TOP TEN TRENDS RELATED TO AGING IN GEORGIA

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1) Fast Growing Older Adult Population
The number of people aged 65 and over in Georgia is expected to increase 105% between 2012 and 2032, and 176% between 2012 and 2050, making Georgia the 4th fastest growing older population in the United States (Houser, Fox-Grage, & Ujvari, 2012).

2) Diversification of Population
Georgia had the 11th highest minority older adult population in 2010, as 25% of all individuals over the age of 65 were part of a minority group. The national average for minority older adults was 20.1%. Additionally, Georgia has the 5th highest black older adult population with 20.5% of all older adults in the state being black. The national average for black older adults was 8.5% (Houser, Fox-Grage, & Ujvari, 2012).

3) Living in Poverty
As of 2010, Georgia had the 9th highest number of adults aged 65 or older living at or below the federal poverty level, with 10.7% of older adults in the state living below the poverty level. When compared to a national average of 9%, it is clear that older adults in Georgia face a tough financial situation. Additionally, 45% of older adults in Georgia were living below 250% of the federal poverty level in 2010. This is the 12th highest percentage in the country. (Houser, Fox-Grage, & Ujvari, 2012).

4) Food Insecurity
Georgia has the 6th highest prevalence of food insecurity for all adults aged 60 years and older in the country at 8.7%. Furthermore, the prevalence of food insecurity increases dramatically for those adults with incomes less than 200% of poverty who are living in Georgia, affecting 36.4% and 20.2% for adults aged 50-59 years old and 60 years or older respectively (Ziliak & Gundersen, 2011).

5) Fewest Men over 85
Georgia has the lowest ratio of men over 85 as compared to the number of women in the country. On average, Georgia had 41 men over the age of 85 for every 100 women of the same age bracket in 2010. This makes The national average is 48 men for every 100 women aged 85 or older (Houser, Fox-Grage, & Ujvari, 2012).

6) Dementia Growth
The number of people affected by dementia is increasing. Alzheimer’s disease is the most common type of dementia, and accounts for 60% to 80% of all dementia cases (Alzheimer’s Association, 2013a). In 2010, approximately 120,000 Georgians 65 years old and older had Alzheimer’s disease. By 2025, only fifteen years later, that number is expected to grow to 160,000 cases (Alzheimer’s Association, 2013b). In 2050, it is estimated that an American will develop Alzheimer’s disease every 33 seconds (Alzheimer’s Association, 2013a).

7) Nursing Homes Paid by Medicaid
In 2010, 72% of nursing home residents in Georgia used Medicaid as the primary means of payment. The national average is 63%, which makes Georgia the 5th highest ranking state in using Medicaid as primary payment for nursing facility care (Houser, Fox-Grage, & Ujvari, 2012).
8) **Low Utilization of Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS)**

Even though the United States is adopting the trend of moving away from nursing homes toward community-based services, Georgia has been slow to embrace this practice. There were 32,680 individuals who used Medicaid HCBS in Georgia in 2008, which equals 3.4 people per 1,000 people in the state. This is the 49th lowest utilization in the United States. The national average is 10.1 people per 1,000 people (Houser, Fox-Grage, & Ujvari, 2012).

9) **Inadequate Number of Informal and Formal Caregivers**

In 2010, 40% of Georgians aged 65 years old or older had a disability, ranking the state the 11th highest. More than one in six Americans workers is caring for a family member, relative, or friend, and 70% indicate that they suffer work-related difficulties or even leave their jobs. Family caregivers in Georgia are providing some 834 million hours of informal care worth approximately $7 billion in unpaid labor (Coalition of Advocates for Georgia’s Elderly, n.d.). While many people are providing informal care, the population growth of those aged 25-55, who are typically the caregivers, will not keep up with the increase in the older population. There will also be shortages for formal health care providers, which include nursing assistants, home health care aides and personal care workers. It is estimated that by 2030, the US will need 3.5 million of such additional formal providers just to maintain the current ratio of providers to the total population (Institute of Medicine, 2008).

10) **Grandparents Raising Grandchildren**

In 2010, 2.3% of individuals 60 years old or older in Georgia were responsible for raising their grandchildren. This gives Georgia the 4th highest percentage in the country. Additionally, 6.7% of older adults 60 or older in the state have children in the household, and 8.8% of individuals 65 years or older have someone under 18 in the household. Georgia ranks 7th highest in the nation for each of these indicators (Houser, Fox-Grage, & Ujvari, 2012).

**References**


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