GERONTOLOGY 101

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SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

- Defining an Older Person
- Overview of Montgomery County's Changing Demographics
  - Aging
  - Diversity
- Healthy Aging and Importance
- Embracing our Older Population
WHEN DOES OLD AGE BEGIN?
VIDEO CLIP FROM FRAMEWORKS
(STARTS AT 25:25)
HTTP://WWW.FRAMEWORKSINSTITUTE.ORG/REFRAMING-AGING.HTML
WHEN DOES SOMEONE GET TO BE AN OLDER PERSON, SENIOR, OR GET THE DISCOUNT?

- Older Americans Act – 60 years
- AARP – 50 years
- Call ‘N’ Ride – at least 67 years or at least 16 years with a disability
- Employment Discrimination – 40 years
- Medicare – 65 years
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) – 55 years
- Road Scholar – 50 years
- My 7 year old niece – 30 years
LOTS OF DIFFERENT DEFINITIONS

- Many HHS services have an eligibility age of 60.
- Many Recreation services have an age of 55.

Recent research shows that it depends on the term you use:

- Older adult could be as young as 40, senior could be as old as 80... either way these terms don’t seem to work. Frameworks Institute a national research group landed on older person/people because it was around 60/65.
“IF YOU MEET A 65 YEAR OLD. YOU HAVE MET ONE 65 YEAR OLD.”
WHO ARE THE NEW OLDER PEOPLE?

- The Baby Boomer Cohort (1946-1964) is the newest group of Older People.
- Baby Boomers have a diverse experience, they came of age during the 60’s and 70’s.
  - Many experienced the Vietnam War Protests, Racial Equity Movement, and other protest movements firsthand
- No reason to assume they will not change the way we view old age. They have already shown different preferences than the cohorts that came before them.
THE GROWTH OF THE OLDER POPULATION
PROJECTED GROWTH IN U.S. OLDER POPULATION

Source: US Census, 2014

43,145,000

55,969,000

72,774,000

79,719,000

83,739,000

2012

2020

2030

2040

2050

Nearly Double!
PROJECTED GROWTH IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY’S OLDER POPULATION

Source: Maryland Department of Planning

More than Double!
WHAT IS CAUSING THE GROWTH IN THE OLDER POPULATION?

- (1) More people are living longer!
- (2) The Baby Boomers
THE US HAS GAINED MORE THAN 25 YEARS OF LIFE EXPECTANCY

THE BABY BOOMER BULGE

Figure 2. Age and Sex Structure of the Population for the United States: 2012, 2030, and 2050

THE DIVERSITY OF THE OLDER POPULATION
MONTGOMERY COUNTY IS A DIVERSE COUNTY

Demographic Trends in Montgomery County: Race and Ethnicity

Source: Census, Brown University
BY 2040, NEARLY 60% OF 55+ ADULTS WILL BE PART OF A MINORITY GROUP

Source: Census ACS 2009-13
MONTGOMERY COUNTY’S OLDER POPULATION IS DIVERSE

Source: Census ACS 2009-13

65+ RESIDENTS

- White (NH): 64%
- Hispanic: 7%
- Black: 11%
- Asian: 14%
- Other: 4%

MINORITIES 65+

- Other: 5754
- Hispanic: 9817
- Black: 14922
- Asian: 18014

Source: Census ACS 2009-13
ASIAN-AMERICAN OLDER POPULATION GROWTH IS HIGHEST AMONG THE 75+ POPULATION

Source: Census ACS 2009-13
HEALTH AND THE OLDER PERSON
HOW HEALTHY IS THE OLDER POPULATION?

- We learned that people are living longer, but are they healthier. The answer appears to be not really! And, not everyone is living longer.

- What is making people less healthy?
  - Obesity
    - Diets
    - Lack of exercise
  - Mental health
  - Substance abuse
DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUPS

Source: CDC, 2016; Measure of America, 2017; USA Life Expectancy, 2017
DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN INCOME GROUPS

Accessed on April 4, 2016
WHAT IS DRIVING THESE DIFFERENCES?

- Education
- Socio-Economic Status
- Access to preventative care
- Diet
- Environment
  - Exercise
  - Pollutants

BOTTOM LINE: Health is Cumulative!
FACTORS ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO MORE DISABILITY IN LATER LIFE

### Percent of Older Adults (65+) with Disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White (Non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: 2012 American Community Survey*
FACTORS ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO HIGHER RATES OF DEMENTIA IN LATER LIFE

Dementia Incidence by Race/Ethnicity

- African-American: 26.60
- Native American/Alaskan Native: 22.2
- Latino/Hispanic (any race): 19.6
- White (non-Hispanic): 19.3
- Asian-American: 15.2

Source: 2016 Alzheimer’s Association
PROBLEMS RELATED TO OBESITY

- “Obesity can exacerbate the age-related decline in physical function and lead to frailty.” (Villareal et al., 2005)
- The extra weight is not the only problem:
  - Diabetes
  - High-Blood Pressure
  - Arthritis
  - Bone Density
  - Cancer
  - Cataracts
CAUSES OF OBESITY

▶ Diets are not as healthy:
  ▶ Access to healthy foods (Larson et al., 2009)
    ▶ Healthy foods are more expensive
    ▶ Not as easy to find healthy foods
    ▶ It often takes more time to eat healthy

▶ Lack of Exercise
  ▶ More sedentary lifestyles
  ▶ Exercise takes time
MENTAL HEALTH

- According to the CDC, 20% of people 55+ will have some type of mental health concern.
- Even more alarming, in 2004, 16 percent of all U.S. suicides occurred among those 65+, while only making up 12% of population.
- Most common conditions:
  - Anxiety
  - Mood disorders (depression or bipolar disorder)
- Older people have more triggering events:
  - Other diseases
  - Loss of family and friends
  - Relocation
  - Caregiving

Source: CDC, 2014; NCOA, 2016; APA, 2015
MENTAL HEALTH

- Causes and Signs of Mental Health Issues
  - Physical disability
  - Long-term illness
  - Dementia-causing illness
  - Physical illnesses that can affect thought, memory, and emotion
  - Change of environment
  - Illness or loss of a loved one
  - Medication interactions
  - Alcohol or substance abuse
  - Poor diet or malnutrition

Source: CDC, 2014; NCOA, 2016; APA, 2015
APA estimates will be nearly 4.4 million older people with substance abuse issues by 2020.

Illicit drug users has nearly doubled between those age 50-59 between 2000 and 2010.

Most common forms of substance abuse use include:

- Alcohol
- Psychoactive medication (25% of older adults use these drugs)

The combination of alcohol and medication is also concerning and a public awareness campaign has been launched to deal with this.

Source: CDC, 2014; NCOA, 2016; APA, 2015
WHAT CAN BE DONE?
WHAT IS MONTGOMERY COUNTY DOING?
WHAT CAN BE DONE?

- Focus on improving diets
- Focus on exercise
- Focus on preventative care throughout the life course
- Focus on mental health
- Focus on substance abuse
DETERMINANTS-THE 5M’S

- Mind
- Mouth
- Muscle
- Meaningful Relationships
- Mattress
AGE-FRIENDLY AND DEMENTIA FRIENDLY MOVEMENTS

Montgomery County Launches Dementia Friendly Initiative

Tuesday, December 13, 2016

AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities

An Age-Friendly Montgomery County, Maryland

The jurisdiction is making great strides for residents ages 50+

AARP Livable Communities

Civic/Social Involvement
Communications/Outreach
Elder Abuse Prevention
Employment
Health & Wellness
Home and Community Based Services
Housing
Planning/Outdoor Spaces/Buildings
Transportation/Mobility
Senior Public Safety
HOW CAN WE THINK ABOUT AGING MORE POSITIVELY?
Social Security must be fair for everyone, not just retirees

Rising pension costs a growing problem in budget-weary Fairfax County

How ‘baby boomers’ took over the world

Pensions and retirement

Paying for the grey

As a pensions crisis looms, China looks at raising the retirement age

Generations in the workplace

Winning the generation game

Global experts convene in China to tackle challenges of aging population

VITAL SIGNS: AGING; Fighting Frailty to Stay at Home
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HOW DO WE DO THIS?

- Focus on:
  - Social supports (the community) and not individualism
    - No us versus them
      - Don’t think of as older Americans as others.
    - Focus on our community as a place where we can work together
  - Problem-solving instead of crises
    - Not a crisis that we can’t tackle. It is an opportunity for us to use our ingenuity.
OLDER PEOPLE AS CONTRIBUTORS

- Contributions of older adults to society
  - Society
  - Volunteerism
  - Caregiving
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS