

OLDER WOMEN

In 2007, there were 37.9 million adults aged 65 years and older in the United States, representing 12.6 percent of the total population. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the older population is expected to grow to 72 million by 2030, representing approximately 20 percent of the population. In 2007, older women composed 7.3 percent of the total population while men accounted for 5.3 percent. Women represented a larger proportion of the population than men within every older age group.

Among women aged 65 years and older and not living in an institution, 42.2 percent were married and living with a spouse in 2007, while

another 38.6 percent lived alone. Nearly 9 percent of older women were heads of their household, with no spouse present, meaning that they have children or other family members, but no spouse, living with them in a housing unit that they own or rent. Research has suggested that older adults who live alone are more likely to live in poverty, which has numerous implications including increased risk of food insecurity, decreased access to health care facilities due to lack of transportation, and inability to pay utility bills.⁴⁴

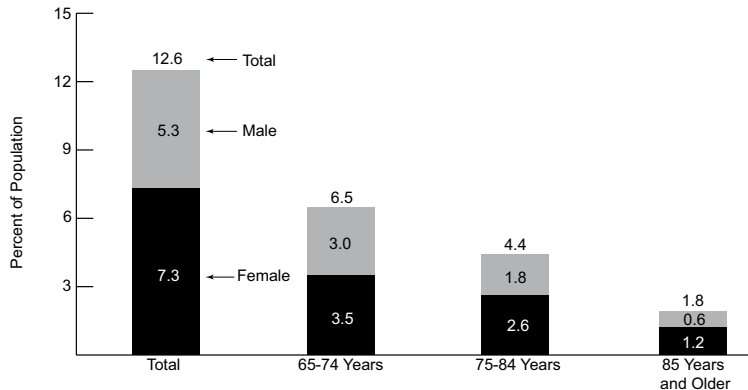
Employment plays a significant role in the lives of many older Americans. In 2007, more than 2.4 million women aged 65 years and old-

er were working, accounting for 10.8 percent of women in this age group. Nearly 19 percent of women aged 65–74 years were employed during 2007, while only 3.5 percent of those aged 75 and older were employed (data not shown).

In 2004, an estimated 1.5 million adults resided in nursing homes. Women aged 65 years and older accounted for 65.7 percent of the nursing home resident population. Some nursing home facilities offer end-of-life or palliative care for their residents; in 2004, 17.2 percent of facilities reported participating in at least one end-of-life program, while 16.7 percent also reported having trained staff for providing palliative and end-of-life care (data not shown).⁴⁵

Representation of Adults Aged 65 and Older in the U.S. Population,* by Age and Sex, 2007

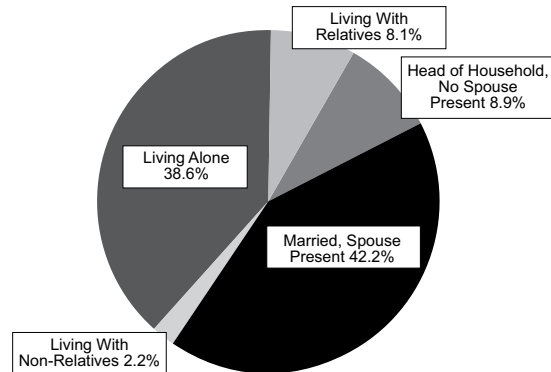
Source I.1: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey



*Civilian, non-institutionalized population.

Women Aged 65 and Older,* by Household Composition, 2007

Source I.2: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey



*Civilian, non-institutionalized population.

RURAL AND URBAN WOMEN

In 2006, more than 48 million people, or 16.4 percent of the population, lived in areas considered to be non-metropolitan. The number of areas defined as metropolitan changes frequently as the population grows and people move. Residents of non-metropolitan areas tend to be older, complete fewer years of education, have public insurance or no health insurance, and live farther from health care resources than their metropolitan counterparts.

In 2006, 22.4 percent of women in non-metropolitan areas were aged 65 years and older,

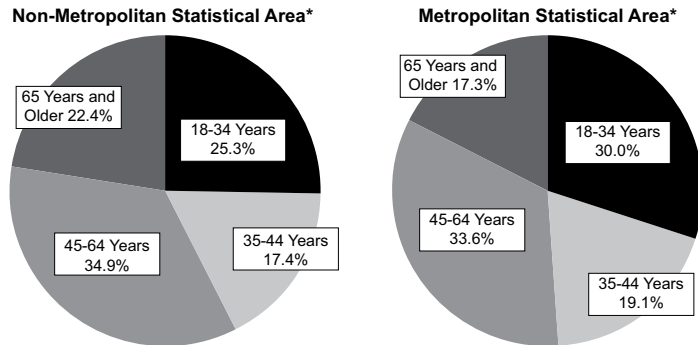
while only 17.3 percent of women in metropolitan areas were in the same age group. One-quarter of women in non-metropolitan areas were aged 18–34 years, compared to 30.0 percent in metropolitan areas. Women aged 35–44 years and 45–64 years accounted for approximately the same percentage of the female population in non-metropolitan and metropolitan areas.

Nearly 66 percent of women reported receiving dental care once a year or more frequently in 2006. Annual dental care was more common among women of all ages in metropolitan areas than in non-metropolitan areas (67.3 ver-

sus 57.7 percent, respectively). Among women in non-metropolitan areas, those aged 35–44 years were most likely to receive dental care at least once a year (64.2 percent), followed by women aged 18–34 and 45–64 years (59.1 and 59.7 percent, respectively). Fewer than half of non-metropolitan women aged 65 years and older reported receiving dental care at least once a year.

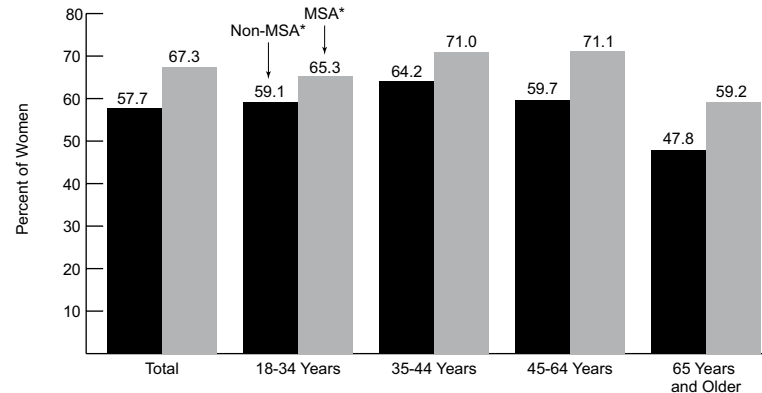
Women Aged 18 and Older, by Area of Residence and Age, 2006

Source II.26: U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Medical Expenditure Panel Survey



Women Aged 18 and Older Who Receive Dental Care Once a Year or More, by Age and Area of Residence, 2006

Source II.26: U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Medical Expenditure Panel Survey



*A metropolitan statistical area (MSA) is defined as a core area containing a large population nucleus together with adjacent communities having a high degree of economic and social integration with that core. All counties within a metropolitan statistical area are classified as metropolitan. Counties not within a metropolitan statistical area are considered non-metropolitan.