

Chatham County Continues Focus On Aging Population

By Administrator

Wednesday, 17 March 2021 08:05 -

The latest statistics from the North Carolina Division of Aging and Adult Services (NCDAAS) show Chatham County is still among the state's leading counties in terms of the aging of its population.

"There are many variables that tell this story," noted Dennis Streets, director of the Chatham County Council on Aging. Here are some of the more telling statistics revealed in the NCDAAS report:

□ As of 2019, more than one-third (34%) of Chatham County's population is aged 60 and older. By 2039, more than 4 in 10 (41%) of Chatham's residents will be in this age category.

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As of 2019, the number of persons aged 60 and older in Chatham County was estimated at 25,471. Comparatively the number of persons aged 17 and younger was 13,927.

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Looking ahead to 2039, the number of individuals aged 60 and older is projected as 43,181, compared to 16,796 for those aged 17 and younger.

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By 2039, Chatham is projected to be one of eight counties in North Carolina with more than 31% of its population aged 65 and older. (Chatham's is projected at 34%.)

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The fastest growing age group remains those aged 85 and older. The projected increase is nearly 200% between 2019 and 2039, compared to an increase of 21% among those aged 17 and younger. This has important implications for long-term supports and services.

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One-quarter of Chatham residents aged 65 and older live alone.

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Nearly a quarter (24%) of those aged 65 and older have incomes less than 200% of the poverty level (\$25,752 annually for an individual). Social Security remains the primary source of income for adults aged 65 and older.

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Nearly one in five (19.5%) of those aged 65 and older are still in the labor force.

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Alzheimer's disease is now the 3rd leading cause of death among those aged 65 and older.

While Chatham County is experiencing significant population aging, the state's trend is also noteworthy. In 2019, 82 counties had more people 60 and older than those under 18 years. By 2025, this number is expected to increase to 89 counties and then, by 2039, to 95. The five counties with more youth than seniors are projected to be Cumberland, Harnett, Onslow, Craven and Hoke—all connected to military installations.

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“These statistics should compel all sectors of our community to continue planning for ways to further engage as well as serve our older population,” noted Streets.

Chatham County continues its long-term efforts to address these trends through the 2018-2023 Chatham County Aging Plan which focuses on five key areas: transportation; housing; healthcare coverage and services; care services and caregiving; and social connectedness, community engagement, and opportunities for self-fulfillment.