Dependents. Also, Families With At Least One Person Age 65 Or Over Have A Modified Poverty Threshold. For 2021, A Single Person Age 65 Or Over Living Alone Is Considered Living In Poverty If Their Pre-Tax Income Falls Below $12,996. For A Single Person Under Age 65, The Comparable Poverty Threshold Is $14,097.

Housing

Homeownership typically increases with age and likewise older householders in Westmoreland County are far more likely to own their current homes compared to younger residents. The younger-old population is most likely to be living in owner-occupied housing, with over 87% of Westmoreland County householders age 65-74 currently living in homes they own, significantly higher than for residents elsewhere within the Pittsburgh MSA (80.6%) or across the United States (79.4%).

PERCENT OF OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS THAT ARE OWNER-OCCUPIED BY HOUSEHOLDER AGE
Westmoreland County, the remainder of the Pittsburgh MSA, and the United States (2021)

SOURCE: American Community Survey 1-year (2021) Estimates

PERCENT OF OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS THAT ARE OWNER-OCCUPIED BY AGE GROUP
Westmoreland County, the remainder of the Pittsburgh MSA, and the United States (2021)

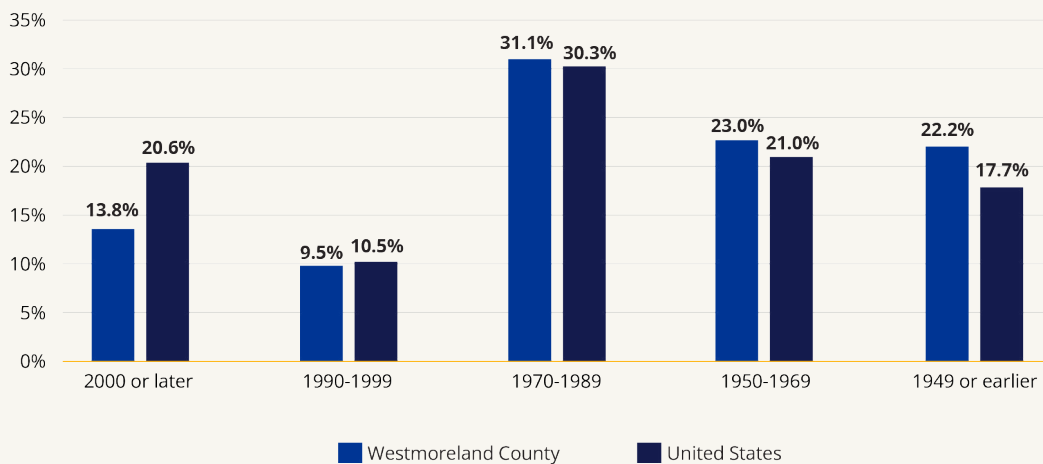|	WESTMORELAND COUNTY	REMAINDER OF PITTSBURGH MSA	UNITED STATES
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Householder under age 55	69.9%	61.8%	55.2%
Householder age 55-59	80.8%	77.7%	74.3%
Householder age 60-64	83.4%	79.5%	76.5%
Householder age 65-74	87.4%	80.6%	79.4%
Householder age 75-84	84.3%	77.4%	79.7%
Householder age 85 and over	77.1%	73.7%	71.8%

SOURCE: American Community Survey 1-year (2021) Estimates

The older housing stock of the Pittsburgh region, along with the long tenure of many residents in their current homes, means that most of Westmoreland County's older residents are living in homes that are older than is typical elsewhere in the U.S. Among Westmoreland County householders age 65 and over who own their homes, over 22% live in homes that were built prior to 1950, or over seven decades ago – compared to under 18% of older householders nationally. Over 45% of older Westmoreland County homeowners live in homes that were built prior to 1970, or over five decades ago.

Just 13.8% of older homeowners in Westmoreland County live in homes built since 2000, compared to 20.6% nationally.

YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT OF OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING, HOUSEHOLDERS AGE 65 AND OVER
Westmoreland County and the United States (2021)

	2000 or later	1990-1999	1970-1989	1950-1969	1949 or earlier
Westmoreland County	13.8%	9.5%	31.1%	23.0%	22.2%
United States	20.6%	10.5%	30.3%	21.0%	17.7%

■ Westmoreland County ■ United States

SOURCE: American Community Survey 1-year (2021) Estimates

Summary of Key Survey Findings

This section presents key survey findings by topic area, including comparisons to Pennsylvania and the U.S. as a whole where available and appropriate. UCSUR conducted the 2023 Survey of Older Adults in Westmoreland County between January and April 2023. The target population was non-institutionalized English-speaking adults age 55 and older living in Westmoreland County. A total of 423 adults age 55 and older in the county completed telephone surveys lasting approximately 60 minutes. The sample for the survey came from three sources. First, we used the UCSUR research registry, which consists of approximately 8,000 local residents who have agreed to be contacted for surveys and research studies. We also surveyed older adults using randomly selected cellular and landline telephone numbers from the County likely to reach older adults. Third, in collaboration with our local project partners, we distributed study flyers in Area Agency on Aging newsletters, to constituents of Senator Ward, and at local agencies and community centers serving older adults. The flyers and distribution lists resulted in calls to an 800 number to set up telephone survey appointments. Of the 423 completed surveys, 121 (29%) were from the UCSUR registry, 188 (44%) were from the random community calls, and 114 (27%) were from the flyer distributions. The sample included 118 older adults with disabilities (defined below), and 121 family caregivers age 55 and older (also defined below). The survey estimates presented in this report are weighted using sex, education level, and age by employment status to match Westmoreland County population figures for the 55 and older population (2021 American Community Survey 1-year estimates). Survey respondents ranged in age from 55 to 98.

Survey analyses in this report focus on descriptive statistics to provide overall estimates for the population of adults age 55 and over in Westmoreland County. In addition, results are broken down by socio-demographic characteristics, including sex, age (55-64, 65-74, 75 and older), education (high school or less, some college, bachelor's degree or higher), and household income (<$25K, $25K-50K, $50K-75K, $75K-100K, $100K or more). Survey variables are also examined by whether the older adult lives alone, disability status, and family caregiving status. We also compare responses between older adults living in urban (n = 302) versus rural (n = 107) areas of the county, using geocoded cross-street information collected at the end of the survey. Urban / rural status was determined by overlaying survey respondent locations onto "Urban Area" boundaries from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission. We focus on sub-groups most at risk (i.e., scoring significantly higher / lower) and key survey indicators to potentially target policy and interventions.

Given their importance as sub-groups in this project, there are expanded analyses of the older adults with disabilities and family caregiver populations. Three factors were used to define "disability" in this report: (1) report needing the help of other persons with personal care activities (eating, bathing, dressing, toileting, mobility); (2) report needing the help of other persons with routine home activities (shopping, laundry, housework, money management, taking medications, transportation outside the home); and (3) report "a lot of difficulty," or "cannot do at all" on any of the following (World Health Organization Washington Group measure): seeing, even if wearing glasses; hearing, even if using a hearing aid; walking or climbing steps; remembering or concentrating; self-care such as washing all over or dressing; and communicating, understanding, or being understood. Individuals with disabilities were respondents meeting any of the three criteria. "Family caregivers" were defined as those answering yes to the following question (caregiver screener from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System [BRFSS] caregiver module): During the past 30 days, did you provide regular care or assistance to a friend or family member who has a health problem or disability? Note that "family caregiving" is broadly defined to include care for individuals with health problems or disabilities of all ages, including non-relatives. While we assume that the majority of the caregivers are unpaid, some may be receiving compensation for their efforts, but this was not a focus of this study.
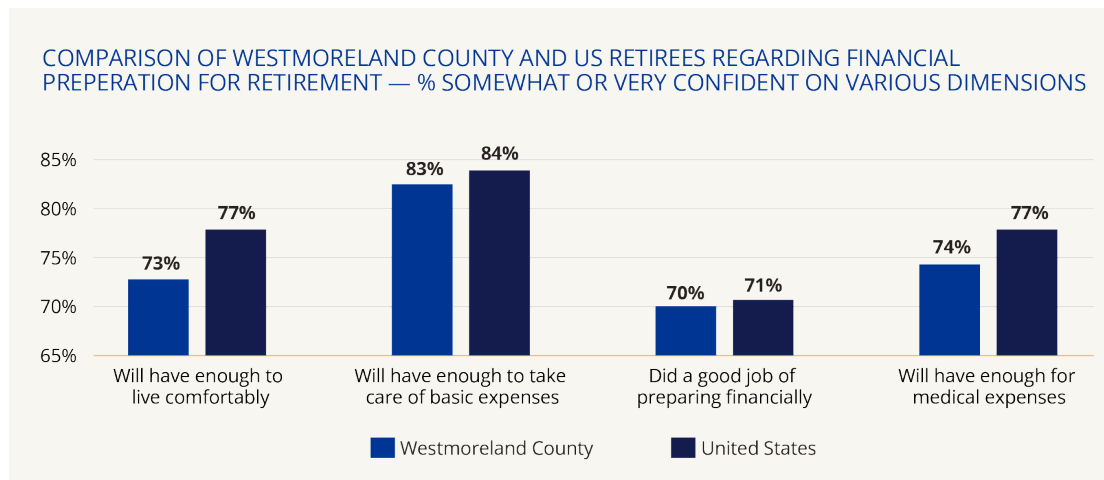
Work and Retirement

Over one in three older adults reported currently working (37%), slightly more than half are retired, and 9% have disabilities and are unable to work. The oldest (75+) and those with the lowest incomes were least likely to report working, and 17% of those with disabilities reported being employed.

Current retiree median retirement age was 63 and 51% retired earlier than planned, both similar to comparison U.S. data. Low income, age 55-64, and persons with disabilities were all more likely to have retired earlier than planned. Workplace health and employment support programs should consider targeting these populations for support. Additionally, about half of retired older adults are "very satisfied" with retirement, with another 41% "moderately satisfied." Persons with disabilities and those with the lowest incomes were least likely to report being "very satisfied" in retirement.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THOSE
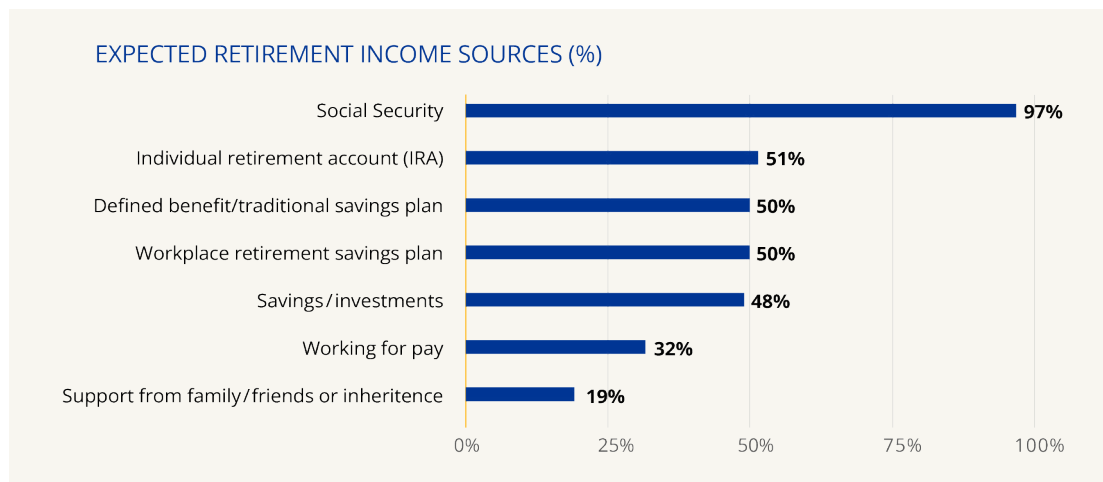LEAST LIKELY TO BE CURRENTLY EMPLOYED (P<.05)
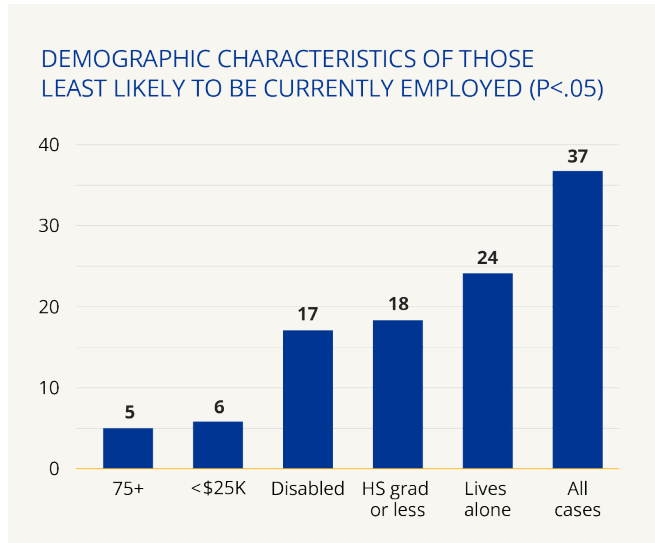
Retirement Confidence

Local older adult retirees reported slightly lower retirement confidence than a comparison national sample. Confidence among older adults in Westmoreland County (and the U.S.) is high for covering basic expenses but declines for medical expenses. Approximately 30 percent of older adults in Westmoreland County do not feel they did a good job of preparing financially for retirement, and over 25 percent do not believe they will have enough to live comfortably, indicating a vulnerable subgroup of financially insecure older adults. As health and long-term care needs increase over time, this subgroup may face challenges in covering expenses such as long-term care.

COMPARISON OF WESTMORELAND COUNTY AND US RETIREES REGARDING FINANCIAL
PREPERATION FOR RETIREMENT — % SOMEWHAT OR VERY CONFIDENT ON VARIOUS DIMENSIONS

Retirement Income Sources

Nearly all the respondents (97%) expected Social Security to be a key source of retirement income, and 66% are currently receiving Social Security income. Other sources of retirement income include individual retirement accounts (IRA; 51%), defined benefit pension plans (50%), workplace retirement savings plans (50%), and personal savings and investments (48%). About 32% expected to work during retirement. About 13% of respondents reported that Social Security will be their sole retirement income source, but this figure is much higher for low-income older adults (49%). More than half of older adults in Westmoreland County do not expect to obtain retirement income from savings or investments. Older adults relying exclusively on Social Security payments for retirement income are a financially vulnerable group who are likely to have limited ability to cover unexpected medical or long-term care expenses, such as personal assistance or nursing facility care. The local services and support infrastructure in Westmoreland County, including aging services, is key to meeting these needs.

EXPECTED RETIREMENT INCOME SOURCES (%)

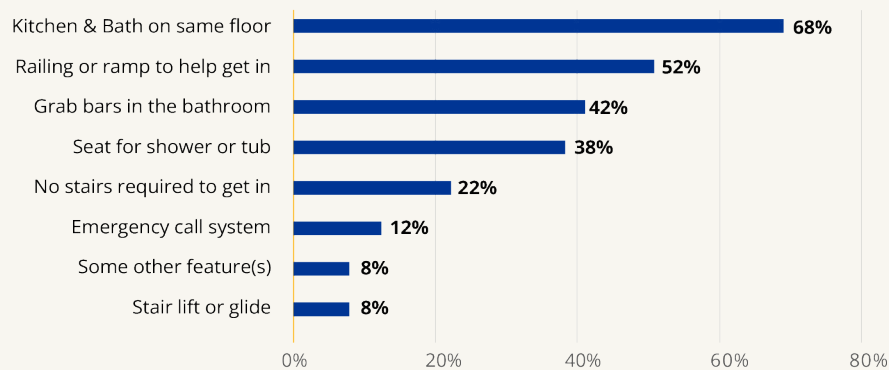|	
Social Security	97%
Individual retirement account (IRA)	51%
Defined benefit/traditional savings plan	50%
Workplace retirement savings plan	50%
Savings / investments	48%
Working for pay	32%
Support from family / friends or inheritence	19%

Housing / Living Arrangements

While 43% of the survey respondents reported living alone, this figure was somewhat higher than found by the recent Census. Among those living with others, the majority (73%) lived with a single person, usually a spouse. In addition, 31% reported living with children; 14% had children under the age of 18 living in their household; and 8% were living with a grandchild. More than eight in ten reported owning their home, and more than half have lived at their current residence for 20 years or longer. In terms of the physical aspects of older adult housing that make it difficult for older adults, 78% of homes have steps or stairs required to enter, 40% are two stories, and 47% are three or more stories. However, 52% already have some type of ramps or railings to help get into the house; and 68% contain a kitchen and bath on the same floor. One-fourth (25%) plan to make future home modifications to make it easier for older adults or those with disabilities and 34% of current family caregivers plan to make future home modifications. About six in ten (63%) older adults say they are "very satisfied" with their current housing situation. Only about 14% say they are planning to move from the region in the future; the most common reason (42%) for the planned move is better weather/climate. More than 8 in 10 of those planning to move think it is "very important" (61%) or "somewhat important" (25%) to have a house that is designed or modified to accommodate older adults or those with disabilities. Nearly half of the housing stock in Westmoreland County was constructed prior to the 1970s. Common features, such as multiple

floors and stairway entries can create significant barriers to housing options for individuals with disabilities and impede aging in place. While the modifications required to successfully age in place depend on the needs and preferences of the individual, data indicates that many homes may still lack necessary accessibility modifications, such as ramps and railings or stair glides. With approximately 1 in 4 older adults and 1 in 3 family caregivers planning to make modifications in the future and many older adults aging in place for decades in the same residence, exploring strategies to physically adapt homes could be an important mechanism to meet the needs of Westmoreland County's aging population. As noted in the Age-Friendly Community Index supplement report, housing affordability and age are not uniformly distributed across the County, so solutions will need to be adapted depending on the locality.
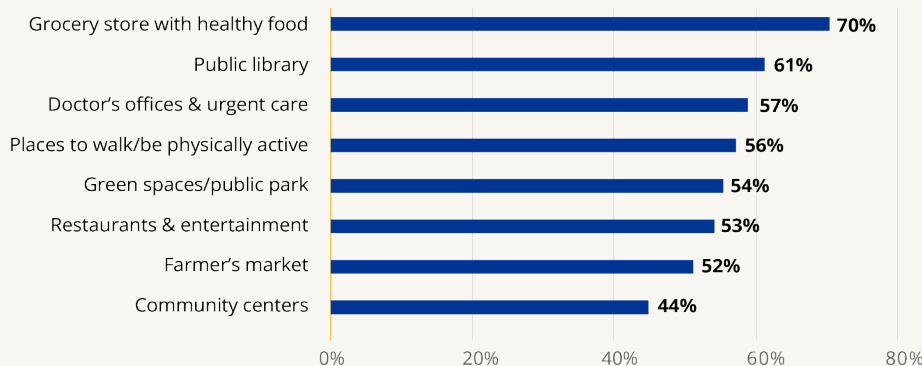
HOME FEATURES THAT MAKE IT EASIER FOR OLDER ADULTS OR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO LIVE THERE (%)

Feature	%
Kitchen & Bath on same floor	68%
Railing or ramp to help get in	52%
Grab bars in the bathroom	42%
Seat for shower or tub	38%
No stairs required to get in	22%
Emergency call system	12%
Some other feature(s)	8%
Stair lift or glide	8%

Neighborhood

About 9 in 10 older adults said that the condition of homes and buildings in their neighborhood is "excellent" (20%), "very good" (47%), or "good" (23%). In terms of feeling safe in their neighborhood, 72% report feeling "very safe," and another 24% report feeling "somewhat safe," with females (64%) and those with less education (68%) the least likely to report feeling "very safe." Access to
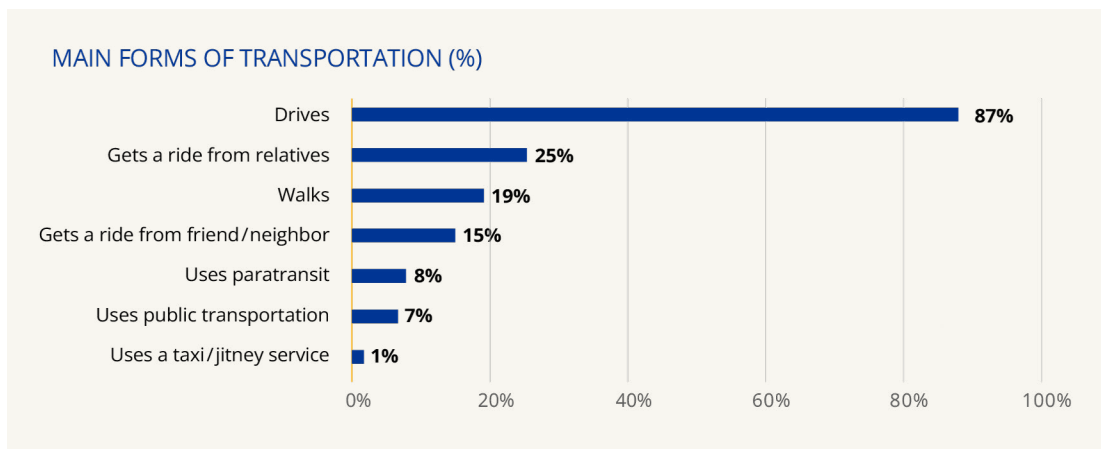
RESIDENTIAL LOCATION PROVIDES VERY GOOD OR EXCELLENT ACCESS TO VARIOUS AMENITIES (%)

Amenity	%
Grocery store with healthy food	70%
Public library	61%
Doctor's offices & urgent care	57%
Places to walk/be physically active	56%
Green spaces/public park	54%
Restaurants & entertainment	53%
Farmer's market	52%
Community centers	44%

amenities like grocery stores, green spaces, public libraries, etc. was fairly high. However, those with disabilities and those with the least education were less likely to report good access to these amenities, as were rural residents. Although neighborhood social cohesion was perceived to be high, there were education and income gradients where progressively higher income / education households perceived increasing social neighborhood cohesion. Persons with disabilities rated neighborhood social cohesion as lowest. While investments in modifications can have a positive impact on the accessibility of housing, addressing the distribution of housing will likely require a combination of interventions and sustained investments in fair housing practices. A majority of Westmoreland County residents do not have easy access to community centers, indicating a potential missed opportunity for socialization and community participation. While a majority of residents report access to green spaces, parks, and places to be physically active, access is variable across the County. Strategies to target enhanced transportation to resolve these barriers could help improve access to community centers and other amenities.
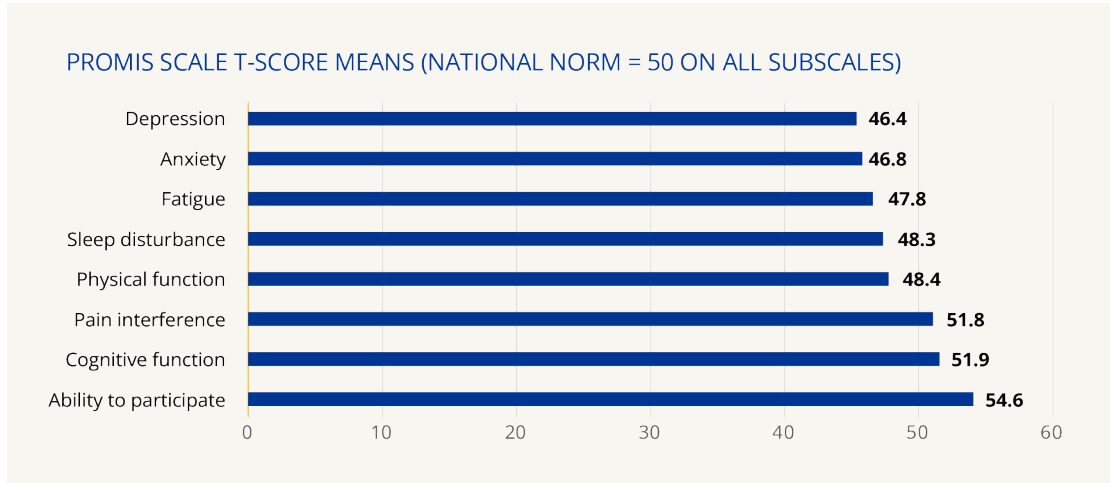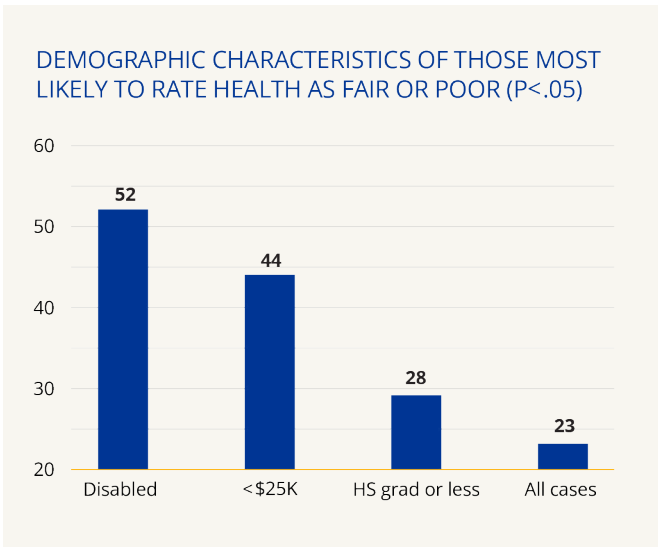
Transportation

When respondents were asked to list the main forms of transportation they use, 87% said they drive themselves; 25% get rides from relatives (49% of the those with disabilities); 19% walk; and only 7% use public transportation. Among those who are employed, 95% report driving themselves as the main transportation to work; only 3% report using public transportation. Use of public transportation at least sometimes was reported by 13% of older Westmoreland County adults and is highest among those with the lowest incomes (32%), and those age 55-64 (19%). In addition, only

MAIN FORMS OF TRANSPORTATION (%)

Form	%
Drives	87%
Gets a ride from relatives	25%
Walks	19%
Gets a ride from friend / neighbor	15%
Uses paratransit	8%
Uses public transportation	7%
Uses a taxi / jitney service	1%

8% reported using GO Westmoreland or paratransit as a main form of transportation, with rates highest for those with the lowest incomes (20%), persons with disabilities (15%), and those who live alone (13%). Walking as a form of transportation among older adults is much more common than the use of public transportation. Walkability is a significant factor in healthy aging, as it promotes physical activity and access to key amenities, as well as opportunities for socialization. As noted in the Age-Friendly Community Index supplement report, walkability is concentrated in highly populated areas, and more rural areas tend to have worse access to public transportation. With such a high proportion of older adults relying primarily on driving for transportation, having alternatives such as public transit and accessible walking paths available uniformly across the County will be important to ensure continuous access to transportation over time.
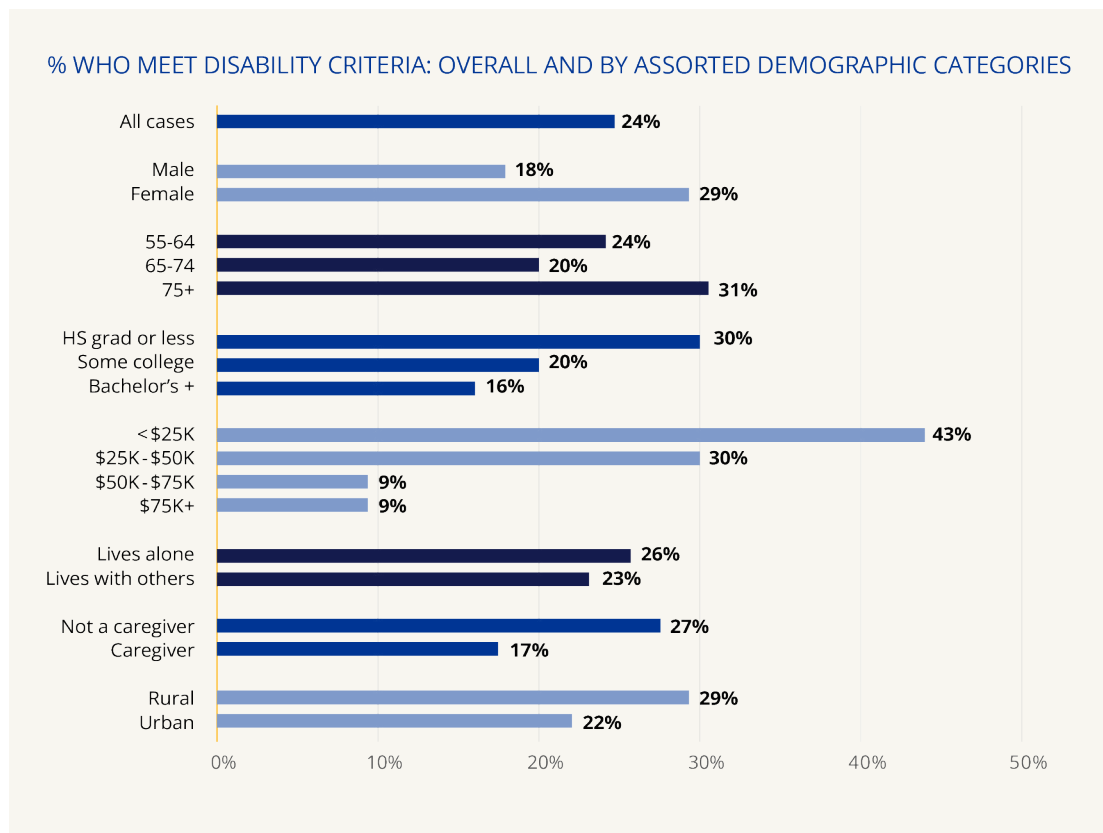
Physical and Mental Health

Over three-fourths of older adults report that their general health is "excellent" (11%), "very good" (37%), or "good" (29%), while 18% rate their general health as "fair" and 5% as "poor." Those with disabilities, those with the lowest incomes, and the least educated were more likely to rate their health as fair or poor. The most commonly reported chronic health conditions were arthritis (57%) and high blood pressure (55%), diabetes (27%), asthma (26%), and cancer (25%). A little less than one in four older adults report four or more chronic conditions, with the highest rate for those with disabilities, those with the lowest income, and rural residents. More Westmoreland County older adults reported having diabetes than those from the U.S. and the state of PA as a whole (27% vs. 21% vs. 19%). Using nationally normed measures (for those 18 and older) from the Patient-Reported Outcomes Measurement and Information System (PROMIS), older adults in Westmoreland County scored lower on physical function and higher on pain interference. Interestingly, local older adults scored lower than the national norm on depression, anxiety, sleep disturbance, and fatigue; and scored higher on cognitive function and ability to participate in social roles. Exploring strategies such as enhanced transportation to facilitate continued access to opportunities for social participation could help to maintain these strengths among the older adult population. Persons with disabilities scored lowest on all these measures, consistently worse than national norms. In addition, older adults with the lowest incomes and females consistently scored worse across physical health indicators.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THOSE MOST LIKELY TO RATE HEALTH AS FAIR OR POOR (P<.05)

Disabled	52
<$25K	44
HS grad or less	28
All cases	23

PROMIS SCALE T-SCORE MEANS (NATIONAL NORM = 50 ON ALL SUBSCALES)

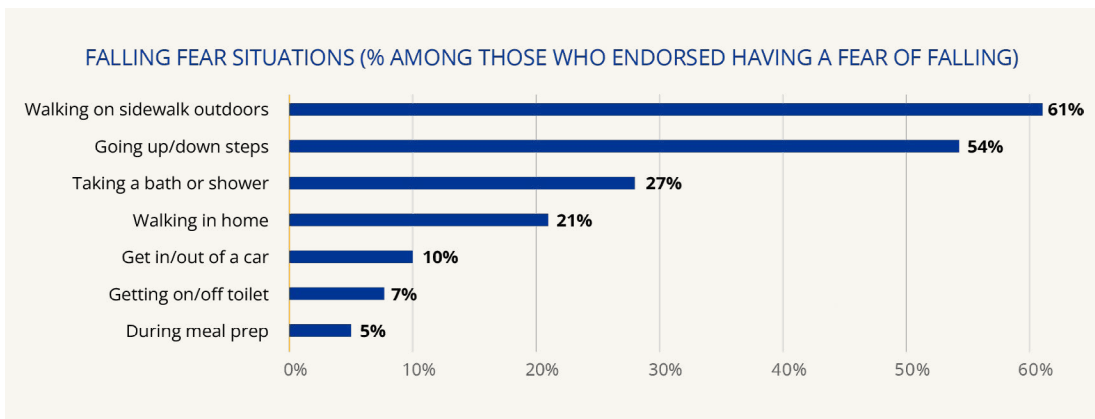|	
Depression	46.4
Anxiety	46.8
Fatigue	47.8
Sleep disturbance	48.3
Physical function	48.4
Pain interference	51.8
Cognitive function	51.9
Ability to participate	54.6

Functional Status and Disability

About one in four (24%) older adults in Westmoreland County reported a disability based on our criteria. Those with incomes of $25K or less, females, and those with the least education were more likely to meet overall disability criteria. Older adults living in rural areas also reported somewhat higher levels of disability. In addition, 18% met the criteria for "pre-clinical" disability (change in the way personal care activities are completed, or doing personal care activities less frequently). Targeting this pre-clinical population with education and resources may help to encourage access to low-cost devices or home modifications that could help to enhance safety and maintain independence as older adults' functional abilities change over time. A little under one in five (18%) reported using assistive devices. 55% of those with disabilities use an assistive device. More than one-third (36%) of older adults experienced a fall or unintentionally slipped, tripped, stumbled, or lost their balance in the past 12 months, and 44% of those who fell experienced an injury as a result of the fall, representing 16% of the overall population. Fifty three percent of those with disabilities experienced a fall in the past 12 months, and 32% were injured as a result. Nearly one in four (24%) expressed a fear of falling (including 60% of those with disabilities).

% WHO MEET DISABILITY CRITERIA: OVERALL AND BY ASSORTED DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORIES

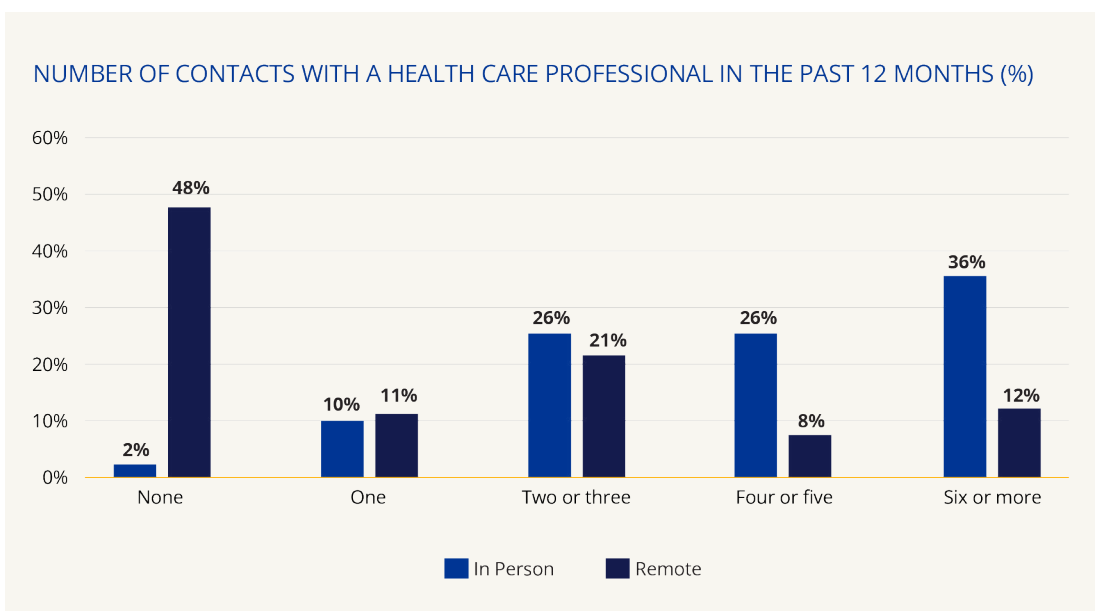| Category	Percentage
All cases	24%
Male	18%
Female	29%
55-64	24%
65-74	20%
75+	31%
HS grad or less	30%
Some college	20%
Bachelor's +	16%
<$25K	43%
$25K-$50K	30%
$50K-$75K	9%
$75K+	9%
Lives alone	26%
Lives with others	23%
Not a caregiver	27%
Caregiver	17%
Rural	29%
Urban	22%

The most common situations in which older adults report fear of falling are walking on a sidewalk outdoors, going up and down steps, taking a bath or shower, and walking in the house. Older adults with disabilities were the most likely to experience a fall. Falls are a significant driver of injuries and deaths among older adults. Despite the significant number of older adults expressing fear about falling while walking outside, nearly 1 in 5 older adults report that walking is their primary mode of transportation. Investments in sidewalks and other public paths could help to increase the number of older adults engaged in physical activity and reduce fear of falling.

When asked how concerned they are about the possibility of becoming a burden to family / friends because of poor health / disability, 9% are "extremely concerned," 35% are "somewhat concerned," 28% are "not very concerned," and 28% are "not at all concerned." Compared to those not reporting a disability, persons with disabilities report negative impacts across health and quality of life domains. These include work and labor force, retirement confidence, retirement income sources, housing, neighborhood, transportation, physical and mental health, health care access, health behaviors, social health and support, elder mistreatment, service use, and technology use. These findings clearly reveal multiple potential targets for programs, services, and policy supports for older persons with disability in Westmoreland County.

FALLING FEAR SITUATIONS (% AMONG THOSE WHO ENDORSED HAVING A FEAR OF FALLING)

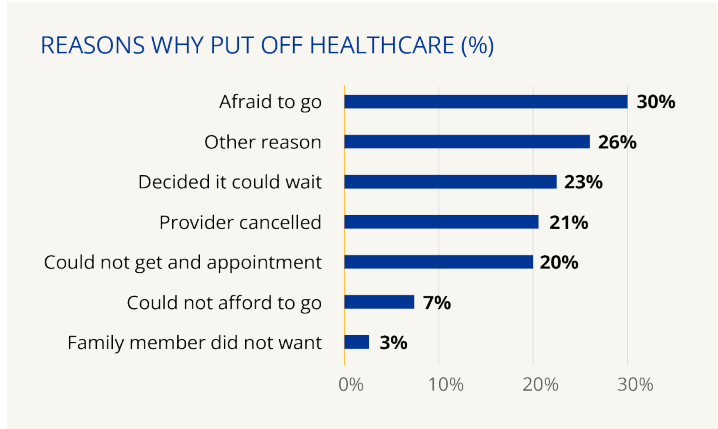| Situation	Percentage
Walking on sidewalk outdoors	61%
Going up/down steps	54%
Taking a bath or shower	27%
Walking in home	21%
Get in/out of a car	10%
Getting on/off toilet	7%
During meal prep	5%

Health Care Access

Nearly all (97%) older adults in Westmoreland County report having health care coverage with 48% covered primarily by Medicare and 30% by a plan purchased through an employer. When asked about doctor visits in the past 12 months, 2% have not seen a doctor in person during the past 12 months; 10% have seen a doctor once; 26% two or three times; 25% four or five times; and 36% six or more times. Frequency of remote telehealth visits in the past year is somewhat lower. On the

NUMBER OF CONTACTS WITH A HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS (%)

	In Person	Remote
None	2%	48%
One	10%	11%
Two or three	26%	21%
Four or five	26%	8%
Six or more	36%	12%

■ In Person   ■ Remote

positive side, only 3% report being unable to see a doctor because of the cost. However, more than 35% are either "somewhat" (30%) or "very" (6%) worried about being able to pay their medical bills in case of an illness or accident. More than seven in ten older adults report seeing a dentist (71%) in the past year, but only 58% of those with disabilities had done so. About 15% of older Westmoreland County adults

REASONS WHY PUT OFF HEALTHCARE (%)

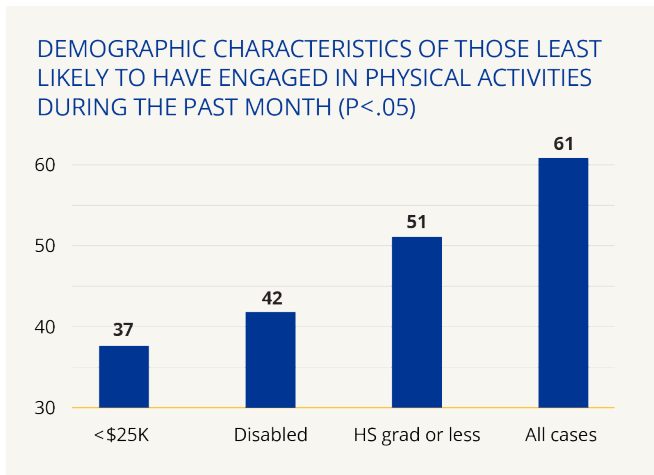| Reason	%
Afraid to go	30%
Other reason	26%
Decided it could wait	23%
Provider cancelled	21%
Could not get and appointment	20%
Could not afford to go	7%
Family member did not want	3%

were hospitalized in the past year (including 23% of those with disabilities). 27% have gone to a hospital emergency room in the past year; with 18% going one time; 7% two or three times; and 2% four or more times in the past year. ER usage was highest among those with the lowest incomes (41%). Only 9% of Westmoreland County older adults reported receiving health care in their own home in the past year, but this rate was higher for persons with disabilities (20%), those with the lowest incomes (16%), and rural residents (16%). About 64% reported being "very satisfied" with the quality of health care received; 61% were "very satisfied" with the convenience of health care; while only 49% were "very satisfied" with the cost of health care. About one in five (20%) reported putting off health care when needed at least once since the start of the Coronavirus pandemic. Females (26%) were more likely to put off getting care due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

The main reasons noted for delaying care were that they were afraid to go (30%), they decided it could wait (23%), and that the provider cancelled, closed, or re-scheduled (21%). Nearly all older adults in Westmoreland County have some form of health care coverage, though close to 1 in 3 are concerned about their ability to absorb unexpected medical expenses.

Health Behaviors

About one in ten reported smoking every day (8%) or some days (2%), and the rates were higher for those with incomes of $25K or less (24%). 61% reported engaging in physical activities or exercise outside of a regular job, but this is lower for those with incomes of $25K or less, those with
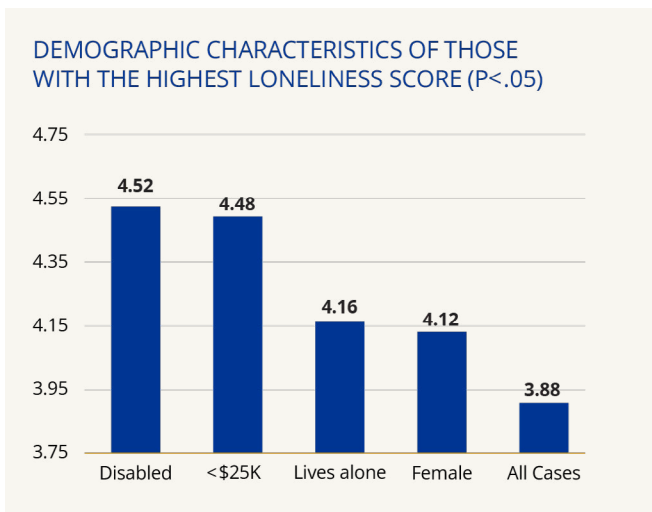
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THOSE LEAST LIKELY TO HAVE ENGAGED IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES DURING THE PAST MONTH (P<.05)

Category	Value
<$25K	37
Disabled	42
HS grad or less	51
All cases	61

disabilities , and those with a high school diploma or less. Using height and weight to calculate Body Mass Index (BMI), 44% of older adults in Westmoreland County are classified as "obese." Those age 55-64 (55%) are more likely to meet obesity criteria. In terms of vaccinations, 62% have received a flu shot in the past year, 65% a pneumonia vaccine, 58% a shingles vaccine, and 83% a Covid vaccine.

VACCINATIONS RECEIVED (%)

Covid	83%
Pneumonia	65%
Flu (past 12 months)	62%
Shingles	58%
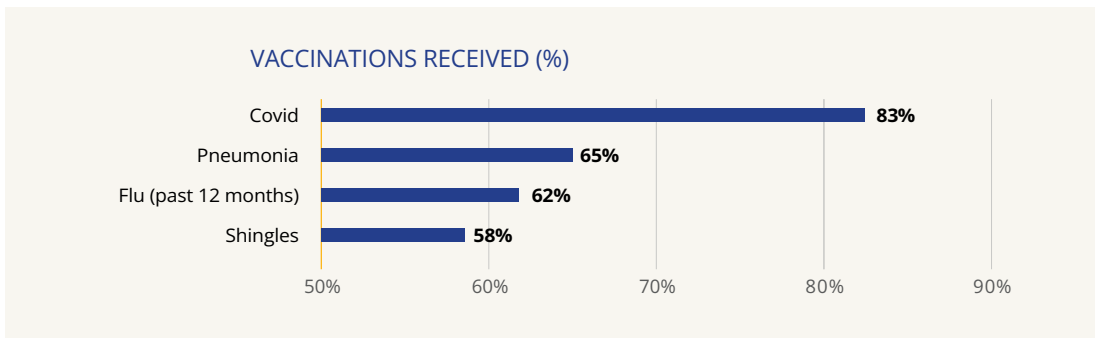
Social Support / Health

Using multi-item scales to assess various aspects of social support and relationships, older adults in Westmoreland County scored fairly high, indicating high general levels of social support. The mean social support network scale was approximately 18 (out of 30), showing moderate levels of social network support, including items on how many family members and friends the older adult talks to monthly in general and about private matters, and can call on for help. However, those with the lowest incomes, those with disabilities , and those with the lowest education reported lower social support network scores. Another scale measuring negative / critical interactions – how often others made too many demands on you, have been critical of you, and have taken advantage of you – showed local older adults scoring very low (only 4.4 on a scale with a potential range of 4 – 12). Thus, our sample reported essentially positive social interactions. Females (M = 4.8) and those age 55 - 64 (M = 4.7) reported the most negative / critical interactions. Scores on the UCLA loneliness scale were also quite low (M = 3.9; range 3 – 9), but those with disabilities , individuals with low income, those who live alone, and females reported mor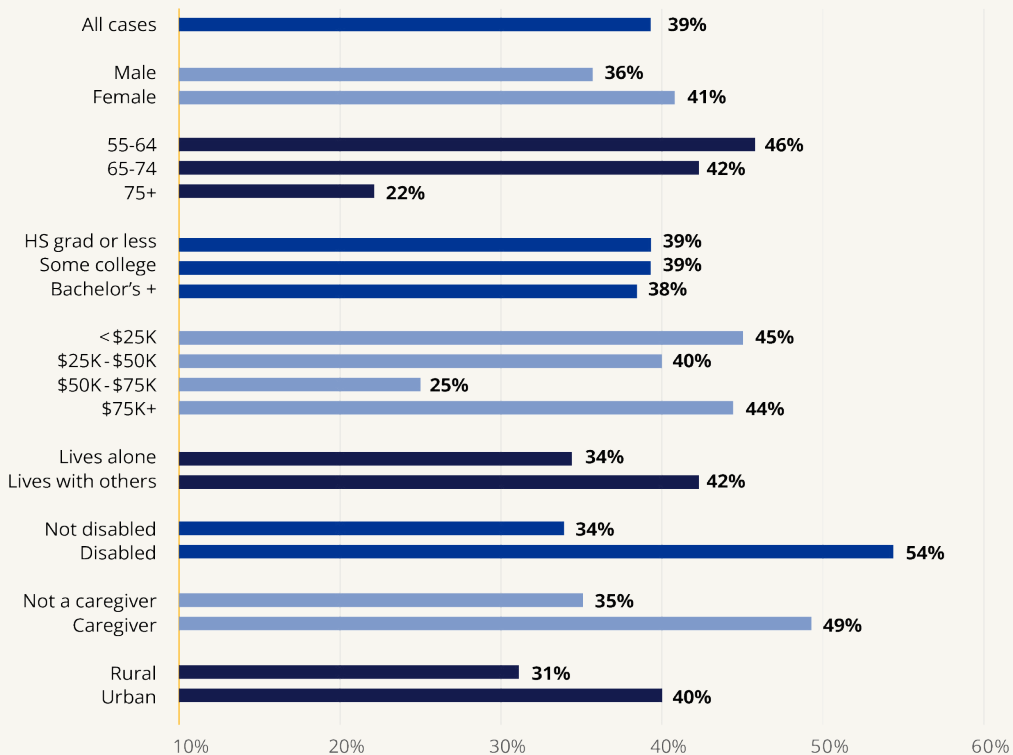e loneliness. When asked how satisfied they were with the help received from family and friends, 69% said "very satisfied," and another 28% said "somewhat satisfied." Those age 55 - 64 (56%) and those living in urban areas (62%) were less likely to be "very satisfied" with the help and support received. Education and outreach to connect populations experiencing loneliness, including individuals who live alone, persons with disabilities, low-income individuals, and women to services such as transportation and community programs may help to reduce isolation.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THOSE WITH THE HIGHEST LONELINESS SCORE (P<.05)

Disabled	4.52
<$25K	4.48
Lives alone	4.16
Female	4.12
All Cases	3.88

Elder Mistreatment

Using a screener developed for the "National Social Life Health and Aging Project" (NSHAP) to measure potential elder mistreatment (EM), 39% of older adults (age 55+) in Westmoreland County indicate potential EM in the past 12 months on at least one item, compared with 43% of the national sample from 2015 (age 60-95). Those with disabilities , family caregivers, and those age 55 - 64 were more likely to endorse at least one EM item. Local older adults were slightly more likely to endorse items related to emotional / psychological mistreatment; slightly less likely to endorse physical mistreatment items; and less likely to endorse financial mistreatment items. Family caregivers and those with disabilities were more likely to report emotional / psychological mistreatment and physical mistreatment. Those age 55 - 64 and those with disabilities were more likely to report financial mistreatment. Awareness of supportive services and resources available to address elder mistreatment is essential to accessing support. Older adults experiencing or at risk for elder mistreatment must be made aware of the services available through local adult protective services (APS) agencies. Outreach to ensure awareness of protective services should be targeted to populations that are indicated to be at higher risk, including family caregivers and care recipients.
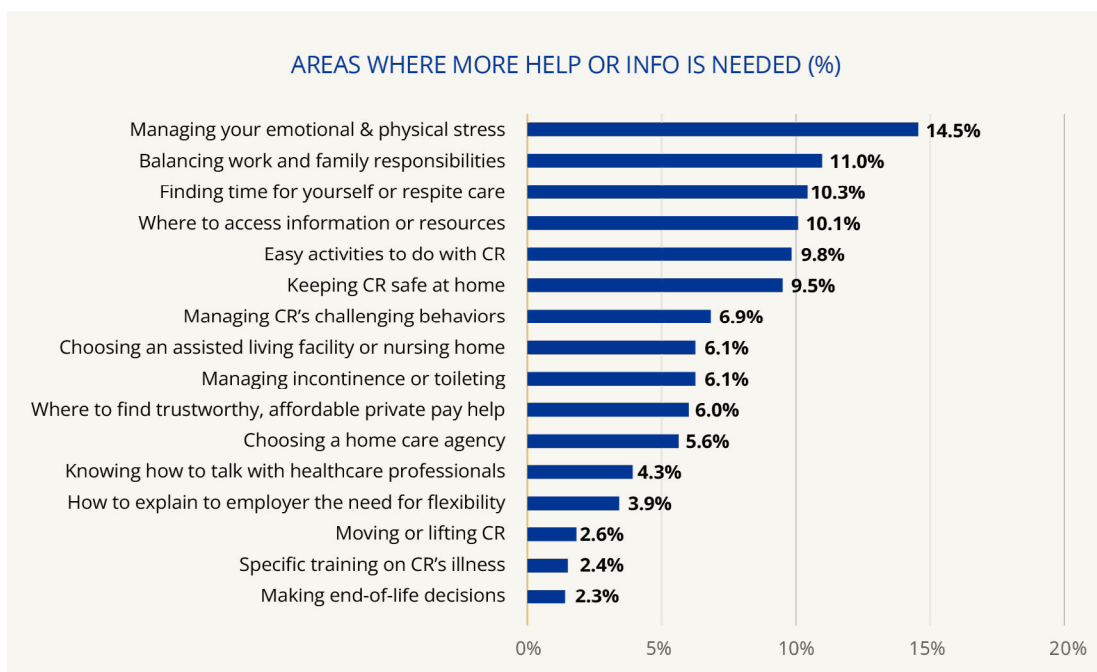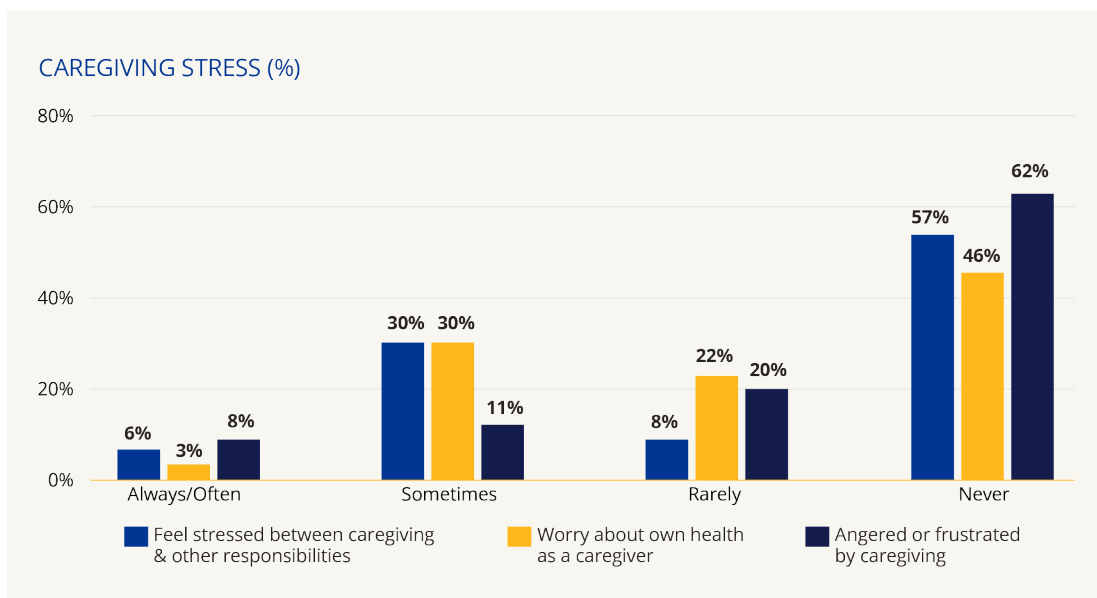
% WHO EXPERIENCED ELDER MISTREATMENT IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS: OVERALL AND BY ASSORTED DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORIES

Category	%
All cases	39%
Male	36%
Female	41%
55-64	46%
65-74	42%
75+	22%
HS grad or less	39%
Some college	39%
Bachelor's +	38%
<$25K	45%
$25K-$50K	40%
$50K-$75K	25%
$75K+	44%
Lives alone	34%
Lives with others	42%
Not disabled	34%
Disabled	54%
Not a caregiver	35%
Caregiver	49%
Rural	31%
Urban	40%

Family Caregiving

Using the caregiver screener from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System [BRFSS] caregiver module, a total of 107 older adult family caregivers were surveyed. The caregiver sample was more likely to be caring for a child, a relative other than a parent or spouse, or a non-relative / friend than those from the state of PA as a whole.

The proportion of Westmoreland County caregivers caring for persons with Alzheimer's Disease or cognitive impairment is higher than that reported statewide (18% vs. 11%). While many caregivers report rarely or never experiencing various types of caregiver stress, sub-groups do report this stress at least sometimes. In terms of financial impacts of caregiving, 10% report that it has

CAREGIVING STRESS (%)

Legend:
- Feel stressed between caregiving & other responsibilities
- Worry about own health as a caregiver
- Angered or frustrated by caregiving

	Always/Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Feel stressed between caregiving & other responsibilities	6%	30%	8%	57%
Worry about own health as a caregiver	3%	30%	22%	46%
Angered or frustrated by caregiving	8%	11%	20%	62%

AREAS WHERE MORE HELP OR INFO IS NEEDED (%)

| Area	%
Managing your emotional & physical stress	14.5%
Balancing work and family responsibilities	11.0%
Finding time for yourself or respite care	10.3%
Where to access information or resources	10.1%
Easy activities to do with CR	9.8%
Keeping CR safe at home	9.5%
Managing CR's challenging behaviors	6.9%
Choosing an assisted living facility or nursing home	6.1%
Managing incontinence or toileting	6.1%
Where to find trustworthy, affordable private pay help	6.0%
Choosing a home care agency	5.6%
Knowing how to talk with healthcare professionals	4.3%
How to explain to employer the need for flexibility	3.9%
Moving or lifting CR	2.6%
Specific training on CR's illness	2.4%
Making end-of-life decisions	2.3%

prevented saving money; 13% say it has increased their debt; 4% say that caregiving has limited their ability to save for retirement; and 4% say it led to later retirement than planned. Less than half of caregivers report using various caregiver support services / strategies, with 26% searching online for support; 13% using transportation services for the care recipient; and 14% using caregiver respite services. Between 2% and 15% of older caregivers report needing help or more information with a variety of caregiving issues. The areas where caregivers report most needed help and information are managing their own emotional and physical stress and balancing work and family responsibilities. In comparison to non-caregivers, caregivers were more likely to report having difficulty paying for basic expenses; not having received a Shingles shot in the past 12 months; negative interpersonal interactions on the "critical others" scale; potential psychological/ emotional elder mistreatment; and that the Coronavirus pandemic has prevented them from visiting a senior center. The data indicates that caregivers in Westmoreland County could benefit from enhanced access to a number of services, particularly educational resources to help with managing emotional and physical stress. While over 30% of caregivers reported they "always" or "sometimes" feel stressed between caregiving and other responsibilities or worry about their own health as a caregiver, only 14% reported utilizing respite services. Enhanced educational resources on stress management, as well as improved access to respite care, could help to address the high priority concerns raised by Westmoreland County caregivers. Approximately 1 in 10 caregivers also reported financial strain, such as increased debt or inability to save, indicating the need for targeted assistance with caregiving costs.
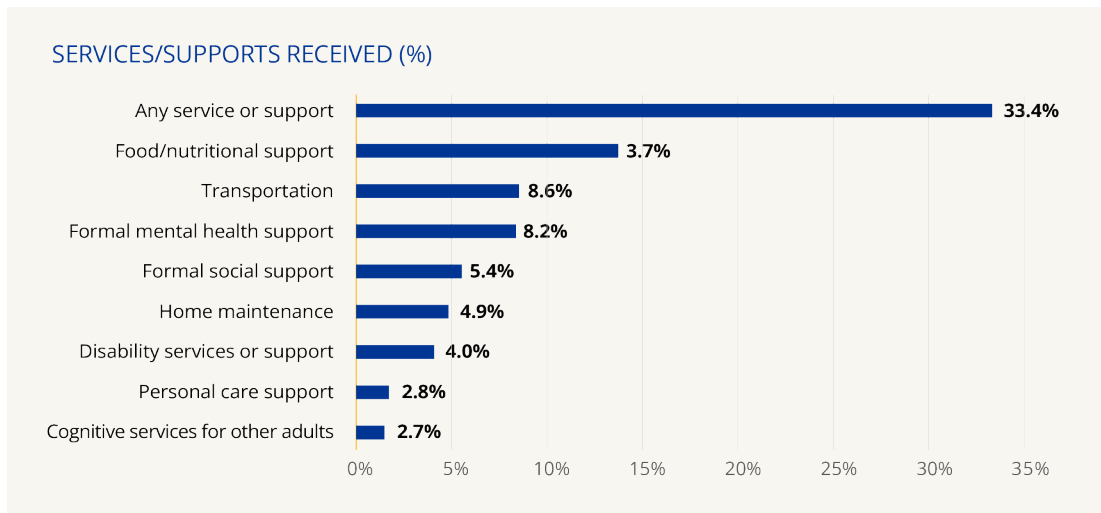
Service Use

Slightly more than half (52%) of older adults in Westmoreland County have heard of information and referral services for older adults. Among those who have heard about information and referral services, 21% have actually used them (11% of all older adults). Overall, about 33% of older adults reported receiving at least one formal service in the past year. Those with incomes of $25K or less (65%), those with disabilities (61%), and the rural population (44%) are more likely to have used at least one formal service in the past year. A little more than a third (36%) have ever visited a senior community center, 33% plan to visit a community center, and 13% say the Coronavirus pandemic has prevented them from visiting a senior community center. The primary reason older adults give for visiting a senior community center is for social activities / socialization (59%), followed by information / assistance (11%), and volunteer opportunities (7.5%). Among those receiving services in the past year, 55% are "very satisfied"; 38% are "somewhat satisfied"; and 6% are "somewhat dissatisfied" (2%) or "very dissatisfied" (4%) with services received.
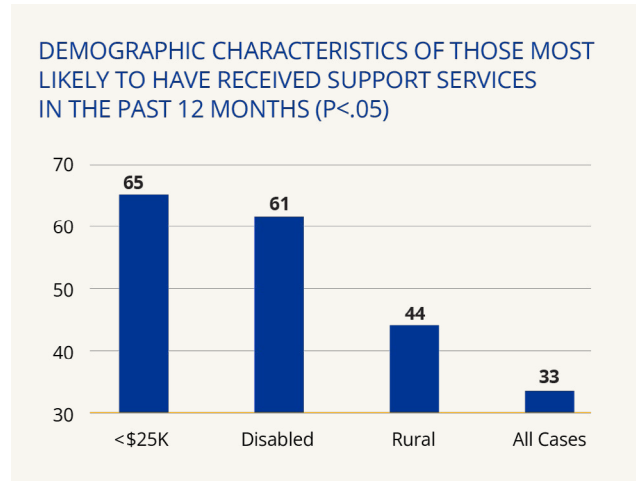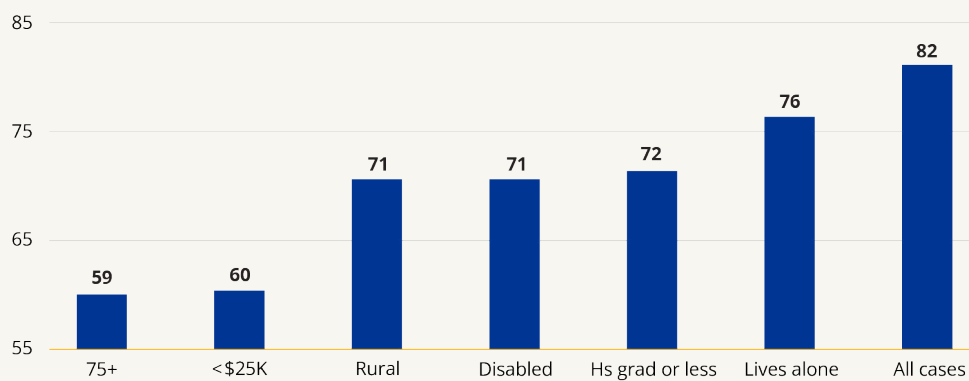
Overall, only 1 in 3 older adults used available senior services. Vulnerable groups, including older adults with disabilities, individuals with incomes below $25,000, and rural individuals are more likely to utilize services. Service use among these vulnerable populations reflects a heightened need for, as well as opportunities for, more frequent contacts, to share information and potentially connect individuals to additional resources as appropriate.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THOSE MOST LIKELY TO HAVE RECEIVED SUPPORT SERVICES IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS (P<.05)

Category	Value
<$25K	65
Disabled	61
Rural	44
All Cases	33

SERVICES/SUPPORTS RECEIVED (%)

Service	Percent
Any service or support	33.4%
Food/nutritional support	3.7%
Transportation	8.6%
Formal mental health support	8.2%
Formal social support	5.4%
Home maintenance	4.9%
Disability services or support	4.0%
Personal care support	2.8%
Cognitive services for other adults	2.7%

Technology and Internet

82% of older adults (age 55+) in Westmoreland County reported using the internet, at least occasionally. Also, 76% of Westmoreland County adults age 65 and older use the internet, which is similar to the U.S. population as a whole age 65 and older (75%), as reported by the Pew Research Center in 2021. Those 75 and older, with incomes of $25K or less, rural older adults, those with disabilities , those with a high school diploma or less, and those who live alone are less likely to use the internet. Among internet users, 71% use social networking sites like Facebook or LinkedIn. In addition, 51% of internet users have ever had a virtual or online visit with a healthcare provider; and 37% have managed prescription refills or delivery online or using an app. Slightly less than three in ten (29%) of older adult internet users have used a ride service app like Uber or Lyft. Given the relatively low utilization of taxi / jitney services in Westmoreland County, encouraging proficiency with ride services such as Uber and Lyft could help to provide another source of transportation to meet the needs of seniors.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THOSE LEAST LIKELY TO USE THE INTERNET (P<.05)

Category	Value
75+	59
<$25K	60
Rural	71
Disabled	71
Hs grad or less	72
Lives alone	76
All cases	82

Looking Forward – Westmoreland County's Future Older Population

A baseline forecast of future demographic trends in Westmoreland County has been developed by UCSUR using the REMI model distributed by Regional Economic Models Inc. (REMI) of Amherst, MA. The REMI model is used for economic and population projections for a ten-county region of southwestern Pennsylvania. The REMI model includes a detailed demographic model that allows for the projection of the Pittsburgh region's future population, as well as changes anticipated in the region's demographic composition.

The baseline forecast of population change in Westmoreland County projects that the County's total population is expected to remain relatively flat through 2040 and will then experience slight declines through the last decade of this forecast (2040-2050). Through the earlier decades, ongoing natural population decline – caused by a greater number of deaths than births in the resident population – and the loss of population due to retiree migration are expected to be offset by population gains generated from international immigration. Despite these overall stable population trends, significant shifts in the composition of the population, and in particular shifts in the age structure of the county's population, are ongoing.

The population age 65 and over in Westmoreland County is currently in the middle of a twenty-year period of growth that is expected to stabilize at the end of the current decade. Prior to 2010, the population age 65 and over had been relatively stable over the previous two decades. Between 2010 and 2030, the overall population age 65 is projected to have increased from under 69,000 to over 96,000, or an increase of 40%.

HISTORIC AND PROJECTED OLDER POPULATION FOR WESTMORELAND COUNTY, 2000-2050

Population	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
Age 55-64	38,153	54,427	55,665	43,644	38,311	40,651
Age 65 and over	67,781	68,891	82,748	96,182	93,775	84,707
Age 65-74	34,453	33,787	47,458	49,370	39,076	34,870
Age 75-84	25,691	24,229	24,454	35,358	37,496	30,381
Age 85 and over	7,637	10,875	10,836	11,454	17,203	19,456

CHANGE IN POPULATION BY DECADE (PERCENTAGE)

| Population	2000-10	2010-20	2020-30	2030-40	2040-50
Age 55-64	42.7%	2.3%	-21.6%	-12.2%	6.1%
Age 65 and over	1.6%	20.1%	16.2%	-2.5%	-9.7%
Age 65-74	-1.9%	40.5%	4.0%	-20.9%	-10.8%
Age 75-84	-5.7%	0.9%	44.6%	6.0%	-19.0%
Age 85 and over	42.4%	-0.4%	5.7%	50.2%	13.1%

SOURCE: UCSUR/Pittsburgh REMI Model

These demographic trends differ significantly for specific age groups. Westmoreland County's population of the older-old, or those age 85 and over, has been declining over much of the most recent decade. This period of decline is projected to stabilize over the next year and the county's population age 85 and over is projected to increase continuously through the next two decades before stabilizing. Between 2023 and 2047 the population age 85 and over is projected to increase from just over 10,400 to over 19,700, or an increase of over 90%.

WESTMORELAND COUNTY-PROJECTED POPULATION AGE 55 AND OVER
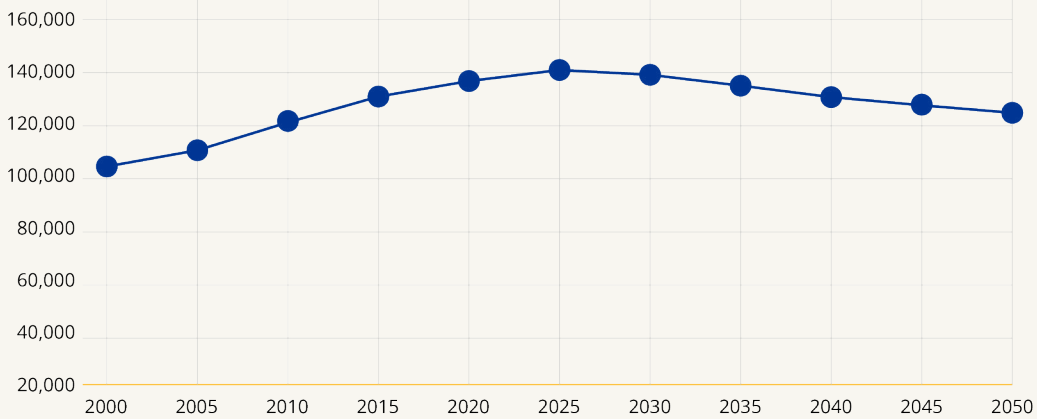
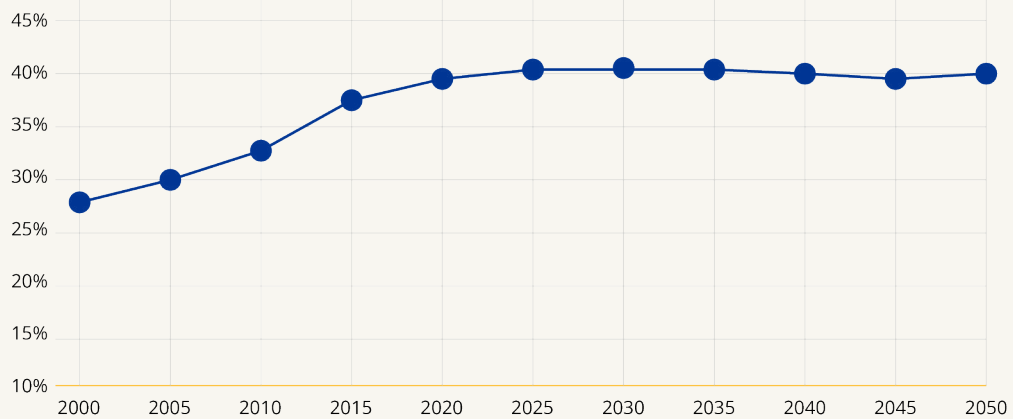**WESTMORELAND COUNTY-PROJECTED POPULATION AGE 65 AND OVER**
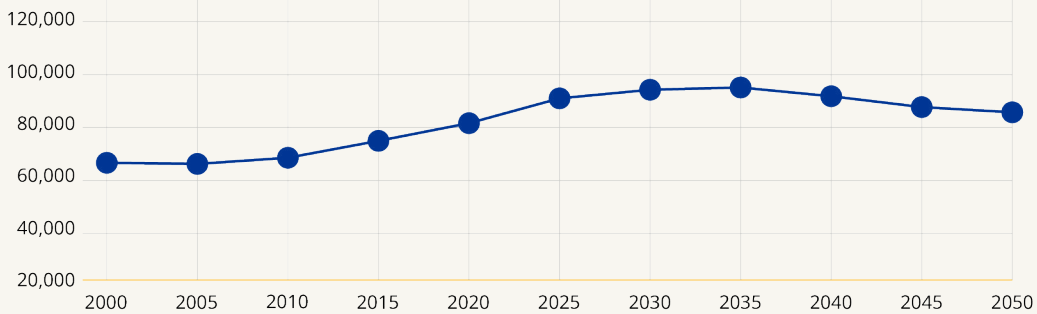
WESTMORELAND COUNTY-PROJECTED POPULATION AGE 85 AND OVER
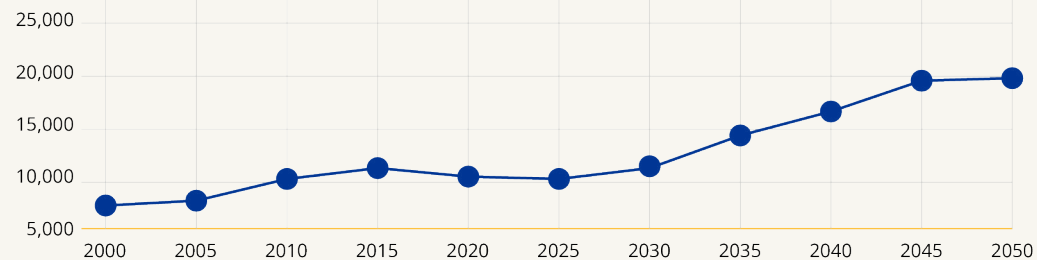
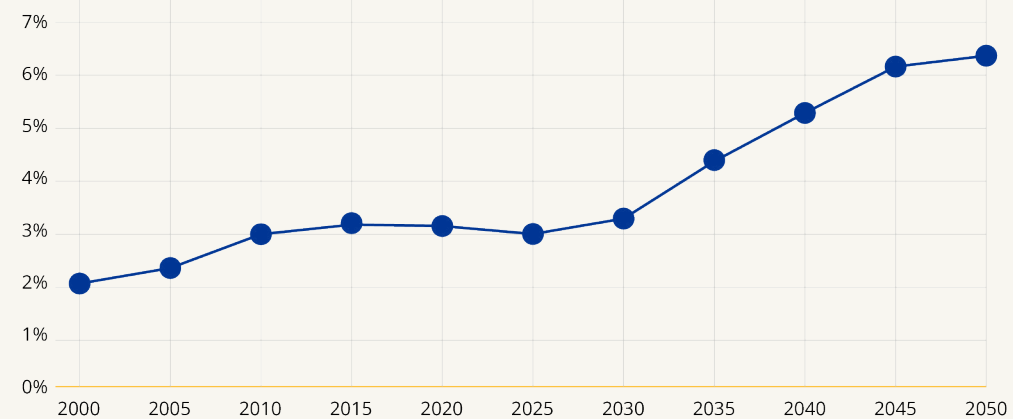## WESTMORELAND COUNTY-PROJECTED PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION AGE 55 AND OVER
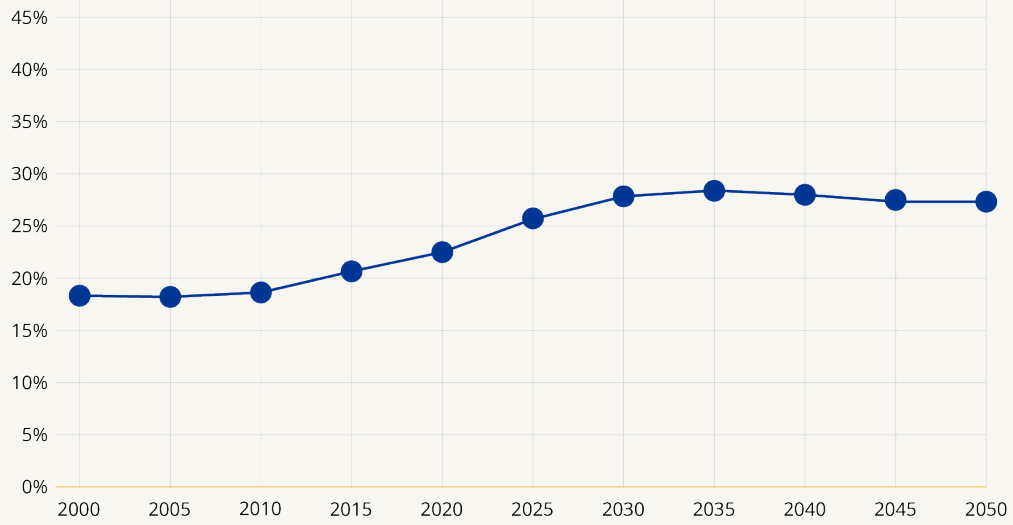
WESTMORELAND COUNTY-PROJECTED PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION AGE 65 AND OVER

WESTMORELAND COUNTY-PROJECTED PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION AGE 85 AND OVER

Study Summary and Policy and Program Implications

- The data in this report highlights challenges faced by several subgroups of older adults, including those with disabilities, those with incomes below $25K, and those who live in rural areas across numerous dimensions.

- Relatively high levels of service use among older adults living in rural areas, those with incomes below $25K, and older adults with disabilities reflect a heightened need, as well as opportunities for, more frequent contacts to share information and potentially connect individuals to additional resources as appropriate.

- Recognize increases in workforce participation among older adults and prioritize policies to support and retain aging workers, provide educational resources, and offer job placement programs such as the Senior Community Service Employment Program.

- Enhanced educational resources on stress management, as well as improved access to respite care, could help to address the high-priority concerns raised by Westmoreland County caregivers. Approximately 1 in 10 caregivers reported financial strain, such as increased debt or inability to save, indicating the need for targeted assistance with caregiving costs.

- Leverage current trends in online engagement to reach older adults with information about health, public programs and resources, and other priorities, and explore ways to increase internet access and proficiency for individuals who are age 75 and older, have a disability, live in rural areas, or live alone.

- Explore enhancements and continued investment in ensuring the availability of accessible and safe sidewalks, walking trails, and other publicly accessible pathways to enable older adults and individuals with disabilities to remain active.

- Compared to the U.S., adults under 65 in Westmoreland County are slightly more likely to report a disability, indicating a potential need for greater supports across the lifespan for younger individuals with disabilities.

- Given the age of the housing stock in Westmoreland County and the long tenure of older adults in their homes, increase the availability of home modifications that will enable seniors to safely age in place while maintaining independence and engaging in community life.

- Explore strategies to ensure a health and direct care workforce that can meet the needs of the more concentrated populations of older adults in Westmoreland County.