

Local Technical Assistance Program

**SAN DIEGO COUNTY
AGING & INDEPENDENCE
SERVICES
SURVEY OF OLDER AMERICANS**

San Diego



**ASSOCIATION OF
GOVERNMENTS**

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ABSTRACT

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ABSTRACT: Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) across the country are required to determine the extent of need for supportive and nutrition services among the older population and to evaluate the effectiveness of resources in meeting such need. The County of San Diego AAA, now called Aging & Independence Services, requested SANDAG's assistance through the Local Technical Assistance program in conducting a survey of a sample of people age 60 and over. The results of the survey, conducted in late 2000, are presented in this report.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Survey of Older Americans sought to determine the concerns of the San Diego region's older population as well as the population's familiarity with and use of various service programs. During November 2000, the questionnaire was distributed to approximately 4,700 people age 60 and over across the San Diego region. Thirty-five percent (1,647 surveys) were returned.

The survey gathered demographic characteristics, information about respondents' mental and physical health, and information about the degree to which certain issues caused them problems. They were asked which of the 25 issues affected them most. In addition, they were asked to indicate the level of difficulty with which they could perform each of 14 activities of daily living. Some significant findings are described below.

- The majority of respondents (77 percent) said their own health, compared to the health of other people their age was excellent, very good, or good. Only five percent thought their health was relatively poor. Despite these high numbers of people rating their health as relatively good, a full 19 percent of respondents cited their health as somewhat or much worse than one year ago.
- Many services may be more accessible or are perceived to be more accessible to respondents from higher income groups. One-half of single respondents in the lowest income group (monthly income of \$696 or less) have a problem getting information about services and benefits while one in three in the highest income group (\$937 or more per month) have a similar problem. Despite this difference, respondents from all income groups suggested that a directory of services for older people, including service people who do not age-discriminate, would benefit them.
- Of the six health-related issues listed in Question 7, getting adequate health care is of greatest concern to respondents. Twenty-two percent of respondents indicate getting adequate health care is a minor problem and seven percent call it a major problem.
- The social issue that by far presents the greatest problem to older people is loneliness. Approximately 25 percent of respondents cited loneliness a problem.
- More than two-thirds of respondents are concerned with the cost of utilities, more than any other financial issue.
- The activities most often rated as "unable to do" are heavy housework and using different types of transportation. Other activities that many residents either cannot do or can do only with serious difficulty include walking, shopping for personal items, and doing light housework.
- A similar Survey of Older Americans was performed in 1997. Most of the results were similar across the two years. However from 1997 to 2000 there were notable decreases in the percentages of people who were troubled by crime and age discrimination.

INTRODUCTION

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The County of San Diego Aging & Independence Services (AIS) was established in 1974 as a designated Area Agency on Aging by the Older Americans Act. The primary function of AIS is to plan and develop a comprehensive and coordinated service delivery system for older persons and to administer funds for social services for the elderly in this region.

In September 1997 the San Diego County Board of Supervisors created the Health and Human Services Agency with the Area Agency on Aging as one of its components. In February 1999 the agency's new name, Aging & Independence Services was formally introduced and now fully reflects the mission and purpose of the agency and the population it serves.

The Older Americans Act requires all AAAs to determine the extent of need for supportive and nutrition services in preparing plans and evaluating the effectiveness of resources in meeting such need. The California Department of Aging has developed guidelines to collect, analyze, and interpret information on the service needs of the elderly. "Need" is defined as a gap or difference between the current situation and the desired or required one.

Also mandated by the Older Americans Act is the development of an Area Plan, a four-year work plan that identifies the above-mentioned gaps and the methods proposed to address them. The survey that is the topic of this report is one tool to help determine what programs need to be put in place to meet the needs of this region's older population.

The questionnaire was distributed during November 2000 to approximately 4,700 people age 60 and over across the San Diego region. (See the Methodology section of this report for a discussion of the survey design and implementation.) Thirty-five percent (1,647 surveys) were returned, resulting in a typical response rate for this type of survey.

The questionnaire was designed to help determine the areas of greatest concern to the older population as well as the population's familiarity with and use of various services and programs. As with many surveys, the questionnaire itself is an educational tool, since even people who don't return a completed form may still read it and find out about services and programs that they didn't know existed. Also, there was a toll-free phone number on the questionnaire to call to obtain information about services.

This report provides the responses to each question and a discussion of the most significant findings. A copy of the questionnaires (English and Spanish versions) can be found in Appendix A. Appendix B provides verbatim comments of respondents regarding issues that are problems, areas of concern that weren't addressed on the survey, and additional comments about obtaining information and services. Appendix C contains responses by Supervisorial District.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

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To examine the needs of the San Diego region's older population the Survey of Older Americans gathered demographic characteristics, information about respondents' mental and physical health, and information about the degree to which certain issues caused them problems. Respondents were asked to indicate if each of 25 service, health, social, and financial issues were "not a problem," a "minor problem," or a "major problem" for them. Additionally they were asked which of the 25 issues affected them most. Respondents were then asked to indicate the level of difficulty with which they could perform each of 14 activities of daily living, from "no difficulty," "minor difficulty," "serious difficulty" to "unable to do."

Tables 1 through 6 describe the demographic characteristics of the respondent population and in some cases compare those numbers to the demographics of the older populations in San Diego and the U.S. The health characteristics of the population surveyed are shown in Tables 7 through 10.

Tables 12 through 15 show response rates for the 25 service, health, social, and financial issues listed in Question 7. The issues that stand out as most important to older residents are having enough money to live on and the cost of energy and utilities, both cited by more than two-thirds of residents as a problem. In contrast, the issues that appear to be of concern to the fewest respondents are drug and alcohol abuse/misuse, elderly abuse, and taking care of a child under 18. Each of those was stated to be "no problem" by at least 95 percent of respondents.

Table 16 shows the response rates for 15 activities that are often difficult for older people. The activities that are most frequently performed with "no difficulty" are eating (94 percent), preparing meals (93 percent) and using the telephone (93 percent). The activities that the highest percentages of respondents are unable to do include heavy housework and using different types of transportation.

Although issues such as drug and alcohol abuse/misuse and using the telephone are reported as problems or causes of difficulty relatively infrequently, it is important to recognize that they often are significant problems to those who do suffer from them. Furthermore, these problems and difficulties are often indicative of broader social conditions such as poverty, overcrowding, and lack of access to social services.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

The Survey of Older Americans asked respondents to indicate the length of time they have lived in San Diego, as well as their marital status, age, education, ethnicity, and income before taxes.

More than half (54 percent) of the survey respondents are female and the vast majority of them are white (88 percent). This compares to a regionwide age 60 and over population which is 56 percent female and 77 percent white. Thirty-seven percent of respondents live alone and 32 percent receive SSI or SSP. More than 40 percent of married couples have a monthly income of more than \$1,781, or 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Income categories correspond to federal poverty guidelines for FY 2000-2001 (\$8,350 per year for individuals, \$11,250 per year for couples). The categories on the survey correspond to 100 percent, 120 percent, 150 percent, and 200 percent of poverty, respectively, with the final category above 200 percent of poverty.

Table 1
Length of Time In Community
(Question 2)

<u>Years</u>	<u>% of Responses</u>
5 years or less	16%
6 to 10 years	12%
11 to 20 years	28%
More than 20 years	44%

Table 2
Marital Status
(Question 12)

<u>Status</u>	<u>% of Responses</u>	<u>% of U.S. Population¹</u>
Married	51%	53%
Widowed	29%	35%
Separated	1%	1%
Divorced	15%	5%
Never married	4%	5%
Other	1%	1%

¹Source: 1990 US Census

Table 3
Age
(Question 10)

<u>Age</u>	<u>% of Responses</u>	Distribution of San Diego's
		<u>Over 60 Population¹</u>
64 and under	19%	24%
65 to 74	40%	40%
75 to 84	32%	26%
85 and older	9%	10%

¹Source: SANDAG 2000 Population and Housing Estimates

Table 4
Education
(Question 10)

<u>Highest Grade Completed</u>	<u>% of Responses</u>	<u>% of U.S. Population²</u>
0 to 8th	6%	29%
9 to 12th	26%	27%
Some college	32%	25%
College graduate	35%	

²Source: 1990 US Census

Table 5
Ethnicity
(Question 15)

<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>% of Responses</u>
White	82%
Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano	7%
Filipino	4%
Black, African American, Negro	2%
American Indian/Alaska Native	2%
Some other race	2%
Other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino	1%
Japanese	1%

Table 6
Income Before Taxes
 (Question 13)

	<u>Monthly Income</u>	<u>% of Responses</u>
Married (combined income)	\$938 or less	3%
	\$939 to \$1,172	3%
	\$1,173 to \$1,424	3%
	\$1,425 to \$1,780	6%
	\$1,781 or more	43%
Single	\$696 or less	4%
	\$697 to \$749	3%
	\$750 to \$870	2%
	\$871 to \$936	3%
	\$937 or more	31%

HEALTH CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

The majority of respondents characterize their current health as about the same as their health one year ago. When asked how their health fares compared to other people their age, the majority of respondents (77 percent) said excellent, very good, or good and only five percent thought their health was relatively poor. Despite these high numbers of people rating their health as relatively good, a full 19 percent of respondents cited their health as somewhat or much worse than one year ago.

When asked how often they had emotional problems, most respondents said a little of the time or none of the time. Eight percent, however, say they suffer from emotional problems at least a good bit of the time.

Table 7
Health Compared To One Year Ago
 (Question 4)

	<u>% of Responses</u>
Much better	9%
Somewhat better	7%
About the same	64%
Somewhat worse	16%
Much worse	3%
Don't know	1%

Table 8
Health Compared to Others Your Age
 (Question 5)

	<u>% of Responses</u>
Excellent	17%
Very Good	29%
Good	31%
Fair	17%
Poor	5%
Don't Know	1%

Table 9
Frequency of Emotional Problems
 (Question 5)

	<u>% of Responses</u>
All of the time	1%
Most of the time	2%
A good bit of the time	5%
Some of the time	16%
A little of the time	35%
None of the time	40%
Don't know	2%

Table 10
Frequency of Feeling Downhearted and Blue
 (Question 9)

	<u>% of Responses</u>
All of the time	1%
Most of the time	2%
A good bit of the time	4%
Some of the time	13%
A little of the time	33%
None of the time	45%
Don't know	3%

PROBLEMS FACING THE OLDER POPULATION

Services - More seniors encounter problems getting information about services, rather than obtaining the services themselves. Thirty-eight percent report facing at least a minor problem (31 percent minor problem, 7 percent major problem) getting information about services and benefits. The other two service-related issues presenting problems to the greatest percentage of respondents are finding legal advice and counseling (20 percent minor problem, 9 percent major problem), and finding recreational or social activities that are of interest to them (21 percent minor problem, 4 percent major problem).

Table 11
Services
 (Question 7)

	<u>No Problem/ Doesn't Apply</u>	<u>Minor Problem</u>	<u>Major Problem</u>
▪ Getting information about services/benefits	62%	31%	7%
▪ Finding legal advice/counseling	71%	20%	9%
▪ Finding recreational or social activities that interest you	75%	21%	4%
▪ Getting homemaker services for household chores	83%	13%	5%
▪ Transportation	83%	12%	6%
▪ Getting more education	90%	8%	2%
▪ Getting information about volunteer opportunities	89%	10%	2%

Health - Of the six health-related issues listed in Question 7, getting adequate health care is of greatest concern to respondents. Twenty-two percent of respondents indicate getting adequate health care is a minor problem and seven percent call it a major problem. The second greatest concern is accidents in the home (such as falling), considered a minor problem by 14 percent of respondents and a major problem by another two percent. Approximately two in 25 respondents have a problem getting adequate nursing home care, mental services or counseling, and enough food and nutrition. Less than one in thirty respondents have a problem with drug and/or alcohol abuse or misuse.

Table 12
Health
(Question 7)

	<u>No Problem/ Doesn't Apply</u>	<u>Minor Problem</u>	<u>Major Problem</u>
▪ Getting adequate health care	71%	22%	7%
▪ Getting adequate nursing home care	92%	5%	3%
▪ Getting mental health services or counseling	93%	6%	1%
▪ Drug and/or alcohol abuse or misuse	98%	2%	1%
▪ Getting enough food/nutrition	92%	7%	1%
▪ Accidents in the home (such as falling)	84%	14%	2%

Social Issues - The social issue that by far presents the greatest problem to older people is loneliness. Almost one out of every four respondents cited loneliness as a minor or major problem. One in eight cited crime, age discrimination, and taking care of an adult as a major or minor problem. Less than one in ten cited elderly abuse, isolation, or taking care of a child under 18.

Table 13
Social Issues
(Question 7)

	<u>No Problem/ Doesn't Apply</u>	<u>Minor Problem</u>	<u>Major Problem</u>
▪ Loneliness	78%	19%	4%
▪ Racial discrimination	94%	4%	1%
▪ Elderly abuse	97%	3%	1%
▪ Crime	89%	9%	2%
▪ Isolation	90%	8%	1%
▪ Age discrimination	89%	10%	2%
▪ Taking care of a child under 18	95%	4%	1%
▪ Taking care of an adult	89%	8%	3%

Financial Issues - More than two-thirds of respondents are concerned with the cost of utilities. Thirty-three percent cited the cost of utilities as a minor problem and another 31 percent considered the issue a major problem. It was considered a major problem by far more respondents than was any other service, health, social, or financial issue. This can in part be explained by the recent increases in the costs of gasoline, natural gas, and most prominently, electricity. Coincidentally in the 1997 survey, the issue of energy costs also was the number one concern, though not with the same high percentages. (See Table 14.)

Table 14
Financial Issues
(Question 7)

	<u>No Problem/ Doesn't Apply</u>	<u>Minor Problem</u>	<u>Major Problem</u>
▪ Having enough money to live on	62%	27%	11%
▪ Cost of energy/utilities	37%	33%	31%
▪ Housing	77%	14%	9%
▪ Employment opportunities	87%	7%	5%

Respondents were asked to select which, of all the Service, Health, Social, and Financial concerns listed above affect them the most. Table 15 contains the issues that affect one percent or more of respondents.

Table 15
Issues Most Affecting Respondents
 (Question 7A)

	<u>% of Respondents</u>
▪ Cost of energy/utilities	28%
▪ Having enough money to live on	17%
▪ Getting adequate health care	10%
▪ Transportation	6%
▪ Housing	6%
▪ Getting information about services/benefits	4%
▪ Loneliness	4%
▪ Taking care of an adult	4%
▪ Getting homemaker services for household chores	4%
▪ Crime	3%
▪ Finding recreational or social activities that interest you	3%
▪ Employment opportunities	2%
▪ Accidents in the home (such as falling)	2%
▪ Finding legal advice/counseling	2%
▪ Age discrimination	1%
▪ Getting adequate nursing home care	1%
▪ Taking care of a child under 18	1%
▪ Getting more education	1%
▪ Getting information about volunteer opportunities	1%
▪ Getting enough food/nutrition	1%
▪ Racial discrimination	1%

NOTE: Totals sum to more than 100% because respondents were asked to indicate two of the 25 issues. Some respondents indicated only one issue.

When asked to indicate problems or concerns not listed above that are important to them, respondents most often repeated issues related to the 25 mentioned issues. For example, many respondents indicated that transportation was a problem. In particular, several mentioned that transportation to the medical appointments was a serious concern. Several respondents also indicated that a comprehensive directory of senior services would be of great help to them. (See verbatim responses in Appendix B.)

Ability to Perform Tasks - Respondents were asked to indicate the level of difficulty with which they perform 14 different tasks that are often difficult for older people. These tasks help determine the degree of assistance needed. These include basic self-care tasks, often called Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) and household chores, know as Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs). The activities most often rated as “unable to do” are heavy housework and using different types of transportation. Other activities that many residents either cannot do or can do only with serious difficulty include walking, shopping for personal items, and doing light housework. Increased age seems to impact respondents’ ability to perform these tasks. (See Table 16.)

Table 16
Ability to Perform Tasks
(Question 8)

	<u>No Difficulty</u>	<u>Minor Difficulty</u>	<u>Serious Difficulty</u>	<u>Unable to do</u>
▪ Eating	94%	6%	1%	-
▪ Bathing	90%	8%	2%	1%
▪ Dressing/undressing	91%	8%	1%	-
▪ Walking	67%	24%	7%	1%
▪ Getting in and out of bed	89%	10%	1%	-
▪ Getting to the bathroom	87%	10%	2%	1%
▪ Preparing meals	93%	6%	1%	-
▪ Shopping for personal items	85%	10%	3%	2%
▪ Medication management	90%	7%	2%	1%
▪ Managing money	87%	11%	2%	1%
▪ Using the telephone	93%	5%	1%	1%
▪ Doing heavy housework	52%	29%	11%	8%
▪ Doing light housework	79%	16%	3%	2%
▪ Ability to use different types of transportation	79%	11%	6%	5%

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

In order to get an idea of older residents’ awareness and use of community resources, respondents were asked to indicate which of several services they had used in the past. Respondents call the Social Security Administration for information and services more often than any other information source listed on the survey. Other frequently used services are various Senior Centers (18%) and the AARP (13%). Overall, the majority (56%) of respondents have never called to inquire about information or services available to them.

Table 17
Information
(Question 3)

	<u>% of Responses</u>
▪ I have never called for information or services	56%
▪ Social Security Administration	22%
▪ Senior Center	20%
▪ AARP	13%
▪ Other	8%
▪ Aging and Independence Services	4%
▪ Info Line (United Way)	1%

AGE, GENDER, AND INCOME

In order to compare the needs of different groups within San Diego’s older population, the responses to survey Question 7 and Question 8 were cross-tabulated with age, gender, marital status, income, ethnicity and education. The answers to Question 7, which asks respondents to indicate if each of 25 issues is “no problem,” a “minor problem,” or a “major problem,” were collapsed into two categories: “no problem” and “problem.” The Problem category includes both minor and major problems. Similarly, responses to Question 8, which asks respondents to rank the difficulty of 14 different activities from 1=no difficulty to 4=unable to do, were simplified into two groups.

Age – In some cases the frequency with which issues are indicated as problems markedly increases with age. For example, while only nine percent of respondents under age 65 are concerned with getting homemaker services for household chores, 27 percent of those 85 and older indicated finding homemaker services presents them with a problem. (See Table 18.) Other issues whose frequency as a problem increases with the age of the respondents include transportation, accidents in the home, loneliness and isolation.

Other issues however are markedly less important to respondents age 85 and over, when compared with responses of those in other age groups. Interestingly, while 17 percent of respondents under age 65 cite age discrimination as a problem, only 11 percent of those aged 65 to 74, nine percent of those age 75 to 84, and eight percent of those age 85 or older have similar complaints. Other issues whose ranking as a problem decrease with the increasing age of the respondents are taking care of a child under 18, taking care of an adult, having enough money to live on, cost of energy/utilities, housing, and employment opportunities.

Table 18
Issues of Concern by Age Group
 (Questions 7 and 10)

	<u>Total*</u>	Minor or Major Problem			85 and <u>over</u>
		64 and <u>under</u>	65-74	75-84	
<u>Services</u>					
▪ Getting information about services/benefits	38%	34%	42%	35%	37%
▪ Finding legal advice/counseling	29%	28%	31%	27%	28%
▪ Finding recreational/social activities that interest you	25%	25%	28%	22%	23%
▪ Getting homemaker services for household chores	17%	9%	16%	20%	27%
▪ Transportation	17%	13%	16%	18%	33%
▪ Getting information about volunteer opportunities	11%	14%	12%	9%	10%
▪ Getting more education	10%	13%	12%	8%	9%
<u>Health</u>					
▪ Getting adequate health care	29%	31%	29%	27%	30%
▪ Accidents in the home (such as falling)	16%	9%	13%	18%	37%
▪ Getting adequate nursing home care	8%	8%	8%	7%	8%
▪ Getting enough food/nutrition	8%	7%	9%	7%	10%
▪ Getting mental health services or counseling	7%	10%	7%	5%	7%
▪ Drug and/or alcohol abuse or misuse	2%	4%	2%	2%	3%
<u>Social Issues</u>					
▪ Loneliness	22%	18%	21%	24%	28%
▪ Crime	11%	15%	13%	7%	12%
▪ Age discrimination	11%	17%	11%	9%	8%
▪ Taking care of an adult	11%	15%	13%	7%	7%
▪ Isolation	10%	8%	9%	10%	16%
▪ Racial discrimination	5%	7%	6%	3%	5%
▪ Taking care of a child under 18	5%	8%	7%	2%	3%
▪ Elderly abuse	3%	5%	3%	2%	7%
<u>Financial Issues</u>					
▪ Cost of energy/utilities	63%	62%	69%	60%	48%
▪ Having enough money to live on	38%	44%	41%	32%	29%
▪ Housing	23%	29%	26%	17%	13%
▪ Employment opportunities	12%	26%	14%	4%	3%
<u>Ability to Perform Tasks</u>					
▪ Doing heavy housework	20%	10%	17%	23%	41%
▪ Ability to use different types of transportation	10%	4%	8%	13%	30%
▪ Walking	8%	6%	7%	10%	14%
▪ Shopping for personal items	5%	2%	4%	6%	14%
▪ Doing light housework	5%	2%	3%	8%	16%
▪ Preparing meals	4%	2%	3%	5%	7%
▪ Bathing	2%	1%	2%	2%	5%
▪ Dressing/undressing	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%
▪ Getting to the bathroom	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%
▪ Medication management	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%
▪ Managing money	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%
▪ Using the telephone	2%	1%	1%	3%	9%
▪ Getting in and out of bed	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
▪ Eating	1%	-	1%	1%	-

*NOTE: Total represents the percentage of all respondents who answered both Question 7 and Question 10.

Perhaps surprisingly, when asked how much difficulty respondents had performing each of fourteen tasks, the number of respondents who performed the tasks with serious difficulty or were unable to do them only increased with age for about half of the activities. (See Table 19.) Older respondents were less able to walk, shop for personal items, use the telephone, do heavy housework, do light housework and use transportation. On the other hand, respondents from different age groups seemed to have equal difficulty or lack of difficulty eating, dressing, getting in and out of bed, managing medication, and managing money.

Table 19
Ability to Perform Tasks by Age Group
 (Questions 8 and 10)

<u>Tasks</u>	Serious Difficulty or Unable to Do				
	<u>Total*</u>	<u>64 and under</u>	<u>65-74</u>	<u>75-84</u>	<u>85 and over</u>
▪ Doing heavy housework	20%	10%	17%	23%	41%
▪ Ability to use different types of transportation	10%	4%	8%	13%	30%
▪ Walking	8%	6%	7%	10%	14%
▪ Shopping for personal items	5%	2%	4%	6%	14%
▪ Doing light housework	5%	2%	3%	8%	16%
▪ Preparing meals	4%	2%	3%	5%	7%
▪ Bathing	2%	1%	2%	2%	5%
▪ Dressing/undressing	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%
▪ Getting to the bathroom	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%
▪ Medication management	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%
▪ Managing money	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%
▪ Using the telephone	2%	1%	1%	3%	9%
▪ Getting in and out of bed	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
▪ Eating	1%	-	1%	1%	-

**NOTE: Total represents the percentage of all respondents who answered both Question 8 and Question 10.*

Gender – Male and female respondents had similar difficulties in most cases. Similar percentages of males and females reported having problems getting information about services and benefits, finding legal advice or counseling, finding recreational activities that interest them, age discrimination, elderly abuse, and finding employment opportunities. (See Table 20.)

However, there is a measurable difference between the numbers of males and females who cited having problem with particular service-related, health related, and financial issues. For example, more females than males report having a problems with getting homemaker services for household chores, transportation, accidents in the home, and having enough money to live on. More males than females find getting more education problematic.

Table 20
Issues of Concern by Gender
 (Questions 7 and 11)

	Minor or Major Problem		
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
<u>Services</u>			
▪ Getting information about services/benefits	38%	38%	38%
▪ Finding legal advice/counseling	29%	28%	29%
▪ Finding recreational or social activities that interest you	25%	25%	25%
▪ Transportation	17%	14%	20%
▪ Getting homemaker services for household chores	17%	13%	21%
▪ Getting information about volunteer opportunities	11%	12%	11%
▪ Getting more education	10%	11%	9%
<u>Health</u>			
▪ Getting adequate health care	29%	29%	28%
▪ Accidents in the home (such as falling)	16%	13%	18%
▪ Getting adequate nursing home care	8%	8%	7%
▪ Getting enough food/nutrition	8%	7%	8%
▪ Getting mental health services or counseling	7%	7%	6%
▪ Drug and/or alcohol abuse or misuse	3%	3%	2%
<u>Social Issues</u>			
▪ Loneliness	22%	19%	25%
▪ Crime	11%	12%	11%
▪ Age discrimination	11%	11%	11%
▪ Taking care of an adult	11%	11%	11%
▪ Isolation	10%	8%	11%
▪ Racial discrimination	5%	6%	4%
▪ Taking care of a child under 18	5%	6%	5%
▪ Elderly abuse	3%	3%	3%
<u>Financial Issues</u>			
▪ Cost of energy/utilities	63%	62%	65%
▪ Having enough money to live on	38%	35%	41%
▪ Housing	23%	21%	25%
▪ Employment opportunities	13%	13%	13%

**NOTE: Total represents the percentage of all respondents who answered both Question 7 and Question 1*

When asked about their ability to perform 14 different activities, males and females responded similarly to eight of the activities, including eating, bathing, dressing and undressing, getting in and out of bed, getting to the bathroom, medication management, money management, and using the telephone. (See Table 21.) Some of the activities that more female respondents reported having difficulty doing are similar to the issues which more females reported presented them with problems. For example, more females than males responded having trouble doing both light and heavy housework and using different types of transportation. More female respondents also reported having difficulty walking and shopping for personal items.

Table 21
Ability to Perform Tasks by Gender
 (Questions 8 and 11)

<u>Tasks</u>	Serious Difficulty or Unable to Do		
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
▪ Doing heavy housework	19%	12%	27%
▪ Ability to use different types of transportation	10%	6%	14%
▪ Walking	9%	6%	11%
▪ Shopping for personal items	5%	3%	7%
▪ Doing light housework	5%	4%	7%
▪ Preparing meals	4%	2%	5%
▪ Bathing	2%	2%	3%
▪ Dressing/undressing	2%	1%	2%
▪ Getting to the bathroom	2%	1%	2%
▪ Medication management	2%	2%	3%
▪ Managing money	2%	2%	3%
▪ Using the telephone	2%	2%	2%
▪ Eating	1%	-	1%
▪ Getting in and out of bed	1%	1%	2%

**NOTE: Total represents the percentage of all respondents who answered both Question 8 and Question 11.*

Income – Many services may be more accessible or are perceived to be more accessible to respondents from higher income groups. This trend is particularly apparent in the case of married respondents. (See Tables 22 and 23, A and B.) For example about three out of five respondents in the lowest income bracket for married people (combined monthly income of less than \$938) indicated that they have major or minor problems getting information about services and benefits. In comparison, only one in three people in the highest income bracket for married respondents (combined monthly income of more than \$1,782) reported having problems getting information about services and benefits. One-half of single respondents in the lowest income group (monthly income of \$696 or less) have a problem getting information about services and benefits while one in three in the highest income group (\$937 or more per month) have a similar problem. The difference in need is apparent in other service areas, as well as in the areas of health, social issues, and financial issues. For example, while 55 percent of married

people in the lowest bracket indicate having a problem getting adequate health care, only 25 percent in the highest bracket indicate having the same problem. Almost one-third of single people in the lowest income bracket have a problem getting enough food and nutrition while less than one out of five single people in the highest income group indicate having the same problem. Problems associated with racial discrimination, elderly abuse, taking care of a child under 18, as well as having enough money to live on are cited less frequently in increasingly more affluent groups.

Table 22A
Issues of Concern by Income for Married People
 (Questions 7 and 13)

	Total	Minor or Major Problem				
		\$938 or less	\$939- \$1,172	\$1,173- \$1,424	\$1,425- \$1,780	\$1,781 or more
<u>Services</u>						
▪ Getting information about services/benefits	38%	68%	50%	49%	47%	35%
▪ Finding legal advice/counseling	29%	57%	34%	42%	33%	24%
▪ Finding recreational/social activities that interest you	25%	52%	28%	42%	30%	21%
▪ Getting homemaker services for household chores	17%	28%	25%	20%	21%	13%
▪ Transportation	17%	39%	31%	20%	23%	10%
▪ Getting information about volunteer opportunities	11%	20%	15%	13%	15%	10%
▪ Getting more education	10%	24%	11%	23%	13%	9%
<u>Health</u>						
▪ Getting adequate health care	29%	55%	31%	33%	35%	25%
▪ Accidents in the home (such as falling)	16%	23%	24%	23%	19%	11%
▪ Getting adequate nursing home care	8%	33%	7%	10%	10%	6%
▪ Getting enough food/nutrition	8%	33%	9%	18%	13%	3%
▪ Getting mental health services or counseling	7%	25%	7%	15%	12%	6%
▪ Drug and/or alcohol abuse or misuse	2%	15%	2%	2%	3%	2%
<u>Social Issues</u>						
▪ Loneliness	22%	25%	28%	39%	24%	10%
▪ Crime	11%	11%	18%	2%	14%	12%
▪ Age discrimination	11%	26%	11%	16%	13%	9%
▪ Taking care of an adult	11%	22%	16%	16%	14%	13%
▪ Isolation	10%	16%	11%	18%	10%	6%
▪ Racial discrimination	5%	20%	9%	5%	9%	3%
▪ Taking care of a child under 18 years of age	5%	16%	7%	5%	9%	6%
▪ Elderly abuse	3%	14%	4%	5%	4%	2%
<u>Financial Issues</u>						
▪ Cost of energy/utilities	64%	80%	75%	76%	74%	60%
▪ Having enough money to live on	39%	73%	61%	65%	54%	26%
▪ Housing	24%	51%	29%	40%	31%	16%
▪ Employment opportunities	13%	33%	29%	20%	22%	9%

*NOTE: Total represents the percentage of all respondents who answered both Question 7 and Question 13.

Table 22B
Issues of Concern by Income for Single People
 (Questions 7 and 13)

	Total	Minor or Major Problem				
		\$696 or less	\$697- \$749	\$750- \$870	\$871- \$936	\$937 or more
<u>Services</u>						
▪ Getting information about services/benefits	38%	48%	61%	37%	73%	34%
▪ Finding legal advice/counseling	29%	59%	43%	23%	54%	29%
▪ Finding recreational/social activities that interest you	25%	24%	33%	31%	41%	26%
▪ Getting homemaker services for household chores	17%	23%	28%	18%	28%	19%
▪ Transportation	17%	35%	32%	22%	43%	18%
▪ Getting information about volunteer opportunities	11%	16%	14%	12%	14%	11%
▪ Getting more education	10%	30%	10%	8%	14%	8%
<u>Health</u>						
▪ Getting adequate health care	29%	53%	47%	31%	54%	26%
▪ Getting enough food/nutrition	16%	33%	19%	12%	24%	6%
▪ Accidents in the home (such as falling)	8%	25%	27%	11%	49%	16%
▪ Getting adequate nursing home care	8%	17%	14%	4%	21%	5%
▪ Getting mental health services or counseling	7%	11%	7%	-	13%	5%
▪ Drug and/or alcohol abuse or misuse	2%	9%	-	-	8%	2%
<u>Social Issues</u>						
▪ Loneliness	22%	27%	32%	44%	53%	31%
▪ Age discrimination	11%	21%	10%	15%	24%	11%
▪ Racial discrimination	11%	14%	7%	12%	8%	6%
▪ Crime	11%	14%	7%	4%	25%	11%
▪ Isolation	10%	14%	19%	12%	28%	11%
▪ Taking care of an adult	5%	13%	3%	4%	13%	5%
▪ Taking care of a child under 18 years of age	5%	11%	-	4%	11%	3%
▪ Elderly abuse	3%	9%	-	4%	16%	3%
<u>Financial Issues</u>						
▪ Cost of energy/utilities	64%	77%	69%	71%	74%	62%
▪ Having enough money to live on	39%	74%	67%	64%	76%	36%
▪ Housing	24%	53%	43%	27%	43%	24%
▪ Employment opportunities	13%	46%	18%	15%	29%	9%

**NOTE: Total represents the percentage of all respondents who answered both Question 7 and Question 13*

Table 23A
Ability to Perform Tasks by Income for Married People
 (Questions 8 and 13)

Tasks	Total	Serious Difficulty or Unable to Do				
		\$938 or less	\$939- \$1,172	\$1,173- \$1424	\$1,425- \$1,780	\$1,781 or more
▪ Doing heavy housework	19%	23%	23%	32%	19%	12%
▪ Ability to use different types of transportation	11%	19%	18%	18%	8%	6%
▪ Walking	9%	5%	4%	19%	13%	5%
▪ Shopping for personal items	5%	-	10%	11%	7%	2%
▪ Doing light housework	5%	12%	6%	9%	9%	3%
▪ Preparing meals	4%	-	6%	9%	5%	2%
▪ Medication management	3%	2%	2%	7%	3%	2%
▪ Bathing	2%	3%	2%	2%	5%	2%
▪ Dressing/undressing	2%	2%	-	2%	-	1%
▪ Getting in and out of bed	2%	2%	-	2%	2%	1%
▪ Getting to the bathroom	2%	-	-	2%	1%	1%
▪ Managing money	2%	7%	2%	9%	3%	2%
▪ Using the telephone	2%	-	-	2%	2%	1%
▪ Eating	1%	-	-	2%	-	-

**NOTE: Total represents the percentage of all respondents who answered both Question 8 and Question 13*

Table 23B
Ability to Perform Tasks by Income for Single People
 (Questions 8 and 13)

Tasks	Total	Serious Difficulty or Unable to Do				
		\$696 or less	\$697- \$749	\$750- \$870	\$871- \$936	\$937 or more
Doing heavy housework	19%	35%	44%	36%	33%	22%
Ability to use different types of transportation	11%	17%	26%	27%	23%	12%
Walking	9%	15%	36%	22%	16%	9%
Shopping for personal items	5%	8%	19%	23%	13%	5%
Doing light housework	5%	8%	20%	15%	8%	5%
Preparing meals	4%	6%	13%	8%	5%	4%
Medication management	3%	6%	10%	-	5%	2%
Bathing	2%	6%	13%	4%	3%	2%
Using the telephone	2%	6%	10%	8%	5%	2%
Dressing/undressing	2%	4%	13%	-	5%	1%
Getting to the bathroom	2%	4%	16%	4%	5%	1%
Managing money	2%	4%	7%	4%	8%	1%
Getting in and out of bed	2%	2%	7%	4%	3%	1%
Eating	1%	2%	3%	4%	-	1%

**NOTE: Total represents the percentage of all respondents who answered both Question 8 and Question 13*

Marital Status and Household Type – Respondents were asked to indicate their marital status as well as whether or not they live alone. They were also asked several questions about their emotional state. Thirty-eight percent of respondents who live alone also find loneliness to be a problem for them. (See Table 24.) This compares to the 22 percent overall who find loneliness to be a problem. While 12 percent of married people have a problem with loneliness, 37 percent of widowed respondents, 35 percent of separated respondents, 68 percent of divorced respondents, and 23 percent of those who were never married face problems with loneliness. There did not seem to be a relationship between frequency of emotional problems and either living alone or marital status. Neither was there a correlation between loneliness or isolation and years in the community or isolation and living alone.

Table 24
Household and Marital Status by Emotional Health
 (Questions 6, 7, 9, 12 and 17)

	Live		Marital Status				Never Married
	Total	Alone	Married	Widowed	Separated	Divorced	
<u>Loneliness</u>							
Major or minor problem	22%	38%	12%	37%	35%	68%	23%
<u>Isolation</u>							
Major or minor problem	10%	17%	6%	13%	12%	16%	9%
<u>Frequency of emotional problems</u>							
All/most of the time	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	2%	2%
A good bit/some time	21%	23%	19%	22%	30%	24%	19%
A little/none of the time	75%	73%	77%	73%	65%	72%	78%
<u>Frequency of feeling downhearted</u>							
All/most of the time	2%	3%	2%	3%	-	3%	2%
A good bit/some of the time	17%	21%	15%	20%	33%	21%	16%
A little/none of the time	78%	74%	81%	75%	67%	74%	79%

COMPARISON OF RESULTS FROM 1997 AND 2000 SURVEYS

Many of the same questions that were asked in the 1997 Survey of Older Americans were asked again in the 2000 survey. Table 23 contains a comparison of the results of the two surveys. Most responses were similar across the years. Some notable differences include decreases in the percentage of people who consider crime and age discrimination major or minor problems. The most significant increase is in the number of people who find the cost of energy to be a minor problem (26 percent in 1997 and 33 percent in 2000) or a major problem (14 percent in 1997 and 31 percent in 2000). Again, this increase is likely due to the recent increases in energy costs and the media attention given to these increases.

Table 25
Issues of Concern to Older People
1997 and 2000

	No Problem/ Doesn't Apply		Minor Problem		Major Problem	
	<u>1997</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>2000</u>
<u>SERVICES</u>						
▪ Getting information about services/benefits	61%	62%	30%	31%	9%	7%
▪ Finding legal advice/counseling	68%	71%	23%	20%	9%	9%
▪ Finding recreational or social activities that interest you	76%	75%	19%	21%	5%	4%
▪ Getting homemaker services for household chores	79%	83%	13%	13%	8%	5%
▪ Transportation	76%	83%	16%	12%	8%	6%
▪ Getting more education	90%	90%	7%	8%	3%	2%
▪ Getting information about volunteer opportunities	85%	89%	13%	10%	2%	2%
<u>HEALTH</u>						
▪ Getting adequate health care	78%	71%	17%	22%	5%	7%
▪ Getting adequate nursing home care	86%	92%	8%	5%	6%	3%
▪ Getting mental health services or counseling	90%	93%	8%	6%	2%	1%
▪ Drug and/or alcohol abuse or misuse	97%	98%	2%	2%	1%	1%
▪ Getting enough food/nutrition	87%	92%	10%	7%	3%	1%
<u>SOCIAL ISSUES</u>						
▪ Loneliness	75%	78%	18%	19%	7%	4%
▪ Racial discrimination	93%	94%	5%	4%	2%	1%
▪ Elderly abuse	93%	97%	5%	3%	2%	1%
▪ Crime	74%	89%	15%	9%	11%	2%
▪ Age discrimination	81%	90%	14%	8%	5%	1%
<u>FINANCIAL ISSUES</u>						
▪ Having enough money to live on	64%	62%	24%	27%	12%	11%
▪ Cost of energy/utilities	60%	37%	26%	33%	14%	31%
▪ Housing	81%	77%	11%	14%	8%	9%
▪ Employment opportunities	86%	87%	8%	7%	6%	5%

METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

The County of San Diego Aging and Independence Services (AIS) requested the assistance of the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) in conducting a survey of a random sample of the region's population age 60 and over. SANDAG has assisted local agencies on many surveys of this type through the Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program, and in fact assisted Aging and Independence Services on similar surveys in 1984, 1988, and 1997.

This survey was a mail-out, mail back survey. Most of the survey questions were taken from the core questionnaire prepared by the California Department of Aging. Questions four, five, six, and nine were from the "Health Assessment Form" developed by the federal government for the Social Health Maintenance Organizations.

Once the survey questions were determined, SANDAG graphically laid out the form, printed approximately 7,000 copies. County of San Diego staff purchased a mailing list of 4,000 households sampled from all zip codes in San Diego county where people age 60 and older reside. The survey form and business reply envelopes were sent to all 4,000 households during November 2000. Households not responding to the survey within two weeks were sent a second survey form in an effort to increase the response rate.

In addition, AIS translated the survey form and printed 350 each of the English and Spanish versions. The survey forms and business reply envelopes were handed out at Senior Centers around the region. The total of 1,647 surveys were completed and returned resulting in a 35 percent response rate.

The completed surveys were then put into computer-readable form, processed, and tabulated. ZIP code information was used to determine the Supervisorial Districts of respondents.

It should be noted that a survey of this kind has several limitations. Generally, the most frail, socially isolated, or persons with mental problems or depression are not willing or able to respond. Similarly, the institutionalized population (in nursing homes and residential care facilities) has not been reached with this survey.

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A: SURVEY FORMS

APPENDIX B

Verbatim Responses - Question 7B

Please describe any problems or concerns not on the above list that are important to you.

Information About Services

- Finding information on senior services, recreation, social, health, etc. in one place! Researching all the contacts is a real pain, most of the time I give up
- Would like to know where and how to get information

Recreation

- Having computer education, arts, and crafts at senior centers
- Appropriate exercise such as available water exercise for arthritis and back
- Group activities, bowling

Homemaker Services

- As a widow, I need more information on house and car repairs-who to trust and is reliable and good in their profession-just got ripped off by a handy man who re-roofed a small shed.
- Finding a handyman to install a dryer, put up a shelf, fix a hose leak & install a new one, it's hard to find anyone trustworthy
- Managing my rental property, yard work, trimming bushes faster than they grow
- At 71 years of age with an injured left foot I need dependable in home care/ cleaning, not thieves that steal.
- Getting reputable home repair work at a reasonable price-one repair man re-roofed building without putting felt (which was here) under the tiles-a licensed carpenter wanted \$800.00 to replace a 6-stair way from a deck all material here & painted-I care of my home-outdoor problems and also handy man problems
- I am not able to run sweeper due to my back but I do now and then as I don't like to wait two weeks to have it run. I try to keep things picked-up and I do buy box dinners. I don't cook like I did when my husband was with me.
- Finding gardening help for my on-half acre (more than just mow/blow), need someone to prune trees and shrubs.
- I live in a senior complex- manager is absolutely no help. Very sarcastic, rent is raised and utilities are very high; need someone to help put up curtains etc. I am in remission from cancer, 80 years old- cannot stand on a ladder- afraid to fall.

Transportation

- Adequate public transportation! I can drive now but will not want to or can't later. Our taxi situation is disgusting and buses or senior /medical buses are poor because of hours and locations.
- Adequate parking
- I understand from other elderly in my mobile home park that it is very hard for them to find transportation to the doctor.
- Most elderly people can no longer drive-sometimes they drive when they shouldn't- which endangers us all. Need a dependable small van type service to take the elderly to doctor/hospital appointments or grocery shopping. Other towns have this, with passes issued through social services for a small cost.
- Public transportation, if I could not drive I would be isolated.

Verbatim Responses - Question 7B

Please describe any problems or concerns not on the above list that are important to you.

- Transportation to and from hospital when I have to stay in hospital for treatments or surgery. Getting to bus stops or locations by bus as my ability to walk is limited also climbing steps or stairs.
- Transportation might be a problem in the future-but not yet I have my own car. I have family here but they work.
- Parking-Pacific beach a nightmare-if they would line streets (parking lines) in heavy condo & apartment locations-many more cars would fit, without lines many people take up two spots.
- Public transportation is at a premium. I drive at present but who knows when I may depend on another option?
- Someone to call anytime to take me to the doctor/hospital
- Sufficient handicapped parking at any store
- Better transportation (buses-trains) when I will not be able to drive
- I don't know how to get around. I've got a car but I'm afraid of getting lost and won't find my way back home. I know that dumb to feel that way-but I do feel that way.
- A means of transporting myself. I'm overweight and have arthritis of the knees.
- My problem is getting to the doctors and back, I have a knee problem and can't walk over a block or two.
- Shopping sometimes is very hard since I don't have a car. I depend on public transportation. Sometimes I forget that I'm an old woman and but too many thing when I go to the store.

Other – Service Related

- The help provided by Services and Social issues is based on “Here's what helps” philosophies that came into play seemingly 60 years or more age. The younger senior citizen has no interest or little faith in the assistance provided today.
- No personal phone service-all automated, very frustrating and tends to make me angry.
- Automated phone service
- The various agencies devised to serve us now have the attitude that people were created to suit them and to merely provide employment for them and serve them.
- Not enough seniors volunteer their time

Health Care

- HMO health care, the doctors are over worked and over scheduled and can not give adequate care. I don't blame the doctors
- Recovering from hip surgery-needs lots of help, still do
- Dental care
- Make appointment to go see a doctor
- Better, cheaper medical care
- Getting medical advice on phone when I really need it but am not sick enough for emergency room.
- The state of health care. Physicians that spend minimum inadequate time to diagnose the high cost of drugs. If I'm in better health today it's due to my own research and experimenting with vitamins and herbs. Reluctance of employers to employ older work.

Verbatim Responses - Question 7B

Please describe any problems or concerns not on the above list that are important to you.

- Age related medical problems and an inadequate care
- Getting support group counseling
- Bereavement classes at the present time

Nursing Home Care

- Adequate nursing home care (not needed presently) is too expensive. We eventually will have to move to a less expensive locale if we-either of us becomes disabled.
- Nursing homes are hell on earth-spent 5 days after relapse from bilateral hip surgery-they are under staffed & under paid help that works there. I live alone and am concerned for how much longer I can do this.

Cost of Medical Care/Medicine

- HMO's are a major problem - have to make too many changes, you finally get a good doctor then your HMO changes your insurance.
- Possible degradation of HMO coverage along with cost increases for services & drugs
- The need to continue and keep my now excellent medical care through my insurance coverage, Medicare plus Blue Cross of California
- The U.S. Navy has failed in its guaranteed health care coverage for retirees.
- Medical insurance
- Continuing huge cost of medication and fact that despite concern drug costs escalate every four months
- Price of prescriptions
- My Secure Horizon's premium (which didn't cost anything until a year ago) is on the rise. My co-pay for drugs increased once again.
- High cost of supplemental medical coverage and the cost of prescriptions
- Concerned about the price of medicine, too much.
- Health insurance cost is very expensive and food prices are increasing. I have and illness osteoporosis which keeps me at home most of the time where I perform my exercise.
- Increase costs in medical industry
- Deductible on health, plus cost for medication and housing, bills
- The extremely high cost of maintaining health coverage to ensure my wife will be well cared for if anything happens to me; and which is currently a wasteful detriment to improving our aging conditions because "politicians" prevent it being used to support our basic source of support and comfort-the military hospital.
- Cost of long term care
- Cost of HMO
- Price of prescriptions, price of medical insurance, more senior discounts and increase from 10 percent to 25 percent
- Cost of prescription drugs (2)
- Cost of medical insurance, cost of prescriptions
- Cost of medicine (3)
- The cost of health care and medicine despite HMO's the co-pay does not permit to get proper care
- My medical deductible has gone to over \$500.00

Verbatim Responses - Question 7B

Please describe any problems or concerns not on the above list that are important to you.

- Cost of prescription drugs outrageous. I belong to an HMO but my co-payments are \$50 a month
- Medical benefits at work have too high a deductible to make it even a benefit-especially for healthy people. Also Medicaid/Medicare doesn't work-do away with it don't try to fix it.
- Losing retirement health benefits and reducing pension because of a hostile company merger. Millions of retirees are being adversely affected by large corporations reducing health benefits and raiding pension funds.
- Good quality dental care is far too expensive and the DMV as always is a pain in the neck. I'm sure they would like to see everyone over the age of 60 off the highway and the only reason they don't push harder is they know they will be that age one day.
- Cost of medication up from \$15 to \$20
- The cost of the supplemental health insurance \$283.00 a month, the cost of medication \$560.00 a month
- You should list the concern for cost of prescription drugs for the aged-what a rip off. Age 65, that magic number, was like getting a \$1,000 tax free raise!
- Medical insurance, dental insurance, poor housing for seniors. High insurance costs, gasoline prices, electricity, gas to cook & heat homes and high water costs. All these are important to my low income as I am an injured senior due to my employer chemically injuring me.
- All I know I am not going to be able to pay my prescription

Medical Condition

- Trouble of finding out about my feet problem been to all kinds of doctors. Paying out for medicines going up all the time.
- My sinus problem now and then. Quite a bother to me this time of the year, sneezing running nose and headache.
- Eyesight (2)
- Immensely overweight. I am trying to lose 100 pounds. It is the hardest thing I have ever attempted to do. Pray for me. Thank you. Problem: health insurance for those of us who can not afford it.
- Care for Alzheimer's disease
- Due to impaired ability to walk or stand, my activities are severely curtailed. I was struck (in my car) by a police car in January 1999 and legs were injured.
- I live with my son and I have concern and had open heart surgery, my health is starting to deteriorate, my concern is that I not be a burden to my son and daughter.
- Parkinson's disease
- Keeping check on osteo arthritis
- Have been under treatment periodically for a rare form of blood cancer during past 10 years-treated with chemotherapy by Kaiser Permanente. My oncologist say's I'm in good partial remission and I am hopeful.
- Cancer

Verbatim Responses - Question 7B

Please describe any problems or concerns not on the above list that are important to you.

Aging

- I guess I am like most seniors I worry about when I am no longer able to care for myself. I have children near, do not want to be a financial or physical burden.
- The problem with realizing I'm 60 years old. I still do activities 20 year olds do. I don't realize my body is starting to weaken.
- Memory short comings increasing tendency to forget or to recall past events or peoples names My only problem is getting old (I'm 72 next month) Being unable to remember things is very disconcerting-otherwise all okay

Loneliness

- Getting to know people with similar interest, problems, backgrounds.
- Social lady friend-I have a lot of friends and I'm not lonely but I lack a female companion.
- Not finding any "close" friends-have no family or blood relatives. Know lot of people but not like a "close" friend

Crime

- Recent residential burglaries despite installing a private security system and numerous changes of locks.
- Postal boxes are sometimes tampered with, so I have had to rent a box
- The crime rate is of particular concern; particularly those types of crimes which limit my freedom to move about the community in nighttime.
- Safety in my home, I live alone and worry about intruders or falling (I use oxygen and the tubing kinks and curls and sometimes becomes disconnected without my knowledge.
- Keeping crime out of my apartment someone comes in everyday when I'm out. Things are moved around & some things are taken. The door key has circulated around because the lock opens easily, when it's picked one doesn't work very well. The manager was notified and said no one had hers.
-

Discrimination

- Age discrimination/racial discrimination
- Racism, poverty
- Discrimination against smokers
- Scams against the elderly, especially getting honest price on repairs

Taking Care of a child under 18 years of age

- Social services will not send me any financial aid for the four-year-old unless I go in and apply. I am too busy with transporting grandkids to school at different times-cooking, washing etc.-plus the fact that a welfare office is somewhere I don't want to go-Help! Help! All the grandparents raising grandchildren.

Verbatim Responses - Question 7B

Please describe any problems or concerns not on the above list that are important to you.

Taking Care of an Adult

- During the harmony Grove fire in our area my husband had a stroke and I just had hip replacement. We could not move away and did not know where to go, housebound. Caregiver if I'm in the hospital for spouse.
- Having someone reliable to "spell" with the 95-year-old adult in my care. She gets unruly and chases off anyone we hire for a few hours respite.
- Concerned about health and with adult girl living with me; concerned about difficulty adult son having with divorce-kids not doing well.

Widows

- What can be done for my wife should I expire?
- Loneliness after husband passed away, cost of energy with bill going up makes my income not go very far
- Since my husband died last died last year life has been very hard, I went from almost \$5000 a month to \$1,731.
- Living alone since my husband of 45 years died in 1998.
- I worry about losing my husband and what will happen to me if I have to live alone. Thanks to Byron Wear and Jean Durgan I have seen many widows adjust to their situation and I trust in God; so I know I can survive if this happens in time.
- Concern about my wife if anything happens to me.
- Loneliness, still miss my two husbands.
- My husband has heart problems, despite this he is my caregiver. This disturbs me as I don't think he should be doing this, but he doesn't want anyone to come in the house except to clean.

Having Enough Money to Live on

- Really none at this time except Social Security does not seem to last regarding food. From the 20th of any month till I get my Social Security. check, I literally go without food. I sometimes borrow from neighbor.
- What bugs me most is the fact that each time your Social Security check each increases, the prices on medical drugs, food, and housing goes up as well. This is also the case with minimum wage.
- Financial problem due to the high cost of living, need help with heavy housework.
- Rising cost of everything except Social Security.
- Benefits that I receive do not cove my monthly expenses. My monthly benefit is \$761.00 and my monthly expenses are \$1300.00. I have used up my savings to meet these bills, now I am without a cushion.
- The most important thing to me is to be able to pay rent, because Social Security is not enough even for food.
- Not enough money for many elderly they have a difficult time to pay insurance's and food often raised a large family well would not save. Rents in many apartments are too high.
- Cost of everything seems to go up-doesn't any ever go down.
- Increases in retirement and Social Security benefits do not keep up with increases in cost of living (utilities, taxes, gasoline, insurance, food, services, etc.).

Verbatim Responses - Question 7B

Please describe any problems or concerns not on the above list that are important to you.

- Social Security is not keeping up with the ever-increasing costs of absolutely everything. Soon it will not be possible for me to keep cutting things anymore.
- The price of gasoline, the continuing increasing cost of food, health care even with HMO's.
- Cost of prescription drugs, cost of energy (electric & natural gas), cost of gasoline in San Diego County.
- People living on fixed income do Not live, we exist, mostly our own fault.
- Cost of living is going up and not enough money coming in.
- Issues of income after age 60-maintenance of health care plan after age 60.
- Fear that I might out live my savings.
- My house needs a lot of repairs a bit of a budget problem.
- Having an adequate income from savings and retirement to keep-up with inflating prices as years go by and if I am still alive.
- Having enough money to take care of myself rest of my life. I have invested money, but the world is so crazy now that it concerns me to no end how to plan. Am sure I am not alone in fretting this way.

Cost of Energy/Utilities

- Cost of utilities.
- Cost of gas.
- Why doesn't Cox Cable give a discount to seniors. Why the water department regulates our sewer usage and the amount of water one uses and does not allow any kind of discount for seniors.
- Cost of gasoline for automobile, yard up-keep, cost of water, eye and dental care, driving in traffic.
- God has blessed us with a healthy body & mind so we do not have any other concerns- Maybe the high utilities & gasoline prices.
- Gasoline prices.
- Cost of auto registration ridiculous in California, cost of gas ridiculous in San Diego.
- We are quite a distance from public transportation and are dependent on our car. The high cost of gasoline and maintenance is of concern as a limited income is eroded by inflation.
- Cost of living in San Diego is driving older people on fixed incomes out of the city. Gas prices, utility etc. are outrageous. We don't want to leave San Diego but if you aren't on welfare you eventually will be driven out.
- Raising the price of transportation and utilities.
- High gas prices.
- Utility bills.
- The current energy crisis-we are concerned that industry and the California economy will be dramatically harmed.

Housing

- Where I should move that will be enjoyable and affordable. Can I work? Where doing what?
- How and where can we live as a couple active retirees after selling our home?

Verbatim Responses - Question 7B

Please describe any problems or concerns not on the above list that are important to you.

- I live in 55 and over park. CC&R's say no pets. 2001-Governor says must allow pets- Most people do not want pets, that's why we bought here!
- Finding clean insect free smaller apartments at reasonable cost in low crime areas is becoming very, very difficult. Survival requires food, shelter, clothing and reasonable medical care-yet the cost of shelter is not in the formula for determining COLA(s) for older citizens.
- I have been on the list for Section 8 for two years and recently learned that they are now working on helping those entering the list in 1995. Also my present residence is no longer accepting Section 8 renters which means that I will have to move eventually. my rent is \$625.00 per month.
- Yearly increase in space rent.
- Help for homeless of all ages.
- The waiting list for Section 8! Last year I wasn't eligible, this year the wait is 8 years!
- Concern for my future housing, transportation other than to senior center.
- Finding housing that isn't totally out of control.
- We have a small home (835 sq. ft.) in a senior community. We can't compete with a rising market-our rent is adequate 30 year loan-we couldn't rent anymore due to higher and higher rents-now we won't be able to protect what we have if everything else goes

Taxes

- The rule on selling your home and buying another 5 percent above or below selling price, to take your tax base with you is very unfair to seniors. We should be able to take the base with us to the selling price. New taxes on that above selling price.
- Taxes
- Taxes on Social Security income.
- California's over all exceptionally high tax structure for businesses and individuals. Inability of our political leaders to consistently exercise sound judgement & make good decisions.
- Marriage penalty, inheritance taxes, limits on retirement plan contributions, level of federal & state income taxes for middle class taxpayers.

Politics

- Okay, my biggest, and maybe only concern is that we the people don't get "Gored."
- Overall disenchantment with a system that only serves the well-off or communities/society-the ball park, Charger ticket boondoggle etc.
- Worry about Al Gore lying and stealing the election, and I am a registered democrat until the next election.
- Interference by governmental agencies.
- Environmental idiots getting too much power, city politicians selling the city/county down the drain too many on death row-start executing the 710.
- Mayor Susan Golding putting San Diego in debt for years with Charger and new ballpark scams!
- What are the people of San Diego and California in general waiting for?
- Intrusive Big Brother governmental action, exemplified by the too powerful San Diego County Health Department.

Verbatim Responses - Question 7B

Please describe any problems or concerns not on the above list that are important to you.

- Sierra club and Greenpeace shutting down recreational areas for just a weed.
- Government corruption, officials controlled by big business.
- The election should have ended
- Politics, a Post Office Box on both of their Houses! (Not enforced with the minor parties as well.)

Traffic

- Increase in traffic accidents/vandalism.
- Traffic.
- Traffic-too many lights, signs etc.
- Traffic/freeway, slow postal service, dogs off leash, need a way to get handyman inexpensively and quickly.
- Traffic-Semi-truck passing going over 70mph.
- People should not talk on car phones while driving! Women should not put make-up on while driving! Kids should be 18 years old to get a drivers license.
- Increasing traffic-less enjoyable to take trips or do local shopping.
- Urgent! Autos speed on Lake Murray Blvd. The police department should park on this street to observe the speeding motorists & write out tickets before pedestrians get hurt or killed. Please do something about this mess in La Mesa, Ca 91942.
- Traffic speeders (I go limit on freeway) tail gaiters lack of CHP on roads. Where will I go when I am really old-nursing homes are mostly the pits and charge huge amounts, all of us worry about these things.

Neighborhood Problems

- Unsupervised children in neighborhood.
- Young people without supervision-working parents who don't care- abuse of young children.
- Being taken advantage of because of age by young people-lack of respect by young people.
- Being harassed by youths.
- Worried that this area might go to open housing. We will be prisoners in our homes, there will be skate boarding parties into all hours. There will be break-in's because we are seniors and can't fight.
- Interaction with neighbors.
- Over stimulation from noise, traffic, business. Difficulty with modern electronics-computers etc. Frequent disrespect from younger people.
- Noise - kids and their boom box loud radios and cars or vehicles (trucks, motorcycles etc.) with loud engines. Police never enforce ordinances on noise pollution.
- Young adults speeding in residential areas, especially when bringing children to school. Speeding residential areas, lack of enforcement of 25 MPH rule. High price of electrical energy, what's going on?
- NOISE-continued barking dog's that owners ignore. This is over the accepted decibels and a violation which police should enforce but they ignore. No wonder emergency sirens are not heard and yielded to.

Verbatim Responses - Question 7B

Please describe any problems or concerns not on the above list that are important to you.

- I've complained to the city of Lemon Grove services about an abandoned car on our street, with no results. A neighbor keeps many cats and her property smells so bad it's uncomfortable to be near it, but nothing is done about it.

Population Growth

- The influence of the problems our own grown children on our lives. Being forced to constantly change how we do things because of technology changes forced upon us rather than chosen by us. Lack of forward planning (ie freeways) and always "catching – up."
- Indiscriminate housing growth and associated traffic problems, obviously little or no planning has been done to relieve these problems and see in future.
- Impact of a growing SDSU.
- The increase in growth of the area has reduced quality of life eg. pollution, beaches, air, water. San Diego water is not clean enough to drink, the roads and highways are overcrowded and congested our green space is disappearing and yet we build!
- Overcrowding-to much immigration-tired of being squeezed by all of the new building and importing the trash of the world to live here!
- All infrastructures are aged and worn-Uncontrolled traffic increases in all areas-Uncontrolled housing on all open land-water supply for more and more aliens.
- The infestation of illegal aliens coming across our borders and the inability to stop them!

Other

- We need more funding for our Norman Park senior center and our nutrition centers, St. Charles nutrition center.
- Not being able to communicate very well in English and not being able to get help very quick when I'm sick. Loneliness and nervousness.
- My largest problem was being forced to Palomar Hospital by ambulance drivers after car accident when I could clearly say I want my doctor and his hospital is Pomerado, I was treated very badly & would love to sue until this day!
- Too many requests for money in mail every day, they come 2-3-4- a day.
- Giving up my independence: a divorce in my daughter's life, concern for my granddaughter (due to the heartache of her father's affairs has caused) Having to move in next few months and don't know where to go.
- Telephone sales for home repairs, we get at least 6 calls a week for free estimates are given just because representatives are in our neighborhood. Also offers in mail/phone for free financial planning.
- Not enough time for everything: spouse, family, travel, entertainment, job, projects, duties etc.
- My concern is for all the elderly who don't know where or how to get such services. I may be there one day also.
- My son always accompanies me whenever I need to go. He keeps an unusual schedule in staying up late reading, snacking, feeding our pets (cats-ours and strays). My daughter board and care is only a few blocks away. My "time" is short and since I am

Verbatim Responses - Question 7B

Please describe any problems or concerns not on the above list that are important to you.

the last person in my generation we make the most of our time together. My daughter spends as much time with me as she can. Her B&C take frequent trips which I pay for.

- This bothers me very much that when I am talking on the phone someone else is on the other line listening.
- Future security-the huge number of things (details, mail, phone calls, repairs etc) to take care of and think about . I need a full time assistant just to have some time free (I don't have any assistant of course.)
- Promotional job opportunities and transfers.
- Too many seasonal decorations at dining room, very little religious opportunities. Do have a 45 min service each Friday morning.
- Violence on TV, I do watch TV and it's really difficult to find shows that do not include guns, knives, vandalism, robbery

Verbatim Responses - Question 18

Do you have any additional comments about obtaining information or services?

Information About Services

- I have no idea how to avail myself of services for seniors! And I have no idea what those services are!
- Is there a handbook of telephone numbers/services offered.
- Publish separate phone book for government city/state/village phone numbers with easier way to locate numbers.
- It would be nice to see a booklet that can help us find information and services for the elderly, especially on business and services that are honest and don't take advantage of us. So when services are needed we can use them.
- No comment, but do think that services should be aired often for those who seriously need help and have no one to turn to.
- Information for seniors and young adults should be made available through neighborhood library/internet systems. Also employment opportunities for seniors.
- I wish there were booklets indicating what is available out there.
- Seems to be lots of information-almost too much to sort through. Not enough services for housebound.
- The number below is the first phone number I have seen anywhere for a point of contact, there is no Public Relations or media promulgation of the number that I am aware of.
- We do need a 800 number to call for info regarding seniors!
- Encouraging radio and TV adds (not the impossible) pamphlets or booklets available in our area. More needs to be done for seniors-we are living longer and are passed over. It would be nice to have a list of services (especially) of transportation sent out. I know Vista has a service but none in my area.
- Each agency non-profit should have cross-reference for callers. The persons answering don't help a person find the right agency.
- Hire white, English-speaking people, that speak slowly and are courteous-then you won't have any problems.
- Difficult to obtain information you wanted-a lot of "red tape." Services not in your near area-when you call they answer a question hang up immediately-phone always busy.
- Wish we had toll free calls to the county offices and services from Fallbrook-my calls to Animal Control one day were \$4.67.
- Would like additional information/legal advice.
- I have found that items here is not available or I don't know how to go about finding out.
- There are not enough places for seniors to get information.
- Would like list on important information.
- Yes-too many times you reach an automated service when you call to get information. I like to speak to a human to get information.
- I haven't tried your HELP line but I hope there are live people to answer the phone. Holding the phone while I go through "menus" is one of the more irritating tasks in life. If one can't answer promptly a return number should be provided so the inquirer does not need to hold the telephone.
- Wish information was more available on how to receive help for parents on fixed incomes.

Verbatim Responses - Question 18

Do you have any additional comments about obtaining information or services?

Legal Advice or Counseling

- Help with legal services that won't cause me to go bankrupt.
- I really got the runaround when trying to find who to call about senior legal assistance and when I did reach the right party, I had to wait weeks before I got an appointment.
- I would like to know how to find and select an attorney or other qualified person to help setting up a will or living trust.
- Would like to know where I could get help in making out a Living trust and a living will without costing too much.

Recreation

- Most senior activities are in the daytime and I work. It would be nice once a week to have something in an evening or weekend.
- North County has little to offer-we need space for meetings that are not religious churches-you have Boy's club's, Girls' club's how about Senior Club's?
- A way to meet new people with similar interests (not just old people-we like young people). Condos that can be purchased in village type atmosphere with affordable restaurants.

Homemaker Services

- Referral service for low cost repairs house, cars, house cleaning and yard work- especially in the rural areas of the county.
- Just help house cleaning.
- As I grow older I will need household cleaning service referrals for finding adequate maid at what expense?
- Lack of reliable handyman and home maintenance services.
- SSI said we are not eligible for house-cleaning help as income is a bit too much. But we can not afford \$40 for 2 hours twice a month. Husband disabled Veteran 80% DA.
- List of available home cleaning ladies in Escondido-Please honest people.

Transportation

- County transportation department has a few glitches to iron out
- I feel more help needs to be done to help seniors especially in the are of transportation. Social Security is poor for seniors in this country compared to other countries. Medical is a disgrace. "Charity begins at home" not to be given to world countries. The US Government needs to look after their seniors a lot better than they do
- Transportation (have no car but there is a good bus service only I haven't been well. Never the less I can get out somewhat for groceries and push a cart home or sometimes, get a ride. Getting groceries home is a big problem. Getting to Target shopping center or North County Fair is a big problem also somewhat tiring.
- Hard to walk to public transportation, I use a walker. Transportation is a major problem-lift is only good for doctor's appointments or church. Before disability act we could call lift and get a ride next day! No more!
- Bus stop could be closer.
- We need reliable transportation

Verbatim Responses - Question 18

Do you have any additional comments about obtaining information or services?

- Transportation for medical emergencies.
- Difficulty in transportation, getting on a bus (or to a bus), getting some chores or minor repairs done.
- At this time I have been able to care for myself but had both knees replaced and open heart surgery by pass. My car is old but driveable and if I can't drive, I will be very handicapped.
- Transportation -right now I can drive but sooner or later I won't be able to. Energy very expensive.
- Would like a list of all public transportation facilities around the county of San Diego. Available from Ranch Bernardo to Downtown to North County shopping mall etc. Including Dial-a-Ride, buses, taxis etc. List of nursing homes and rest homes in San Diego and approximate prices, thank you!
- I have a 1984 Nissan Sentra that really needs a lot of work and I haven't the money to get this work done-are there any people who do vehicle repairs for little or no money as charity donations? My vehicle is one of the only things I have to help keep me.
- In New Hyde PR,NY I depended on a service by FISH an organization that provided transportation to the doctors. The volunteers picked us up and after the examinations drove us home. Mostly the drivers were senior citizens. The county also took the seniors food shopping once a week-no charge.
- I seem to be more limited than most at times I find it next to impossible to get to a phone. Also no car will be impossible-it has been threatened someone come through our parking lot and damage cars or steal parts off them.

Medical Care

- If you could recommend a group or doctor that is not in an HMO and that will take time to listen to and really care for us seniors-please let me know! We're really desperate for someone who will care about us. Guess we're spoiled by the excellent doctors we had in L.A. Moved here because our only daughter and grandkids, couldn't make the drive down from L.A. anymore.
- I needed that help when I was taking care of my 87 year-old father in law-doctors should have better info and referral sources.
- Getting medicines that are needed.
- How to obtain a therapist in my area.
- Adequate information on health problems.
- Would like information about all services that are available to me-such as a Podiatrist.
- How do I cope with an obstinate 95 year old mother-in-law when I'm 78 years old and not in good health. There is no other outside help available because of her attitude, my husband and I shudder this burden alone.
- Assisted living homes are extremely expensive. Feel seniors are not taken care of in this country. It's a national disgrace. My generation has to support them.

Cost of Medical Care/Medicine

- Is there such a thing as Dental Assistance?

Verbatim Responses - Question 18

Do you have any additional comments about obtaining information or services?

- Paying for 24 hour care is costly – the current company, Affordable Home Care-charges \$980-per week. Isn't there some way to help care for someone without having to go into a home? I've already had to get a reverse mortgage on my home!
- Don't forget to include subject of medication expense for elderly in next survey.
- My medicine averages \$300.00 per month.
- S.S.I. people pay nothing for their health service why should I pay \$107.00 share of cost? Medical insurance, employment for seniors.
- Benefits cost too much for what we get from Social Security.

Food and Nutrition

- How to get food stamps.
- I need some more food. My income is too low so it not enough for me and my wife (she is also a my dependence) she does not have any income.
- Out here eating right and regular is my main problem.

Cost of Living

- Cost of living.
- The money I receive is not sufficient for all my expenses.
- My monthly income is \$977.21, my rent alone is \$620.00 plus add utilities, car maintenance, plus co-pay to the pharmacy, plus food sometimes is not easy. But I have two children nearby, they help so I am blessed.
- I am 80 and I have a hard time with my finances.
- I don't have enough to meet my personal need because I can't work anymore because of my age.
- I need to return to work so I can survive at 67 and having worked almost 50 years, I find this disgusting.
- Yes, how can I get more money to live on?
- Do something for "scams" on electrical service and stop paying any salary to each PUC members since they can't do any good-all are being controlled by the "Power Company CEO's.
- State of Washington passed a law lowering auto registration to \$30.00 per auto-why doesn't Steve Peace and the rest do something worthwhile. They do nothing to help the people who elect them-California gouges us all.
- I would like to know if you ever look over Social Security payments. I receive my first husband's who died at age 57. It's very minimum compared to any of my friends.
- Not giving enough information about utilities-especially gas and electric, as to how to receive assistance in meeting payments.
- I believe the services offered in San Diego County are great. I hope the prices for these services become less expensive by the time I need them.
-

Housing

- Would like to know if I'm going to get help from housing assistance to help pay my rent, it keeps going up, but Social Security increase doesn't pay the increase.
- More inexpensive housing is needed for seniors.

Verbatim Responses - Question 18

Do you have any additional comments about obtaining information or services?

- I am aware of a serious need for low-cost housing for seniors and am concerned about my own future in that respect.
- Is there any way to shorten waiting list for Section 8-my apartment complex is approved and my landlord is agreeable.
- When the time or need arrives, I would like some information on retirement homes.
- Please help old people to have housing.
- SSI, Medical, Section 8, etc should only be for those lifetime Americans.
- I wish there was someone, a person to go to, in the city in regard to be being gouged by mobile home owners on their rent, utilities also.
- I would like to receive information about trailer parks in El Cajon area-locations, rent etc. in case I may someday have to move my 31 ft. house trailer from my present location in case this park is sold or re-developed into business or apartment building.

Taxes

- The estate tax should be done away with altogether that would be a great service!
- I believe strongly that long term care for the elderly should be tax deductible because it saves the state money if elderly people pay for their care when needed. Legislators should be working on this problem. People are living longer and will need care!

Other

- Find a part time job close to my home that pays more than minimum wage.
- Communication with police, courts and DMV.
- Do seniors get treated as second-rate citizens? Ask seniors about the response they receive from ambulance requests and police calls for protection.
- The free computer classes at the career center (Kearney Mesa) are very timely and valuable (very good teachers) should have more neighborhood locations.
- Vet services for pets-low income need assistance.

APPENDIX C

