Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
Trends in Health and Aging

This project provides reliable up-to-date information on trends in the health and health care utilization of the elderly population, using data primarily from the National Center for Health Statistics and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Lead Agency:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)

Agency Mission:

The mission of NCHS is to provide statistical information that will guide actions and policies to improve the health of the American people. As the Nation's principal health statistics agency, NCHS leads the way with accurate, relevant, and timely data

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General Description:

The Trends in Health and Aging (THA) project uses the statistical resources of NCHS and other federal agencies to provide current, policy-relevant information on the health and well-being of the older population in the United States. The core of the project has been the THA web-site (www.cdc.gov/nchs/agingact.htm), which allows access to a wealth of data presented in a consistent manner. The compilation, analysis and dissemination of these data are coordinated by staff of the Aging and Chronic Disease Statistics Branch of the Office of Analysis and Epidemiology (OAE) of NCHS. This branch brings together researchers with expertise in epidemiology, demography, and economics, assuring that the data are of high quality and presented in a manner useful to

policy-makers and researchers.   These researchers have used the data to produce a series of simple, policy relevant, topical reports on a range of topics relating to health and aging. (See: www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/otheract/aging/research_publications.htm)

In the near future, NCHS plans to merge the THA website with another web-based interactive data system—Health Data for All Ages—to produce a system that has consistent data across the lifespan. This new system will allow for the tracking of trends in the health and health care utilization of the future elderly.

Excellence: What makes this project exceptional?

Trends in Health and Aging is a powerful web-based resource that employs user-friendly software to provide access to up-to-date trend data on the health of the elderly population. By distilling data from complex surveys and data systems into user-friendly tools and reports, it provides a model of data and research dissemination for other federal agencies.

Significance: How is this research relevant to older persons, populations and/or an aging society?

The entire focus of the project is to provide information on trends in the health of the elderly population.

Effectiveness: What is the impact and/or application of this research to older persons?

THA provides reliable, readily accessible information on the health of the elderly to policymakers, educators, researchers, and the public resulting in more informed decision making and better training tools.

Innovativeness: Why is this research exciting or newsworthy?

The project represents a powerful use of web-based tools to disseminate complex data in a user-friendly way.