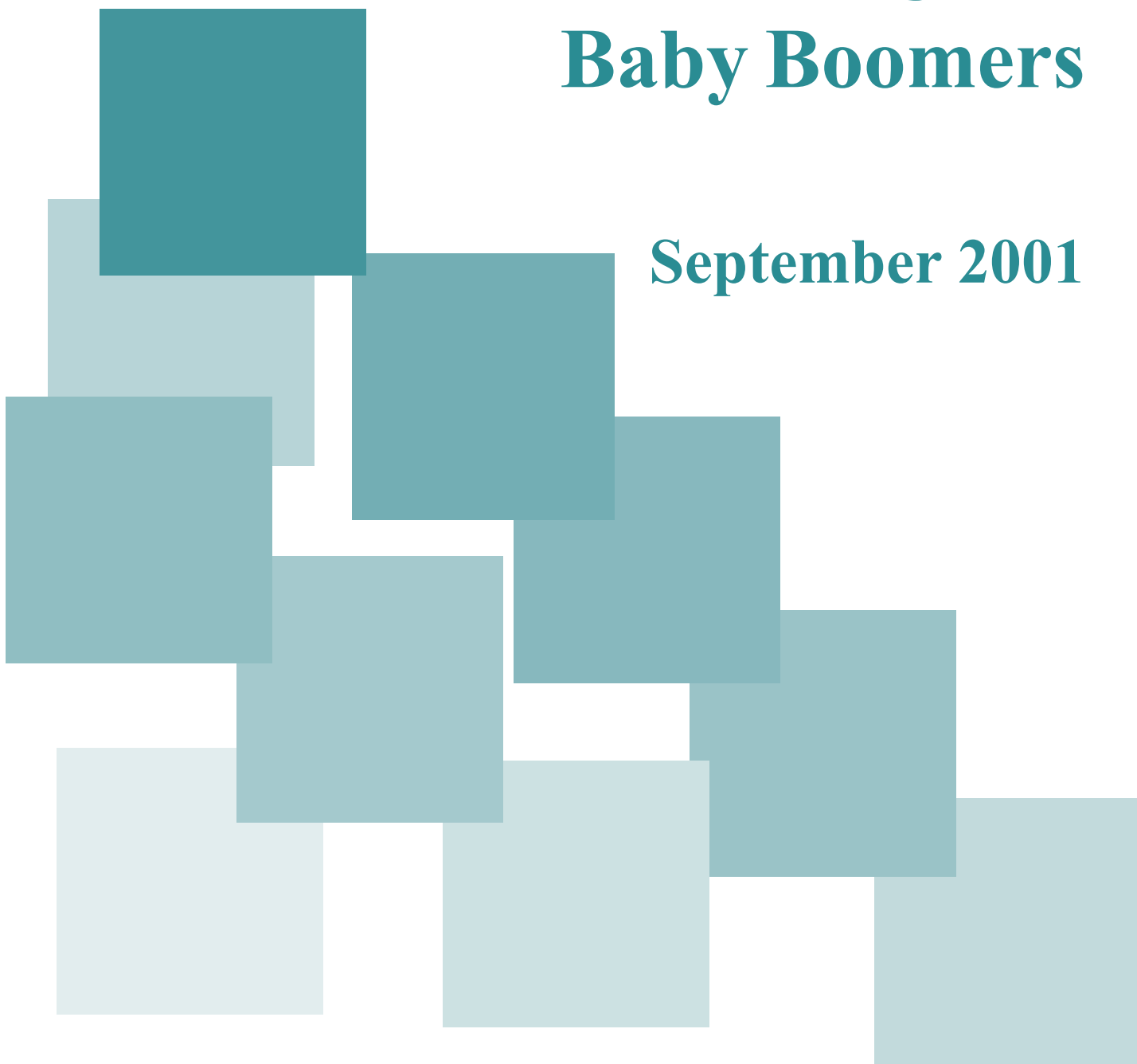


A Study of the Mental Health and Addiction Needs of Oregon's Baby Boomers

September 2001

Governor's Commission on Senior Services



Introduction

Our study results point to the need in Oregon for improvements now in our mental health and addiction treatment system. We must prepare for the largest elderly population in American history within a decade. The recommendations in this report include steps to address the problems of access to treatment services, inadequate education and prevention efforts, and insufficient training and support for both professional and family care givers. We must prepare for the increased needs of the 21st century. How well we prepare will be a measure of our health care system and of our society as a whole.

Survey Background

The Governor's Commission on Senior Services distributed 400 surveys around the state to gather information on the attitudes and behaviors of Oregon's "baby boom" generation. (See Appendix 1.) The survey was sent to persons between the ages of thirty-six and fifty-four years of age who had been identified by volunteer agencies (RSVP, AARP, & Head Start) and fraternal organizations that serve Baby Boomers. We attempted to survey an equal number of men and women, and a variety of income levels. We received completed surveys from 250 respondents.

Findings and Recommendations

Survey Findings #1:

- ← 76% of the respondents did not know where to turn for mental health or alcohol and drug services in their communities.
- ← 59% of the respondents did not believe they had insurance coverage for mental health or addiction treatment services.
- ← 39% of the respondents believed that either self (34%) or children (5%) would pay for mental health or addiction treatment services; 5% did not know who would pay for services.

Findings and Recommendations Continued

← 4% of the respondents either have or anticipated purchasing long-term care insurance.

Recommendation #1: Decrease barriers in access to mental health and addiction treatment services.

- ← Health insurance providers must be required to develop written materials on mental health and chemical dependency benefits for members, in a similar format and as comprehensively stated, as the materials written about physical health benefits
- ← Encourage government and private sector organizations to offer goal setting and financial planning assistance to Baby Boomers to ensure adequate insurance coverage for future health, mental health or chemical dependency needs.
- ← Ensure local community-based accountability for improving access to mental health and chemical dependency treatment services, i.e., local planning board involvement in developing ongoing community-based education & prevention efforts aimed at understanding the scope of problem and teaching the community how to access treatment services and community services.

Survey Findings #2:

- ← **12%** of the respondents are either currently receiving or have previously received alcohol and/or drug treatment services; 17% did not know whether they were currently receiving or had previously received alcohol and/or drug treatment services.
- ← **7%** of the respondents are either currently receiving or had previously received mental health services; 6% did not know whether they were currently receiving or have previously received alcohol and/or drug treatment services.

Findings and Recommendations Continued

Recommendation #2: Decrease barriers in access to mental health and addiction treatment services, increase education and prevention efforts to the baby boomer population.

- ← Provide educational opportunities for both professionals and the Baby Boomer public on chemical dependency and mental health services with a primary objective of decreasing stigma and increasing the likelihood of early intervention opportunities.
- ← Increase awareness of both health systems.
- ← Develop and implement a mental health and addiction treatment infrastructure that reflects both best practice approaches and is sensitive to the needs of older adults; i.e.:
 - 1) Develop system-wide policies and procedures which specifically address the needs of older adults in mental health and addiction treatment services;
 - 2) Include language in performance indicators of service delivery systems which are specific to the identification of older adults as a targeted population for quality assurance reviews;
 - 3) Provide on-going technical assistance and training opportunities for professionals to ensure best practice methods for treatment of mental health and addiction issues in older adults.

Survey Findings #3:

- ← **73%** of respondents believed that Alzheimer's Disease will be the most pressing mental health need for Baby Boomers.
- ← **45%** of respondents currently provide care for a parent, grandparent or adult child; 28% of respondents provide care for a family member more than 15 hours a week.

Findings and Recommendations Continued

Recommendation #3: Provide adequate support and training for family care givers who require functional or behavioral assistance due to a mental health diagnosis.

Background

Demographic and Social Changes

Significant demographic and social changes will affect the mental health and addiction treatment system with regard to services for older adults.

- ← In the second decade of this century, the U.S. will have the largest elderly population in American History rising from 9.7 percent of the total population in 1990 to 14.4% by 2010. Accompanying this surge of the “new” elderly will be an accompanying need for mental health and addiction treatment services that are accessible and appropriate to the needs of older adults.
- ← Current barriers to mental health and addiction treatment such as stigma, poor access to care, inadequate treatment services and disparities in insurance coverage will be magnified as resources become increasingly limited and less likely to meet the service level needs of older adults.
- ← The U.S. Surgeon General’s Report on Mental Health, released in December, 1999, states that currently, mental illness is the second leading cause of disability and premature morbidity. The report emphasizes that although the efficacy of mental health treatment is well documented, nearly 50 percent of those with mental illness do not seek treatment. The Surgeon General’s report makes it clear that in the coming years, our society will be confronted with unprecedented challenges in organizing, financing, and delivering effective mental health services.
- ← Looking at Alzheimer’s Disease, Jeffrey Cummings, M.D., and Dilip Jeste, M.D., state that

Background Continued

the prevalence of dementia doubles every five years after the age of 60. They estimate that dementia, due primarily to Alzheimer's, may affect up to 45 percent of those 85 and older. ("Alzheimer's Disease and its management in the year 2010", published in the September 1999 issue of Psychiatric Services, a journal of the American Psychiatric Association.) If 45 percent of the projected population in 2010 who are 85 years and older have dementia, that would represent 6.5 percent of Americans, or 2.6 million people. Are we prepared to provide necessary care for these people?

Facing the Nation

Numerous sources concerned with the influx of baby boomers into the healthcare system are saying that now is the time to look at ways to transform current methods of service delivery systems if the future health care needs of aging baby boomers are to be adequately met. If services are not developed now, the health care service delivery system will become increasingly unable to meet the needs of an ever-increasing older adult population.

Mental Health Needs of Baby Boomers Survey

Mental Health and Addiction Committee
of the
Governor's Commission on Senior Services

Please answer the following questions:

1. **Your Age** _____
2. **Marital Status**
G Single - Never Married
G Married
G Divorced
3. **Average Annual Income**

4. **Do you have or anticipate buying long term care insurance?**
G Yes
G No
G Don t Know
5. **Do you know where to turn for mental health or alcohol and drug services in your community if you or a family member needed help?**
G Yes
G No
G Don t Know
6. **Do you have insurance coverage for mental health or alcohol and drug treatment services?**
G Yes
G No
G Don t Know
7. **Do you have a family member to rely on for your care?**
G Yes
G No
G Don t Know
8. **Which family member?**

9. **Are you providing care for a parent, grandparent, or adult child?**
G Yes
G No
10. **How many hours per week do you provide care?** _____
11. **If you need mental health services or substance abuse treatment in the future how would you pay for the services?**
G Private Insurance G Self
G Federal Program
G State funded program
G Children
G Don t Know
12. **Are you now or have you ever received services for:**
Mental Health or emotional disorder treatments?
G Yes G No
Alcohol or drug treatments?
G Yes G No
13. **In the future, what do you think will be your most pressing mental health need?** _____

Survey Results

1. **Ages Surveyed**
 - 36-40 58 people
 - 44-48 64 people
 - 49-52 52 people
 - 53-54 76 people
2. **Marital Status?**
 - Single/NM 13%
 - Married 51%
 - Divorced 36%
3. **Average Annual Income?**
 - Less than 9,000 13 people
 - 10,000 - 14,000 47 people
 - 15,000 - 25,000 34 people
 - 26,000 - 34,000 73 people
 - 35,000 - 49,000 61 people
 - 50,000 - 74,000 13 people
 - 75,000 - 99,999 9 people
4. **Do you have or anticipate buying long term care insurance?**
 - Yes 4%
 - No 96%
5. **Know where to go for MH/AD services?**
 - Yes 25%
 - No 51%
 - Don t Know 12%
6. **Have insurance coverage?**
 - Yes 41%
 - No 47%
 - Don t Know 12%
7. **Do you have a family member to rely on for your care?**
 - Yes 68%
 - No 32%
8. **Which family member?**
 - Spouse 72%
 - Other 28%
9. **Are you providing care for a parent, grandparent, or adult child?**
 - Yes 45%
 - No 32%
10. **Hours per week care provided?**
 - 1-5 hrs 39%
 - 6-10 hrs 17%
 - 11-15 hrs 16%
 - More 28%
11. **How would you pay for treatment services?**
 - Private Insurance 11%
 - Federal Program 40%
 - State funded program 5%
 - Self 34%
 - Children 5%
 - Don t Know 5%
12. **Are you now or have you ever received services for:**
 - Mental Health or emotional disorder treatments?***
 - Yes 7%
 - No 87%
 - Don t Know 5%
 - Alcohol or drug treatments?***
 - Yes 12%
 - No 71%
 - Don t Know 17%
13. **Most pressing M/H need in future?**
 - Alzheimer s Disease 73%
 - Dementia 10%
 - Depression 13%
 - Other/Don t Know 4%

Acknowledgments

This study has been prepared by the
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Guiding Principle

Dedicated volunteers building on the success of the past to enhance the quality of life for Oregon's seniors and people with disabilities

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Alternative Formats available upon request.

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