

Stakeholder Priorities for an Elder Friendly
Community:

Results from Caregiver Respondents

Part of Care for Elders 2009/10 Consumer Input Initiative



Outline of this Presentation

- Background that led to Care for Elders Consumer Input Process
- Demographics of Caregivers
- Top 5 Priorities
- Top 5 Areas for Expansion
- Comparing Caregivers to Overall Sample
- What did we Learn about Caregivers?

Background

- Care for Elders participated in a process lead by the City of Houston's Department of Health & Human Services to create an *Aging Agenda* for Houston & Harris County (in 2008).
- In creating the *Aging Agenda*, experts consolidated different issues/concerns into 8 domains or themes, which were used to evaluate the extent to which Houston/Harris County is elder-friendly.
- The domains:
 - Health and Well-Being
 - Access to Quality Care
 - Basic Needs
 - Housing
 - Transportation and Mobility
 - Safety and Security
 - Civic Engagement/Volunteerism and Employment
 - Spirituality, Culture, Recreation, and Lifelong Learning

Background Information

- The *Aging Agenda* had a total of 48 recommendations to improve our community's elder friendliness.
- However, most recommendations were written in “the language of professionals”, there was no priority ranking of the recommendations and community-dwelling elders did not have any input in the *Aging Agenda*.
- Care for Elders “translated” the 40 recommendations into “lay language” and re-categorized them into 10 domains /categories.
- Care for Elders then conducted extensive community outreach to get input from seniors and other stakeholders about ***priorities for action.***

Process of Gaining Stakeholder Input

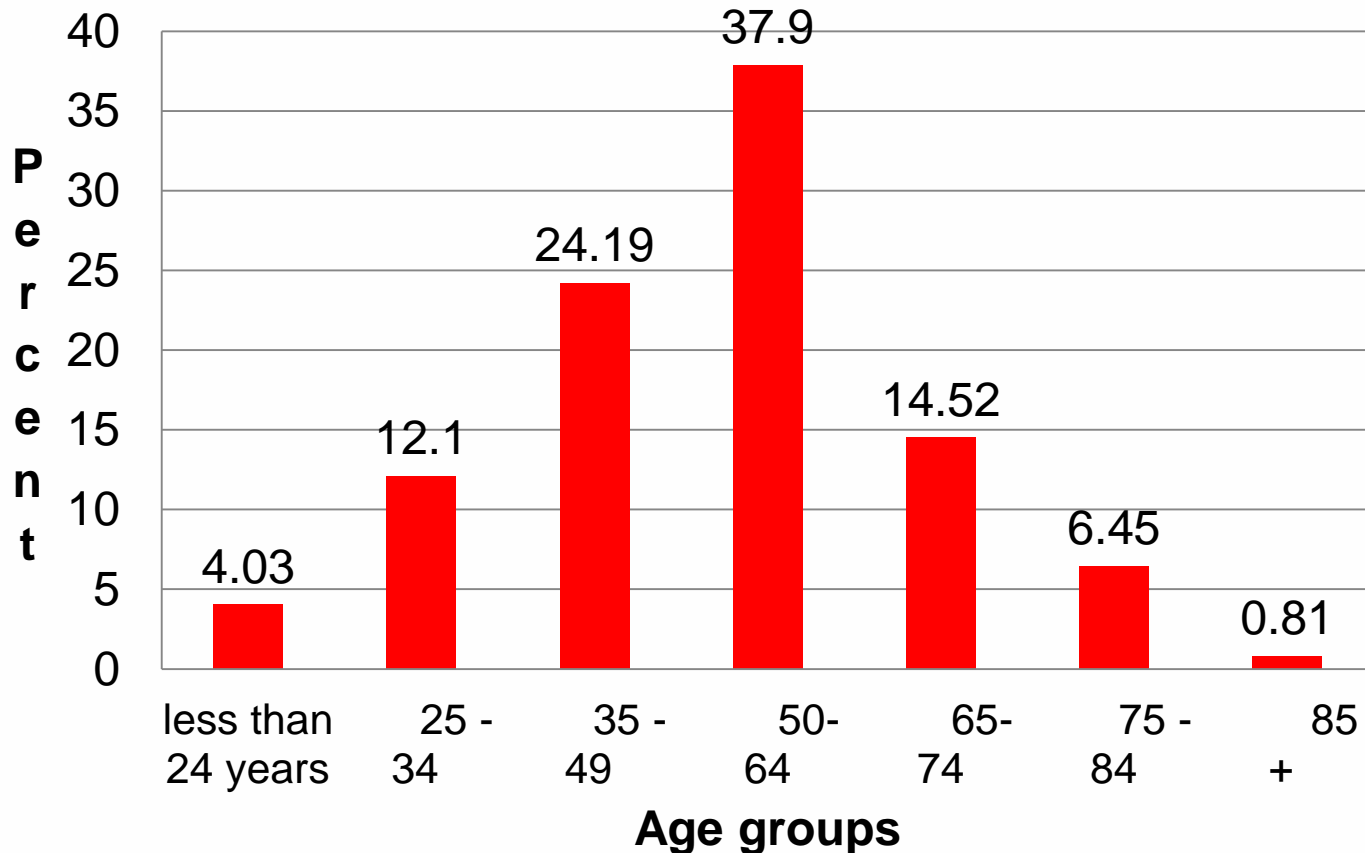
- CFE, with its partners, identified many opportunities to meet with stakeholders and gain their input. Surveys were administered at the following locations:
 - Senior and community centers
 - Subsidized senior apartment communities
 - Assisted living facilities
 - Retirement communities
 - And more
- Surveys were also distributed:
 - To homebound elders (who were meals on wheels clients)
 - Via Survey Monkey (electronic survey)
- Time Frame
 - Surveys were conducted from September 2009 – March 2010

Definition of Caregiver in Survey

- CFE reached 1198 survey participants through its process.
- Respondents were asked to select one of 4 categories that best described themselves
- **Caregiver for an older adult** was one category; this is a summary of the **11%** who described themselves as **'a caregiver to an older adult or a family member who has responsibility for an elder relative'**.

Demographics of Caregivers: Age & Gender

Age Range of Caregivers



Harris County caregivers are young!

Only 21% are 65 years or over

62% are between the **ages of 35-64**

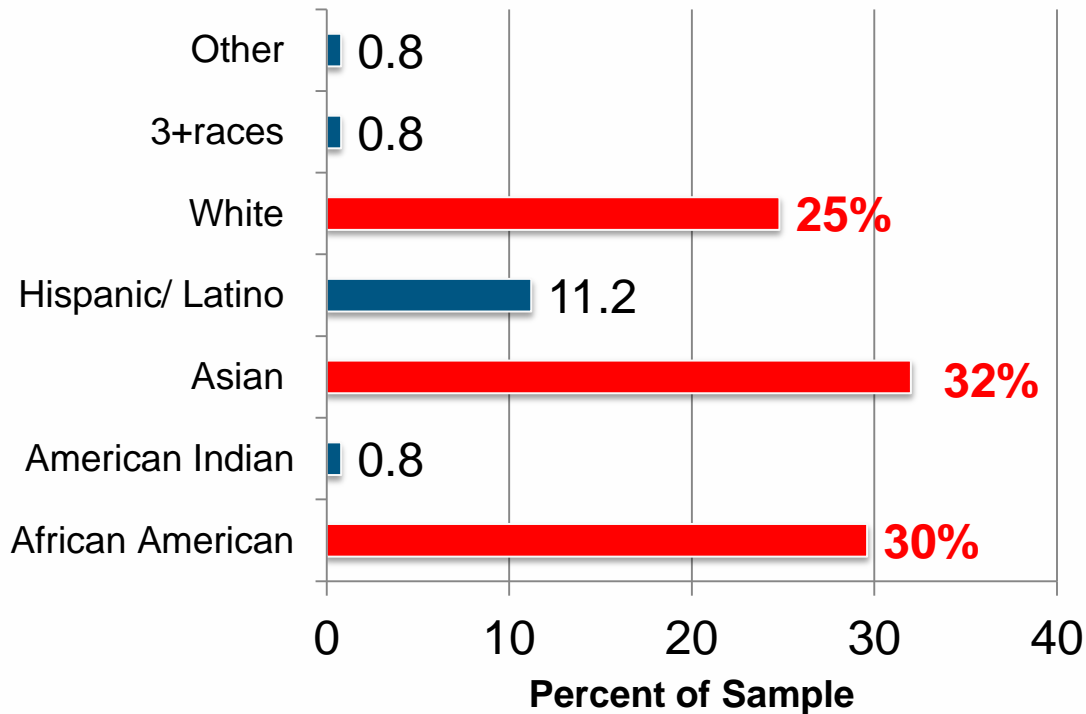
Gender:

84% female

16% male

Demographics: Self-Reported Race and Residence

Racial Makeup of Caregivers



Where do they live?

County	Percent
Harris Precinct 1	30.51
Harris Precinct 2	16.1
Harris Precinct 3	26.27
Harris Precinct 4	8.47
Fort Bend County	11.86
Brazoria County	3.39
Galveston County	1.69
Montgomery County	1.69
Total	100

Demographics: Annual Income

Income	Percent
Under \$20,000	21%
\$20,000 - \$34,000	18%
\$35,000 - \$49,000	19%
\$50,000 - \$74,000	21%
\$75,000 +	21%
Total	100

Compared to other sub-groups and even the entire sample, caregivers are almost evenly divided among the five income brackets. In the overall sample, 43% were under \$20,000 year, with 16% between \$20,000 - \$34,999 and 16% in the highest income bracket.

Caregivers' Top Recommendation for Each Domain

Domain	Recommendation that Received the Most Votes by Caregivers
<i>Health and Well Being</i>	Require that doctors share medical information about a patient with others who are also treating that patient so everyone understands the senior's needs
<i>Access to Services</i>	Provide more assistance to seniors with finding and applying for community services
<i>Quality of Direct Workforce</i>	Make it a law that all home care and "hands on" workers must be trained <i>before</i> they help a senior
<i>Services and Support for Caregivers</i>	Provide more individualized training and help to family caregivers
<i>Basic Needs</i>	Make it easier to get help with paying electric and utility bills

Caregivers' Top Recommendation for Each Domain

Domain	Recommendation that Received the Most Votes by Caregivers
<i>Housing</i>	Teach seniors about different types of senior housing as well as ways to make their homes easier to stay in as they age.
<i>Transportation and Mobility</i>	Improve how current transportation programs operate so that they better meet seniors' needs.
<i>Safety and Security</i>	Teach older adults about scams and how to protect themselves from being taken advantage of.
<i>Civic Engagement, Volunteering and Employment</i>	Work with businesses to encourage them to hire older workers.
<i>Spirituality, Culture, Recreation and Lifelong Learning</i>	Work with organizations and businesses to help them make their facilities and businesses easier for seniors to use

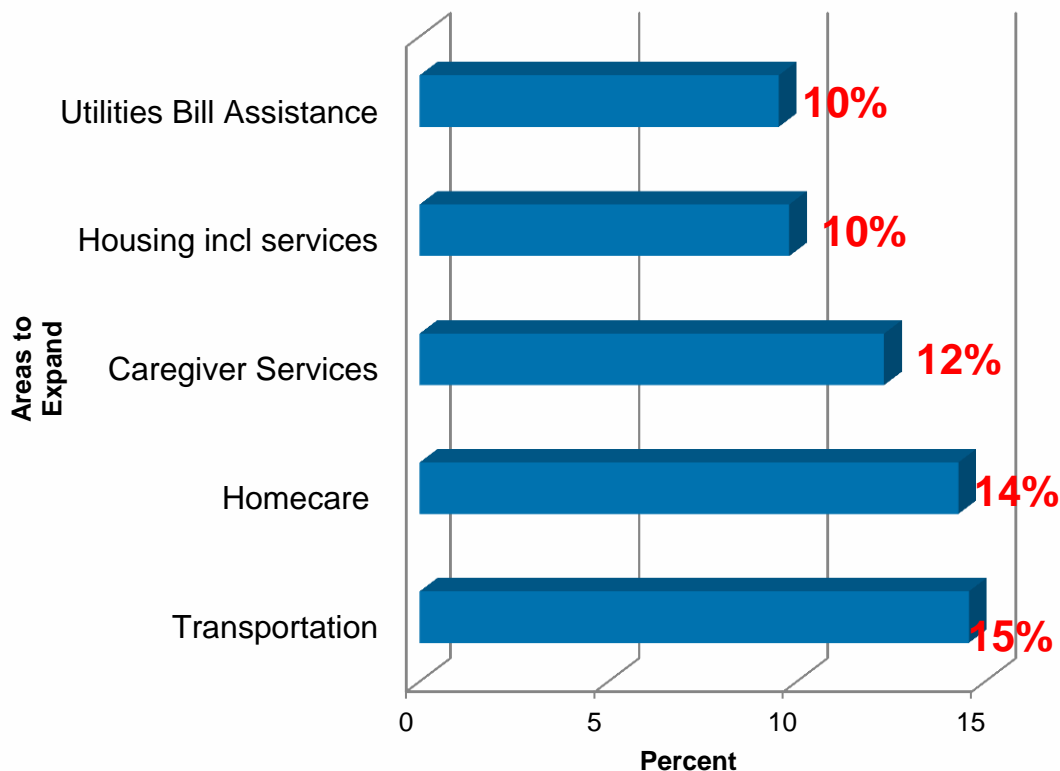
Caregivers' Top 5 Overall Priorities to make Houston/Harris County 'Elder-Friendly'

Rank	Domain & Recommendation	%
1	Transportation: Improve how current transportation programs operate so that they better meet seniors' needs	64%
2	Safety & Security: Teach older adults about scams and how to protect themselves from being taken advantage of	49%
3	Basic Needs: Make it easier to get help with paying electric and utility bills	46%
4	Housing: Teach seniors about different types of senior housing as well as ways to make their homes easier to stay in as they age.	43%
5	Health & Well Being: Require that doctors share medical information about a patient with other doctors who are also treating that patient so everyone understands the seniors' needs.	39%

Comparing Priorities for Caregivers to Overall Survey Respondents

Rank	Caregivers Domain & Recommendation	Overall Survey Group Domain & Recommendation
1	Transportation: Improve how current transportation programs operate so that they better meet seniors' needs	Transportation: Improve how current transportation programs operate so that they better meet seniors' needs
2	Safety & Security : Teach older adults about scams and how to protect themselves from being taken advantage of	Basic Needs: Make it easier to get help with paying electric and utility bills
3	Basic Needs : Make it easier to get help with paying electric and utility bills	Safety & Security: Teach older adults about scams and how to protect themselves from being taken advantage of
4	Housing: Teach seniors about different types of senior housing as well as ways to make their homes easier to stay in as they age.	Quality & Direct Workforce: Make it a law that all home care and "hands on" workers must be trained <i>before</i> they help a senior
5	Health and Well Being : Require that doctors share medical information about a patient with other doctors who are also treating that patient so everyone understands the seniors' needs.	Civic Engagement, Volunteering and Employment: Work with businesses to encourage them to hire older workers.

Areas to Expand



If resources permitted, which areas should be expanded?

Caregivers selected the following:

1. **Transportation** -15%
2. **Home Care** -14%
3. **Caregiver Services** -12%
4. **Housing** - 10%
5. **Utilities/Telephone bill Assistance** -10%

There is only five percent difference between #1 and #5, indicating they are all very important to this constituency

What did we learn about Caregivers?

- From this sample of Harris County caregivers (n=125), we know that they are young (between 35-64 years of age) and more than half live in Harris County Precinct 1 and 3.
- 84% of caregiver respondents are females belonging to one of the three racial groups: Asians, African Americans and White.

What did we learn from Caregivers?

- There is a wide diversity in income among Harris County caregivers; caregivers' incomes are equally distributed among income brackets.
- **Transportation, safety & security** and (access to) **basic needs** are caregivers' top 3 priorities; they share these same concerns with the overall survey sample.
- The fact that **caregivers had similar priorities with the total sample** (consisting of elders, professionals & others) is a testament of how important these are and also indicative of agreement.

What did we learn from Caregivers?

- However, caregivers had two additional priorities that were different: *Teaching seniors about housing options* and helping them remain in their own homes and *requiring health professionals to share information* about a patient.
- Professionals who serve elders agreed with caregivers about the importance of teaching elders about housing alternatives.
- However, caregivers were the only sub-sample that emphasized the *need for care providers to share information*, perhaps because they are burdened with the task of filling out duplicative paperwork and providing information on behalf of their family/relative.

What did we learn from Caregivers?

- Caregivers make many sacrifices as they support an elder; not surprisingly, their top five priorities did not include concern for themselves (domain: supports for caregivers).
- Caregivers agree with senior respondents on **four** out of the **five areas that should be expanded**. They expressed a need for more services to support them directly. Housing with supports was higher on caregivers' list, perhaps because this is a source of respite for them.

For more information, please contact
Ms. Jane Bavineau,
Executive Director, Care for Elders
713 – 685 – 6506
jbavineau@shelteringarms.org

Prepared by Taj Bhaloo, PhD *Health Services Research Consultant*