 increasing aging of the population. Four-hundred and four adults from over 37 states participated. The majority of respondents were 41-64 years of age, and many anticipated relying on family and friends for a safety net, assuming that the caregivers remain in good health. As a follow up to this survey, and in light of
the current national debate about healthcare, CommonHealth ACTION partnered with BETAH Associates, Inc. to develop a larger, more robust survey for 2010. The confidential online survey was designed for adults over the age of 18 , and examined particicants's concerns about aging, expectations they have about who
will provide for their needs in their later years, and how they expect those needs to be met. Findings were compiled to illustrate responde implications. The following state of aging in America, as wefl as for public policy intion.
are some basic statistics about the nation's aging population.

CommonHealth ACTION plans to use survey findings to inform a comprehensive policy agenda for communities interested in adopting a public health approach
to aging preparedness. We anticipate these findings will also inform agencies, organizations, communities, and individuals interested in aging issues. We plan to develop and distribute the next survey in late Spring of 2011.

## BACKGROUND

- Older population projected to increase to 72 million people in 2030 , nearly 20 percent of total US population [1]
Nearly one in five US residents at that time will be 65 or older
changes in US popultation become more diverse reflecting demographic
- Increase in number of old
necessary to support them
Pensions and associated health insurance will decrease
nancial pressures on Social Security and Medicare will increase .rasing capacity to afford retirement emerging for several years, especially
-Current recession has exacerbated these concerns and brought more middle class people into the mix [2]
- Older low-income women, women of color, rural, and other underserved women - We lack foundation of home and community-based supportive services to enable - older adults to remain in their homes and communities (age in place) - These trends will present challenges and opportunn
organizations, communities, public policymakers


## SURVEY

- Forty one questions to collect quantitative and qualitative data
- Designed to gather information about
$*$ Demographic characteristics
* Demographic charact
* Availability of aging resources
* Access to and use of technology
*Perceptions about governmental preparedness for aging population
* Survey available online March
www.commonhealthaction.org
* List-serves focused on aging issues and public health
* Social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)
* Information disseminated at 2010 Conference on Aging in Chicago
$*$ Contacts at agencies dealing with aging issues
$*$ Contacts at national, state and local civil rights, political and public health organizations representing popul
-Sample $-1,022$ survey respondents


KEY FINDINGS

 prescription medication costs, property tax increases, providinin care) arare giv
ceductions in Medicare coverage, social security, and transporataion needs.


$$
\begin{aligned}
& \begin{array}{l}
\text { transportation needs, having sufficient retirement } \\
\text { income, and aceess to afordable healthcare }
\end{array} \\
& \begin{array}{l}
\text { - Youngest responstenst were mostealt oncerered about } \\
\text { recip of os scial security and reduction }
\end{array}
\end{aligned}
$$

Aging and Retirement Resources
The survey explored respondents' perceptions of avalable and affordable ressurese in their communities
(i.e affordable assisted living facilities, affordable nussing home facilities, affordable heath care, aftordable




 and would 1 ive with family members
-More men ( $12^{2}$ ) plamned to tive in a nussing
 nursing home

- Higher percenage of whites than blacks
or Hispanics seported d they would care for themselves or pay a professional
Higher percentages of blacks
(10


Higher percentages of blacks (10\%) and of Hispanics $(11 \%)$ than whites $(4 \%)$ reported they would rely on a
family member or fiend for care and would live in their own homes or in the homes of family members

-93\% of respondents taking steps now to prevent or manage chronic disease as shey age age inevt
Lower proportions of Hispanics engage in health-- Molated activiteres (age $65-75$ than younger (age 18-29) More respondents with hivher eddactionona atain-
nent and income engage in health-related a ctivities




20

Women potentially vulnerable errup
Cost of broadband would deter more women $\left(35^{\circ} \%\right.$ than men $\left(25^{\circ} \%\right.$ from Internet use
.




## ${ }^{\text {Fifty-four }}$ as hey aged





## LIMITATIONS

- Respondents had higher levels of income and education relative to general US population; however, a more representative group would likely report similar
levels of concern. The next survey will solicit responses from population with levels of concern. The next survey will solicit responses from population with Although we used percentages to create retired and oldest age respondents was quite small was likely attributab narrow age ranges
and gelimitations, sample size was sufficient to examine responses by ethnicity CONCLUSIONS
Aging of population and retiren and policy - Aging of population and retire
issues facing our country today
issues facing our country today
- Respondents expressed pervas


## $\qquad$ <br> neertainty and apprint research

- Government's ability to support an aging population
- Future cost and availability of health care
- Availability of affordable housing and transportation
- Respondents hope to remain independent and age in place but concerned about resources available to support needs
Findings suggest that gender and ethnicity interacted with SES to influenc
respondents respondents views on access and use of Internet and technology - Women and older members of historically disadvantaged groups may be particularly vulnerable to potential reduction in governmental resources


## IMPLICATIONS

-Internet access will become increasingly
important for aging and retired people important for aging and retired people
to obtain sources of information and services

- Private technology companies and those
focused on health information technolo focused on health information technolog.
should continue to study and develop should continue to study and develop
more accessible technologies for older
and diverse groups
- State and local governments, social and
religious organizations
religious organizations, community-minded business, community-based groups must form productive alliances and provide effective leadership regarding how to create communities where seniors can remain vibrant and involved

It is critical that we begin a national dialogue that serves as a catalyst for individuals and communities to collaborate on effective aging strategies. Without
these strategies, we are in danger of devaluing our seniors, further crippling our these strategies, we are in danger of devaluing our seniors, further crippling our
economy and communities, and creating an unbearable strain on the "sandwich ceonomy and communities, and creating an unbearabse strain on the sona
generation." our rapidly growing older population is living longer, more productive lives which highlight the need for all Americans to plan for thei future. The survey data could help us to identify specific issues and develop better
strategies affecting older Americans. The ultimate goal would be for our society to strategies affecting oldder Americans. The ultimate goal would be for our society to be equipped with the systems to support an aging population, ensuring they have
relatively independent and healthy lifestyles.
$\begin{aligned} & \text { About CommonHealth ACTION } \\ & \text { Commontieath ACTIN } \text { CHA) is a ational, non-proft, public health } \\ & \text { organization in the Districict of columbia. We work to to uild organization }\end{aligned}$
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$\begin{aligned} & \text { community capacity to address determinants of health and create optimal } \\ & \text { heatth for all. Contact us at info@commonhealthaction.org or } 202.407 .7088\end{aligned}$
$\begin{aligned} & \text { to learn more about how CHA can work with you to achieve your mission and } \\ & \text { improve the healt and well being of al people. For more information, visit }\end{aligned}$
$\begin{aligned} & \text { improve the health and well being of all } \\ & \text { http://www.commonhealthaction.org. }\end{aligned}$

Reference


