



# Age-Friendly Allegany County

*For All Seasons of Life*

Submitted To:

**AARP**

Livable Communities

Submitted By:

**Jose Soto**

Ardent Solutions, Inc.

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# RESOLUTION NO. 159-20

## RESOLUTION TO SEEK MEMBERSHIP IN THE AARP NETWORK OF AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

Offered by: Ways & Means Committee

**WHEREAS**, as 20 percent of Allegany County is currently over 60 years old with that figure expected to increase significantly by 2030; it is of great importance to solidify communities that are equipped to support active aging, and

**WHEREAS**, inclusive and supportive, social, environmental, and built, infrastructures play a critical role in helping residents thrive in their communities as they age, and

**WHEREAS**, Allegany County is committed to developing programs, services, facilities, and projects that are planned, designed, operated, and maintained to best accommodate users of all ages and abilities, and

**WHEREAS**, becoming an age-friendly community requires widespread community support, and a shared mindset must be incorporated into every sector of the county to work together on an initiative to support all ages of life, and

**WHEREAS**, Ardent Solutions, Inc. resolves to take the lead role in implementing the Age-Friendly Communities initiative for Allegany County in cooperation with the Allegany County Office for the Aging, Long Term Care Council, and other entities as fit the mission, and

**WHEREAS**, joining the AARP and W.H.O. Network of Age-Friendly Communities will connect Allegany County with communities across the country and the world to unify our efforts to make communities a great place to live for all ages and stages of life, now, therefore, be it

### RESOLVED:

1. That in order to ensure the communities of Allegany County are well-designed, livable communities that promote health and sustained economic growth for residents of all ages, Allegany County supports the planning process and requests participation in the AARP and W.H.O. Network of Age-Friendly Communities.

I, Brenda Rigby Riehle, Clerk of the Board of Legislators of the County of Allegany, State of New York, do hereby certify that the foregoing constitutes a correct copy of the original on file in my office and the whole thereof of a resolution passed by said Board on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of July 2020.

Brenda Rigby Riehle Dated at Belmont, New York, this 28th day of July 2020  
Clerk, Board of Legislators, Allegany County

Moved by: Stockin

Seconded by: Fanton

VOTE: Ayes: 12

Noes: 2

Absent: 1 Voice:

Absent: Burdick

Voting No: Barnes, Decker





## Board of Legislators

County Office Building, Room 201  
7 Court Street  
Belmont, New York 14813  
Phone: 585-268-9222

July 15, 2020

Lisa Nenadich  
AARP New York State Director  
750 Third Avenue, 31<sup>st</sup> floor  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Ms. Nenadich:

On behalf of Allegany County, New York, I am pleased to offer this letter of our ongoing commitment to creating an age-friendly environment. We are excited to join AARP's Age-Friendly Communities network. Allegany County is committed to becoming a livable community to promote health and sustainable growth and contribute to the well-being of citizens in all stages of life.

Allegany County wants to promote successful aging and improve the quality of life for all residents. There is great value in utilizing the AARP's Eight Domains of Livability in establishing a more age-friendly community: making outdoor spaces and buildings more senior friendly, increasing the accessibility and affordability of transportation and housing, increasing access and opportunities for social participation and inclusion through programs that promote ethnic and cultural diversity, supporting work and volunteer opportunities, access to communication and information, and supporting the ability of older people to age in place through community support and health services.

As a participant in the AARP and the World Health Organization (WHO) Age-Friendly Community initiative, it is the intent of Allegany County to:

- Pursue the active engagement of older adults in the planning process through outreach and inclusion by bringing events to where older people live and recreate.
- Pursue outreach through churches, civic organizations, AARP, providers of aging services and host events designed for older people.
- Establish a plan of action that responds to the needs identified by older people.
- Develop a means to measure our activities, reviewing action plan outcomes and plans to determine we are meeting our goals.
- Keep the public, especially older people, informed throughout the process.

We look forward to working with AARP New York State staff, members, and volunteers to make our county a place where we can all age with dignity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Crandall", is written over a horizontal line.

Curtis W. Crandall, Chairman  
Allegany County Board of Legislators



# Thank you

Thank you to the Age-Friendly Allegany County (AFAC) Planning Committee  
*Established 2020*

Ann Weaver, Allegany Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, Inc.  
Becky Nelson, Ardent Solutions  
Brayanna Ormsby, Ardent Solutions  
Carrie Whitwood, Ardent Solutions  
Casey Jones, Allegany HOPE  
Christopher Clow, Allegany County Department of Social Services Adult Service Unit  
Danielle Kielar, Catholic Charities  
Dr. Danielle D. Gagne, Alfred University  
Darcy J. Dwaileebe, Recovery Options Made Easy  
Dusti Wilson, Fidelis Care  
Irene Dieteman, Allegany County Office for the Aging/NYConnects  
Jeanette Carlin, The Alzheimer's Association  
Jonathan Chaffee, Tobacco-Free CCA and Partners for Prevention in Allegany County  
Judy Peck, The Arc of Allegany-Steuben  
Kelly Duby, ProAction  
Kier Dirlam, Allegany County Office of Planning  
Laura Hunsberger, Cornell Cooperative Extension  
Liz Gamache, Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Program  
Mandi Joyce Phelps, Allegany County Office of Planning  
Melissa Peck, Venture Forthe  
Reita Lynch, Allegany County Employment & Training  
Rima O'Connor, Alfred Box of Books Library  
Robin Fuller, Ardent Solutions  
Sue Hannon, Directions in Independent Living  
Timothy Puda, Allegany County Department of Social Services  
Yvonne Morris, Jones Memorial Hospital and Bolivar Lions Club

## AFAC Organizers:

Danielle DeLong, Age-Friendly Communities Coordinator (Ardent Solutions 2020-22)  
Jose Soto, System Transformation Manager Ardent Solutions  
Anita Mattison, Director Allegany County Office for the Aging  
Lyndi Scott-Loines, Deputy Director Allegany County Office for the Aging

# Executive Summary

The total population of older adults in our communities continues to increase year after year. By 2035 there will be more adults over the age of 65 than children under 18 in the U.S. for the first time in history.

As a result of this growing older adult population, the Age-Friendly Communities Initiative was developed in 2006 by the World Health Organization as a way to assess a community's capability to support people of all ages and abilities, with an emphasis on the oldest members in the community.

Allegany County is experiencing this same demographic shift, yet even more pronounced. The population of Allegany County, New York in 2021 was 46,106, 5.9% down from the 48,973 who lived there in 2010. For comparison, the US population grew 7.3% and New York's population grew 2.2% during that period.

Among six age groups – 0 to 4, 5 to 19, 20 to 34, 35 to 49, 50 to 64, and 65 and older – the **65+** group was the fastest growing between **2010** and **2021** with its population **increasing 23.6%**. The **5 to 19** age group **declined the most dropping 12.3%** between **2010** and **2021**.

It is for this reason that Ardent Solutions and stakeholders implemented an Age-Friendly effort paralleling the national movement. On July 27, 2020, the Allegany County Legislative Board passed Resolution 159-20 allowing Allegany County to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities and so began Age-Friendly Allegany County!

## **Our Mission is...**

to support Allegany County residents through every stage and every age of life by providing enabling physical and social environments, opportunities to create meaningful experiences, and equitable, affordable, programs and services.

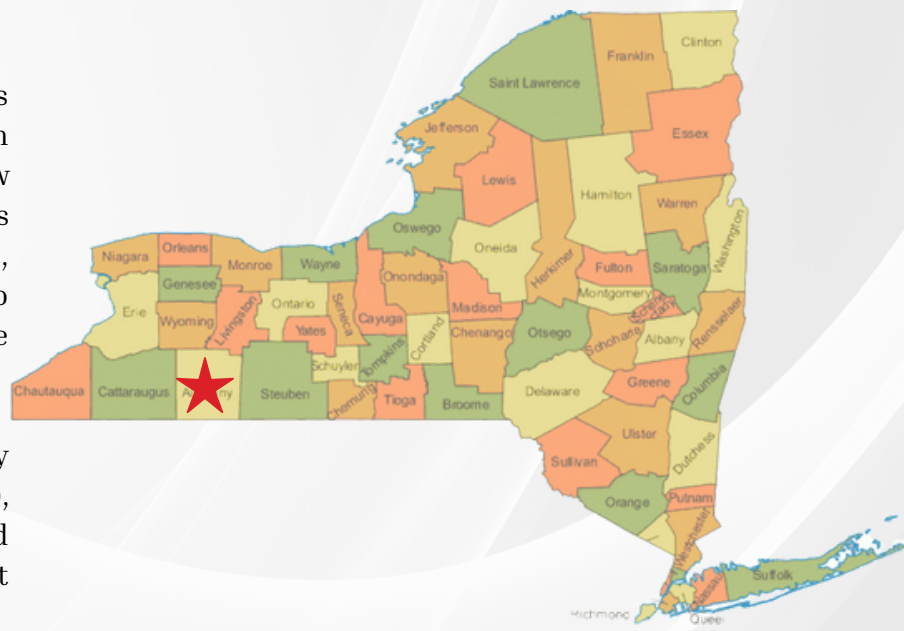
# Community Profile



## Introduction to Allegany County

Founded in 1806, Allegany County, New York is nestled in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains in the southern portion of Western New York. Bordered by Pennsylvania to its south, it is neighbored by Cattaraugus County to the west, Steuben County to the east, Livingston County to the northeast, and Wyoming County to the northwest.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 1,034 square miles (2,680 km<sup>2</sup>), of which 1,029 square miles (2,670 km<sup>2</sup>) is land and 5.1 square miles (13 km<sup>2</sup>) (0.5%) is water making it the 21st largest county in New York State.



Allegany County comprises 29 towns and 10 villages with no recognized cities. The county seat is Belmont, New York. The most populated townships include:

- Wellsville, New York: 7,099 residents; diversity index 15 (lowest in New York State)
- Belmont, New York: 848 residents
- Cuba, New York: 1,484 residents
- Alfred, New York: 4,437 residents and students (Alfred University and SUNY Alfred)

Allegany County's political climate is very conservative. Allegany County has voted Republican in every presidential election since 2000. In the last Presidential election, Allegany County remained overwhelmingly Republican, 68.0% to 29.1%.



# Community Profile



## Introduction to Allegany County

### FEDERAL AND STATE LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVE

#### U.S. SENATORS

CHARLES E. SCHUMER

Federal Office Building & Courthouse  
U.S. Senate 15 Henry Street, Room 100 A-F  
322 Hart Senate Office Building Binghamton, NY 13901  
Washington, DC 20510 Telephone: 607-772-6792  
Telephone: 202-224-6542 Fax: 607-772-8124  
Fax: 202-228-3027  
Website: [www.schumer.senate.gov](http://www.schumer.senate.gov)

KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND

U.S. Senate Kenneth B. Keating Federal Office Bldg.  
478 Russell Senate Office Building 100 State Street,  
Room 4195  
Washington, DC 20510 Rochester, NY 14614  
Telephone: 202-224-4451 Telephone: 585-263-6250  
Website: [www.gillibrand.senate.gov](http://www.gillibrand.senate.gov)

#### CONGRESS

##### 23RD DISTRICT

Congressman Nick Langworthy  
1 Bluebird Square  
Olean, NY 14760  
Phone: (585) 543-5033  
Website: [www.langworthy.house.gov](http://www.langworthy.house.gov)

#### NYS SENATE

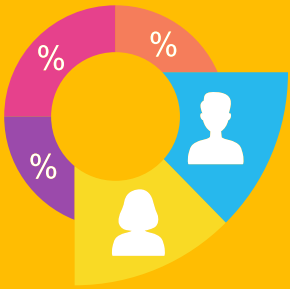
##### 57TH DISTRICT

Senator George Borrello  
700 W. State Street, Westgate Plaza  
Olean, NY 14760  
Phone: 716-372-4901  
Fax: 716-372-5740  
email: [borrello@nysenate.gov](mailto:borrello@nysenate.gov)

#### U.S. ASSEMBLY

Assembly District 148  
Assemblyman Joseph M. Giglio  
700 West State Street  
Olean, NY 14760  
716-373-7103  
Fax: 716-373-7105  
[GiglioJ@nyassembly.gov](mailto:GiglioJ@nyassembly.gov)

# Community Profile



## Demographics and Diversity

ALLEGANY COUNTY, NY POPULATION (as of July 2022 Population Estimate)	
Total Population	45,360 (100%)
Population in Households	40,858 (90.1%)
Population in Families	31,938 (70.4%)
Population in Group Quarters	4,502 ( 9.9%)
Population Density	44
Diversity Index	20

The Diversity Index is a scale of 0 to 100 that represents the likelihood that two persons, chosen at random from the same area, belong to different races or ethnic groups. If an area's entire population belongs to one race AND one ethnic group, then the area has zero diversity. An area's diversity index increases to 100 when the population is evenly divided into two or more race/ethnic groups.

ALLEGANY COUNTY, NY RACE AND ETHNICITY (as of July 2022 Estimate)	
White alone, percent	95.6%
Black or African American alone, percent(a)	1.4%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent(a)	0.4%
Asian alone, percent(a)	1.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent(a)	Z
Two or More Races, percent	1.4%
Hispanic or Latino, percent(b)	1.8%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent	94.2%

# Community Profile

In 2021, the largest racial or ethnic group in Allegany County was the white (non-Hispanic) group, which had a population of 43,436. Between 2010 and 2021, the Hispanic/Latino population had the most growth increasing by 172 from 674 in 2010 to 846 in 2021.

ALLEGANY COUNTY, NY AGE AND SEX (as of 2022 Population Estimate)	
Persons under 5 years, percent	5.1%
Persons under 18 years, percent	20.1%
Persons 65 years and over, percent	20.0%
Female persons, percent	48.9%

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS	
Veterans, 2017-2021	3,414
Foreign born persons, percent, 2017-2021	1.7%

Allegany County, NY has a large population of military personnel who served in Vietnam, 2.78 times greater than any other conflict.

## MOST COMMON SERVICE PERIOD

1. Vietnam 1,280 ± 125
2. Gulf War (1990s) 461 ± 100
3. Gulf War (2001-) 428 ± 110

As of 2020, 2.09% of Allegany County, NY residents (967 people) were born outside of the United States, which is lower than the national average of 13.5%. In 2019, the percentage of foreign-born citizens in Allegany County, NY was 2.48%, meaning that the rate has been decreasing.

None of the households in Allegany County, NY reported speaking a non-English language at home as their primary shared language. This does not consider the potential multi-lingual nature of households, but only the primary self-reported language spoken by all members of the household.



# Community Profile

ALLEGANY COUNTY, NY INCOME (as of July 2022 Population Estimate)	
Median Household Income	\$50,903
Average Household Income	\$67,706
% of Income for Mortgage	9%
Per Capita Income	\$26,034
Wealth Index	53

The Wealth Index is based on a number of indicators of affluence including average household income and average net worth, but it also includes the value of material possessions and resources. It represents the wealth of the area relative to the national level. Values above or below 100 represent above-average wealth or below-average wealth compared to the national level.

ALLEGANY COUNTY, NY HOUSING (as of July 2022 Housing Estimate)	
Total HU (Housing Units)	23,148 (100%)
Owner Occupied HU	13,108 (56.6%)
Renter Occupied HU	4,167 (18.0%)
Vacant Housing Units	5,873 (25.4%)
Median Home Value	\$85,774
Average Home Value	\$120,245
Housing Affordability Index	194

The Housing Affordability Index base is 100 and represents a balance point where a resident with a median household income can normally qualify to purchase a median price home. Values above 100 indicate increased affordability, while values below 100 indicate decreased affordability.

ALLEGANY COUNTY, NY HOUSEHOLDS (as of July 2022 Household Estimate)	
Total Households	17,275
Average Household Size	2.37
Family Households	10,878
Average Family Size	3.00

# Community Profile

The table below compares Allegany County to the other 62 counties and county equivalents in New York by rank and percentile using July 1, 2022 data. The location Ranked # 1 has the highest value. A location that ranks higher than 75% of its peers would be in the 75th percentile of the peer group.

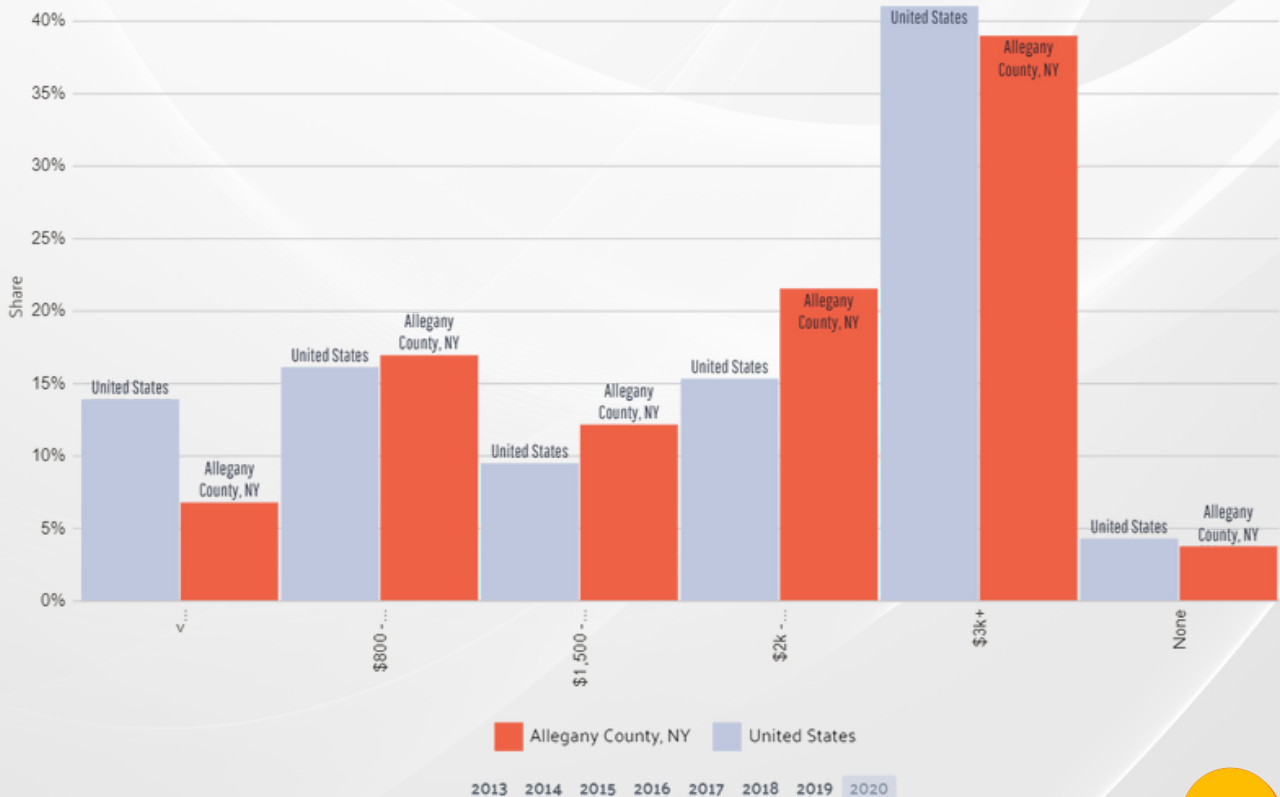
Variable Description	Rank	Percentile
Total Population	# 52	18th
Population Density	# 55	13th
Median Household Income	# 61	3rd
Housing Affordability Index	# 62	100th
Per Capita Income	# 61	3rd
Diversity Index	# 56	11th

## PROPERTY TAX

MEDIAN PROPERTY VALUE 2020: ±\$78,400

MEDIAN PROPERTY TAXES: \$14,266

The following chart displays owner-occupied housing units distributed between a series of property tax buckets compared to the national averages for each bucket. In Allegany County, NY the largest share of households pay taxes in the \$3k+ range.



# Community Profile

The economy of Allegany County, NY employs 19.7k people. The largest industries in Allegany County, NY are:

- Educational Services (3,773 people)
- Manufacturing (2,919 people)
- Health Care & Social Assistance (2,779 people)

The highest paying industries are:

- Utilities (\$73,516)
- Mining, Quarrying, & Oil & Gas Extraction (\$66,522)
- Administration (\$50,048)

Males in New York have an average income that is 1.28 times higher than the average income of females, which is \$66,479. The income inequality in New York (measured using the Gini index) is 0.494, which is higher than than the national average.



From 2019 to 2020, employment in Allegany County, NY declined at a rate of -1.51%, from 20k employees to 19.7k employees. The most common job groups, by number of people living in Allegany County, NY, are:

- Education Instruction, & Library Occupations (2,145 people)
- Office & Administrative Support Occupations (2,047 people)
- Production Occupations (1,691 people).



# Community Profile

## MEDIAN EARNINGS PER INDUSTRY

\$39,585

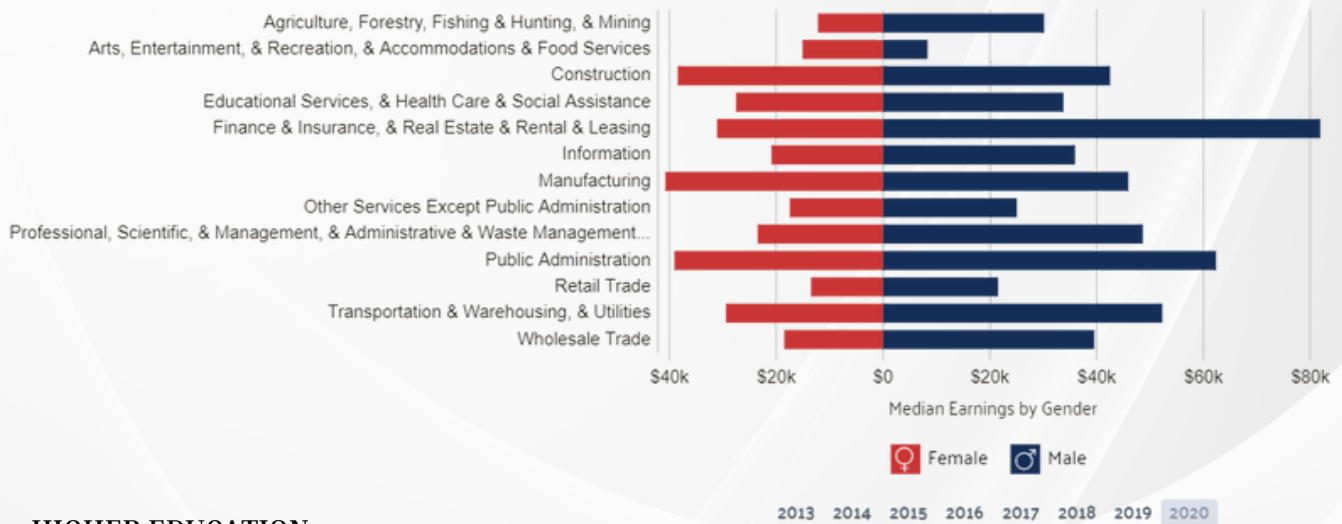
\$24,093

MEDIAN EARNING MEN ± \$1,860

MEDIAN EARNING WOMEN ± \$1,438

The industries with the best median earnings for men in 2020 are Finance & Insurance, & Real Estate & Rental & Leasing (\$81,875), Public Administration (\$62,351), and Transportation & Warehousing, & Utilities (\$52,279).

The industries with the best median earnings for women in 2020 are Manufacturing (\$40,765), Public Administration (\$39,063), and Construction (\$38,438).



## HIGHER EDUCATION

In 2020, universities in Allegany County, NY awarded 2,072 degrees. The student population of Allegany County, NY in 2020 is skewed towards men, with 3,601 male students and 3,155 female students.

Most students graduating from Universities in Allegany County, NY are White (1,411 and 69.2%), followed by Black or African American (250 and 12.3%), Hispanic or Latino (179 and 8.77%), and Unknown (96 and 4.71%).

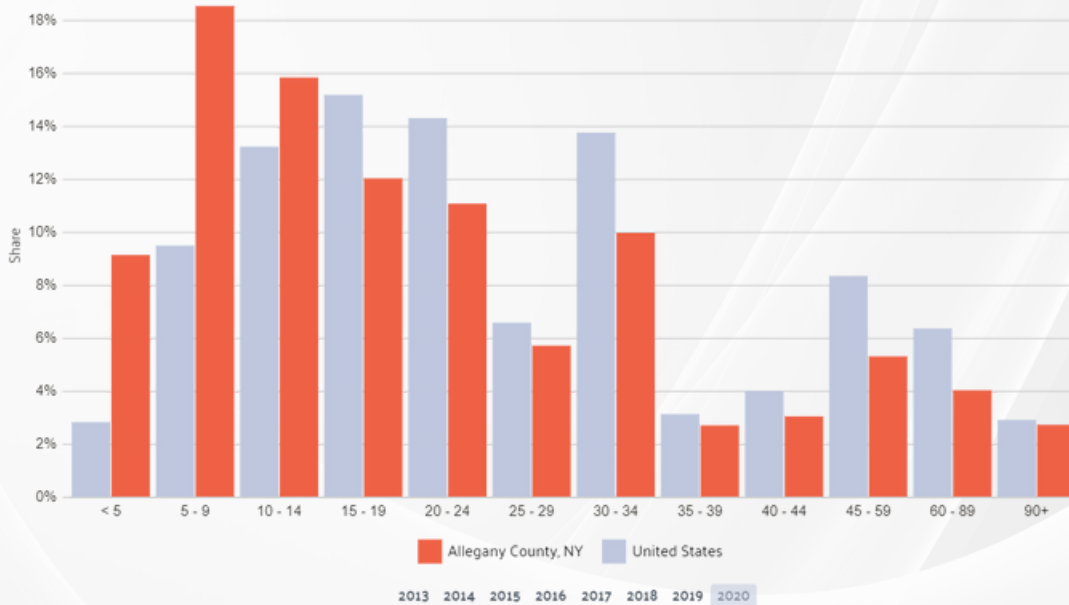
The largest universities in Allegany County, NY by number of degrees awarded are SUNY College of Technology at Alfred (1,046 and 50.5%), Alfred University (715 and 34.5%), and Houghton College (311 and 15%). The most popular majors in Allegany County, NY are General Business Administration & Management (169 and 8.16%), School Counseling & Guidance Services (147 and 7.09%), and Mental Health Counseling (106 and 5.12%).

The median tuition costs in Allegany County, NY are \$34,498 for private four-year colleges, and \$7,070 and \$14,010 respectively, for public four-year colleges for in-state students and out-of-state students.

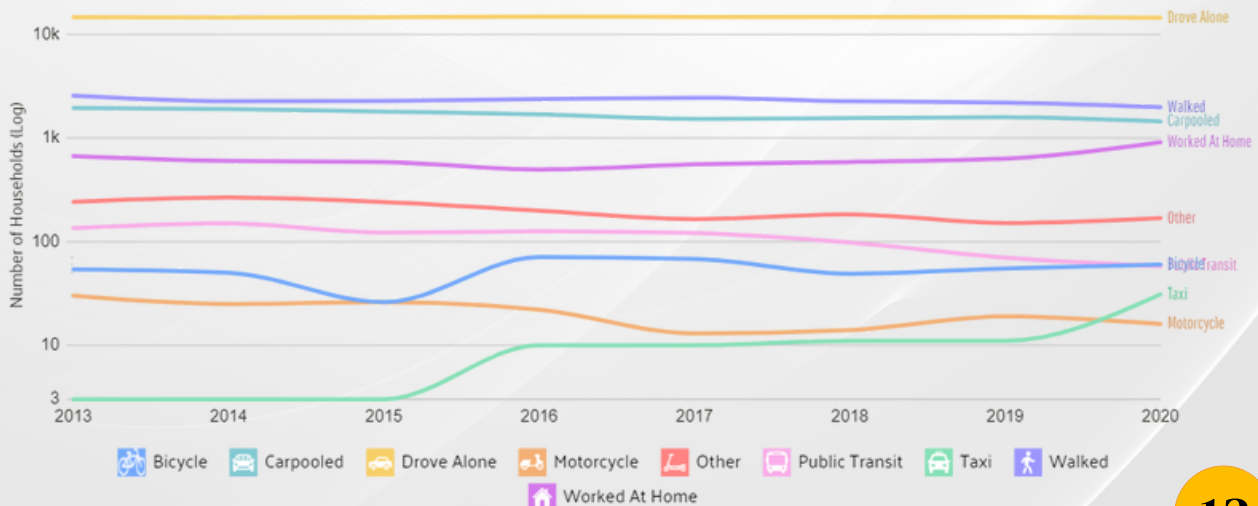
# Community Profile

## MOBILITY

Allegany County, NY is located in the southernmost portion of Western New York, bordering with Pennsylvania to the south. The county's land area in square miles (2020) was 1,034. The population per square mile (2020) was 45.1 indicating that individuals must drive more distance to reach their destinations. The county is 40-70 miles due south of Rochester and 60-80 miles south-east of Buffalo. The major roadways include Route 19 (north-south) and Interstate 86 (east-west). People in Allegany County, NY have an average commute time of 22.2 minutes, and they drive alone to work. Car ownership in Allegany County, NY is approximately the same as the national average, with an average of 2 cars per household. Additionally, 2.71% of the workforce in Allegany County, NY have "super commutes" in excess of 90 minutes.



In 2020, 75.7% of workers in Allegany County, NY drove alone to work, followed by those who walked to work (10.3%) and those who carpooled to work (7.51%). The following chart shows the number of households using each mode of transportation over time, using a logarithmic scale on the y-axis to help better show variations in the smaller means of commuting.



# Community Profile

According to the American Automobile Association (AAA), older adults are safe drivers by nearly every measure, and especially when compared to other age groups. This is because they more often reduce their risk of injury by wearing safety belts, observing speed limits, and refraining from drinking and driving. Most older drivers recognize and avoid situations where their limitations put them at risk. They drive less after dark, during rush hour or in bad weather, and avoid difficult roads such as highways and intersections.

However, older adults are more likely to be killed or injured in traffic crashes due to age-related vulnerabilities, such as more fragile bones and due to medical conditions and chronic conditions. With the exception of teen drivers, older drivers have the highest crash death rate per mile driven, even though they drive fewer miles than younger people and employ their own safety strategies.

According to the Center for Disease Control, in 2020, there were almost 48 million licensed drivers ages 65 and older in the United States. This is a 68% increase since 2000. Nationally, about 7,500 older adults were killed in traffic crashes, and almost 200,000 were treated in emergency departments for crash injuries. This means that each day, 20 older adults are killed and almost 540 are injured in crashes.

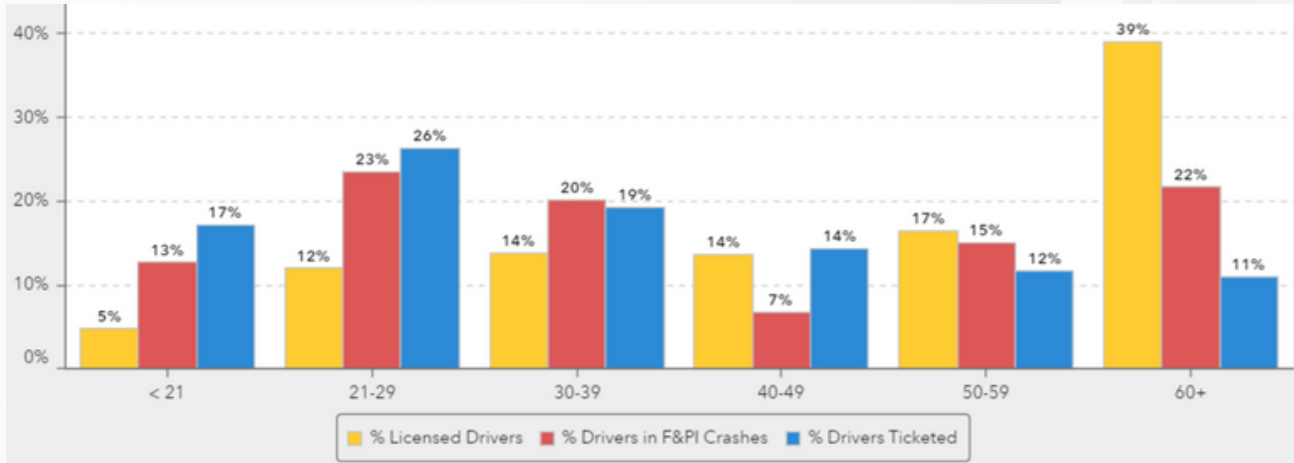
New York State is experiencing an unprecedented surge in its aging population, primarily due to the aging of the Baby Boom age cohort. Currently, New York ranks third in the nation in the number of older adults (3.7 million). In fact, if just the older adult population of New York State comprised its own state, it would be the 29th largest state in the U.S. This holds true for Allegany County where 20% of the population is age 60 years and older. (Are you concerned.pdf (ny.gov))

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, older drivers are driving more miles per year than previous generations, and at older ages and there is no reason to believe this trend will not continue well into the future. As well, age-related changes in vision, physical functioning, and the ability to reason and remember, as well as some diseases and medications, might affect some older adults' driving abilities.

If Allegany County, NY is consistent with national statistics, we can assume that 1 out of every 5 drivers are 65 years of age or older.

# Community Profile

In Allegany County, NY, the following represents data from the Traffic Safety Statistical Repository (TSSR) in relation to motor vehicle crashes and tickets for individuals 60 years and older. Allegany County older adults follow similar patterns as national statistics



Older adults are dramatically at greater risk of crashes that lead to serious injuries or death.

	2021		Fatal		Personal Injury	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Total	39	100.00%	4	100.00%	35	100.00%
ALLEGANY	39	100.00%	4	100.00%	35	100.00%
60-69	23	58.97%	3	75.00%	20	57.14%
70 and Over	16	41.03%	1	25.00%	15	42.86%

	2021	
	Total	%
Total	12	100.00%
ALLEGANY	12	100.00%
Fatal	1	8.33%
Personal Injury	9	75.00%

	2021	
	Total	%
Total	13	100.00%
ALLEGANY	13	100.00%
Fatal	1	7.69%
Personal Injury	11	84.62%

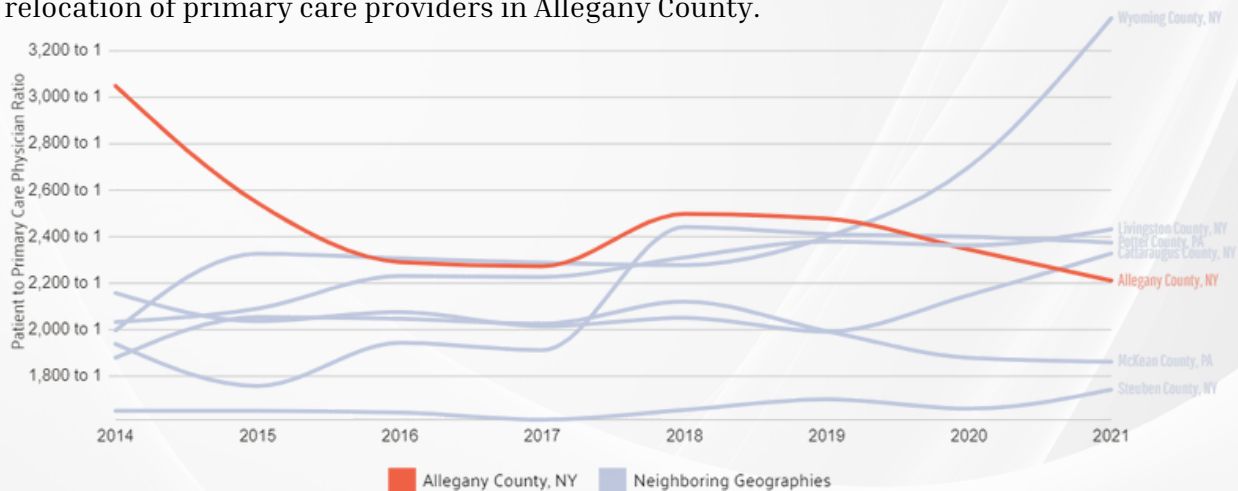
	2021	
	Total	%
Total	1,040	100.00%
ALLEGANY	1,040	100.00%
Fatal (K)	7	0.67%
Serious (A)	30	2.88%
Moderate (B)	46	4.42%
Minor (C)	59	5.67%
Unk Severity	1	0.10%



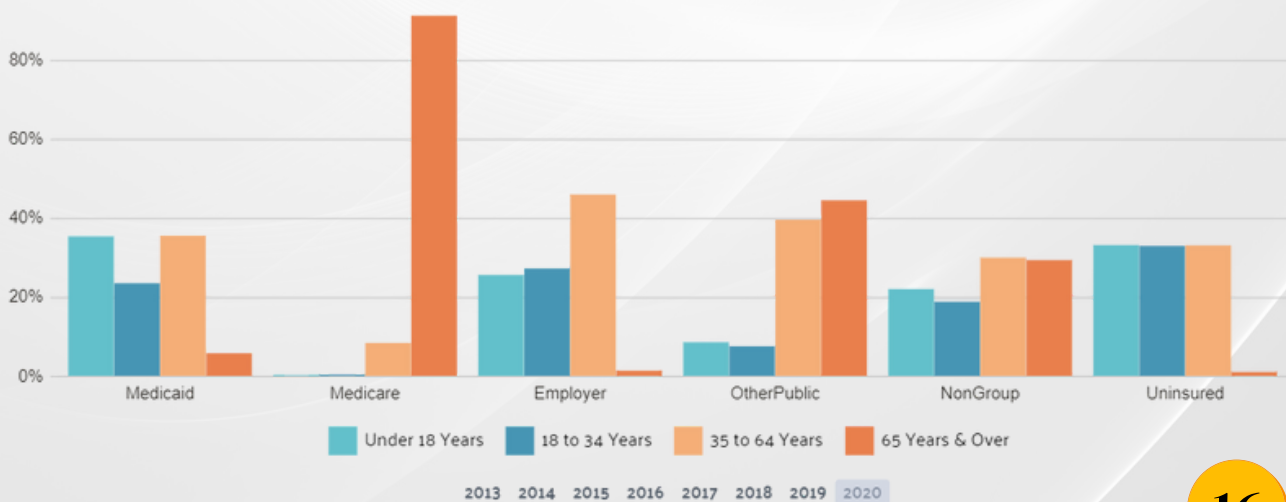
# Community Profile

Allegany County, NY faces serious health equity challenges in comparison to its neighboring counties, and comparative communities across the state and nation. Low incidents of preventative health screenings and a lack of continuity of care reduces the number of residents who seek early treatment for chronic health conditions leading to more severe outcomes and higher mortality and morbidity rates. Additionally, unhealthy lifestyles choices and lack of access to care create a burden for both the healthcare industry and the resident themselves.

Primary care providers in Allegany County, NY see an average of 2,211 patients per year. This represents a 5.71% decrease from the previous year (2,345 patients). The following chart shows how the number of patients seen by primary care providers has been changing over time in Allegany County, NY in comparison to its neighboring geographies. This can translate into three (3) possible scenarios: (1) primary care providers are spending more time/patient, (2) patients are not seeking primary care reducing the number of visits/provider or (3) retirement and relocation of primary care providers in Allegany County.

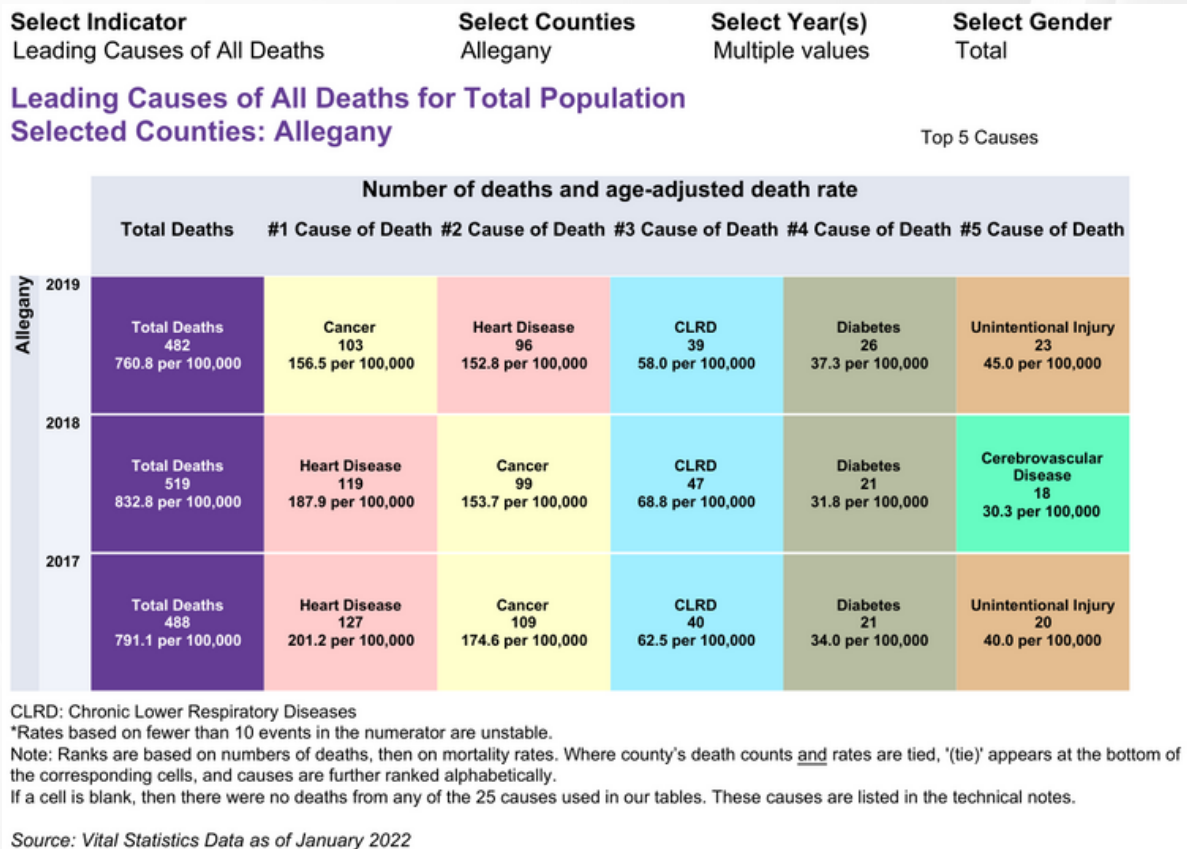


93.9% of the population of Allegany County, NY has health coverage, with 46.6% on employee plans, 18.7% on Medicaid, 13% on Medicare, 14.1% on non-group plans, and 1.51% on military or VA plans. Per capita personal health care spending in New York was \$9,778 in 2014. This is a 4.57% increase from the previous year (\$9,351).



# Community Profile

According to the most recent Vital Statistics datasets (2017-2019), the leading causes of death in Allegany County, NY were as follows:



To further explore Allegany County, NY's health, please visit the following health related data sets:

- Allegany County Indicators for Tracking Prevention Agenda Priority Areas
- CHIRS Dashboard (ny.gov)

While the COVID-19 virus initially spread through urban regions within the United States, by late spring of 2020, it began quickly shifting into rural regions and Allegany County, NY was no exception. From the onset of COVID-19 to date (February 8, 2023), Allegany County, NY has reported 10,732 COVID-19 cases and has experienced 162 deaths. (Allegany County, New York coronavirus cases and deaths | USAFacts)

COVID-19 vaccine rates in Allegany County, NY were the lowest in New York State. As of December 2022, 22,829 residents had received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine (48.55% of the population) and 21,122 were fully vaccinated (44.92% of the population). (Allegany County, NY COVID-19 Vaccine Tracker | democratandchronicle.com)

# Community Profile

After much data analysis and community input, Allegany County has selected the following Health Care Priorities for its Community Health Assessment/Community Health Improvement Plan 2022-2024 are:

## *Priority Area 1: Prevent Chronic Disease*

Focus Area 1: Healthy eating and food security

Goal 1.1: Increase access to healthy and affordable foods and beverages

Objective: By December 2024, increase redemption percentage of farmers' market (FM) coupons in Allegany County.

Goal 1.2: Increase skills and knowledge to support healthy food and beverage choices

Objective 1.2: By December 2024, decrease the percentage of children with obesity (among public school students in NYS exclusive of New York City).

Focus Area 3: Tobacco Prevention

Goal 3.2: Promote tobacco use cessation

Objective 3.2.2: By December 2024, decrease the prevalence of cigarette smoking by adults' age 18 years and older (among all adults).

Focus Area 4: Preventative care and management

Goal 4.4: In the community setting, improve self-management skills for individuals with chronic diseases including asthma, arthritis, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and prediabetes and obesity

Objective: 4.4.1 By December 2024, increase the percentage of adults with chronic conditions (arthritis, asthma, CVD, diabetes, CKD, cancer) who have taken a course or class to learn how to manage their condition.

## *Priority Area 4: Promote Well-Being and Prevent Mental and Substance Use Disorders*

Focus Area 2: Prevent mental and substance use disorders

Goal 2.5: Prevent suicide

Objective: 2.5.2 Reduce the age-adjusted suicide mortality rate by 10% by 2024.

Goal 2.3: Prevent and address adverse childhood experiences

Objective 2.3.1: Reduce the percentage of adults experiencing two or more adverse childhood experiences (ACE's) by 2024.

*Disparity* - Socioeconomic/Income Strategies/activities for all priorities will be offered at low cost or no cost to the residents of Allegany County. Offering the evidence-based interventions/strategies/activities locally, virtually and by telephone reduces the financial burden to the residents of Allegany County by reducing the travel and time expense to county residents.

2022-2024-Allegany-County-ACDOH-JMH-CMH-CHA-CHIP-CSP-DRAFT.pdf (alleganyco.gov)

# Community Profile

Allegany County, NY has an overall crime rate of 18 per 100,000 residents. This is one of the safest regions in the United States. This means that your chances of becoming a victim of any type of crime in Allegany County is 1 in 5,556 if you reside there for a year.

## CRIME RATE per 100,000 residents

Index Crime: 881.5

Violent Crime: 160.5

Property Crime: 721.0

The report shows that Allegany recorded a total of 456 crimes in 2019, including 61 violent crimes and 395 property crimes. Reported violent crimes include 30 cases of rape, 1 robbery, and 30 aggravated assault occurrences. Property crimes include 97 burglaries and 26 motor vehicle thefts. Larceny was the most committed Allegany County crime in 2019, with 272 reported cases. Overall, the Allegany County crime rate dropped by 0.2% compared to 2018.

Year	Total	Violent	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Agg Assault	Property	Burglary	Larceny	MV Theft
2019	456	61	0	30	1	30	395	97	272	26
2020	401	73	3	38	3	29	328	86	214	28
% +/-	-12.1%	19.7%	NA	26.7%	200.0%	-3.3%	-17.0%	-11.3%	-21.3%	7.7%

*Index crimes are the eight crimes that the FBI joins to create its yearly crime list, often called as FBI index crimes. These 8 index crimes incorporate willful homicide, forcible rape, robbery, burglary, aggravated assault, larceny over \$50, motor vehicle theft, and arson.*

Source: *Crime-in-NYS-2020.pdf*

Elder abuse occurs in all communities. Older adults are at an increased risk for abuse, with individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and other neuro-cognitive impairments at the greatest risk. Other factors include isolation, dependence on caregivers or others, poor physical and mental health, and poverty. Around 1 in 6 people 60 years and older experienced some form of abuse in community settings during the past year.

- Rates of abuse of older people are high in institutions such as nursing homes and long-term care facilities, with 2 in 3 staff reporting that they have committed abuse in the past year.
- Rates of abuse of older people have increased during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Abuse of older people can lead to serious physical injuries and long-term psychological consequences.

Types of elder abuse include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, financial exploitation, and neglect (including self-neglect), and scams.



# Age-Friendly Features

Allegany County, New York underwent a community needs assessment focused on the voice of older adults throughout the community. This process included the following:

- Demographic analysis of Allegany County,
- Online and paper-based surveys,
- Community forums,
- Preliminary mapping of current community assets, and
- Research into the 8 domains of an age-friendly community.

Through this process we recognized that Allegany County's age-friendly features will require greater study due to the lack of a comprehensive database of the 8 domains of an age-friendly community.

Various information and referral systems are currently in place to assist families and older adults in locating resources or promoting referrals between professionals. These include:

- [211 Helpline](#)
- [NY Connects](#)

Anticipation over the [New York State Section 1115 Medicaid Redesign Waiver](#) application to the federal government, many organizations are jockeying for regional support by building or enhancing an integrated health information and referral system that encompasses organizations that address social determinants of health (Health Equity Regional Organizations (HEROs)). This is a duplication of resources and Allegany County has chosen to take a "wait and see" approach until NYS is funded and HEROs are named.



# Age-Friendly Features

Although a more in-depth asset map and communications strategy is a priority for Age-Friendly Allegany County, it is important to recognize some of the organizations who are working to improve the health and wellbeing of older adult residents. As well, we must recognize the tireless work that the already existing coalitions, community groups, and committees are undertaking that align with the 8 Domains of Age-Friendly Communities. Collaborating with allies with similar missions, visions, values, and goals are essential to our efforts. Please note, this is not a comprehensive list and will be added to as our work advances.

## Allegany County Office for the Aging

The Allegany County Office for the Aging (ACOFA) is the local Area Agency on Aging funded by the New York State Office for the Aging. As part of the local government, ACOFA works diligently to improve the life and well-being of older adults living in Allegany County, NY.

Programs and services include:

- Home delivered meals (HDM)
- Congregate meals
- Nutrition counseling and education
- Senior programming
- Health promotion and wellness
- Evidence Based Interventions (EBIs)
- Volunteer opportunities
- Respite and caregiver supports
- Legal Services
- Home modifications, repairs
- Elder abuse prevention and mitigation
- NY Connects
- Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP)
- Personal Care Level I and II
- Case management
- Ancillary services, such as Personal Emergency Response System (PERS) and assistive devices
- Transportation to needed medical appointments, community services and activities
- Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

## Allegany County Community Partnership on Aging/Long-Term Care Council

The Allegany County Community Partnership on Aging acts as Allegany County's Long-Term Care Council and is a collaboration of passionate individuals, service providers and community leaders working to take action and improve quality of life for those age 60 and over; while making Allegany County a good place to grow up, live and grow old through environmental transformation, policy advancement and system change.

# Age-Friendly Features

## Allegany County Senior Foundation

The Allegany County Senior Foundation is a local nonprofit organization that supports programs that support older adults in Allegany County, NY.

## Allegany County Mobility Management: Access Allegany

ACCESS Allegany is the public transportation system and mobility management program serving Allegany County, NY. Housed at Ardent Solutions, ACCESS Allegany is advised by a community task force including program representatives from aging services. ACCESS Allegany offers older adults transportation resources including:

- low fare public transit (.50/boarding/older adult)
- route deviations available up to 3/4 mile from fixed route
- Accessible vehicles with wheelchair lift
- Drive Well Older Adult Driving Education program
- CarFit Education
- Referrals to ACOFA Volunteer Driver Program
- Travel Training Program

## Ardent Solutions, Inc.

Ardent Solutions is a not-for-profit, rural health network serving older adults through the following community health programs:

- Growing Stronger Strength Training Program
- Forever Young Caregiver Services
- Chronic Disease Self-Management Program
- A Matter of Balance
- Chronic Pain Self-Management
- Diabetes Self-Management Program
- Suicide Prevention Education and County-wide Coalition

## **HEALTHCARE**

Jones Memorial Hospital

Cuba Memorial Hospital

## **LONG-TERM CARE**

Wellsville Manor Care Center

Highland Park Rehabilitation and Nursing Center

Absolute of Houghton

Manor Hills Assistive Living

# Age-Friendly Features

## Allegany County Department of Social Services

SNAP Benefits

Medicaid Enrollment

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Benefits

Adult Protective Services

Homeless Assistance

Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation

HEAP

Emergency Financial Assistance

## Allegany County Elder Abuse Prevention Committee

Facilitated by the Allegany County Office for the Aging, the committee consists of professionals that aim to increase awareness of elder abuse and neglect through education, training and resources.

## Allegany County Food Security Coalition

The Allegany County Food Security Coalition strives to ensure that every person in Allegany County has access to food supplies, including food pantries, pop-up food distribution sites, and other food security strategies.

## Partners for Prevention in Allegany County (PPAC)

PPAC a coalition of concerned individuals who care about the health and well-being of our children, families, schools, and communities. We strive to reduce those risk factors that lead to alcohol and drug abuse, teen pregnancy, violence and school dropout. We are empowering Allegany County, New York to collaboratively work together to create a healthy environment for our youth while encouraging positive change.

## Allegany County TRIAD

The Allegany County Sheriff's Office along with the Allegany County Office of the Aging and the New York State Police continue to sponsor the TRIAD Program. This program brings members of our senior citizens groups together to listen to quality speakers on topics that affect their lives. Our seniors also have an opportunity to converse, ask questions and express concerns with local law enforcement officials who attend every meeting. This provides valuable input and insight to us as well. We look forward to this program expanding and becoming a valuable asset to our seniors.



# Intro



## Age-Friendly Allegany County

Our mission is to support Allegany County residents through every stage and every age of life by providing enabling physical and social environments, opportunities to create meaningful experiences, and equitable, affordable, programs and services.

### Allegany County Vision Statement

Our vision is to build upon the strengths of the communities in Allegany County while developing new opportunities that will further support all residents as they grow older.

It is our intention that by 2025, we will:

- Create new social opportunities, including intergenerational activities
- Assess and improve physical environments to be more accessible for all
- Foster collaborations between organizations to strengthen our impact and extend the reach of services to Allegany County residents
- Build on and enhance the infrastructure in our communities that positively impact the quality of life for all residents, especially older adults and those living with a disability.

# Age-Friendly Features

## Trauma-Informed Communities throughout Allegany County

There is a growing movement to understand the impact of trauma on our community and to transform Allegany County, New York into a trauma-informed community. To do so, we must be committed to that shift our thinking from “what’s wrong with you?” to “what’s happened to you?” with an understanding of the pervasive nature of trauma. Trauma-Informed Communities Throughout Allegany County is a community coalition joining together to make Allegany County a Trauma-Informed Community.

## WNY Wilds

WNY Wilds is the official tourism site for Allegany County, NY offering a list of agritourism, cultural, arts, museums and historical sites, restaurants, outdoor activities including hunting and fishing, trails, sports and recreation, and community events. Trails include the Genesee Valley Greenway, Genesee River Wilds, and the Wag Trail,

## Allegany County Community Health Committee

Facilitated by the Allegany County Department of Health, the committee is a cross-section of healthcare professionals representing community health organizations, medical and health care alcohol, tobacco and other drug services, behavioral health, and school-based health services.

# Our Journey

On July 27th, 2020, the Allegany County Legislative board passed Resolution No. 159-20 in support of Allegany County, NY joining over 500 other communities across the United States in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities. Chairman of the Allegany County Legislative board, Curtis Crandall, provided a letter of support to accompany the resolution and further showed the county's commitment to adopting age-friendly practices in to both social and built environments.

By joining the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities, Allegany County entered a 5-year program cycle. The following activities informed a 3-year action plan to make sustainable changes and new developments towards improved livability across Allegany County, NY.



Cultivated the Age-Friendly Allegany County Coalition and introduced Age-Friendly concepts and purpose to key stakeholders and community members.



Developed and administered a community survey to obtain community input from local older adults and caregivers. Alfred University analyzed data and drafted the Age-Friendly Allegany County report.



Hosted Community Forums across Allegany County to learn from older adults about their community concerns and opportunities to expand current age-friendly activities, services, and programs.



Using the 8 Domains of Age-Friendly Communities and data from the Age-Friendly Allegany County report and community forum data, the Age-Friendly Allegany County Action Plan was crafted and submitted to AARP.

*“For being one of the less busy and social activity [counties] I do believe we take care of over communities very well. [...] I love my town and can't think of any other I'd rather live in. We have great churches with God fearing preachers and community, caring school staff and leaders. People that care and help their neighbors. Andover is the greatest.”*

2021 Age-Friendly Survey Respondent

# Our Journey

## Age-Friendly Allegany County Community Survey Highlights

Age-Friendly Allegany County used a multimodal distribution system to engage a wide-array of older adults, including:



Online Survey:  
239 responses



Print Survey:  
266 responses



Total Surveys:  
505 responses

A total of 505 surveys were returned representing 4% of Allegany County's older adult population. To address lack of Wi-Fi or technological discomfort, 2,000 paper surveys were distributed to local libraries and senior housing settings.

Although the survey was anonymous and confidential, respondents could enter into an incentive drawing for a 24" flat screen smart television, a \$50 VISA gift card, or a \$25 Amazon gift card.

Approximately 3/4 of respondents have lived in Allegany County for 26+ years offering a long-term perspective. Those that completed the survey ranged in age from 50-97 years old:

- 50-59 years old = 86 responses (17%)
- 60-69 years old = 132 responses (27%)
- 70-79 years old = 169 responses (34%)
- 80-89 years old = 92 responses (18%)
- 90+ years old = 21 responses (4%)

*"Allegany County may be poor economically, but the people here are kind and hearty (strong). The area is a well-kept secret for now. We are happy to be here. Transportation is needed for many. Assistance with home maintenance is necessary as the younger people move away and it is difficult to find help. The data shows many families can't pay rent without going into grocery money. We tried to get a volunteer assistance with these issues covered, but we were short volunteers and long on needs."*

*2021 Age-Friendly Survey Respondent*



# Our Journey

Respondents represented all zip codes and areas with a larger return rate in the more populated communities:



- Wellsville, NY (29%)
- Belmont, NY (8.1%)
- Cuba, NY (7.1%)
- Alfred, NY (5.9%)
- Rest of County (49.9%)

Nearly 80% of survey respondents rated Allegany County as a positive place to live as they age.

When asked, "How would you rate Allegany County as a place for people to live as they age?" 492 responded with the following results:

Excellent: 10%  
Very Good: 33%  
Good: 26%  
Fair: 18%  
Poor: 03%

When asked, "Do you feel supported in your communities to age-in-place as you grow older?"

Yes: 56.17%  
29.79% "Unsure At This Time"

Overall, Allegany County residents identified that they enjoy living in their communities and hope to remain in Allegany County as they age. However, residents are realistic about the limited or lack of resources needed to do so. Many respondents expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to offer their input.

*"Allegany County is a great place to live. It is true that some products and services are not available locally. But they are not far as long as you are driving. Regional buses are very important to many people."*

2021 Age-Friendly Survey Respondent

# Our Journey

Applying the 8 Domains of Livability, Age-Friendly Allegany County crafted the next set of survey questions:

## The 8 Domains of Livability

The availability and quality of these community features impact the well-being of older adults — and help make communities more livable for people of all ages



1. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

2. Transportation

3. Housing

4. Social Participation

5. Respect and Social Inclusion

6. Civic Participation and Employment

7. Communication and Information

8. Community and Health Services

*"I have lived here in Wellsville all my life and feel very blessed. My late husband and I raised 4 children and they took advantage of Alfred State and Alfred University. We also have a great hospital, with advantage of Mercy Flight when necessary. We could use a department store but do have stores that have the necessities if needed. The office of the aging does a great job. We are so lucky."*

2021 Age-Friendly Survey Respondent

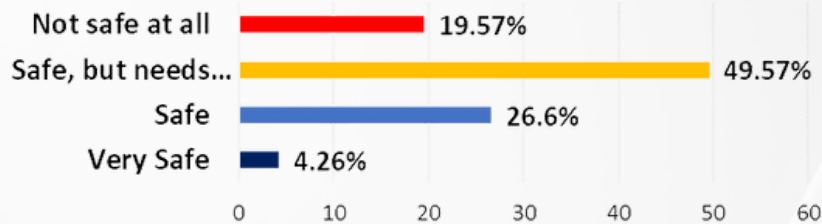
# Our Journey

## COMMON THEMES BY DOMAIN

While all eight domains are crucial to creating age-friendly environments, Age-Friendly Allegany County will utilize the survey results, and other input collected, to help identify which domains are of greatest concern and prioritize in the 2023-2025 Age-Friendly Action Plan.

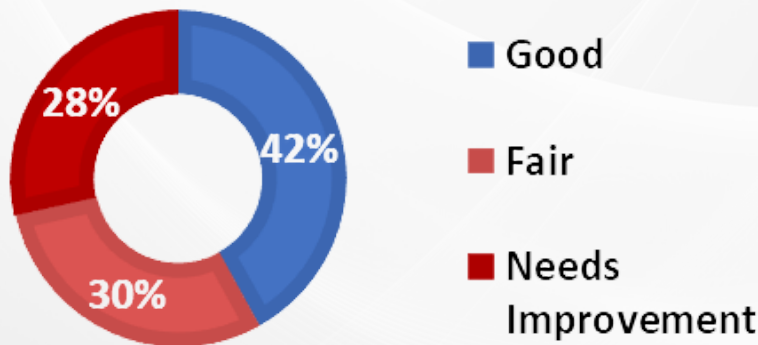
### OUTDOOR SPACE AND ENVIRONMENT

How would you rate the sidewalks in your community for all pedestrians to utilize, including those in wheelchairs, using walkers, or canes?



It is important to note 69% of the 470 respondents stated that their community sidewalks were either unsafe or need improvements. This is a major barrier for walkability and can prevent older adults from staying active.

How would you rate the public buildings in your community on being accessible to all ability levels?



It is important to note 58% of the respondents stated that public building accessibility was either fair or needs improvement. This is a major barrier for older adults to participate in social activities, including shopping, visiting restaurants or hairdressers, etc., leading to isolation.

*"I chose to live in a rural area and know there may challenges in my future. So far things have gone well for me. Office for the aged helped me keep my mother-in-law with me as long as I could care for her. They were very helpful with services I needed for her."*

2021 Age-Friendly Survey Respondent

# Our Journey

## TRANSPORTATION

Respondents stated that the following regarding their personal mobility:

Walk with No Supports: 81.49%

Use Mobility Assistance Devices: 15%

When asked “How do you usually get around your community for things like shopping, visiting the doctor, running errands, or other things?” respondents stated:

Drive own vehicle: 85.5%

Walking: 38.38%

Family or Friends: 19.51%

Public Transportation (ACCESS Allegany): 3.73%

Volunteer Driver Program (ACOFA): 3.74%

It is important to note that according to the AAA Senior Driver Safety and Mobility site, "by 2030, there will be more than 70 million people aged 65 and older, and approximately 85-90% of them will be licensed to drive. In fact, seniors are outliving their ability to drive safely by an average of 7-10 years and for the first time in history, we must plan for our "driving retirement" just as we plan for our financial retirement."



*"I'm currently well able to drive myself but if that should change in the future, my options are limited."*

2021 Age-Friendly Survey Respondent



# Our Journey

## RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

The survey results revealed that about 50% of the respondents felt they, as well as their opinions, are appreciated in their communities. The fact that over 30% felt "unsure" of their worth within their communities leads us to reflect on how we can improve Allegany County's diversity, equity, and inclusion of older adults.

Under this domain, older adults were surveyed on social opportunities including activities that are of most interest and the barriers that would prevent them from participating in social opportunities in their communities.

Participants were asked to choose from a list of what activities they would be interested in participating. Of those, respondents cited the following factors when designing or modifying activities:

- Activities That Are Affordable (16.7%)
- Offer Senior Discounts (14.5%)
- Involve a Variety of Ages (13.9%)
- Continuing Education and Social Clubs (12%)

In her analysis, Dr. Gagne combined the "other" responses from question #21 with responses from question #22 which asked respondents to enter what types of events or activities they would like to see in their communities that are NOT currently available. Her results posted 12 themes which are broken down further in to 4 categories on the next page. Please note, this is not a complete list; please see Dr. Gagne's report for full results.

*Social engagement can contribute to seniors' esteem. Age-friendly initiatives to involve all seniors in activities where they have experience can keep them engaged with the community, and help them feel valued in their community. Older people should always be consulted on decisions concerning them.*

*Respect and Social Inclusion - Age-Friendly World (who.int)*

# Our Journey



Physical Activity



Socialization



Lifelong Learning



Clubs or Support Groups

- Gardening
- Dance classes
- Fitness opportunities
- Indoor track
- Updated playgrounds
- Bird watching
- Historical walking tours

- Board games
- Card nights
- Bingo
- Theater productions
- Dinner and a show
- TED -type talks
- Block parties
- Weekly social gatherings

- Pottery and painting
- Cooking
- Technology instruction
- Computer literacy
- Genealogy

- Widower support
- Grief support
- Substance abuse support
- Astronomy club
- Walking clubs
- Book clubs

## Top Identified Barriers

- Lack of awareness (47.74%)\*
- Not being interested (21.81%)
- Not feeling included (10.49%)
- Limited or no transportation (9.47%)

\*Awareness is a common theme throughout the report and will be seen as a major factor in the "Communication" Domain.

## Other Barriers:

- Physical limitations
- Lack of time to attend
- Lack of activities available
- Cost of activities
- Caregiver responsibilities
- Personal preference
- Technical issues accessing online registrations

*While respect for seniors is mostly healthy in many cities and communities, negative preconceptions of ageing still exist. There is a need to facilitate intergenerational interactions to dispel such notions. Education about ageing should also begin early to raise awareness on ageing and associated issues, so that people learn to appreciate their elderly.*

Respect and Social Inclusion - Age-Friendly World (who.int)

# Our Journey

## HOUSING

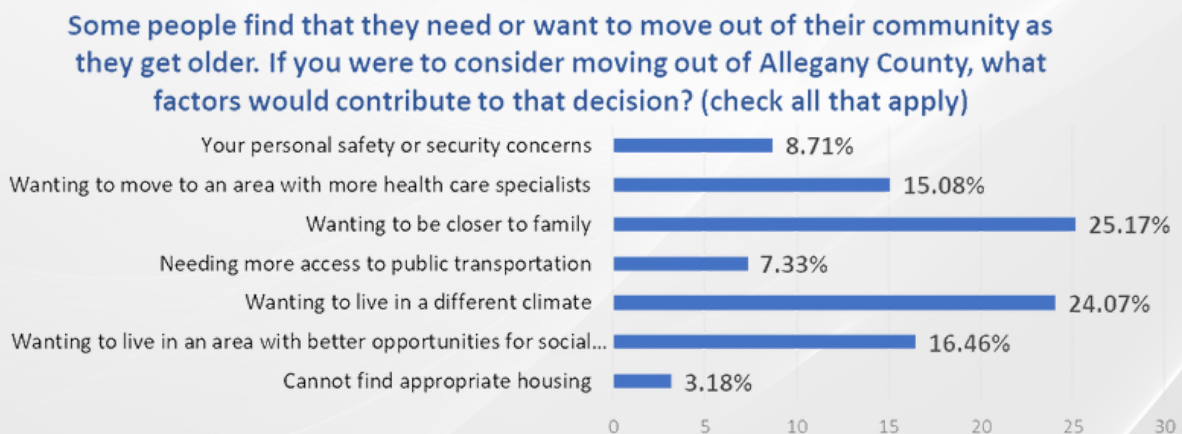
Allegany County, NY is home to 23,797 housing units. The median age of Allegany County real estate is 53 years old. Overall, renters make up 18.8% of the Allegany County population. 32.4% of the housing units in Allegany County, NY were built in 1939 or prior.

Homeowners with homes built prior to 1940 face greater challenges than those with homes built later. Older homes may be more expensive to own due to structural issues, outdated systems, and cosmetics, as well as the presence of hazardous materials. Materials, like asbestos, lead-based paint, and radon were once common building materials; however, these materials are now known to be hazardous to human health. In fact, the Environmental Protection Agency states that exposure to asbestos increases the risk of developing lung disease such as lung cancer. Additionally, mold and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from remodeling activities are more common in older homes. (U.S. Cities With the Largest Share of Homes Built Prior to 1940 | FilterBuy)

As stated earlier in the report, nearly 75% of residents surveyed have resided in Allegany County for more than 25 years. The majority of those surveyed reside in single family homes (83.6%) and own their place of residence (85.5%). Respondents identified reasons why they might move out of their current residences in the future and among the top responses were:

- Wanting a home that would allow for independent living such as a home without stairs (33.52%)
- Cost of maintaining their current home (27.96%)
- Wanting a smaller home (23.52%)

When asked about moving from Allegany County, NY, respondents provided the following considerations:





# Our Journey

Additionally, the open response section provided repeated input that residents would consider moving into a senior housing building or an assisted living facility from their current home as the need arises.

Our results show that older adults in Allegany County feel strongly connected to their communities and want to remain here as they age, but that they do have concerns about their ability to do so. For instance, the harsh New York winters can be hard on older residents; slippery walkways increase falls, slippery roads decrease driving abilities, and snow removal can be impossible, so it is no surprise that the second highest response as to what factors might cause residents to leave Allegany County, is the climate.

The most pleasant months of the year for Allegany County, NY are June, July and August. There are four (4) comfortable months with high temperatures in the range of 70-85°. July is the hottest month for Allegany County with an average high temperature of 79.2°, which ranks it as one of the coolest places in New York. January is the snowiest month in Allegany County with 18.3 inches of snow, and 6 months of the year can have significant snowfall. There are few days during the summer when the humidity may become unpleasant. On average, Allegany County receives 40 inches of rain and 73 inches of snow/year. The average winter low temperature typically occurs in January at 13. (Weather in Allegany County, New York (bestplaces.net)).

While we cannot change the weather, we can make sure our environments are enabling for those that need assistance to navigate the cold weather months such as clearing snow and ice to maintain walkways, offering snow removal assistance, and providing transportation services or running errands for a neighbor.





# Our Journey

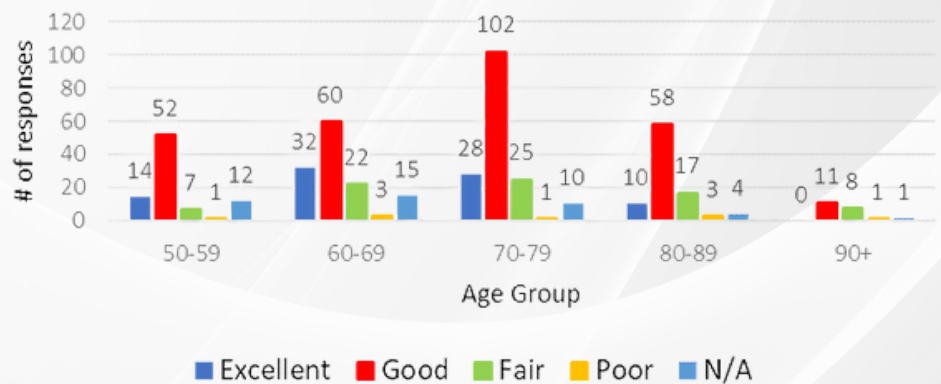
## PERSONAL AND HOUSEHOLD HEALTH

Due to the impact of the coronavirus on social engagement for almost a year prior to the survey, a “Personal and Household Health” category was added to the survey in lieu of the traditional “Social Participation” domain. The AFAC committee decided that input regarding social participation would not be reliable as they would likely be influenced by the isolation of the government shutdowns and social distancing safety regulations that did not allow residents to have “normal” interactions in the community for the time leading up to the survey.

Respondents were asked to rate their personal health from poor to excellent. The majority of residents surveyed rated their personal health as “good” at 61.82% with an additional 18.22% reporting “excellent” health.

As residents aged there was a decline in confidence about their personal health with the 80+ age groups dropping to a “fair” rating for the second highest response.

How would you rate your personal health? (by age group)



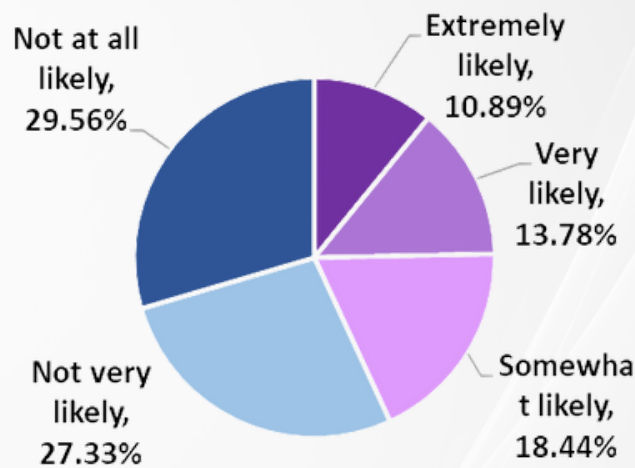
*While scientists continue to actively research how to slow or prevent age-related declines in physical health, they've already discovered multiple ways to improve the chances of maintaining optimal health later in life. Taking care of your physical health involves staying active, making healthy food choices, getting enough sleep, limiting your alcohol intake, and proactively managing your health care. Small changes in each of these areas can go a long way to support healthy aging.*

What Do We Know About Healthy Aging? | National Institute on Aging (nih.gov)

# Our Journey

Under this section, the survey also explored caregiving and found that 17.69% of the respondents are caregivers either in their home (9.98%) or caring for someone outside of their home (7.71%). An additional 43.11% responded some level of likeliness that they would become a caregiver in the future.

How likely is it that you will provide unpaid care to an adult in or outside of your home in the future?



Research shows that caregiving is an important factor in relation to personal health and wellbeing. Caregivers often feel physical and emotional stress. 22% of caregivers report that their health has gotten worse as a result of caregiving. Caring for chronic conditions like dementia or Alzheimer's disease seem to cause the most emotional stress. The physical demands of caregiving can also take a toll, when the duties include lifting and helping with mobility. As well, lack of sleep due to caring can impact both physical and emotional wellbeing. A family caregiver is often at high risk for depression. Oftentimes, caregiving duties take up so much of their time that they no longer maintain social connections outside of the home. (The Challenges Facing a Family Caregiver | ASC Blog (asccare.com)).

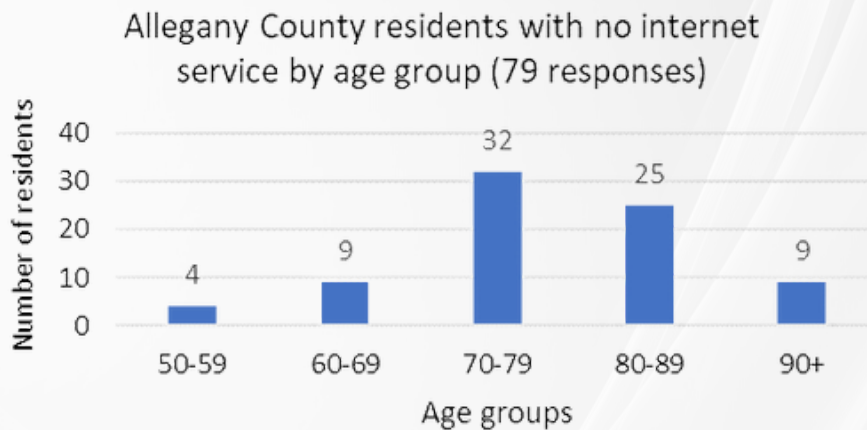
*Caregiving is an important public health issue that affects the quality of life for millions of individuals. Caregivers provide assistance with another person's social or health needs. Caregiving may include help with one or more activities important for daily living such as bathing and dressing, paying bills, shopping and providing transportation. It also may involve emotional support and help with managing a chronic disease or disability. Caregiving responsibilities can increase and change as the recipient's needs increase, which may result in additional strain on the caregiver.*

Caregiving for Family and Friends — A Public Health Issue (cdc.gov)

# Our Journey

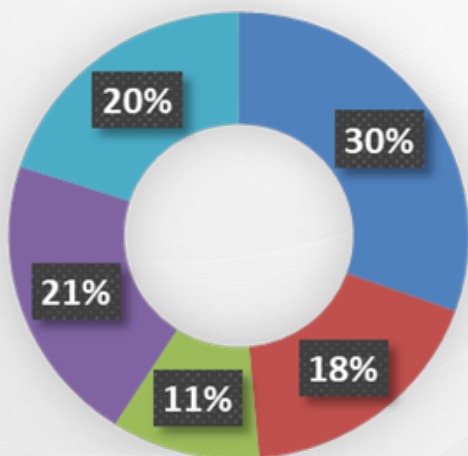
## COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

The survey showed that 80.35% of respondents reported having a computer, laptop, or tablet, and furthermore 82.52% reported they have internet service connected to a device, including smartphones. Looking at the age demographics of those that reported having no internet access capability, we can identify that the older the respondent the increase in the inability to be reached with information by internet.



The internet is the fastest and most up to date way to distribute information about community events, news, services available, etc., Yet, for many accessing an internet connection is not always possible. The high cost of service, no availability of connections in rural areas, and access to equipment to utilize the internet, are all main themes that residents stated as reasons they cannot or do not access the internet.

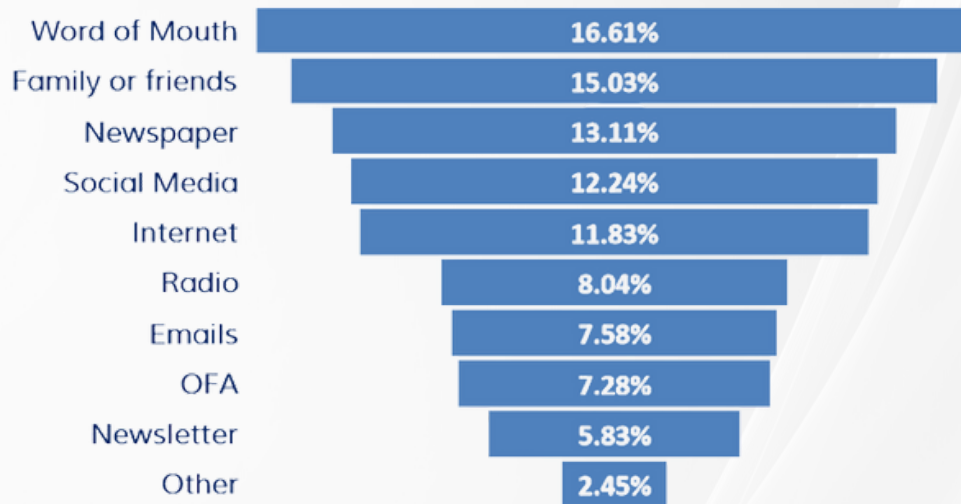
### If you do not have the internet, why not?



- Other
- I do not want internet service
- Internet is not available where I live
- I do not have a computer or other device that requires internet
- I cannot afford internet access

# Our Journey

As witnessed in many domains, lack of communication and awareness are two of the biggest barriers older adults face in accessing information and prevents older adults from participating in programs, services, social activities, etc.



It's important to point out that those who responded to the survey did so via an online survey platform or were already connected to services or activities. Allegany County's hardest to reach older adults may not be part of this sampling, therefore we should consider how to reach those individuals as well.

Agencies and partners who serve older adults (gatekeepers) are important allies for outreach to those who do not have access to internet or technology and may be isolated and/or alone. This is especially true for home-bound seniors. Partners like Allegany County Office for the Aging, home-care agencies, delivery services, etc., are trusted resources who have access to share information with older adults. Additionally, outreach to caregivers, health care providers, mental health providers, other health and human service organizations, family, and friends is vital. This may be accomplished through support groups, employers, and other outlets, including social media. Learning who these trusted gatekeepers are and engaging them in outreach is critical for those who do not have the means to access information otherwise.

*"If our hopes of building a better and safer world are to become more than wishful thinking, we will need the engagement of volunteers more than ever."*

— Kofi Annan

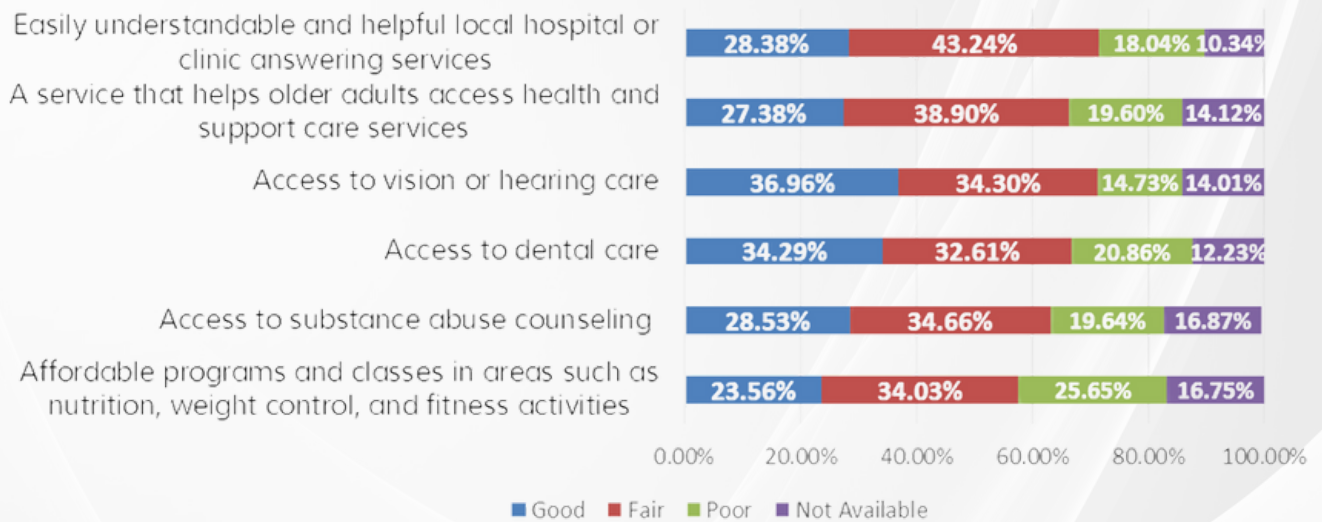


# Our Journey

## HEALTH AND HEALTH SERVICES

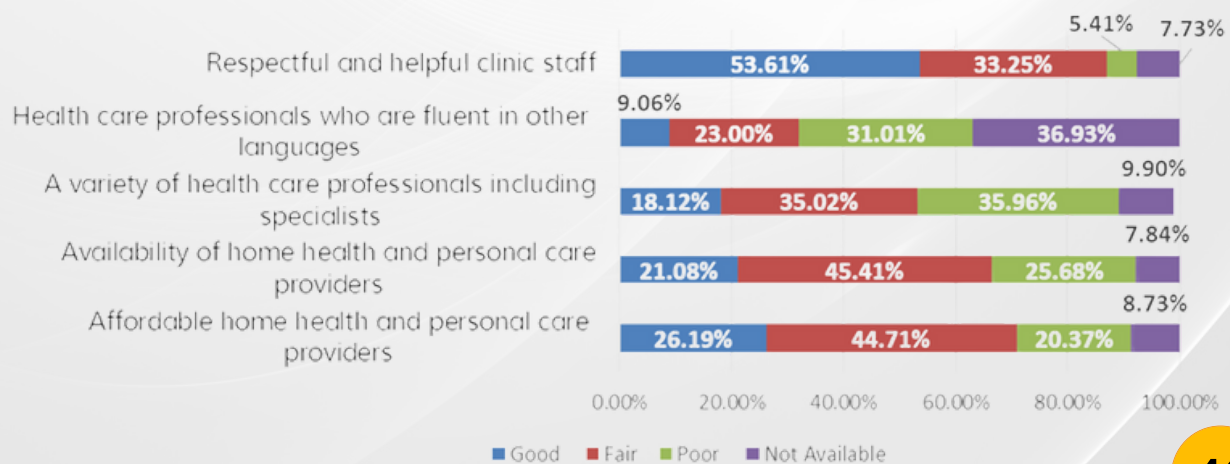
Providing health care and health services in a rural community often presents challenges that more urban areas do not face, such as longer travel distance to providers and specialists, availability of home care services, and overall availability of vision, dental, and medical providers. We asked survey respondents to rate their communities on health care and health and wellness services.

Thinking health and wellness services in your community, how would you rate the following:



Overall, the positive responses outweighed the negative in most areas of both health care and health services. However, the numbers dip in the areas concerning health care professionals that are fluent in other languages and have a variety of health care specialists.

Thinking about health care professions in your community, how would you rate your community on having the following:



# Domain-Specific Action Plan

The following document represents the next phase of Allegany County's journey toward becoming an Age-Friendly Community. It is a roadmap that offers a clear path showing our Goals, Objectives, Activities, and how each goal relates to the 8 Domains.

Through a prioritization exercise, the Allegany County Age-Friendly Communities Coalition scored each Objective based on the following categories:

- Impact on Community and Older Adults
- Feasibility of Success
- Political and Community Support

Data was synthesized and Coalition members came together to further define the timeline for each objective.



GOAL ONE: AFAC will reduce social isolation in Allegany County’s older adult population resulting in improved social, mental, physical and psychological well-being and increasing protective factors against depression, cognitive and physical decline.		
Objective	Action	Domain
1.1 By December 2023, AFAC will produce an asset map of all formal and informal social activities and services for older adults to increase awareness and participation through a strategic awareness campaign.	1. Research social clubs, activities, and programs using the following criteria: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. address,</li> <li>b. day of week,</li> <li>c. hours of day,</li> <li>d. location accessibility,</li> <li>e. cost</li> </ol>	Social Participation Communication and Information
	2. Explore various platforms for increasing awareness of social clubs, activities and programs including a web-based calendar of events, apps, social media outlets, direct mailing, word-of-mouth strategies, etc.	
	3. Test awareness strategies with older adults and modify for accessibility, literacy, and cultural competency.	
	4. Continue to monitor and update social clubs, activities, and programs’ listing based on new and revised offerings.	
	5. Determine gaps in social opportunities for older adults based on social determinants of health and other factors.	
1.2 By December 2023, AFAC will partner with the Allegany County Office for the Aging to explore opportunities to increase attendance at the ACOFA Senior Luncheon Centers.	1. Establish baseline data on participant attendance and determine attendee level of satisfaction with site accommodations.	Social Participation Respect and Social Inclusion Community Support and Health Services
	2. Administer an environmental assessment of each Senior Luncheon Center to determine safety and accessibility.	
	3. Produce an interest survey of potential workshops and activities and assess participant talents and interests.	
	4. Support site managers in creating an individualized plan by providing a comprehensive list of local artists/presenters.	
	5. Survey townships without a Luncheon Center to gauge interest of creating additional Luncheon Centers in Allegany County.	
1.3 By December 2023, increase the number of physical activity and wellness opportunities for	1. Identify all physical activity and wellness programs and services available to Allegany County caregivers and older adults.	Social Participation Community Support and Health Services
	2. Revitalize Allegany County Growing Stronger program to be inclusive and accessible to more participants.	

Allegany County caregivers and older adults that are accessible and affordable.	3. Increase the number of Taichi opportunities for older adults	
	4. Increase the number of community line dancing and dance programs for communities without current resources.	
	5. Establish a pickleball league for older adults	
1.4 By December 2023, explore low-cost and accessible field trips for caregivers and older adults that offer socialization through cultural and recreational events and activities.	1. Identify regional landmarks and field trip activities available for low-cost and accessible to caregivers and older adults.	Social Participation Transportation Respect and Social Inclusion
	2. Research costs for transportation and entrance fees.	
	3. Investigate financial sponsors to reduce costs, market events, and coordinate activities that are low-cost or no-cost.	
1.9 By December 2023, AFAC will develop an Intergenerational Council with AFAC and the Early Childhood Development Coalition to plan intergenerational activities.	1. Identify and recruit Intergenerational Council members and schedule quarterly meetings.	Social Participation Civic Participation and Employment Respect and Social Inclusion
	2. Plan and implement intergenerational holiday and seasonal activities including holiday cards, caroling, etc.	
	3. Plan and implement intergenerational storytelling events.	
	4. Plan and implement intergenerational arts and crafts events.	
	5. Plan and implement intergenerational community gardens.	
1.7 By December 2024, AFAC will enhance intergenerational social opportunities for caregivers, older adults and youth/children who reside in Allegany County will increase.	1. Increase the number of caregivers and older adults who enroll in the Forever Young Community Club program.	Dementia-Friendly Social Participation Respect and Social Inclusion
1.8 By December 2024, AFAC will develop a sustainable strategy for intergenerational livability support for Allegany County older adults.	1. Identify school requirements for community service hours and service-learning hours at the university and high school level.	Civic Participation and Employment Community Support and Health Services Communication and Information
	2. Create an inventory of service-learning opportunities that can be fulfilled through student participation as defined by older adult needs.	
	3. Create a platform for older adults to access assistance from students required to achieve service-learning hours.	
	4. Monitor and modify system through ongoing evaluation.	
1.5 By December 2025, increase social opportunities for caregivers and those living with dementia and Alzheimer's disease providing a safe, supportive environment designed to engage attendees in cognitive activities to perk up memory.	1. Explore Memory Music Cafes for older adults who are experiencing a cognitive decline.	Dementia-Friendly Social Participation Respect and Social Inclusion Communication and Information
	2. Research activity-based musical programs that caregivers and older adults can enjoy together; including sing-a-longs, dancing, playing instruments, games, etc.	
	3. Solicit support from community-based organizations and faith communities to locate a host site for the Memory Music Café(s).	



	4. Organize programming and market Memory Music Café(s) to individuals through a marketing plan; including referrals, media, social media, word-of-mouth, direct mailings, etc.	
1.6 By December 2025, life-long learning opportunities will increase for older adults searching for continuing education and life-skills resulting in improved brain health and socialization.	1. Explore Age-Friendly Universities model and engage with one higher education campus per year to adapt principles and become a Age-Friendly University Global Network member.	Respect and Social Inclusion Civic Participation and Employment Communication and Information
	2. Offer no-cost, low-cost community-based classes and workshops for older adults who wish to refresh or learn new professional skills to re-enter the workforce.	
	3. Offer no-cost, low-cost community-based classes and workshops for older adults who wish to learn a new hobby or personal skills, such as arts, crafts, cooking, etc.	
	4. Create and execute a marketing plan to inform older adults and caregivers about life-long learning opportunities, including web, media, social media, word of mouth, direct mailings, etc.	
<b>GOAL TWO: AFAC will increase Allegany County's older adults' independence resulting in a greater sense of purpose and a higher quality of life.</b>		
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Domain</b>
2.3 By December 2023, AFAC will increase access to a wide range of technologies for caregivers and older adults to maintain social connections, gather information, be safe at home, and promote their personal health and wellness.	1. In collaboration with identified partners with community-accessible computers, develop technology workshops for older adult learners.	Communication and Information Respect and Social Inclusion Public Safety
	2. Develop an inventory of technology devices available for loan closet distribution including tablets, laptops, assistive electronic devices, smart phones etc.	
	3. Offer in-home or community-based technological assistance for older adults who wish to have one-on-one instruction or tech services.	
	4. Advocate for access to no-cost or low-cost broadband and internet service through local, state, and federal advocacy. (3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday meeting with Buffalo group “NYS Digital Equity Coalition”)	
	5. Create and execute a marketing plan to inform older adults and caregivers about technology loan closet; including web, media, social media, word of mouth, direct mailings, etc.	
2.1 By December 2025, enhance housing options for older adults who wish to remain in their homes safely and financially.	1. Increase opportunities for older adults to access home modifications, adaptations, and repairs decreasing risks of falls and injuries.	Housing Civic Participation and Employment Respect and Social Inclusion
	2. Explore house-sharing models that allow older adults to remain in their homes and pool resources from tenants or co-inhabitants.	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Explore home equity and affordability for older adults through policy change and advocacy at the local, state, and federal level lowering the cost burdened of renting, home maintenance, and home ownership.</li> <li>4. Implement intergenerational home maintenance program linking older adults with youth in need of service-learning hours.</li> <li>5. Explore funding for the creation and preservation of affordable housing stock and rental subsidies accessible for older adults.</li> </ol>	
2.2 By December 2025, AFAC will increase access to mobility options for older adults resulting in active aging, allowing older adults to continue to lead dynamic and independent lives.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assess and address environmental factors that limit the walkability in communities with special emphasis on outdoor and indoor areas that are frequented by older adults.</li> <li>2. Increase access to low-cost or no-cost assistive devices that improve balance and mobility for older adults.</li> <li>3. Increase older adult driver safety through education and awareness of road and vehicle safety.</li> <li>4. Explore ride sharing, on-demand programs that offer older adults an affordable and safe transportation method; including GoGoGrandparent.</li> <li>5. Increase older adult ridership on the public transportation system through low-cost fares and by assessing and enhancing the system to be older adult friendly.</li> <li>6. Enhance travel training support for older adults who wish to access the public transportation system including improved bus schedule accessibility, promotion of call center and education for ease of use.</li> <li>7. Assess previous complete streets audits and engage a minimum of two (2) communities to reassess using AARP (American Association of Retired Persons) Walkability Tool to make sustainable changes for safety and mobility.</li> <li>8. Increase the number of volunteer drivers who can assist older adults with mobility needs.</li> </ol>	Transportation Outdoor Space and Buildings
<b>GOAL THREE: Older adults will have safer access to outdoor recreational programs and activities that address all aspects of healthy living, which includes taking care of both physical and emotional health.</b>		
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Domain</b>
3.1 By December 2025, AFAC will promote outdoor activities across the county, including “greenways” and walking trails that protect natural resources, preserve scenic landscapes and historical resources, and offer opportunities for	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure walking trails are fully compliant with the American Disabilities Act (ADA) for ease of use and accessibility. Advocate for design improvements when walking trails are not in compliance with the American Disabilities Act (ADA).</li> <li>2. Audit existing trails for design features, amenities, maintenance &amp; esthetics, and traffic intersections and safety.</li> </ol>	Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

<p>healthy lifestyles, recreation, and non-motorized transportation.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Collect data on existing trails for points of interest, accessibility features, costs and other valuable information associated with utilizing them to rank the ease of walkability and distinctive features that exist along the trails.</li> <li>4. Create an outdoor adventure passport and publish a walking trail guide to aid older adults in selecting an appropriate trail that meets their physical and recreational needs.</li> <li>5. Explore walking tours as a form of recreation and tourism including, but not limited to historic and veteran cemetery tours, historical district tours, garden tours, etc.</li> <li>6. Explore opportunities to plan new equitable trail networks to connect existing trails and parks, communities, and neighborhoods.</li> <li>7. Explore intergenerational playgrounds that may be in greenways and part of walking trails that may include wheelchair accessibility, interactive play structures, low-impact fitness equipment, traditional playground structures, community gardens, and community-designed murals or sculptures.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>GOAL FOUR: Older adults will feel safe and secure in their home, neighborhoods, and community resulting in a higher level of engagement and satisfaction with their quality of life and well-being.</b></p>		
Objective	Action	Domain
<p>4.1 By December 2023, AFAC will collaborate with local safety programs and experts to reduce crimes and emergency situations committed against or experienced by older adults through a unified course of communication.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review community data on safety-related topics targeted toward older adults including elder fraud (scams), violent crimes, elder abuse, theft, mail theft, identity theft, vandalism, and burglary.</li> <li>2. Explore formal and informal Neighborhood Watch Programs that may reduce crime and improve their quality of life when working together and with local law enforcement.</li> <li>3. Increase community awareness about current tactics used by scammers on older adults leading to elder fraud through different mediums.</li> </ol>	<p>Public Safety Elder Abuse Emergency Preparedness Civic Participation and Employment Communication and Information Health Services and Community Supports</p>

	<p>4. Decrease the incidents of elder abuse by collaborating with the Elder Abuse Committee to increase community education and awareness about the diverse types of elder abuse, how to recognize the signs, and where to get help if they suspect an older adult is being victimized.</p> <p>5. Increase the number of older adults who have an emergency preparedness plan and emergency preparedness supply kit that they can enact when faced with a man-made or natural disaster.</p> <p>6. Increase the number of older adults who have access to affordable or no-cost smoke detectors, batteries, and carbon monoxide detectors.</p> <p>7. Increase the number of older adults who have access to resources to prevent or treat substance use disorders including alcohol, tobacco, and prescription drug misuse/abuse.</p>	
<p>4.2 By December 2024, AFAC will seek sustainable solutions to end hunger and to achieve food security for all Allegany County residents.</p>	<p>1. Collaborate and support food and nutrition education programs (FNEP) and food security assistance program (SNAP) helping to break down barriers for outreach and enrollment of older adults, including stigma, lack of awareness, cultural beliefs, etc.</p> <p>2. Identify strategies to improve older adult access to nutritious foods and implement interventions, including addressing food deserts, instituting mobile food markets or cost-effective grocery delivery programs, partner with local agriculture for fresh fruit and vegetable access through Farmer’s Markets and increasing the use of Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program, and other means.</p> <p>3. Increase access to and awareness about local food pantries and support food pantries in their efforts to subsidize food supplies through sponsoring food donation drives.</p> <p>4. Increase the number of older adults participating in Congregate Meal Sites and Meals on Wheels.</p>	<p>Communication and Information Health Services and Community Supports</p>
<p><b>GOAL FIVE: Older adults will receive equitable, accessible, and affordable health care resulting in improved health outcomes and health status.</b></p>		
<p><b>Objective</b></p>	<p><b>Action</b></p>	<p><b>Domain</b></p>



<p>5.1 By December 31, 2025, AFAC will prevent harm to older adults, improve health outcomes, and lower overall costs, by engaging a minimum of one health system to adopt evidence-based models and practices that deliver better care to our rapidly aging population across all settings, including the home and community.</p>	<p>1. Identify healthcare systems and/or practices whose patient panel includes older adults.</p>	<p>Health Services and Community Supports</p>
	<p>2. Introduce Age-Friendly Health Care Systems which entails reliably providing a set of four evidence-based elements of high-quality care, known as the “4Ms,” to all older adults in the system: What Matters, Medication, Mentation, and Mobility.</p>	
	<p>3. Advocate for the health care system leadership team to purchase and use the Age-Friendly Health Systems - A Guide to Using the 4Ms While Caring for Older Adults</p>	
	<p>4. Support health care system personnel to access professional development training through the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) or HANY’s on Age-Friendly Health Care Systems.</p>	
	<p>5. Track health care system changes for future learning collaborative opportunities with other practices or health care systems.</p>	
<p>5.2 By December 31, 2025, AFAC will enhance the degree to which older adults and caregivers can find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.</p>	<p>1. Identify opportunities to increase the older adult population’s awareness about health literacy and self-advocacy.</p>	<p>Health Services and Community Supports Communication and Information</p>
	<p>2. Increase community awareness of community-based and clinical resources and services that are accessible and affordable.</p>	
	<p>3. Advocate and support the health care system to increase providers, specialty services, and new practices in underserved zip codes.</p>	
	<p>4. Identify and maintain informational outlets to market health and wellness resources, including word-of-mouth, media, health fairs, print materials, radio, etc.</p>	
	<p>5. Continuously update community education and awareness materials to reflect changes in the health care environment.</p>	
<p>5.3 By December 31, 2025, AFAC will support older adults' use of health care technology services offering alternatives to traditional in-person resources and treatment modalities.</p>	<p>1. Strengthen older adults' access to virtual preventative health care, primary care, and specialty care using telehealth, virtual provider visits, and home-based technology through the implementation of the technology loaner program.</p>	<p>Communication and Information Respect and Social Inclusion</p>
	<p>2. Advocate for Allegany County to expand high-speed internet access through state and federal funding planning, infrastructure deployment and adoption programs.</p>	
	<p>3. Raise older adult and caregiver skills, knowledge, and confidence in health care technology services through community workshops and one-on-one education.</p>	
	<p>4. Offer alternative, confidential telehealth and virtual appointment sites that are accessible and conveniently located in underserved zip codes.</p>	

	5. Collaborate with local nursing schools to offer patient in-home monitoring and education in health care technology.	
	6. Increase older adult awareness of non-emergency Medicaid transportation services and strategies to access the state's NEMT system.	
5.4 By December 31, 2025, AFAC will work with health care and economic development partners to build an efficient and effective local health care workforce that meets the needs of older adults.	1. Increase the number of home health aides and personal care aides through training opportunities.	Health Services and Community Supports
	2. Increase recruitment and retention efforts for health care positions that are typically under-staffed.	
	3. Advocate for expanding healthcare provider roles to meet patients' needs, including the expanded role of EMS providers.	

### Age-Friendly Domains

1. **Outdoor Spaces and Buildings:** People need public places to gather — indoors and out. Green spaces, seating and accessible buildings (elevators, zero-step entrances, staircases with railings) can be used and enjoyed by people of all ages.
2. **Transportation:** Driving shouldn't be the only way to get around. Pedestrians need sidewalks and safe, crossable streets. Dedicated bicycle lanes benefit nondrivers and drivers alike. Public transit options can range from the large-scale (trains, buses, light rail) to the small (taxis, shuttles or ride share services).
3. **Housing:** AARP surveys consistently find that the vast majority of older adults want to reside in their current home or community for as long as possible. Doing so is possible if a home is designed or modified for aging in place, or if a community has housing options that are suitable for differing incomes, ages, and life stages.
4. **Social Participation:** Regardless of a person's age, loneliness is often as debilitating a health condition as having a chronic illness or disease. Sadness and isolation can be combated by having opportunities to socialize and the availability of accessible, affordable, and fun social activities.
5. **Respect and Social Inclusion:** Everyone wants to feel valued. Intergenerational gatherings and activities are a great way for young and older people to learn from one another, honor what each has to offer and, at the same time, feel good about themselves.
6. **Civic Participation and Employment:** An age-friendly community encourages older people to be actively engaged in community life and has opportunities for residents to work for pay or volunteer their skills.
7. **Communication and Information:** Age-friendly communities recognize that information needs to be shared through a variety of methods since not everyone is tech-savvy, and not everyone has a smartphone or home-based access to the internet.
8. **Community and Health Services:** While it's important that assistance and care be available nearby, residents must access and afford the services required.

### Supplemental Age-Friendly Domains

9. **Emergency Preparedness:** An age-friendly community supports older adults to be prepared in cases of natural disasters, public health emergencies, and other types of disasters.
10. **Elder Abuse:** An age-friendly community protects older adults from knowing, intentional, or negligent acts by a caregiver or any other person that causes harm or serious risk of harm to a vulnerable adult.
11. **Public Safety:** An age-friendly community supports the dedicated government organizations and local departments responsible for the safety of older adults.
12. **Dementia-Friendly:** An age-friendly community supports individuals living with dementia and their caregivers.



# **Age-Friendly Allegany County**

*For All Seasons of Life*

Phone: 585-610-9765

Email: [sotoj@ardentnetwork.org](mailto:sotoj@ardentnetwork.org)

[ardentnetwork.org/age-friendly.html](http://ardentnetwork.org/age-friendly.html)