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A PROFILE OF ALASKA'S SENIORS

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ABSTRACT

This research reports the demographic and social characteristics of elderly Alaskans from the first comprehensive population based study of all elderly residents (N=9,827). Comparisons with the United States census indicate that the sample is representative of state population characteristics. Highlighted here are the unique facets of aging in the state of Alaska as compared with the rest of the United States, a descriptive profile of Alaska's seniors, and policy implications for this small, but growing portion of the Alaskan population.

Table 4: AGE AND SEX BY COMPOSIT SCORE OF SELF-RATED HEALTH

	MALE				FEMALE			
	65-74		75+		65-74		75+	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
PERFECT	627	(8.8)	222	(9.0)	628	(9.1)	282	(8.9)
VERY GOOD	1647	(23.2)	439	(17.8)	1523	(22.0)	604	(19.1)
AVERAGE	3040	(42.9)	992	(40.3)	2936	(42.5)	1168	(37.0)
BELOW AVERAGE	1355	(19.1)	550	(22.4)	1381	(20.0)	773	(24.5)
NOT GOOD AT ALL	357	(5.0)	209	(8.5)	373	(5.4)	275	(8.7)
NO RESPONSE	60	(0.8)	48	(2.0)	75	(1.1)	58	(1.8)
TOTAL	7086	(100.0)	2460	(100.0)	6916	(100.0)	3160	(100.0)

Table 5: AGE AND SEX BY HEALTH PROBLEMS

		MALE				FEMALE			
		65-74		75+		65-74		75+	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
EARS	NO	1269	(35.8)	318	(25.9)	1942	(56.2)	592	(37.5)
	A LITTLE	1224	(34.5)	424	(34.5)	886	(25.6)	442	(28.0)
	SOMEWHAT	693	(19.6)	295	(24.0)	288	(8.3)	282	(17.8)
	SEVERELY	151	(4.3)	116	(9.4)	71	(2.1)	118	(7.5)
	NO RESPONSE	206	(5.8)	77	(6.3)	271	(7.9)	146	(9.2)
EYES	NO	1108	(31.3)	294	(23.9)	1111	(32.1)	355	(22.5)
	A LITTLE	1580	(44.6)	462	(37.6)	1477	(42.7)	576	(36.5)
	SOMEWHAT	508	(14.3)	275	(22.4)	499	(14.4)	351	(22.2)
	SEVERELY	113	(3.2)	116	(9.4)	128	(3.7)	169	(10.7)
	NO RESPONSE	234	(6.6)	83	(6.8)	243	(7.0)	129	(8.1)
BACK	NO	1649	(46.5)	577	(46.9)	1545	(44.7)	620	(39.2)
	A LITTLE	859	(24.2)	269	(21.9)	897	(25.9)	356	(22.5)
	SOMEWHAT	537	(15.2)	171	(13.9)	558	(16.1)	264	(16.7)
	SEVERELY	201	(5.7)	66	(5.4)	174	(5.0)	134	(8.5)
	NO RESPONSE	297	(8.4)	147	(12.0)	284	(8.2)	206	(13.0)
FEET/LEGS	NO	1637	(46.2)	423	(34.4)	1477	(42.7)	484	(30.6)
	A LITTLE	753	(21.3)	300	(24.4)	860	(24.9)	348	(22.0)
	SOMEWHAT	605	(17.1)	241	(19.6)	599	(17.3)	330	(20.9)
	SEVERELY	234	(6.6)	138	(11.2)	228	(6.6)	233	(14.7)
	NO RESPONSE	314	(8.8)	128	(10.5)	294	(8.5)	185	(11.7)
BREATHING	NO	2085	(58.8)	653	(53.1)	2207	(63.8)	889	(56.3)
	A LITTLE	593	(16.7)	222	(18.0)	457	(13.2)	225	(14.2)
	SOMEWHAT	358	(10.1)	131	(10.7)	313	(9.1)	167	(10.6)
	SEVERELY	207	(5.8)	84	(6.8)	139	(4.0)	70	(4.4)
	NO RESPONSE	300	(8.5)	140	(11.4)	342	(9.9)	229	(14.4)
ARTHRITIS	NO	1584	(44.7)	492	(40.0)	1245	(36.0)	490	(31.0)
	A LITTLE	955	(27.0)	315	(25.6)	1088	(31.5)	432	(27.3)
	SOMEWHAT	545	(15.4)	209	(17.0)	644	(18.6)	328	(20.8)
	SEVERELY	184	(5.2)	94	(7.6)	241	(7.0)	177	(11.2)
	NO RESPONSE	275	(7.8)	120	(9.8)	240	(7.0)	153	(9.6)

Table 5 Continued

BLADDER	NO	2493 (70.4)	708 (57.6)	2413 (69.8)	898 (56.8)
	A LITTLE	476 (13.4)	215 (17.5)	458 (13.2)	236 (14.9)
	SOMEWHAT	162 (4.6)	101 (8.2)	169 (4.9)	136 (8.6)
	SEVERELY	60 (1.7)	54 (4.4)	63 (1.8)	95 (6.0)
	NO RESPONSE	352 (9.9)	152 (12.4)	355 (10.3)	215 (13.6)
DIABETES	NO	2852 (80.5)	946 (76.9)	2737 (79.1)	1159 (73.4)
	A LITTLE	176 (5.0)	55 (4.5)	187 (5.4)	71 (4.5)
	SOMEWHAT	97 (2.7)	44 (3.6)	117 (3.4)	61 (3.9)
	SEVERELY	45 (1.3)	13 (1.1)	48 (1.4)	39 (2.5)
	NO RESPONSE	373 (10.5)	172 (14.0)	369 (10.7)	250 (15.8)
TEETH	NO	1879 (53.0)	565 (45.9)	1892 (54.7)	760 (48.1)
	A LITTLE	947 (26.7)	348 (28.3)	922 (26.7)	411 (26.0)
	SOMEWHAT	310 (8.7)	134 (10.9)	228 (6.6)	138 (8.7)
	SEVERELY	106 (3.0)	58 (4.7)	108 (3.1)	63 (4.0)
	NO RESPONSE	301 (8.5)	125 (10.2)	308 (8.9)	208 (13.1)
MEMORY	NO	2133 (60.2)	575 (46.7)	2163 (62.6)	713 (45.1)
	A LITTLE	797 (22.5)	331 (26.9)	777 (22.5)	410 (25.9)
	SOMEWHAT	234 (6.6)	126 (10.2)	143 (4.1)	138 (8.7)
	SEVERELY	60 (1.7)	62 (5.0)	39 (1.1)	116 (7.3)
	NO RESPONSE	319 (9.0)	136 (11.1)	336 (9.7)	203 (12.8)
SPEECH	NO	2820 (79.6)	865 (70.3)	2800 (81.0)	1120 (70.9)
	A LITTLE	251 (7.1)	121 (9.8)	201 (5.8)	128 (8.1)
	SOMEWHAT	81 (2.3)	50 (4.1)	67 (1.9)	50 (3.2)
	SEVERELY	41 (1.2)	45 (3.7)	32 (0.9)	45 (2.8)
	NO RESPONSE	350 (9.9)	149 (12.2)	358 (10.4)	237 (15.0)
HEART	NO	2220 (62.7)	673 (54.7)	2218 (64.1)	813 (51.8)
	A LITTLE	534 (15.1)	210 (17.1)	516 (14.9)	290 (18.4)
	SOMEWHAT	382 (10.8)	163 (13.3)	294 (8.5)	198 (12.5)
	SEVERELY	144 (4.1)	64 (5.2)	118 (3.4)	85 (5.4)
	NO RESPONSE	263 (7.4)	120 (9.8)	312 (9.0)	189 (11.9)
ALZHEIMER	NO	2877 (81.2)	905 (73.6)	2874 (83.1)	1147 (72.6)
	A LITTLE	82 (2.3)	31 (2.5)	31 (0.9)	31 (2.0)
	SOMEWHAT	22 (0.6)	12 (1.0)	15 (0.4)	15 (0.9)
	SEVERELY	13 (0.4)	13 (1.1)	13 (0.4)	32 (2.0)
	NO RESPONSE	549 (15.4)	269 (21.9)	525 (15.2)	355 (22.4)
TOTAL		3543 (100.0)	1230 (100.0)	3458 (100.0)	1580 (100.0)

Table 6: AGE AND SEX BY ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING

		MALE				FEMALE			
		65-74		75+		65-74		75+	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
BATH	NO HELP	3211	(90.6)	961	(78.1)	3081	(89.1)	1075	(68.0)
	SOME	143	(4.0)	130	(10.6)	174	(5.0)	235	(14.9)
	A LOT	61	(1.7)	83	(6.7)	63	(1.8)	177	(11.2)
	NO RESPONSE	128	(3.6)	56	(4.6)	140	(4.0)	93	(5.9)
TOILET	NO HELP	3312	(93.5)	1073	(87.2)	3217	(93.0)	1306	(82.7)
	SOME	39	(1.1)	44	(3.6)	55	(1.6)	71	(4.5)
	A LOT	35	(1.0)	36	(2.9)	21	(0.6)	76	(4.8)
	NO RESPONSE	157	(4.5)	77	(6.3)	165	(4.7)	127	(8.1)
DRESSING	NO HELP	3245	(91.6)	1012	(82.3)	3168	(91.6)	1241	(78.5)
	SOME	114	(3.2)	95	(7.7)	115	(3.3)	132	(8.4)
	A LOT	32	(0.9)	43	(3.5)	26	(0.8)	88	(5.6)
	NO RESPONSE	152	(4.3)	80	(6.5)	149	(4.3)	119	(7.6)
MOVING	NO HELP	3260	(92.0)	1048	(85.2)	3130	(90.5)	1252	(79.2)
	SOME	118	(3.3)	78	(6.3)	160	(4.6)	139	(8.8)
	A LOT	34	(1.0)	40	(3.3)	26	(0.8)	73	(4.6)
	NO RESPONSE	131	(3.7)	64	(5.2)	99	(2.9)	116	(7.4)
EATING	NO HELP	3307	(93.3)	1074	(87.3)	3212	(92.9)	1314	(83.2)
	SOME	60	(1.7)	63	(5.1)	71	(2.1)	82	(5.2)
	A LOT	27	(0.8)	24	(2.0)	19	(0.5)	52	(3.3)
	NO RESPONSE	149	(4.2)	69	(5.6)	156	(4.5)	132	(8.4)
BUYING	NO HELP	2990	(84.4)	804	(65.4)	2661	(77.0)	810	(51.3)
	SOME	314	(8.9)	226	(18.4)	507	(14.7)	376	(23.8)
	A LOT	118	(3.3)	135	(11.0)	153	(4.4)	294	(18.6)
	NO RESPONSE	121	(3.4)	65	(5.3)	93	(2.7)	100	(6.3)
TELEPHONE	NO HELP	3066	(86.5)	843	(68.5)	2993	(86.6)	1061	(67.2)
	SOME	220	(6.2)	183	(14.9)	196	(5.7)	184	(11.6)
	A LOT	108	(3.0)	123	(10.0)	88	(2.5)	198	(12.5)
	NO RESPONSE	149	(4.2)	81	(6.6)	181	(5.2)	137	(8.7)
TRANSP.	NO HELP	2928	(82.6)	730	(59.3)	2334	(67.5)	629	(39.8)
	SOME	336	(9.5)	245	(19.9)	676	(19.5)	399	(25.3)
	A LOT	157	(4.4)	198	(16.1)	336	(9.7)	478	(30.3)
	NO RESPONSE	122	(3.5)	57	(4.7)	69	(2.0)	74	(4.7)

Table 6 Continued

COOKING	NO HELP	2870 (81.0)	778 (63.3)	2945 (85.2)	981 (62.1)
	SOME	372 (10.5)	194 (15.8)	256 (7.4)	220 (13.9)
	A LOT	160 (4.5)	179 (14.6)	110 (3.2)	260 (16.5)
	NO RESPONSE	141 (4.0)	79 (6.4)	147 (4.2)	119 (7.5)
MEDICINE	NO HELP	3159 (89.2)	921 (74.9)	3068 (88.7)	1134 (71.8)
	SOME	166 (4.7)	140 (11.4)	165 (4.8)	177 (11.2)
	A LOT	66 (1.9)	87 (7.1)	58 (1.7)	142 (9.0)
	NO RESPONSE	152 (4.3)	82 (6.7)	167 (4.8)	127 (8.1)
HOUSEWORK	NO HELP	2793 (78.8)	728 (59.2)	2519 (72.8)	783 (49.6)
	SOME	426 (12.0)	230 (18.7)	625 (18.1)	381 (24.1)
	A LOT	169 (4.8)	185 (15.0)	192 (5.6)	309 (19.6)
	NO RESPONSE	155 (4.4)	87 (7.1)	122 (3.5)	107 (6.8)
MONEY	NO HELP	3017 (85.2)	870 (70.7)	2916 (84.3)	1005 (63.6)
	SOME	267 (7.5)	180 (14.6)	278 (8.0)	266 (16.8)
	A LOT	112 (3.2)	108 (8.8)	93 (2.7)	202 (12.8)
	NO RESPONSE	147 (4.2)	72 (5.9)	171 (4.9)	107 (6.8)
TOTAL		3543 (100.0)	1230 (100.0)	3458 (100.0)	1580 (100.0)