

Population Health Vital Statistics Brief:

Seniors in Summit County, 2014-2018

The *Population Health Vital Statistics Data Brief* series was created to provide regular updates to the 2016 Community Health Assessment and to provide the community with additional important information about population health. For more information on the Community Health Assessment and to access other reports in the *Vital Statistics Data Brief* series, please visit scph.org/assessments-reports



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Seniors In Summit County

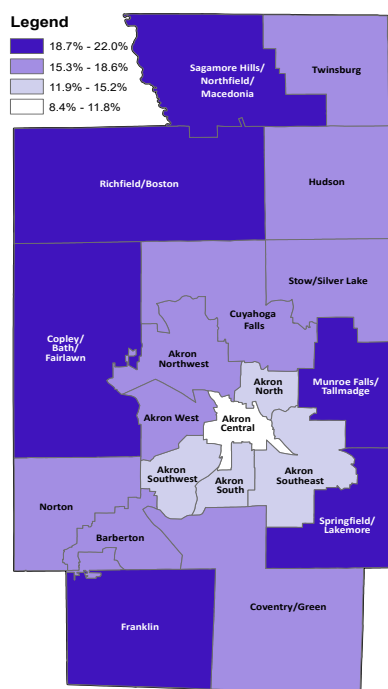
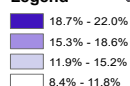
Summit County was home to approximately 98,000 seniors, defined here as people age 65 or older between 2014 and 2018. Those 98,000 people accounted for 18% of Summit County's population on average during those 5 years. Due to the aging of the Baby Boom generation, the percentage of seniors is expected to rise sharply in the coming years.

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Senior Population Projections -- Estimates of the 65 and older population for all Ohio counties published by the Ohio Development Services Agency projects Summit County's senior population to peak in 2035 at about 22% of the total population; nearly 116,000 people (Figure 2a). Figure 2b presents the change in Summit County's total and senior populations since

Legend



2010 (in thousands). While the county's total estimated population has fluctuated slightly for the past eight years, the estimated senior population has steadily climbed each year.

Figure 1: Seniors As A Percent of Total Population by Summit 2020 Cluster.

Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey (ACS), 5-year average.

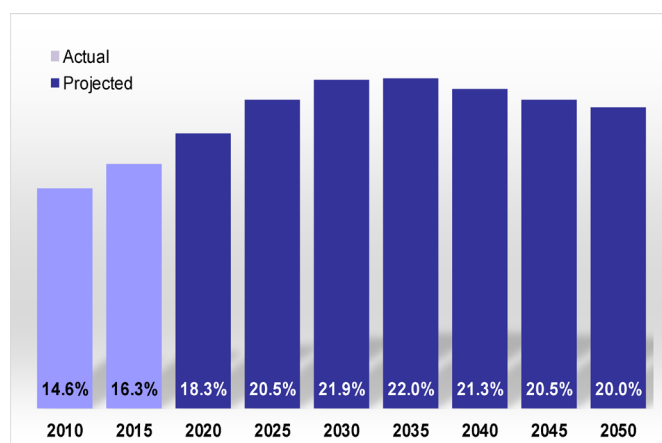


Figure 2a: Share of Population Over Age 65 in Summit County, 2010-2050 Projection. Source: Ohio Development Services Agency

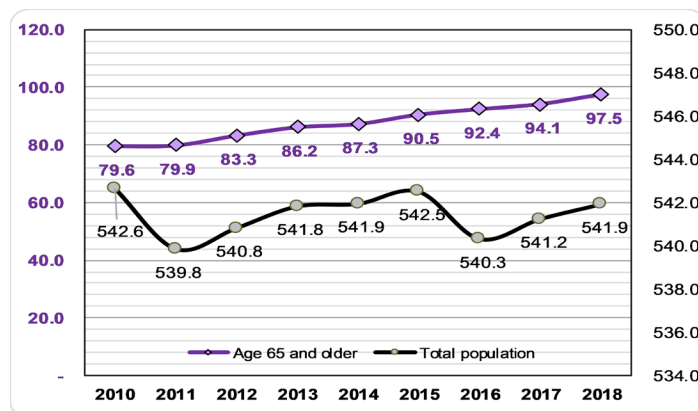


Figure 2b: Population Growth, Total and Over Age 65. Source: American Community Survey, 2010-2018 1-year estimates.

Note: Total population data from the ACS cited in this document refers to the *civilian noninstitutionalized population*. For seniors, that means that people living in correctional facilities, nursing homes, assisted living or hospice facilities are not included. Data from the 2010 Census, which does include detailed group quarters population counts, shows a total of 3,574 people living in nursing or skilled nursing facilities; about 4.5% of the total senior population.

Senior Demographic Profile

Figure 3 presents a comprehensive demographic profile of the 65 and older population in Summit County from the 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS). Details on some of the key indicators can be found below and on the following pages:

- Age, sex, and race -- The median age of seniors in Summit County is 72.9 years. Most seniors are female (56%), which is higher than the total population figure of 51%. A higher percentage of seniors are white (86%); above the total population figure of 79%. Only 11% of seniors are African-American; a lower figure than African-Americans in the total population (15%). Asians make up about 1.9% of the 65 and older population, which is about half the proportion of Asians in the total population (3%).
- Disability status -- Nearly one-third of seniors (32%) have at least one disability. Of those with a disability, 38% have an ambulatory disability, while 29% have a cognitive disability, and 26% have a disability that makes independent living difficult or impossible. Other disabilities include self-care (13% of all seniors), hearing (12%), and vision (11%).
- Housing and households -- About half of seniors (51%) live in a household with at least one spouse or family member, while nearly half (47%) live in a one-person household. A higher percentage of seniors live in owner-occupied housing than the general population (78% and 66%, respectively). Nearly 22% of seniors rent their home.

Summit County 2018 1-year average	65 years and over
Population age 65 and older	97,467
SEX AND AGE	
Male	44.1%
Female	55.9%
Median age (years)	72.9
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN	
One race	99.5%
White	86.4%
Black or African American	10.8%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.2%
Asian	1.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.0%
Some other race	0.2%
Two or more races	0.5%
Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	0.4%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	86.0%
HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE	
Households	61,595
Family households	52.6%
Married-couple family	40.8%
Female householder, no husband present, family	9.2%
Nonfamily households	47.4%
Householder living alone	44.5%
RESPONSIBILITY FOR GRANDCHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS	
Population 30 years and over	97,467
Living with grandchild(ren)	3.9%
Responsible for grandchild(ren)	0.9%
VETERAN STATUS	
Civilian population 18 years and over	97,467
Civilian veteran	17.8%
DISABILITY STATUS	
Civilian noninstitutionalized population	94,993
With any disability	30.8%
No disability	69.2%
INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS	
Households	61,595
With earnings	38.7%
With Social Security income	90.2%
With Supplemental Security Income	5.9%
With cash public assistance income	2.7%
With retirement income	58.1%
With Food Stamp/SNAP benefits	8.6%
Mean earnings (dollars)	\$48,834
Mean Social Security income (dollars)	\$20,981
Mean Supplemental Security Income (dollars)	\$7,987
Mean cash public assistance income (dollars)	\$2,843
Mean retirement income (dollars)	\$27,002
POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS	
Population for whom poverty status is determined	94,993
Below 100 percent of the poverty level	7.0%
100 to 149 percent of the poverty level	9.5%
At or above 150 percent of the poverty level	83.6%
Occupied housing units	61,595
HOUSING TENURE	
Owner-occupied housing units	77.5%
Renter-occupied housing units	22.5%

Figure 3: Senior Demographic Profile, 2018.

Source: 2018 ACS, 1-year average.

Senior Demographic Profile (continued)

Other important demographic characteristics of seniors in Summit County include:

- Income and poverty -- Nearly 7% of seniors live below the poverty line in Summit County; about 6,000 seniors in all; half as high as the rate for the county as a whole (14%). Most of the difference in poverty rates can be explained by the impact of social safety net programs like Social Security, Medicare, and others that benefit seniors and other members of society. In fact, a November 2018 study by the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities entitled "Social Security Lifts More Americans Above Poverty Than Any Other Program" estimates that the nationwide poverty rate for seniors would rise from the current 9% to over 39% without Social Security benefits.¹

Sources of income for seniors: Nearly all seniors in Summit County receive Social Security income (89%), while 58% receive other forms of retirement income. Social Security benefits averaged \$19,700 per year, while other retirement sources averaged \$24,000. One-third of seniors receive earned income (36%), while nearly 9% receive benefits from the SNAP program. Five percent received Supplemental Security Income (SSI), while 3% received cash assistance.

- Employment -- Nearly 8% of Summit County seniors worked full-time in the past 12 months, while nearly 13% worked part-time. The vast majority, 79%, did not work at all.

Notes:

1 Romig, K. (2018). Social Security Lifts More Americans Above Poverty Than Any Other Program. Center for Budget and Policy Priorities. Retrieved January 10, 2019, from <https://www.cbpp.org/research/social-security/social-security-lifts-more-americans-above-poverty-than-any-other-program>.

Younger seniors (ages 65-69) worked the most, with 17% working full-time and another 21%, working part-time. Only 3% of those age 70 and older worked full-time while 9% worked part-time (Figure 4b).

- Household Income -- The median household income for all seniors is just under \$58,000 per year; higher than the \$53,000 for all households. However, because seniors have a different mix of income sources than other households, the distribution of incomes looks different for seniors. Figure 5 shows how household income is distributed for

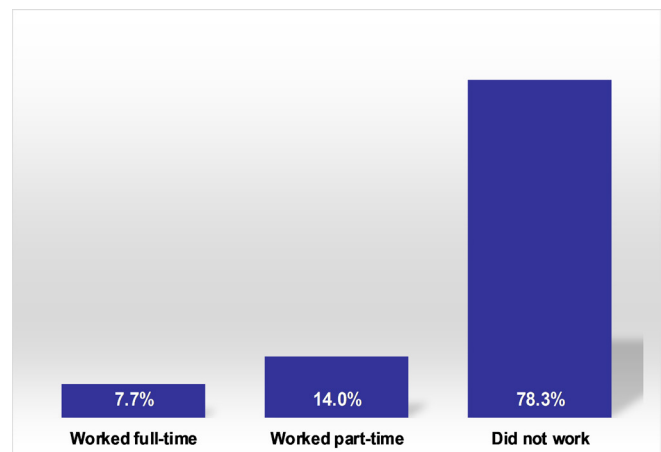


Figure 4a: Senior Employment Status, 2018.

Source: 2018 American Community Survey, 1-year average.

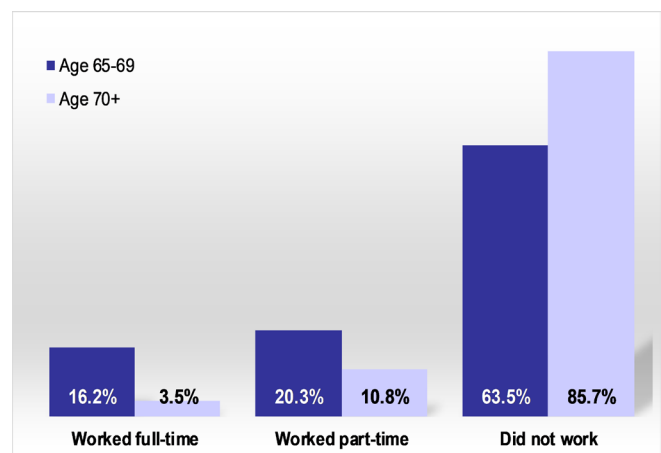


Figure 4b: Senior Employment Status by Age Group, 2018.

Source: 2018 ACS, 1-year average.

households under and over age 65. Half of those under age 65 have a household income of \$60,000 or less. However, 70% of seniors have a household income of \$60,000 or less. At the high end of the scale, more than one-quarter of all households have an income above \$100,000 (26%), while only about half as many age 65 and older households fall in that category (12%).

- **Mortgage burden** -- In the years just before retirement (ages 60-64), nearly two-thirds of owner-occupied homes are mortgaged. That percentage drops to half of occupied homes with a mortgage between ages 65 and 74. More than one-in-four homes belonging to those age 75 or older carry a mortgage. According to the ACS, the median monthly cost for senior homeowners with a mortgage is \$1,061. Median monthly owner costs for seniors without a mortgage is \$458. One-fifth of seniors who own their homes (19%) pay at least 30% of their income for mortgages and other housing costs.

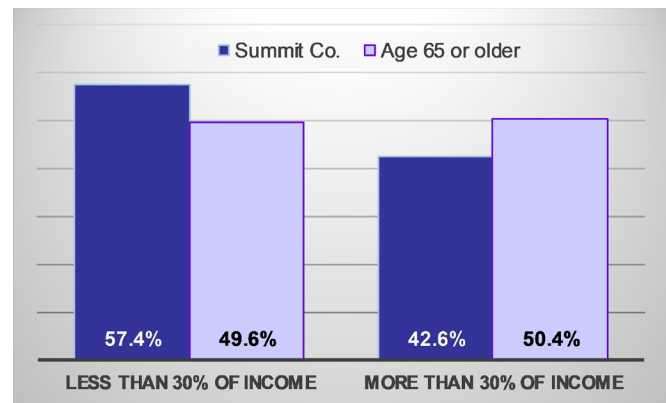


Figure 6: Percent of Renters Paying 30% or More of Income for Rent, 2013-2017. Source: 2014-2018 ACS, 5-year average.

- **Renter burden** -- Seniors who rent face a more serious housing cost burden. A total of 58% of seniors who rent spend at least 30% of their income on rent; much higher than the rate for all Summit County residents (44%). According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, Ohio's fair market rent is \$793 per month. ACS data show that the median gross rent for all Summit County residents is \$783. For retired seniors, many of whom have much lower incomes than when they were working, that figure is only slightly lower (\$755).

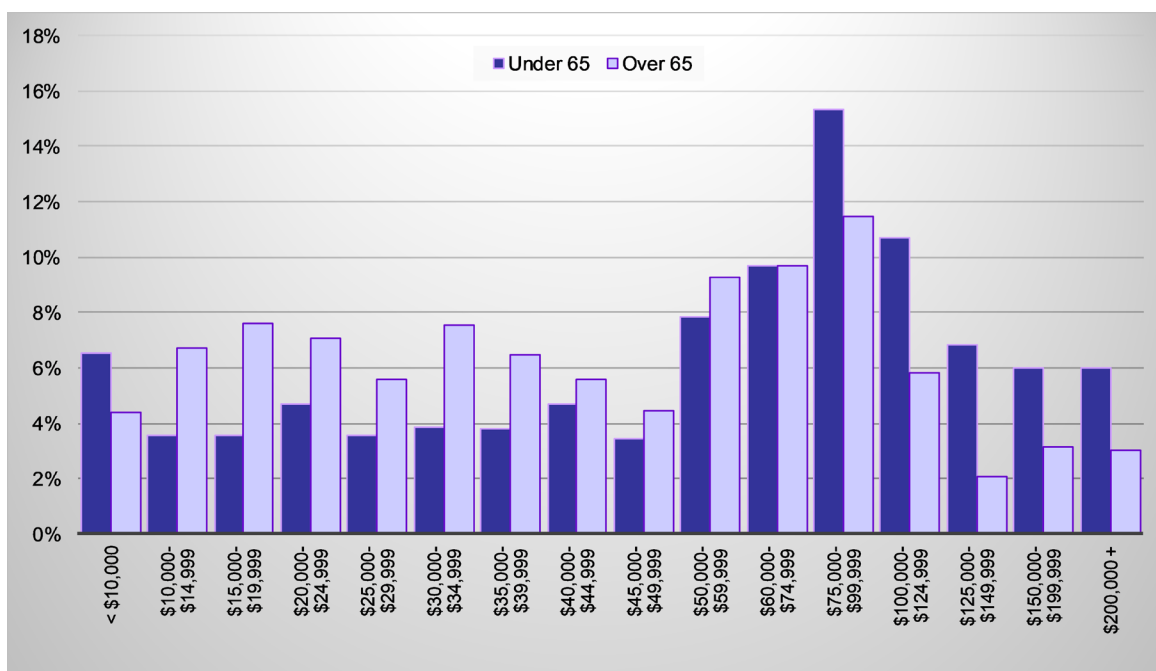


Figure 5: Household Income by Age Group, Summit County 2014-2018

Source: 2014-2018 ACS, 5-year average

- Grandparents raising grandchildren -- One of the more important social indicators the ACS tracks is grandparents raising their own grandchildren. Here in Summit County, an estimated 8,095 grandparents live in the same household as their grandchildren. Of that total, 2,913 grandparents were responsible for raising those grandchildren. Because unintended pregnancies can happen at very early ages (making people parents and sometimes grandparents early in life), the ACS category for grandparents begins at age 30. Of the 2,913 grandparents raising their grandchildren, just under 48% (1,369) are over age 60.

Among grandparents over age 60 who were raising their own grandchildren, 53% were doing so without the help of the children's parents. The burden of being responsible for raising a child not only puts physical and emotional stress on those seniors who are raising their grandchildren, but significant financial burdens as well. According to the ACS, the median household income of those doing so without the help of the children's parents is far lower than for grandparents who are getting that help (see Figure 7).

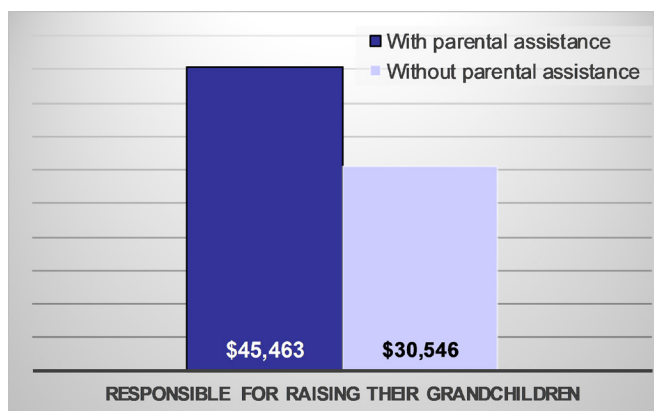


Figure 7: Median Household Income of Grandparents Raising Their Own Grandchildren, 2014-2018;
Source: 2014-2018 ACS, 5-year average

The amount of time grandparents must commit to raising their own grandchildren can also significantly increase the stress seniors raising their own grandchildren must face. According to ACS data, 44% have been responsible for raising their grandchildren for at least 5 years. A much smaller percentage (8%) have been responsible for 6 months or less.

- Racial Differences Among Grandparents raising grandchildren -- Of the 711 African-American grandparents living in the same household as their grandchildren, more than half (56%) were responsible for raising those grandchildren. More than a third (35%) of the 2,700 white grandparents living with their grandchildren were also responsible for raising them; see Figure 8, below).

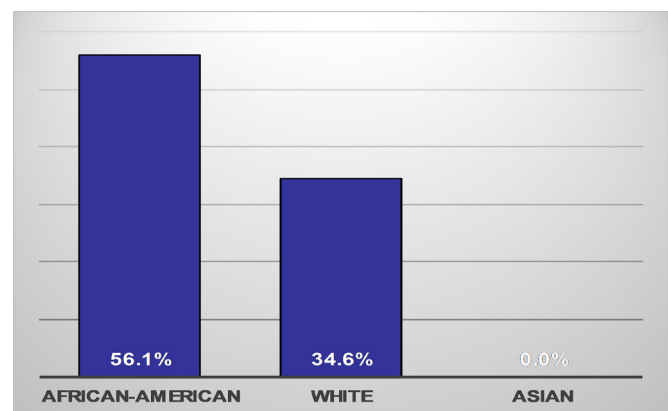


Figure 8: Racial Differences Among Grandparents Raising Their Own Grandchildren, 2014-2018;
Source: 2014-2018 ACS, 5-year average

Health Issues Among Seniors

Fall-related injuries -- Between 2014 and 2019, Summit County seniors had just over 38,000 emergency room (ER) visits for a fall-related injury; about an average of 6,400 per year (see Figure 9). Fall-related ER visits rose from just under 48 per 1,000 seniors in 2014 to 82.4 per 1,000 in 2018. Falls per 1,000 seniors leveled off in 2019, ending its 4-year trend upward.

Of those 38,000 visits, records for 2,466 visits included specific mentions of a head injury associated with the ER visit (which could either be a cause or consequence of the fall). Fifty-nine of the records included specific mentions of traumatic brain injury (9.8 per 1,000 seniors). A total of 5,420 de-identified individuals, about 14%

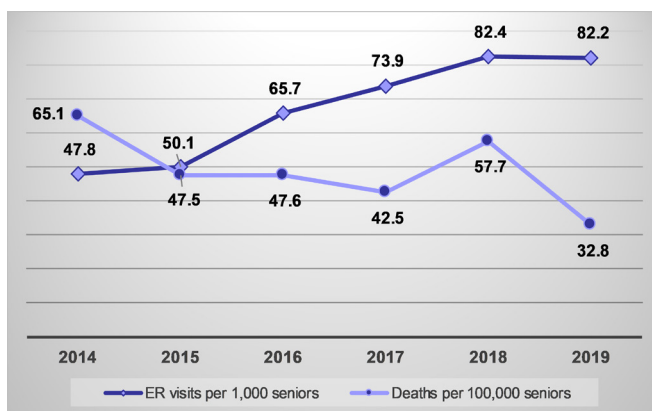


Figure 9: Fall-Related Emergency Room Visits and Fatalities, 2014-2019; Sources: EpiCenter, Ohio Department of Health (ODH) death records

of the total, visited an ER more than once for a fall-related injury. Seven of those de-identified individuals visited an ER between 10 and 19 times for a fall-related reason.

Figure 10 shows the distribution of fall-related ER visits by time of day. In 2019, the highest concentration of ER visits came between 10:00 am and 2:00 pm, which accounted for 34% of all fall-related ER visits. Visits by day of the week were evenly distributed, with Sundays and Mondays being slightly busier than other days.

Fall-related deaths -- Between 2014 and 2018, 271 Summit County seniors suffered a fall-related death. While fall-related injuries have been steadily rising until this year, fall-related deaths have trended in the opposite direction. Fall-related deaths dropped from 65 per 100,000 in 2014 (62 deaths) to 47 in 2018 (Note: figures for 2019 show an even larger drop, but 2019 data is still preliminary).

Of the 271 deaths, 161 were described in death certificates as either *Other fall on same level* or *Unspecified fall*. Frequently-mentioned specific causes included *Fall from stairs and steps* (33 cases) and *Fall from bed* (20 cases). Other causes include *Fall from chair*, *Fall from ladder* and *Fall from wheelchair* (4, 5, and 5 cases, respectively).

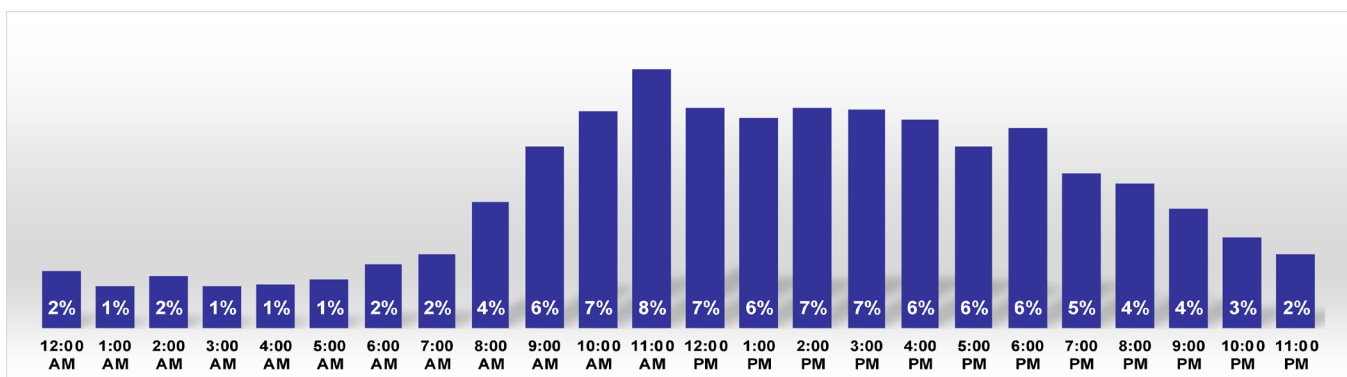


Figure 10: Distribution of Fall-Related Emergency Room Visits and Fatalities, By Time of Day, 2019; Sources: EpiCenter

Alzheimer's Disease and dementia -- Between 2014 and 2019, there were 3,586 Summit County residents who died of either Alzheimer's Disease or dementia. The causes of death were about evenly split between Alzheimer's Disease and dementia (47% and 53%, respectively). The vast majority of cases, nearly 70%, occurred in the 85 and older population. The youngest victim of either disease was just over age 50, while the oldest was just over 106.

For a more detailed look at Alzheimer's Disease and dementia, please see our data brief entitled "Alzheimer's Disease in Summit County," which can be downloaded at <https://www.scph.org/assessments-reports>.

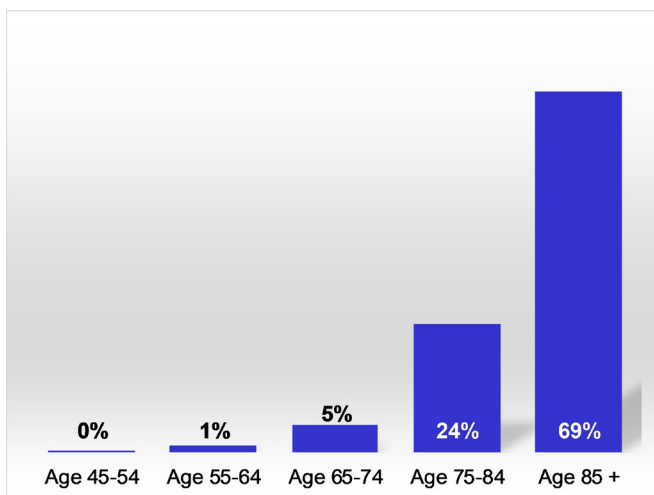


Figure 11a: Alzheimer's and Unspecified Dementia Deaths by Age Group, 2014-2019; Source: ODH death records

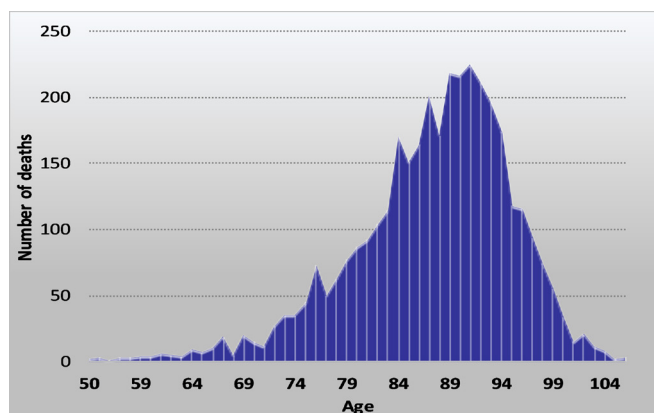


Figure 11b: Number of Alzheimer's and Unspecified Dementia Deaths - All Ages, 2014-2018; Source: ODH death records

Estimated life expectancy at age 65 -- Between 2008 and 2017, Summit County residents who were 65 years old could expect an estimated 19.3 additional years of life; nearly identical to the overall figure for the nation of 19.4 years.

Figure 12 shows the breakdown of estimated life expectancy at different ages for the 2008-2017 time period. As expected, overall estimated life expectancy declines with age, from 19.3 between ages 65-69 to 7.1 years at age 85.

Figure 13 on the next page presents the map of estimated life expectancy at age 65 by Summit 2020 cluster. The Richfield / Boston cluster has the highest estimated life expectancy at age 65 at 22.5 years, closely followed by Akron Northwest, Copley / Bath / Fairlawn, Hudson, and Twinsburg, all of which have estimated life expectancies at age 65 at of 21 years or above. On the opposite end, the Akron Central cluster has the lowest estimated life expectancy at 15.6 years. Most other Akron clusters (Southwest, North, Southeast, and West), as well as the Barberton cluster, have life expectancies at age 65 of less than 18 years.

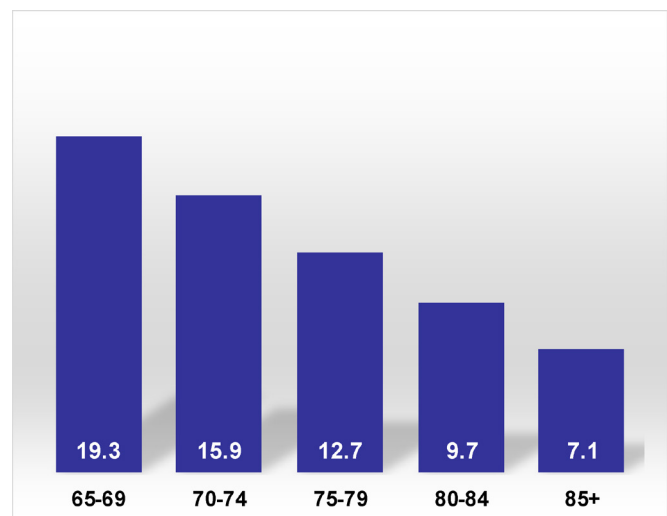


Figure 12: Life Expectancy at Age 65 by Age Group, 2014-2018; Source: ODH death records

Differences in estimated life expectancy at age 65 by race for males -- Figure 14a shows the breakdown of estimated male life expectancy at different ages by race. For the youngest group of seniors, Asian males have the highest life expectancy at nearly 19 additional years; more than two full years higher than white or African-American males. The advantage for Asian males declines as age rises, with Asian males falling almost a full year behind by age 85.

Differences in estimated life expectancy at age 65 by race for females -- Figure 14b shows estimated female life expectancy at different ages by race. For the youngest group of seniors, African-American females have the lowest expected years of life in all three categories between ages

65 and 80. For those age 85 and above, African-American females have the highest estimated life expectancy at an additional 7.4 years.

It is important to note that due to higher mortality at earlier ages, fewer non-whites survive into their later years. Many of those who do have life expectancies as high or higher than whites. Figure 15 shows total deaths of those age 65 and older as a percent of all deaths. Nearly 83% of white female deaths were among those age 65 and older. Only 54% of African-American male deaths were in the age 65 and older category.

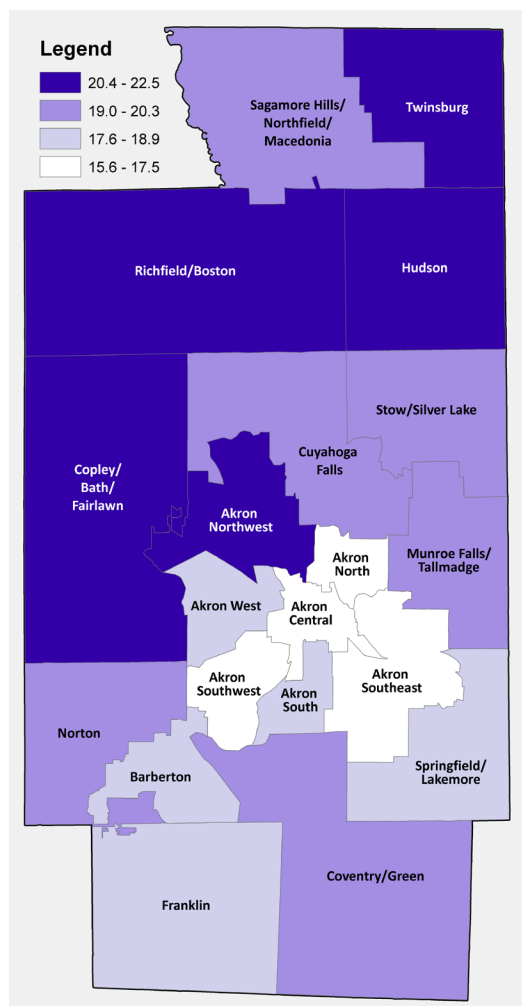


Figure 13: Life Expectancy at Age 65 by Cluster, 2008-2017; Source: ODH death records

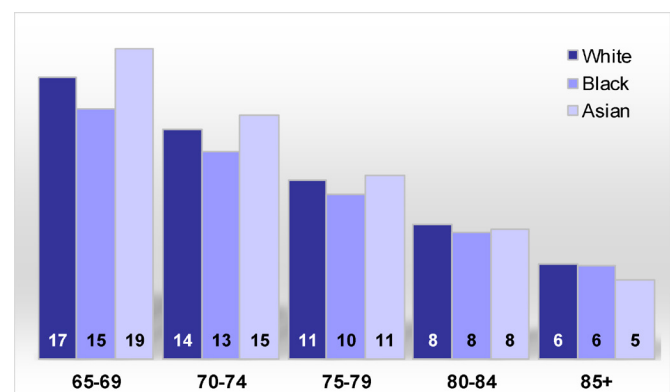


Figure 14a: Estimated Years of Life Expectancy at Age 65 for Males by Race, 2014-2018; Source: ODH death records

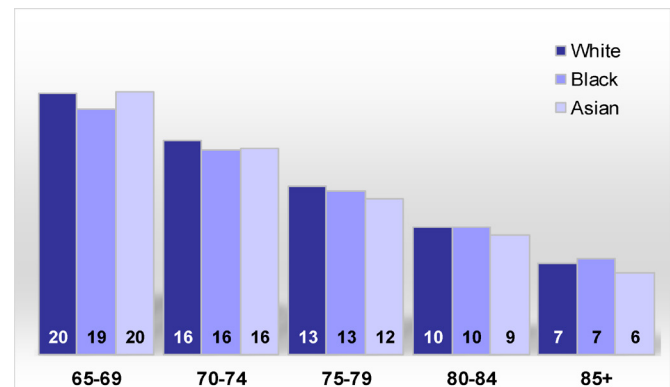


Figure 14b: Estimated Years of Life Expectancy at Age 65 for Females by Race, 2014-2018; Source: ODH death records

Race / Gender	Deaths 65 and older	Total Deaths	Percent
White female	22,453	27,071	82.9%
White male	17,664	25,104	70.4%
Asian female	123	178	69.1%
African-American female	2,491	3,720	67.0%
Asian male	121	215	56.3%
African-American male	2,076	3,823	54.3%

Figure 15: Deaths Age 65 and Older As A Percent of Total Deaths, by Race and Gender, 2014-2018; Source: ODH death records