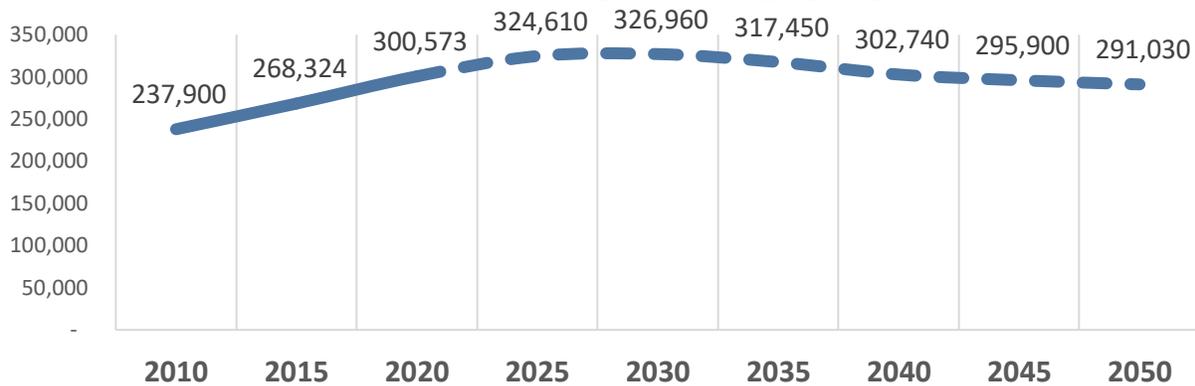
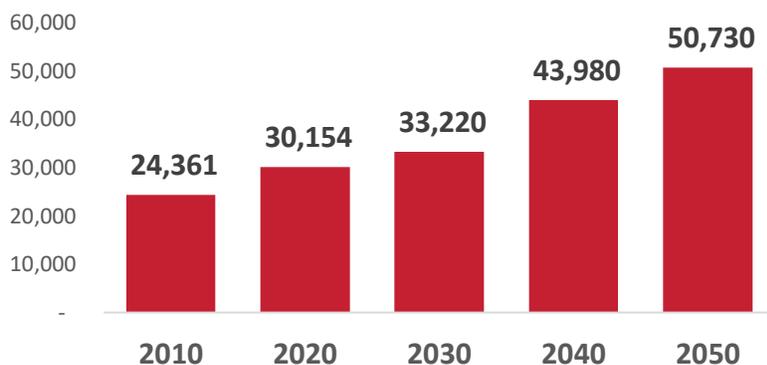


Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging (Ohio Area Agency on Aging Region 10B) covers a region encompassing four counties in Ohio: Portage, Stark, Summit, and Wayne. The area is home to 300,573 older adults over the age of 60, accounting for 25.2 percent of the total population of the four counties. Following state and national trends, the number and share of older adults has been growing in the region and is expected to continue to increase for the next several decades. This increase is the result of generational demographics and the fact that people are living longer lives and remaining in their homes and communities as they age. The growth is particular pronounced among the population ages 85 and above. Increasing numbers of the oldest residents is expected to increase demand for supportive services including home-delivered meals, housekeeping, home modification, in-home care, and social connectedness. Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging and the entire community will need to adapt to these changes.

Population Projection, Population Ages 60+, Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging Region



Population Projection, Population Ages 85+, Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging Region

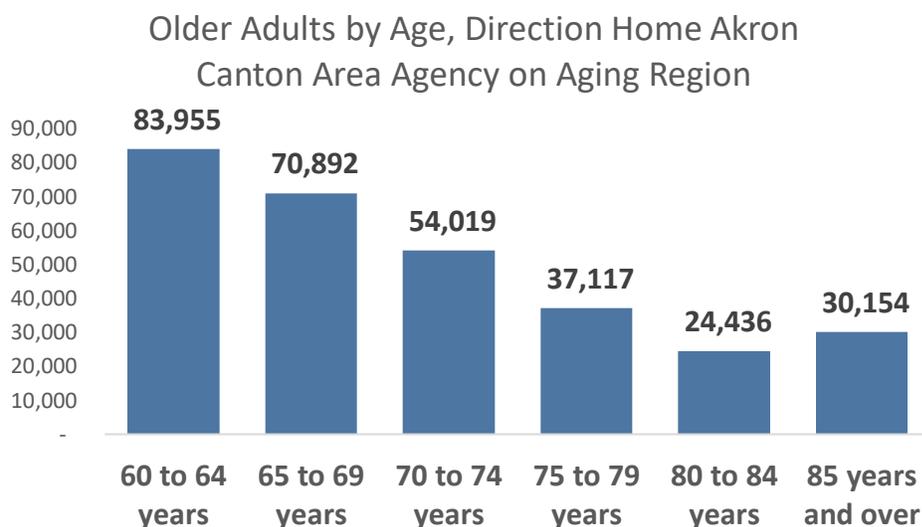


Secondary data analysis for this assessment was compiled by The Center for Community Solutions on behalf of Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging. We relied on the latest available data for the civilian, non-institutionalized population. Unless otherwise noted, the data source is the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey 2020 5-Year estimates. Data was compiled for each county within the region, then aggregated for the region as a whole. Percentages were calculated using weighted averages to reflect the share of the entire population of the region who might be experiencing certain community conditions. Where ever possible, data is reported for ages 60 and older. However, due to data availability, many indicators are for the population ages 65 and older. All the data carry margins of error. For smaller geographies and subpopulations, margins of error can be substantial and differences should be interpreted with caution.

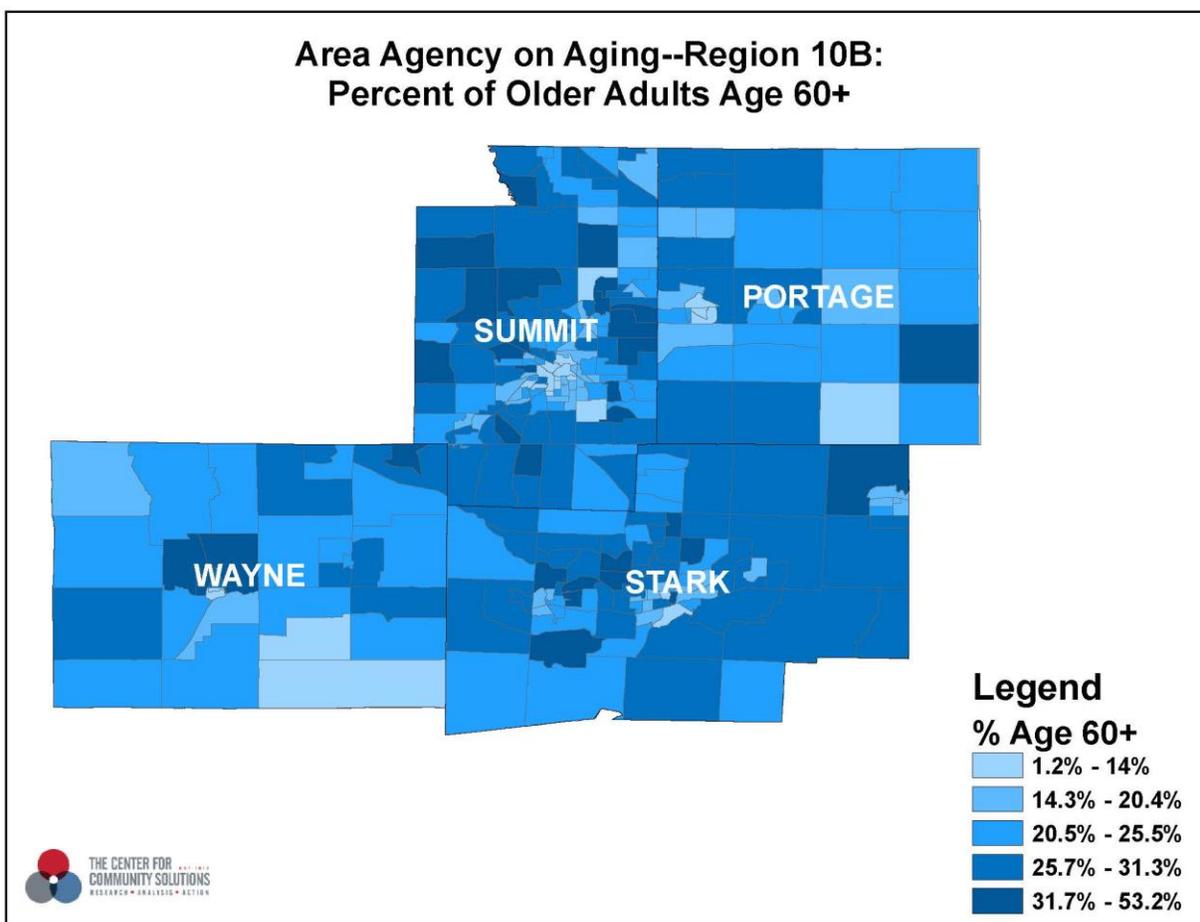
The indicators selected for examination provide an overview of the social, economic, and demographic characteristics of the older adult population in the region with special emphasis on older individuals with greatest economic need, greatest social need, low-income minority older individuals, those with limited English proficiency, and/or those living in rural areas.

### ***Profile of Older Adults in the Region***

Over 300,573 adults age 60 and over live in the four-county area. This includes 30,154 people who are 85 and older, accounting for 10.0 percent of older adults in the region. Around 55 percent of residents over the age of 60 are female.



The map below shows the percent of the population who are over the age of 60.



Of all people in the Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging region, 37,465 individuals ages 60 and older live in rural areas within the region, accounting for 12.4 percent of the older adult population. The population living in rural areas was calculated by The Center for Community Solutions based on guidance from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and includes the entire population of counties outside Ohio’s Metropolitan areas and some individual rural Census Tracts within Metro counties.<sup>1</sup> For this region, rural areas include all of Wayne County and a few Census Tracts in Stark County.

### ***Race and Ethnicity***

The Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging region has pockets that are more racially and ethnically diverse, and 9.5 percent of the population over age 65 are Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC). More detailed breakdowns of racial and ethnic makeup of the population is provided in the table below.

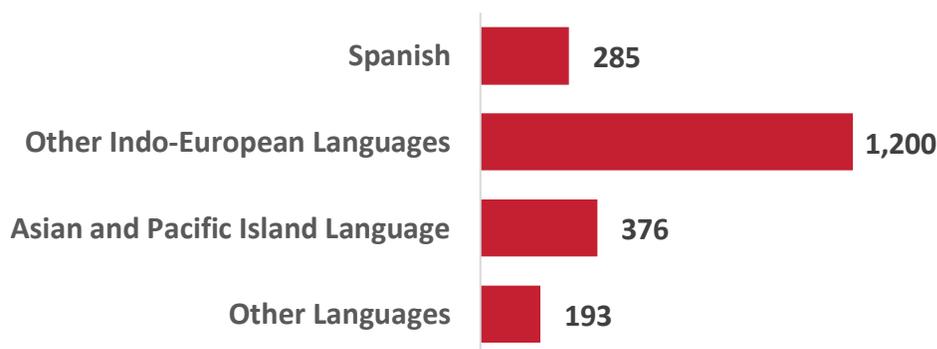
<sup>1</sup> See “Defining Rural Population”, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources & Service Administration. <https://www.hrsa.gov/rural-health/about-us/definition/index.html>. Census Tracts in Metro counties were included if they had a rural-urban community area (RUCA) code of 4-10. RUCA codes have not been updated for 2020, so calculations are based on the 2010 RUCA codes. Visit <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/rural-urban-commuting-area-codes/> for more information.

	Region		Ohio
<b>Total Number of Older Adults (Age 65+)</b>	216,618		1,990,621
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>White</i>	197,131	91.0%	88.2%
<i>Black/ African American</i>	14,842	6.9%	8.9%
<i>American Indian and Alaskan Native</i>	411	0.2%	0.1%
<i>Asian/ Asian American</i>	2,232	1.0%	1.2%
<i>Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander</i>	17	-	0.0%
<i>Other Race</i>	518	0.2%	0.7%
<i>More than One Race</i>	1,467	0.7%	0.9%
<i>Hispanic/Latinx Ethnicity</i>	1,586	7.3%	1.4%

### **Limited English Proficiency**

While most older adults over age 65 in the region speak only English (96.2 percent), there are 2,054 individuals over age 65 in the region who do not speak English at all or do not speak it well. As shown in the chart below, the most common languages spoken by people who have limited English proficiency are Indo-European Languages, Asian and Pacific Island Languages, and Spanish.

Language Spoken, Older Adults who Speak English Not Well or Not At All, Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging Region



### **Housing Tenure and Family Structure**

According to data from the 2020 Decennial Census, there were 8,865 people in the region of all ages living in nursing facilities or skilled nursing facilities. Among older adults living in the community, most own their homes. Around 80 percent are owners and 21 percent are renters. In fact, although people ages 60 and above make up only 25 percent of the population, 45 percent of all people who own their homes in the four-county area are older adults.

In the Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging region, 62,173 people (28.7 percent) over the age of 65 live alone. Living alone can contribute to social isolation and vulnerability.

In the region as a whole, there are 6,891 grandparents who are responsible for their own grandchildren under 18 years. However, fewer than half (42.1 percent) of the grandparents raising grandchildren are older adults ages 65 and above, a total of 2,902 individuals.

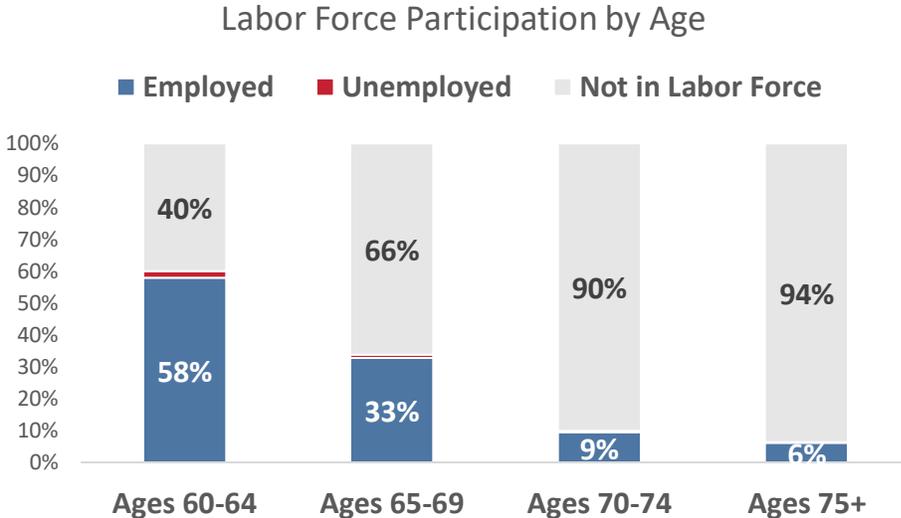
### ***Other Demographic Indicators***

One out of every six people over the age of 65 in the region are veterans, accounting for 17.4 percent of the total. Men are much more likely to report having served in the military than women.

In recent years, the number of older adults who have access to the internet has increased. Close to 75 percent of people over the age of 65 report that they have a broadband subscription. On the other hand, 38,058 older adult households have no computer at all.

### ***Economic and Social Needs in the Region***

Nationwide trends show that people are delaying retirement and remaining in the workforce longer than in previous generations. Over 88,335 people over the age of 60 are in the labor force, including 85,383 who are employed 2,952 who are unemployed by actively looking for work. According to this data, the unemployment rate for older adults in the region overall was 3.3 percent. As shown in the chart below, labor force participation drops substantially after age 70, as people retire either by choice or by necessity.



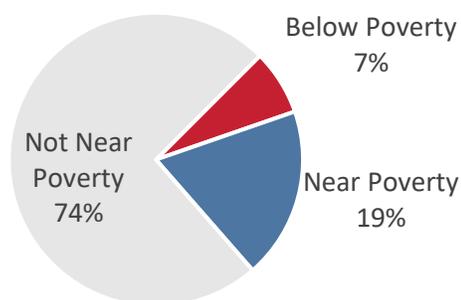
In the Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging region, most older adult households receive Social Security, and many have income from earnings or retirement. Retirement income is also common. Public benefits programs such as SSI, cash assistance and SNAP provide fewer resources on average than private retirement funds and earnings.

Older Adult (60+) Households		
Income Source	Share of Households	Regional Average, Annual Income
Social Security	75.0%	\$20,526
Retirement	53.5%	\$26,196
Earnings	47.5%	\$57,506
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	9.0%	<i>Not Applicable</i>
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	5.5%	\$10,287
Cash Public Assistance	3.3%	\$2,624

### Poverty

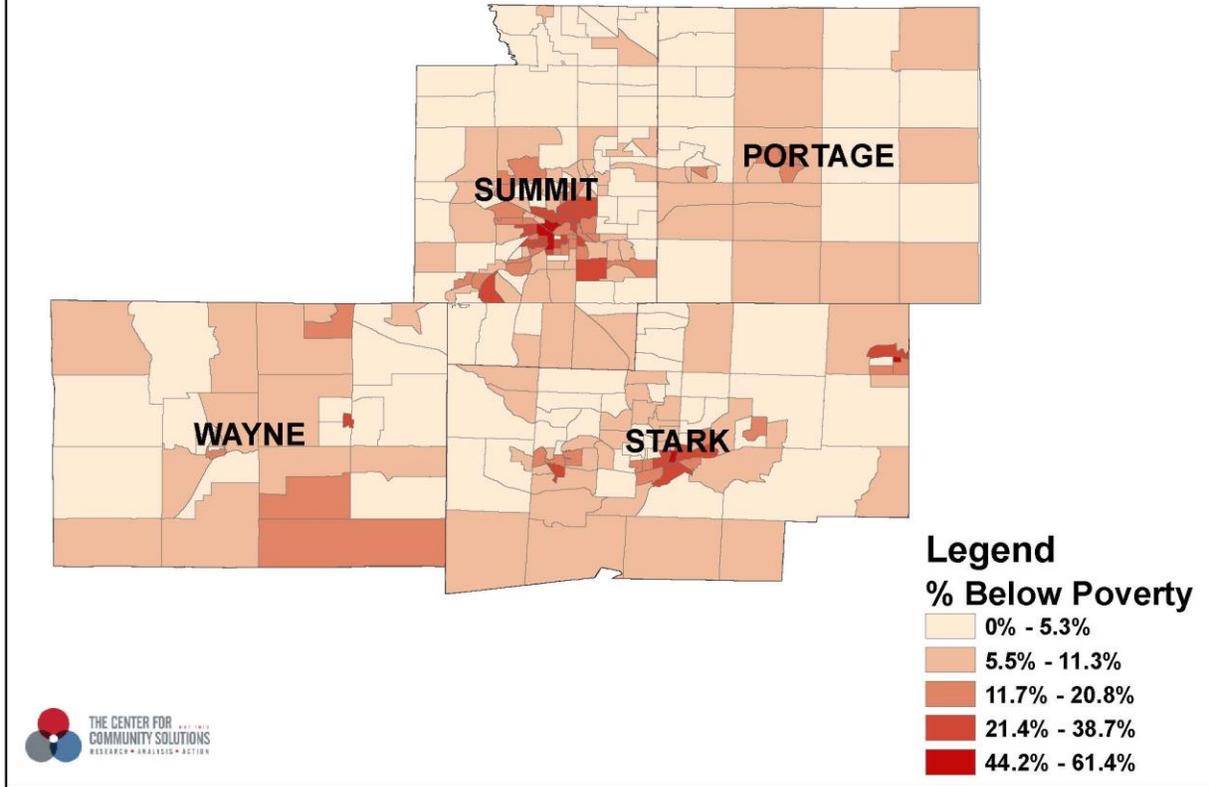
Even with the increases in labor force participation, many older adults in the region still struggle to make ends meet. At 7.2 percent, the poverty rate for adults over the age of 65 in the region is lower than the state average of 8.2 percent. Over 15,085 people over age 65 are living in poverty, including 4,973 people who are in deep poverty, defined as having total household income that is less than 50 percent of the poverty threshold. An even greater number of older adults are considered “near poor” with incomes between 100 and 199 percent of poverty.

Older Adults (65+) at Specified Levels of Poverty  
 Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on  
 Aging Region



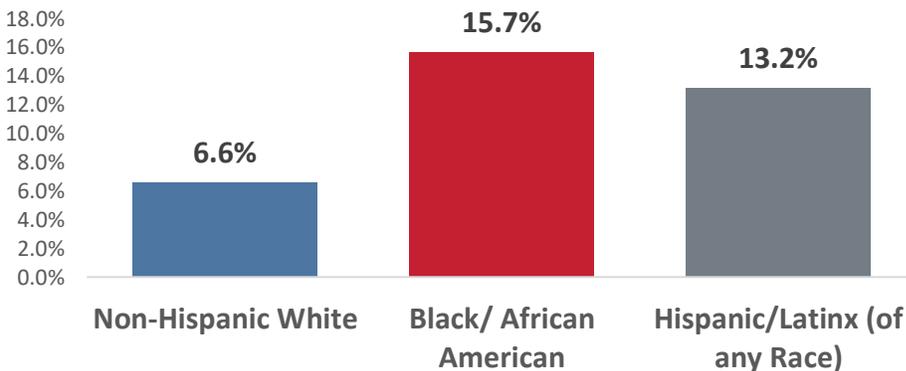
Poverty is not spread evenly throughout the region. The map below shows the concentration of older adults living in poverty in various parts of the region.

**Area Agency on Aging--Region 10B:  
Percent of Older Adults Below Poverty**



There are also racial disparities in poverty. As shown in the chart below, people over age 65 who are Black or African American were three times more likely to live in poverty than non-Hispanic White older adults, and the poverty rate for Hispanic or Latinx people over age 65 was nearly twice the poverty rate for non-Hispanic Whites. Across the region, there are 2,544 BIPOC older adults whose household income is below poverty.

Poverty Rate, Ages 65+, By Race/Ethnicity,  
Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on  
Aging Region



### ***Basic Needs: Food and Shelter***

Although they are fewer in number, older adults who rent are more likely to struggle to affording their housing. Over 53 percent of renters over age 65 pay 30 percent or more of their total income for housing costs, compared to 22.0 percent of owners. In total, 39,209 older adults are in unaffordable housing situations. When housing costs account for a large portion of a household's total income, it is more difficult for them to afford other necessities.

Many older adults experience food insecurity, the condition that leads to hunger. Across Ohio, 7.2 percent of older adults are food insecure and 2.0 percent have very low food security, according to the latest data from Feeding America<sup>2</sup>. Applying the state average to the population of the region, The Center for Community Solutions estimates that 21,500 older adults are food insecure, defined as having “a lack of consistent access to enough food for every person in a household to live an active, healthy lifestyle.”<sup>3</sup> Some of these individuals struggle even more with hunger, including 6,000 older adults who have very low food security. As defined by the US Department of Agriculture, individuals with very low food security report “multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake.”<sup>4</sup> Many older adults rely on benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to meet their basic needs. Over 19,634 households with at least one older adult in the region reported receiving SNAP.

### ***Health Coverage and Disability***

The vast majority of adults over the age of 65 in the region have at least some health insurance coverage, but 1,007 older adults are uninsured. Over 96 percent of non-institutionalized insured older adults have at least some public coverage. As shown below, Medicare is the most common source, either alone or in combination with other types of insurance. Most people covered by Medicare supplement it with private coverage, either purchased directly or through their employer. There are also 10,970 dually enrolled individuals who are covered by both Medicare and Medicaid.

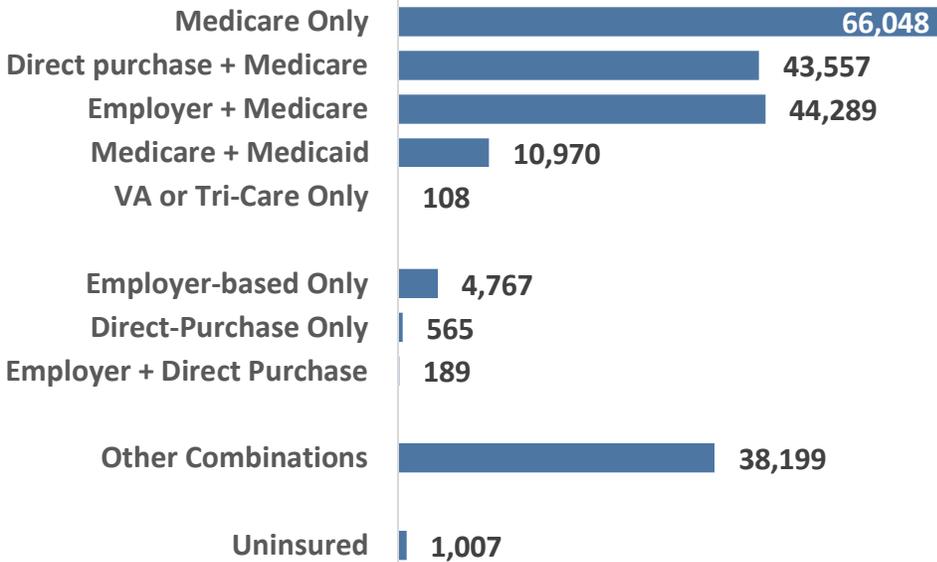
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<sup>2</sup> Ziliak, James P. and Craig Gunderson, “The State of Senior Hunger in America in 2019”, *Feeding America*, August 2021. Available at <https://www.feedingamerica.org/sites/default/files/2021-08/2021%20-%20State%20of%20Senior%20Hunger%20in%202019.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> “Hunger and Food Insecurity”, Feeding America, <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/food-insecurity>

<sup>4</sup> “Definitions of Food Security”, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-u-s/definitions-of-food-security/>

Type of Health Insurance Coverage, Ages 65+,  
 Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging  
 Region



Just over 32 percent of all non-institutionalized older adults over age 65, or 67,275 people, had one or more disabilities. This includes 22.1 percent of those ages 65-74 and 46.4 percent who are 75 and older. As shown below, ambulatory difficulties, defined as having serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs, were most common, followed by independent living difficulties, where a person has difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor’s office or shopping because of a physical, mental, or emotional problem, and hearing difficulties.<sup>5</sup>

Older Adults 60+ With One or More Disabilities	Count
With a <b>Hearing</b> Difficulty <i>Having serious difficulty hearing</i>	27,015
With a <b>Vision</b> Difficulty <i>Blind or having serious difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses</i>	10,797
With a <b>Cognitive</b> Difficulty <i>Because of a physical mental, or emotional problem, having difficulty remembering, concentrating, or making decisions</i>	15,632
With an <b>Ambulatory</b> Difficulty <i>Having serious difficult walking or climbing stairs</i>	41,975
With a <b>self-care</b> difficulty <i>Having difficult bathing or dressing</i>	13,912

<sup>5</sup> “How Disability Data are Collected from The American Community Survey”, U.S. Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/topics/health/disability/guidance/data-collection-ac.html>

<p>With an <b>Independent Living</b> Difficulty</p> <p><i>Because of a physical, mental, or emotional problem, having difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping</i></p>	27,504
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Census data shows that 15,632 older adults in the region have a cognitive difficulty or face challenges remembering, concentrating, or making decisions because of a physical, mental, or emotional problem. Dementia is one type of cognitive difficulty. Research by the Alzheimer's Association shows that the share of people with Alzheimer's dementia increases with age, from 5.0 percent among people ages 65 to 74, to 13.1 percent of people ages 75 to 84, rising to around one third (33.2 percent) among people age 85 and older. Utilizing these statistics, The Center for Community Solutions estimates that as many as 27,500 people ages 65 and older in the region may be living with Alzheimer's dementia. As the population ages, these numbers are growing rapidly. Across Ohio, the number of people over age 65 who have Alzheimer's is projected to increase 13.6 percent between 2020 and 2025.

Data indicates that there are thousands of older adults in the region served by Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging who have great economic and social needs. It is these individuals, as well as low-income minority older adults and those with limited English proficiency that Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging seeks to serve.