2019 State Fair Survey Results
Retirement & Long-Term Care Planning in Minnesota
10/22/2019
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Executive Summary

The 2019 State Fair Own Your Future Survey was administered at the Minnesota State Fair from August 22 through September 2, 2019. The Minnesota Department of Human Services and the Minnesota Board on Aging have conducted a survey on retirement and long-term care planning concerns at the State Fair since 1998. A total of 1,848 State Fair attendees participated in this year’s survey, which consisted of twelve main questions and six questions collecting demographic information. The key findings are as follows:

- **A majority of respondents shared similar demographic characteristics.** Of respondents who provided their racial background, 90% identified as White or Caucasian. Additionally, 67% of respondents were female and 70% were age 55 or older.

- **An individual’s biggest retirement concern differed by age.** Half (50%) of respondents under the age of 44 noted that their main concern about retirement was running out of money, while only a quarter of individuals over the age of 65 reported that running out of money was their main concern. Over half (52%) of individuals over the age of 65 responded that their biggest concern about retirement was losing their health and needing care, while fewer (24%) of the individuals under the age of 44 gave this response.

- **79% of people said they had set up a savings plan or pension.** Nearly half (49%) of respondents said they completed a will. 68% of respondents checked four of the six steps taken to plan for retirement.

- **A large percentage of people do not know how they would pay for long-term care.** Nearly a quarter (22%) of the individuals surveyed did not know how they would pay for long-term care, indicating a continued need for long-term care planning and awareness.

- **A consistent percentage of people do not know how they would pay for long-term care.** This year, nearly a quarter (22%) of the individuals surveyed did not know how they would pay for long-term care, indicating a continued need for long-term care planning and awareness. Since 2012, this percentage has decreased slightly, but has remained above 20% consistently. The highest response year was in 2013 when 33% reported not knowing how they would paid for long-term care.

- **37% of respondents were not employed during the time of the survey and 63% were employed.** Of those who responded that they were working, 76% reported working full-time, 23% reported working part-time, and 1% did not specify.

- **Half of respondents currently working indicated their employer offers paid leave to care for family members.** 581 out of the 1152 survey respondents (50%) who answered this question indicated their employer offers a paid leave policy of 4+ days to several weeks. 16% of respondents
said they don’t know whether employer offers such a policy while 34% responded that their employer does not.  

- **Access to a paid leave policy impacted willingness to spend time caring for elderly relative.** 76% of working respondents said they would take 0-6 months off work to give care if provided no access to paid leave. 54% of respondents reported that they would take more than 6 months off work to provide care if they did have access to paid leave.  

- **For those no longer working, 47% indicated their past employer offered a paid leave policy.** Of those no longer working, 67% indicated they did not use a paid leave policy.

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### Results Report

#### Background

Since 1998, the Minnesota Department of Human Services, in partnership with the Minnesota Board on Aging, has sponsored a periodic survey of state fairgoers at the Minnesota State Fair. The purpose of the survey is to obtain some understanding of the retirement and long-term care concerns and plans from a sample of Minnesotans.

The Minnesota State Fair is the second largest in the U.S. with over 2 million attendees every year. It is held for 12 days at the end of August concluding on Labor Day each year. Those who attend represent all parts of Minnesota, all incomes, ages, occupations, and communities. This provides an opportunity to take a snapshot of Minnesotans on these important issues.

The retirement and long-term care planning survey is not intended to meet all the criteria of a methodologically strict survey, but instead gives insight into the current thinking of Minnesotans on these topics. Results are used as a litmus test of how concerns and behavior are changing over time regarding the critical issues of retirement preparation and long-term care plans, and how these trends should influence public information and outreach efforts so they are more effective.

The survey has been administered thirteen times – 1998, 2003, 2005, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019. At the beginning, the survey was administered to individuals visiting the Ramberg Senior Center at the fair (where the Minnesota Board on Aging booth was located). Starting in 2011, the survey has been administered to individuals in the Education Building, at the current Minnesota Board on Aging booth. The booth is shared by the Minnesota Board on Aging, Senior LinkAge Line®, and Own Your Future. 2019 was the first year to have a MN2030 booth instead of Own Your Future, yet the survey was still conducted.
Methodology

The survey was administered on iPads using the Snap Surveys application and took approximately two minutes to complete. The iPads were in stands set out at the front of the MN2030 booth. Giving the survey on iPads began in 2016, and prior to that the survey was one page long and passed out on clipboards. Staff and volunteers at the booth approached passersby and asked them if they would be willing to take a short survey. Participants were directed to the iPads to take the survey independently, although staff and volunteers were able to assist as needed. After participants completed the survey, they were offered the Own Your Future Planning Guide, Own Your Future checklists, and other materials from the booth as available. All surveys were anonymous.

Because of the Own Your Future initiative’s focus on the concerns and plans of Minnesotans between 40 and 65 years old, survey volunteers attempted to target individuals that appeared to be in this demographic. They did not exclude any adult from participating in the survey. Many retirees completed the survey.

Survey Questions

Some of the questions on the survey have remained the same throughout the years, although some questions have changed depending upon current trends and the focus of the work being done at that time. This year several questions were added regarding caregiving and whether or not respondents had access to paid leave from their employer. Following are the main questions included in this year’s survey:

- **What steps have you already taken (or did you take if retired) to plan for retirement? (Check all that apply)**
  - This is the sixth year that this question has been asked on the survey.
- **Whether or not you are retired, what is your biggest concern about retirement? (Check only one)**
  - This question has been asked on the survey in previous years but was updated to clarify that it applied to people who were retired and those who were not.
- **If you need long-term care due to a physical or mental disability, how will you pay for it? (Please check only one)**
  - This question has been featured every year on the survey, though the wording has been changed throughout the years.
- **Do you provide ongoing care for an ill or disabled family member? (Check one)**
  - This is the eighth year a similar question has been asked, although the wording varied. Individuals who answered yes were next given the question for whom they provide care.
- **I now provide (or did provide) care for: (Check all that apply)**
  - This question was added to get more information about who people are providing care for.
- **Are you currently employed? (Yes/No)**
  - The answer to this question leads to different follow-ups.
- If yes, full-time or part-time? (FT/PT)
  Question asked only if respondent answered yes to the previous question.
- Does your employer offer any paid leave (4+ days to several weeks) to care for family members? (Yes/No/Don’t Know)
  Only asked to those who responded that they were working.
- If you had no access to paid leave, how much time are you willing to take off from your job to provide care to an elderly relative?
  Only asked to those who responded that they were working. Responses ranged from 0-6 months, 6-12 months, and 12+ months.
- If you did have access to paid leave, how much time are you willing to take off from your job to provide care to an elderly relative?
  Responses ranged from 0-6 months, 6-12 months, and 12+ months.
- If you are no longer working, did your employer offer any paid leave (4+ days to several weeks) to care for family members?
  Only asked to respondents who were not working.
- Did you use this paid leave? (Yes/No/Don’t Know)

The same demographic information (age, gender, race, living arrangements, and annual household income) was requested in addition to a question about being a Minnesota resident.

For a copy of the 2019 survey, please see Appendix A.

About Own Your Future

The Own Your Future initiative began in 2011 as a joint federal/state effort with the purpose to urge individuals to create a plan for their long-term care including how to pay for that care. Minnesota was the 27th state to initiate this effort since the program began in 2005.

The main feature of Minnesota’s campaign was the mailing of a letter from the Governor and Lieutenant Governor in early October 2012 to one million households with residents aged 40 to 65, urging them to create a plan for their long-term care and directing them to a special website. The Own Your Future website is at mn.gov/dhs/ownyourfuture/index.jsp and includes basic information to help people learn about long-term care, understand their risk of needing long-term care services, and review options for how they can prepare a plan for themselves including how to pay for their care. For more information about Own Your Future, see Appendix B.

The second phase of Own Your Future addressed the need for more options to privately finance long-term care. The OYF advisory panel helped identify 15 different policy options for further study. Of those, 2 were pursued based on a group consensus. Since then, Own Your Future is now in its third stage of work: developing products to help middle-income Minnesotans pay for long-term services and supports. The two product options include a term life insurance product that would convert to long-term care insurance as a
person ages, and a home care benefit that would be included in Medicare supplemental plans sold in Minnesota.

In addition to product development, the work of Own Your Future continues to observe other states’ policies for addressing the growing need for long-term care finance reform. One specific policy option was brought up in the survey this year – access to paid family leave. The idea behind this is that many family members provide care for their elderly relatives and sometimes that need for care exceeds the available free time of the family member who is working. Access to a paid leave from their employer may allow the caregiver to provide a higher level of care for a period of time and avoid a more costly professional service and support provider.

Results

Demographic Summary

While 2.1 million people attended the fair in 2019, we collected 1,848 surveys throughout the 12-day event. This survey deliberately oversampled adults above the age of 40 because individuals in this age group are more likely to be established in their careers and financially able to engage in retirement and long-term care planning. Consequently, nearly half (49%) of participants were between the ages of 45 and 64, versus just 32.7% in Minnesota’s population (according to the U.S. Census Bureau’s Population Estimates).

There was also a higher than expected number of female respondents (67% of all participants identified as female).

With regards to living arrangements, a majority of participants (68%) report living with a spouse/partner, which greater than the Census estimate of 51% of Minnesotan households identifying as a “married-couple family” in 2017. Couples would often stop together to take our survey, thereby double-representing their household in our demographics.

Retirement Planning

The first question asked participants to respond to the question “What steps have you already taken (or did you take if already retired) to plan for retirement?” They were asked to select all that apply from these six choices: Set up savings plan/pension, completed a will, have healthcare directive, discussed future planning with family, purchased long-term care insurance, and modified home or moved. Figure 1 shows the percentage of respondents who chose each option.
Figure 1: 2019 Results for ‘What Steps Have You Already Taken To Plan for Retirement?’

Responses differed by age regarding steps taken to plan for retirement. Of respondents aged 44 and under, 45% indicated they had set up their own savings plan/pension plan, however only 10% have completed a will. Of respondents 65 and over, 21% have completed a will and 25% have set up their own savings plan/pension plan.

Retirement Concerns

The first question on the survey asked participants to select one of four potential options that best represented their “biggest concern about retirement.”

Figure 2: 2019 Results for ‘What is your biggest concern about retirement?’
As shown in Figure 2, the most common concern of the individuals who took the survey was “losing my health and needing care”. However, responses differed by age on this question as well. Of respondents ages 44 and under, 50% reported that their biggest concern was running out of money. If respondents 65 and over, 51% said their biggest concern was losing their health and needing care. This difference probably reflects the decline in health that older individuals may be experiencing.

**Retirement Concerns by Age Group**

Broken out by age group, respondents’ concerns about retirement tell a different story. Figure 3 describes answers to concerns about retirement broken out by their age group. Demographic questions were included at the end of the survey.

Figure 3: 2019 Biggest Concern about Retirement by Age Group

In looking at responses by age group, there is a clear pattern. The survey instructed that respondents could only choose one answer. A majority of respondents expressed that their biggest concern was either losing their health and needing care or running out of money. There is increasing concern with age about losing health and needing care and a decreasing concern with age about running out of money.

**Paying for Long-Term Care**

The third question on the survey asked “If you need long-term care due to a physical or mental disability, how will you pay for it?” The choices the participants were given included personal savings/investments, long-term care insurance, government programs, life insurance, equity in home, family will help me, and don’t know. Figure 4 shows responses about how survey takers will pay for their long-term care, should they need it. As shown, people were fairly divided in their selections, reflecting the wide range of options for long-term care financing. The results also indicate a lack of knowledge and planning for long-term care, with a large percentage of people not knowing how they will pay for the services.
Among all respondents, most selected that they plan to use personal savings and investments to pay for their long-term care and 22% said that they did not know how they will pay for it, should they need long-term care. Age seemed to play a role in responses. In looking at responses by age group, for those who were 44 years old and under, 34% responded that they do not know how they will pay for their long-term care needs, while 24% said that they would use personal savings and investments. In looking at the 65 years and over age group, 36% said that they plan to use personal savings and investments, 29% said they plan to use long-term care insurance, and 14% that they did not know how they will pay for it.

Long-Term Care Financing Over Time

Figure 5 shows the percentage of respondents over time who answered ‘Don’t Know’ to the survey question ‘If you need long-term care due to a physical or mental disability, how will you pay for it? (Check only one).’ The percentage of respondents who don’t know has decreased over time but only slightly, there is still a consistent percentage of people who don’t know how they will pay for their long-term care.
Caregiving

This year we included two caregiver questions on the survey. In the first question, we assessed both current and past caregiving experience. Participants responded to the question “Do you provide ongoing care for an ill or disabled family member?” with one of three responses. As shown in Figure 6, the highest percentage of respondents did not have any experience as a caregiver.

Figure 6: 2019 Results for Caregiving
Of respondents who have been or are currently a caregiver, 32% have provided care in the past while only 16% are currently providing care. This is an important piece of information because caregiving is considered a critical part of long-term care.

**Figure 7: 2019 Results for Provided Care**

The second caregiving question asked current or former caregivers who they help or helped. The question allowed respondents to check all that apply so although there were only 855 respondents who noted that they have given or currently give care, several check more than one answer for this question. However, most provide/provided care for a parent.

**Figure 8: 2019 Care Providers by Age**
In looking at respondents who provide care, there are some differences between age groups. Of all respondents who said they do not provide care, the largest percentage of those were ages 44 and under. Of those who responded that they have provided care in the past, a large portion of them were ages 65 and over.

**Employment**

Questions of employment were new in the 2019 survey. These questions were intended to discover more about how people spend their time and whether or not they have access to a paid family leave program through their employer.

![Figure 9: 2019 Results of Employment Question](image)

Responses to this question are revealing because this survey asks about retirement and long-term care planning and whether people are not working can have a big impact on these decisions. From Figure 9, it is apparent that most people are working, that is 63% responded that they were working while 37% responded that they were not working. Of those working, 76% (879) responded that they are working full-time and 24% said that they are working part-time.

**Paid Family Leave Policies**

The following questions were broken down by responses to previous questions. If a respondent said they are currently working they were asked the following question about access to a paid family leave policy. If a respondent said they are not working, they were asked different questions.
Of respondents who said they are working, 50% (581 of 1152) acknowledged that they did have access to a paid family leave policy. This is important for long-term care planning because having the ability to take time off work to care for an elderly relative can make a difference, especially in helping to keep that elderly person living at home. Additionally, 34% (387 out of 1152) said did not have access to a paid family leave policy through their employer and 16% (184 out of 1152) said they don’t know whether they have access.

This question was asked only to survey respondents who previously said that they are working. Of 934 respondents, 707 (76%) said that they are willing to take off 0 to 6 months of work to provide care for an elderly relative.
These two questions were asked sequentially so we could determine if an employer offered paid family leave policy could impact taking time off to provide care. Fewer respondents indicated that they were willing to take 0 to 6 months than in the previous question (only 46%) while more reported willingness to take a longer period off work (31% said they would take 12+ months and 23% they would take 6 to 12 months).

The question ‘If you are no longer working, did your past employer offer any paid leave (4+ days to several weeks) to provide care for family members’ was only asked to respondents who indicated that they are not working. Of 657 responses to this question, 306 (47%) said their past employer did offer paid leave to provide
2019 State Fair Survey Results

This survey provides insight into what Minnesotans and guests visiting the State Fair Education Building think about their retirement and long-term care options. From it, broad impressions may be derived about their concerns and plans in these areas. To that end, there are nine main findings from this year’s survey:

1. A majority of respondents shared similar demographic characteristics. Of respondents who provided their racial background, 90% identified as White or Caucasian. Additionally, 67% of respondents were female and 70% were age 55 or older.

2. An individual’s biggest retirement concern differed by age. Half (50%) of respondents under the age of 44 noted that their main concern about retirement was running out of money, while only a quarter of individuals over the age of 65 reported that running out of money was their main concern. Over half (52%) of individuals over the age of 65 responded that their biggest concern about retirement was losing their health and needing care, while fewer (24%) of the individuals under the age of 44 gave this response.

3. 79% of people said they had set up a savings plan or pension. Nearly half (49%) of respondents said they completed a will. 68% of respondents checked four of the six steps taken to plan for retirement.

4. A consistent percentage of people do not know how they would pay for long-term care. This year, nearly a quarter (22%) of the individuals surveyed did not know how they would pay for long-term care, indicating a continued need for long-term care planning and awareness. Since 2012, this percentage has decreased slightly, but has remained above 20% consistently. The highest response year was in 2013 when 33% reported not knowing how they would paid for long-term care.

5. Nearly half of people had experience as a family caregiver. A fairly high percentage of individuals reported serving as a caregiver now or in the past (48%) with fewer saying they are a caregiver now (16%). A majority (67%) of caregivers said they provided care for a parent, parent-in-law or other older relatives.

6. 37% of respondents were not employed during the time of the survey and 63% were employed. Of those who responded that they were working, 76% reported working full-time, 23% reported working part-time, and 1% did not specify.

7. Half of respondents currently working indicated their employer offers paid leave to care for family members. 581 out of the 1152 survey respondents (50%) who answered this question indicated their
employer offers a paid leave policy of 4+ days to several weeks. 16% of respondents said they don’t know whether employer offers such a policy while 34% responded that their employer does not.

8. Access to a paid leave policy impacted willingness to spend time caring for elderly relative. 76% of working respondents said they would take 0-6 months off work to give care if provided no access to paid leave. 54% of respondents reported that they would take more than 6 months off work to provide care if they did have access to paid leave.

9. For those no longer working, 47% indicated their past employer offered a paid leave policy. Of those no longer working, 67% indicated they did not use a paid leave policy.

Study Limitations

As previously mentioned, this survey was not designed to meet the criteria for a formalized research effort; rather, it was used at the State Fair both as an engagement tool and an opportunity to gain informal information. The population was surveyed using a convenience sample and does not necessarily accurately represent Minnesota’s overall population. The population surveyed may have been biased by its association with the Minnesota Board on Aging booth and the booth’s location in the Education Building. Many times groups of related individuals would stop by and take the survey, potentially over-representing those households.

Conclusion

This survey provides general perspectives of visitors to the Minnesota State Fair with regards to retirement and long-term care planning. Unfortunately, the data confirms that there is a high lack of preparation, consistent with previous surveys. The survey results from this year continues to build the evidence regarding the critical need for more long-term care planning in Minnesota, and supports the ongoing need for the planning and development activities that are the priorities of Own Your Future.

Appendices

Appendix A. Own Your Future Survey Text

Question 1: What steps have you already taken (or did you take if already retired) to plan for retirement? (Check all that apply)

a. Set up my own savings plan/pension plan
b. Have a healthcare directive for end-of-life
c. Completed a will
d. Discussed future planning with my family
e. Purchased long-term care insurance or other product that will pay for care
f. Modified my home or moved to a more accessible place

**Question 2:** Whether or not you are retired, what is your biggest concern about retirement? (Check only one)

a. Losing my health and needing care
b. Being a burden to my family
c. Running out of money
d. Unable to save for retirement

**Question 3:** If you need long-term care due to a physical or mental disability, how will you pay for it? (Check only one)

a. Use personal savings/investments
b. Use long-term care insurance
c. Use life insurance or some other insurance
d. Use government program(s)
e. Use equity in home
f. Family will help me
g. Don’t know

**Question 4:** Do you provide ongoing care for an ill or disabled family member? (Check one)

a. Yes – I am currently providing care
b. No – but in the past I did care
c. No – I am not a caregiver now and have not been a caregiver

**Question 5:** I now provide (or did provide) care for: (Check all that apply)

a. Spouse and/or partner
b. Parent, parent-in-law or other older relative(s)
c. Children or grandchildren
d. Friends, neighbors or others

**Question 6:** Are you working?
a. Yes
b. No

**Question 7:** If yes, full-time or part-time?
   a. Full-time
   b. Part-time

**Question 8:** Does your employer offer any paid leave (4+ days to several weeks) to care for family members?
   a. Yes
   b. No
c. Don’t know

**Question 9:** If you had no access to paid leave how much time are you willing to take off from your job to provide care to an elderly relative?
   a. 0 – 6 months
   b. 6 – 12 months
   c. 12 + months

**Question 10:** If you *did have access* to paid leave, how much time are you willing to take off from your job to provide care to an elderly relative?
   a. 0 – 6 months
   b. 6 – 12 months
   c. 12 + months

**Question 11:** If you are no longer working, did your employer offer any paid leave (4+ days to several weeks) to care for family members?
   a. Yes
   b. No
c. Don’t know

**Question 13:** Did you use this paid leave?
   a. Yes
b. No

c. Don’t know

Please tell us (optional)

Question 12: Your age (Check one)

a. 44 and under
b. 45 – 54
c. 55 – 64
d. 65 and over

Question 13: Gender (Check one)

a. Female
b. Male
c. Other

Question 14: What would you say best describes your race? (Check all that apply)

a. Asian or Pacific Islander
b. Black or African American
c. Native American or Alaska Native
d. White or Caucasian
e. Other

Question 15: Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin? (Check one)

a. Yes
b. No

Question 16: Living Arrangements (Check one)

a. Live alone
b. Live with spouse/partner
c. Live with others
**Question 17:** Are you a resident of Minnesota? (Check one)

a. Yes
b. No

**Question 18:** Annual Household Income (Check one)

a. Under $25,000
b. $25,000 - $49,999
c. $50,000 - $74,999
d. $75,000 - $99,999
e. $100,000 - $124,000
f. $125,000 or over

**Question 19:** If you are interested in receiving the results of this survey or updates from the Minnesota Board on Aging, please provide your email address.

Thank you for completing this survey!

**Appendix B. Own Your Future Phases & Objectives**

1. • Own Your Future Initiative
   • Urge individuals to plan for long-term care

2. • Affordable Product Development
   • Identify products for middle income individuals

3. • Explore reform of MA Long-Term Care provisions to better support and incent private financing

**Appendix C. Special Thanks**

Own Your Future staff would like to thank all of the volunteers who generously donated their time to conduct this survey, particularly volunteers from the Own Your Future Advisory Panel. Thank you to DHS staff unconnected to the campaign who gave their time and talents to make this possible, and to the Board on Aging staff and volunteers for their space, time and support. We also thank the survey participants.