Survey of Older Minnesotans: Transportation Fact Sheet

This fact sheet is one of several documents written to share the results of the 2015 Survey of Older Minnesotans (SOM). In 2015, the Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA), in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Human Services, conducted a statewide survey of 4000 persons age 50 and older in Minnesota. The MBA conducts this survey approximately every five to ten years to monitor the changing needs, assets and expectations of older persons in the state. This information is used to improve the design and targeting of public programs for older persons and to help researchers and policy makers better understand Minnesota’s older population. Older adults or people will be used throughout this fact sheet to refer to those who were surveyed. This fact sheet includes data points related to transportation with links to the data tables on the MBA website for related questions.

For more information visit the MBA website at http://www.mnaging.net/en/Advisor/SurveyOlderMN.aspx. All corresponding 2015 SOM Data Tables are identified in the Data Notes. To view these specific tables, see 2015 SOM Data Tables document (DHS-3764B-ENG): https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-3764B-ENG.

Unable to Go Somewhere

Around six percent of people under age 60 reported that they were unable to go somewhere because they could not drive or did not have transportation in the month before taking the survey. This number increased to 23 percent for those age 85 and older; though nearly every age group saw a decrease between the 2005 and 2015 survey.

Figure 1. Being unable to go somewhere increased with age but decreased since 2005

A product of the Minnesota Board on Aging in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Human Services
**Driving**

The SOM asked older adults if they or their spouse own and drive a car or truck now. The proportion of people who responded yes increased between 2005 and 2015 for nearly all age groups. Even for those age 85 and older, 72 percent drive or have a spouse who drives.

Figure 2. People who drive (or have a spouse who drives) decreases with age but has increased overall since 2005

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**Public Transportation**

When it comes to alternatives to driving, the SOM asks about public transportation. Although it was not defined in the Survey, public transportation generally means a system of trains, buses, or other vehicles which charge set fares, run on a fixed route, are available to the public, and are frequently operated by a government entity. According to the 2015 SOM, approximately two-thirds of older adults reported living in a community with public transportation. Not surprisingly, people in the Metro area were more likely to say they have public transportation in their community than those in Greater Minnesota.

Figure 3. Majority of people had public transportation in their community
The 2015 SOM found that one in five people used public transportation in the past year. Among each age group except those age 85 and older, a higher proportion of people used public transportation in the 2015 survey than in 2005.

Figure 4. Higher proportion of people used public transportation in 2015 except among oldest people

A higher proportion of individuals in the Metro Area used public transportation than in Greater Minnesota, though this differs slightly by age group.

Figure 5. Higher proportion of people use public transportation in Metro except among oldest people

Data Notes

To view specific 2015 SOM Data Tables identified in the fact sheet, see 2015 SOM Data Tables document (DHS-3764B-ENG): https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserv/Public/DHS-3764B-ENG.

1. Table 2 (Transportation Difficulties in the Past Month, page 4)
2. Table 3 (Older Adult Drivers, page 5)
3. Table 4 (Availability of Public Transportation, page 6) and Table 5 (Used Public Transportation in Past Year, page 7)
Related Resources

ITNAmerica: http://itnamerica.org/

Minnesota Department of Transportation (Driving): http://www.dot.state.mn.us/cars.html

Minnesota Department of Transportation (Transit): http://www.dot.state.mn.us/transit/

Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths: http://www.minnesotatzd.org/topics/older/

National Aging and Disability Transportation Center: http://www.nadtc.org/

Contact

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