



Boulder County

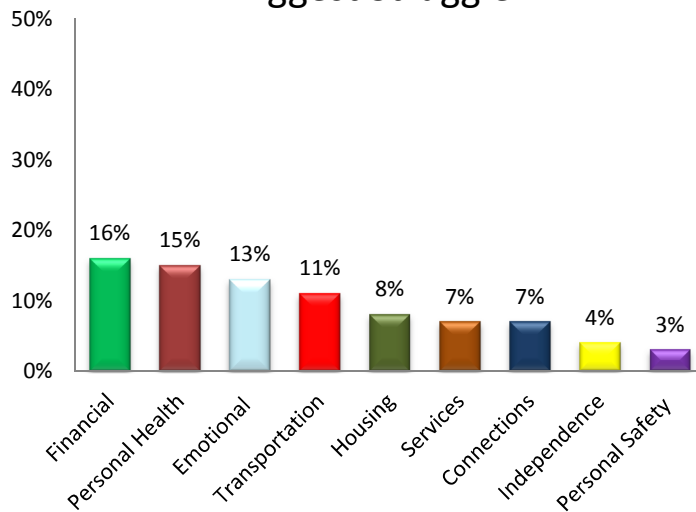
Creating Vibrant Communities in Which We All Age Well

Community Conversations Summary

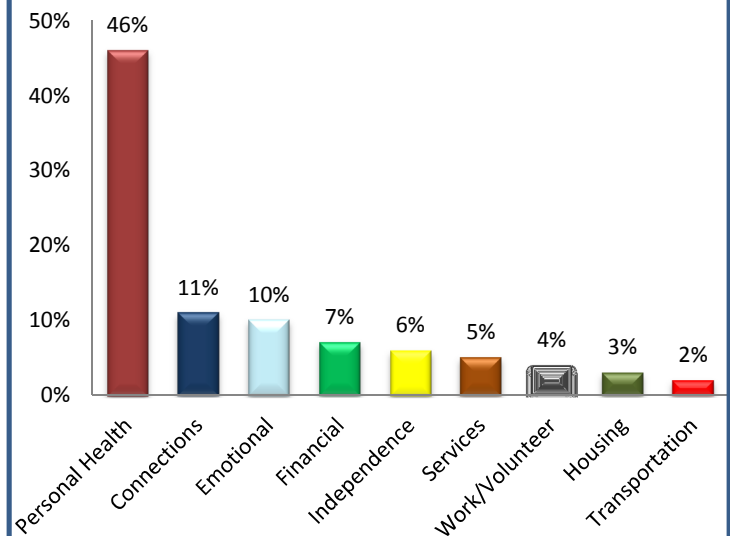
Purpose of the Conversations

- To gain first-hand understanding of day-to-day experiences of older adults in Boulder County
- To identify significant unmet needs
- To identify barriers that prevent ease of access to services and participation in community life
- To identify priorities for aging well

Biggest Struggle



Priorities for Aging Well



About the Conversations...

Held July 6 – 29, 2010

Older adults recruited

197 participants

Average group size: 9 participants

Geographic groups:

Allenspark

Boulder

Erie

Lafayette

Louisville

Nederland

Targeted groups:

Faith community

Family caregivers

Homeless

Latinos

Lesbian/gay/bisexual/transsexual

Low-income

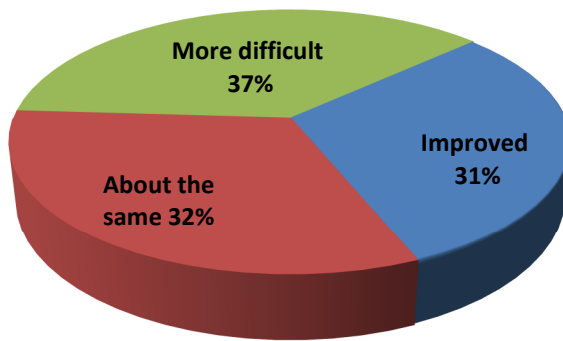
Men

Senior housing residents

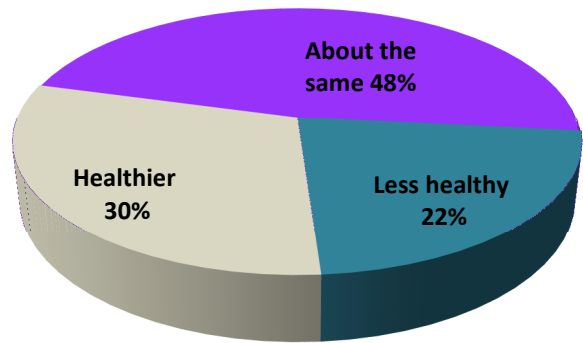
Veterans

(over, please)

Day-to-Day Life



Health in the Last Year



Central Themes

In searching for consistencies across groups, two major themes emerge as touchstones for all other findings:

- The two most significant worries voiced by older adults focus on finances and personal health;
- The three most important factors cited for aging well are personal health, social and personal connections and emotional well-being.

Key Findings by Quadrant

Quadrant: Addressing Basic Needs

- Financial issues are paramount. Older adults are concerned about outliving their assets, the cost of services and health insurance and the fiscal impacts of illness. Means-testing and their inability to find work compounds the problem. Some expressed the need for financial guidance.
- Participants reported that housing needs are unmet in many instances, primarily due to cost and availability.
- Some participants said there was a lack of information about services, while others said they were bombarded with too much information. A number cited a lack of agency follow-through as a barrier to receiving services.

Quadrant: Promoting Social and Civic Engagement

- Social connections are key to Conversation participants and a sense of purpose is essential.
- Some believe that their contributions are not appreciated in the community and that a 'senior' stigma exists.
- Many are enthusiastic about trying to change the perception about older adults.

Quadrant: Optimizing Physical and Mental Health and Well-Being

- Personal health is considered the key to aging well.
- Significant barriers to personal health cited by participants are cost and access to services.
- Key issues include: physician acceptance of Medicare and Medicaid; means-testing; lack of information; and language barriers.

Quadrant: Maximizing Inter-Dependence and Supporting Caregivers

- Staying in their homes is a high priority for Conversation participants.
- Major transportation barriers make independence much more challenging.
- Family caregivers have unmet needs: respite care; help with in-home tasks; and emotional support from peers.