



Long-Term Care in Alaska



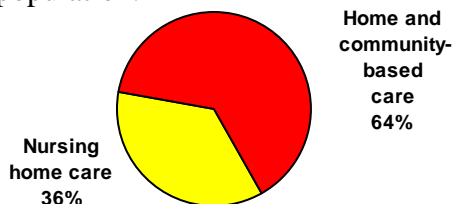
The number of Alaska residents age 85 and older is projected to grow by nearly 300 percent by 2030.

Alaska's older population can be at greater risk for chronic illnesses and in need of long-term care. Seven percent of Alaska's population is age 65+ with nearly 5,000 residents age 85+.¹ Alaska's age 85+ population – the age group that is most likely to need long-term care services – will grow by 297% from 2007 to 2030.² This makes Alaska the top-ranked state (#1) in the projected growth rate of the 85+ population.

Most prefer to receive long-term care at home; however, Alaska spends about a third of the state's Medicaid funds on institutional care.

The majority of Americans age 50+ (89%) want to stay in their homes for as long as they can.³ Over 123,000 Alaskans rely on Medicaid, and seven percent are age 65+.⁴ Home and community-based service (HCBS) waivers allow Medicaid recipients to receive Medicaid funding for in-home care. In Alaska, Medicaid allows some to choose in-home care instead of nursing home care. In 2006, 1,516 people 65+ and 1,004 adults (18-64) with physical disabilities received a waiver.⁵ Historically, Alaska has not imposed waiting lists for waivers for people who need nursing home care. In 2008, the State did experience some administrative backlog in processing waiver applications, which may have delayed the start of waiver services for some applicants. On average, the Medicaid program can provide HCBS to three people for the cost of serving one person in a nursing home.⁶

Alaska spends 64% of its Medicaid long-term care dollars for older people and adults with physical disabilities on home and community-based care – ranking it 4th in spending on home care services for this population.⁷



In addition, 74,000 Alaskans are providing family caregiving to a loved one at home. This care is valued at over \$1 billion.⁸

Alaska has the highest average nursing home private pay rate in the nation at \$514 per day.

In 2007, Alaska's nursing homes had an occupancy rate of 87%.⁹ This care is expensive. In 2009, Alaska had the most expensive nursing homes in the country, with an average private pay daily rate of \$514. Alaska also had some of the highest rates for home health aides (\$24/hr private pay and \$95/hr Medicare-certified) and adult day care (\$92/day).¹⁰

Five out of Alaska's fifteen nursing homes rated above average in health inspections.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) created a five-star quality rating to help consumers compare nursing homes. CMS rates nursing homes on health inspections, staffing, and quality measures.



The health inspection process is comprehensive and conducted by a trained team of objective surveyors.¹¹

Recent studies have found that non-profit nursing homes generally deliver higher quality of care.¹² In 2007, seven percent of Alaska's nursing homes were for profit (53%, non-profit; 40%, government-owned).¹³

Few Americans have long-term care insurance.

Nationally, about 7 million long-term care insurance policies were in effect in 2005, and the typical purchaser was age 61 with assets over \$100,000.¹⁴ Cost is a major factor in the decision to purchase long-term care insurance. In 2008, premiums for a married couple in their sixties were about \$3,000 a year.¹⁵ Alaska has not adopted the most recent long-term care insurance recommendations from the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC).¹⁶

End Notes

The data utilized in this report is the most recent publicly available data collected for all states.

¹U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. Estimates of the Resident Population by Selected Age Groups for the United States and Puerto Rico: July 1, 2008. Released May 14, 2009. URL: <http://www.census.gov/popest/states/asrh/SC-EST2008-01.html>

²Gibson, Mary Jo, Fox-Grage, Wendy, Houser, Ari. *Across the States 2009: Profiles of Long-Term Care and Independent Living: Executive Summary, State Data, and Rankings*. Page 34. AARP Public Policy Institute. Washington, D.C. URL: http://www.aarp.org/research/ppi/ltc/Other/articles/across_the_states_2009_profiles_of_long-term_care_and_independent_living.html

³Providing More Long-term Support and Services at Home: Why It's Critical for Health Reform. AARP Public Policy Institute, June 2009. URL: http://www.aarp.org/research/ppi/ltc/hcbs/articles/fs_hcbs_hcr.html

⁴The Kaiser Family Foundation, statehealthfacts.org. State Medicaid Fact Sheets, 2006-2007: Alaska. URL: <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/mfs.jsp?rgn=3&rgn=1>

⁵Ibid. *Medicaid 1915(c) Home and Community-Based Service Waiver Participants, by Type of Waiver, 2006*. Data Source: The Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured (KCMU) and The University of California at San Francisco's (UCSF) analysis based on The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Form 372, December 2009, Table 5. "Medicaid 1915(c) Home and Community-Based Service Programs: Data Update" available at <http://www.kff.org/medicaid/7720.cfm>. URL:

<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparetable.jsp?ind=241&cat=4>

⁶Providing More Long-term Support and Services at Home: Why It's Critical for Health Reform. AARP Public Policy Institute, June 2009. URL: http://www.aarp.org/research/ppi/ltc/hcbs/articles/fs_hcbs_hcr.html

⁷State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services. Department of Health and Social Services FY11 Budget Overview. Page 334. URL: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/fms/Pages/home.aspx>. http://dhss.alaska.gov/fms/Documents/Budget_overview_book_fy11_1.14.09.pdf.

⁸Ibid. Page 44.

⁹Ibid. Page 66.

¹⁰Genworth 2009 Cost of Long-Term Care Survey. April 2009. URL: http://www.genworth.com/content/genworth/us/en/products/long_term_care/long_term_care/cost_of_care.html

¹¹Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Note: These data are updated monthly. Data for this brief was pulled on November 3, 2009. URL: <http://www.medicare.gov/NHCompare/Include/DataSection/Questions/ProximitySearch.asp>.

¹²BMJ 2009 (British Medical Journal); 339:b2732. URL: www.pnhp.org/nursing_home

¹³The Kaiser Family Foundation, statehealthfacts.org. Table: *Distribution of Certified Nursing Facilities by Ownership Type, 2007*. Data Source: C. Harrington, H. Carrillo, and B. Blank. Table 7, "Nursing, Facilities, Staffing, Residents, and Facility Deficiencies, 2001 Through 2007," Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, University of California, San Francisco, accessed September 2008. Available at <http://www.pascenter.org>. Based on the Online Survey, Certification, and Reporting system (OSCAR), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. URL: <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparetable.jsp?ind=412&cat=8&sub=97&yr=62&typ=2>

¹⁴Kassner, Enid. Long-Term Care Insurance Fact Sheet. AARP Public Policy Institute. June 2009. URL: http://www.aarp.org/research/ppi/ltc/ltc-ins/articles/LTCI_fact_sheet_2009_08.html

¹⁵Tumlinson, Anne, Aguiar, C. and Watts, M. Closing the Long-Term Care Funding Gap: The Challenge of Private Long-Term Care Insurance. Kaiser Family Foundation. Page 6. June 2009. URL: <http://www.kff.org/insurance/upload/Closing-the-Long-Term-Care-Funding-Gap-The-Challenge-of-Private-Long-Term-Care-Insurance-Report.pdf>

¹⁶Gibson, Mary Jo, Fox-Grage, Wendy, Houser, Ari. *Across the States 2009: Profiles of Long-Term Care and Independent Living*. Page 28. AARP Public Policy Institute. Washington, D.C. URL: http://www.aarp.org/research/ppi/ltc/Other/articles/across_the_states_2009_profiles_of_long-term_care_and_independent_living.html