



A Profile of Alberta Seniors

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Introduction

Alberta's Seniors, A Diverse Population

- Alberta's seniors are a diverse population whose lives have been shaped by a variety of experiences and circumstances. This population spans more than two generations, with an age range from 65 to more than 100 years and has varying skills, abilities, support systems, living arrangements and levels of health. It is difficult to create a comprehensive portrait that illustrates this diversity. The information in this profile is intended to provide basic information on Alberta's seniors and focuses on demographics, living arrangements, income, ethnicity, educational attainment, health status and activities. Various sources have been used to compile this information, based on the most recent data available.

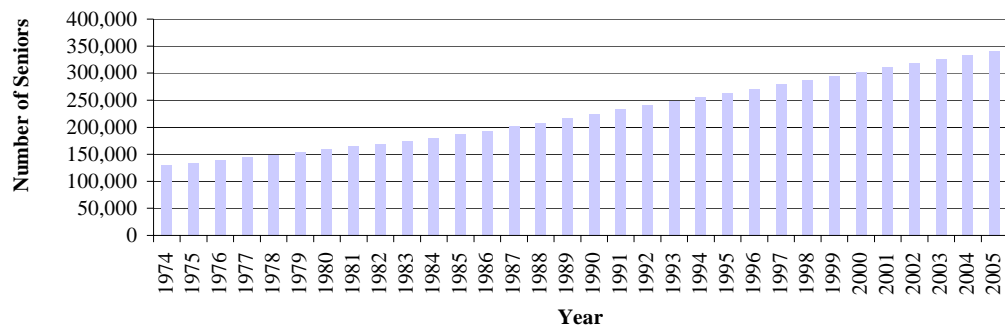
Alberta's Aging Population

The Number of Seniors is Increasing, as is their Percentage in the General Population

- The Alberta population is aging. There has been a 162 percent increase in the number of Albertans over the age of 65 since 1974, from 130,089 to 340,553 in 2005 (see Chart 1). Over the same time frame, Alberta's total population increased by 85 percent and the average age of Albertans has increased from 30.1 years in 1974 to 36.3 years in 2005.
- The prime causes of overall population aging are the aging of the baby boom generation, decreasing fertility rates, and increasing life expectancy.
- In 2005, seniors accounted for approximately 10.5 percent of Alberta's total population. The comparable figure for the Canadian population was 13 percent. Among all provinces, Alberta has the lowest percentage of seniors.

Chart 1

Number of Seniors Increased Steadily in Last Thirty Years

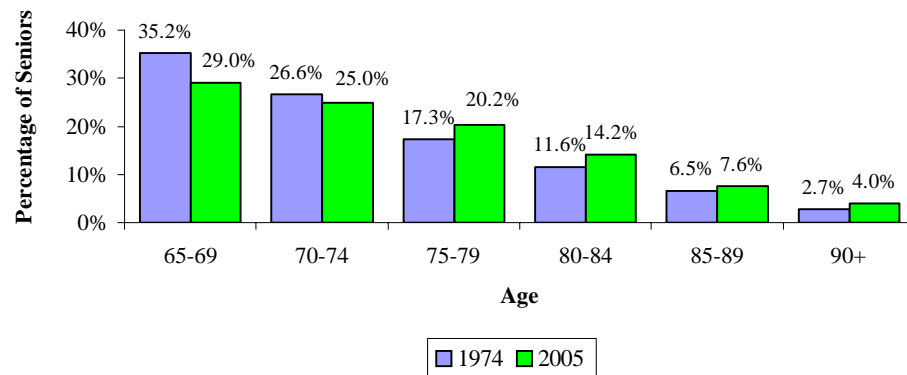


Source: Statistics Canada, *Annual Demographic Statistics 2005*

The Seniors Population is Aging

- As of 2005, approximately one-third of seniors were in the 65 to 69 age group, with 55 percent younger than 75 years of age.
- However, the number of seniors in older age categories has grown more rapidly than those in younger categories. In 2005, seniors aged 80 and over made up one-quarter of all Alberta seniors, up from 21 percent in 1974 (see Chart 2). This group is expected to more than double in the next 20 years

Chart 2
Seniors Population Still Has a Higher Percentage of Seniors in Younger Age Categories



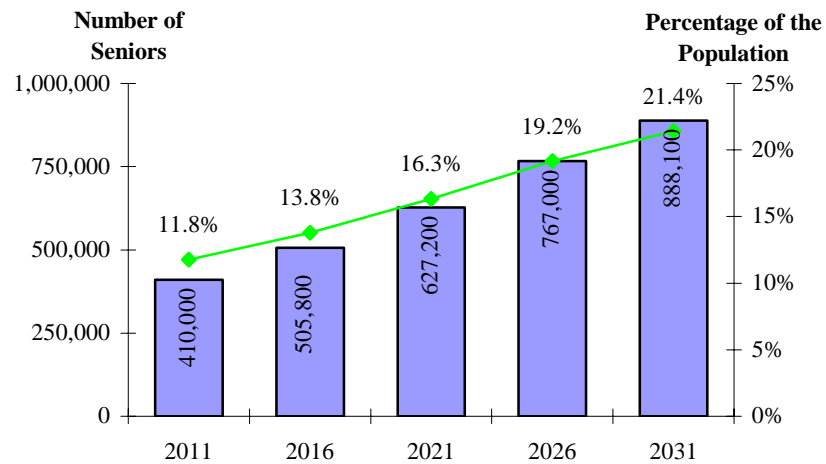
Source: Statistics Canada, *Annual Demographic Statistics 2005*

How Fast is Alberta Aging?

- Projections suggest that Alberta will remain one of the youngest provinces in the coming years. It is estimated that between 2011 and 2021, the number of seniors will increase from approximately 410,000 to 627,200. In that time, the percent of seniors in the population will increase from approximately 12 percent to approximately 16 percent of the total population. By 2031, it is projected that there will be more than 880,000 seniors in Alberta, or about one in five Albertans (see Chart 3).
- The aging of the population is expected to be fairly gradual until 2011. The rate of growth will then accelerate as baby boomers begin to turn 65.¹ This accelerated growth is expected to last until approximately 2030, when the last of the baby boomers become seniors. The aging population, however, will continue to characterize demographic trends in the decades following 2030.

¹ Albertans born between 1946 and 1966 are considered to be part of the baby boom generation.

Chart 3
Number and Percentage of Seniors in Alberta Will Continue to Increase



Source: Statistics Canada, *Population Projections for Canada, Provinces and Territories 2005 - 2031* (Scenario 3)

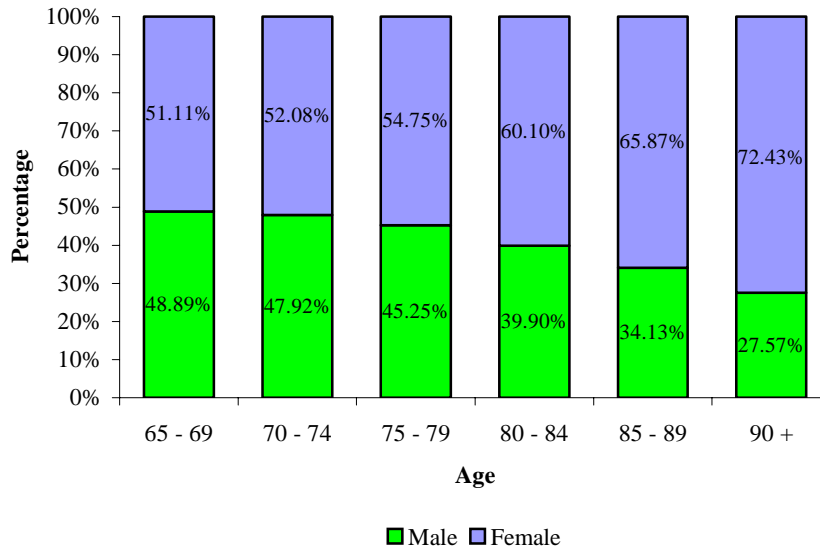
Gender

Gap Narrows, But There Are Still More Females Than Males

- In 2005, there were approximately 188,455 female seniors in Alberta, accounting for 56 percent of the seniors population and approximately 152,098 male seniors in Alberta, accounting for 44 percent of the seniors population.²
- According to Statistics Canada, the disparity in life expectancy between the sexes has been narrowing for the past two decades in both Canada and Alberta. The more rapid increase in life expectancy at birth for males will continue to reduce some of this disparity. However, female seniors will continue to outnumber male seniors in the future (see Chart 4).

² According to Statistics Canada, *Annual Demographic Statistics, 2005*.

Chart 4
Ratio of Females to Males Increases with Age



Source: Statistics Canada, *Annual Demographic Statistics, 2005*

Marital Status

Women More Likely to be Widowed Than Men

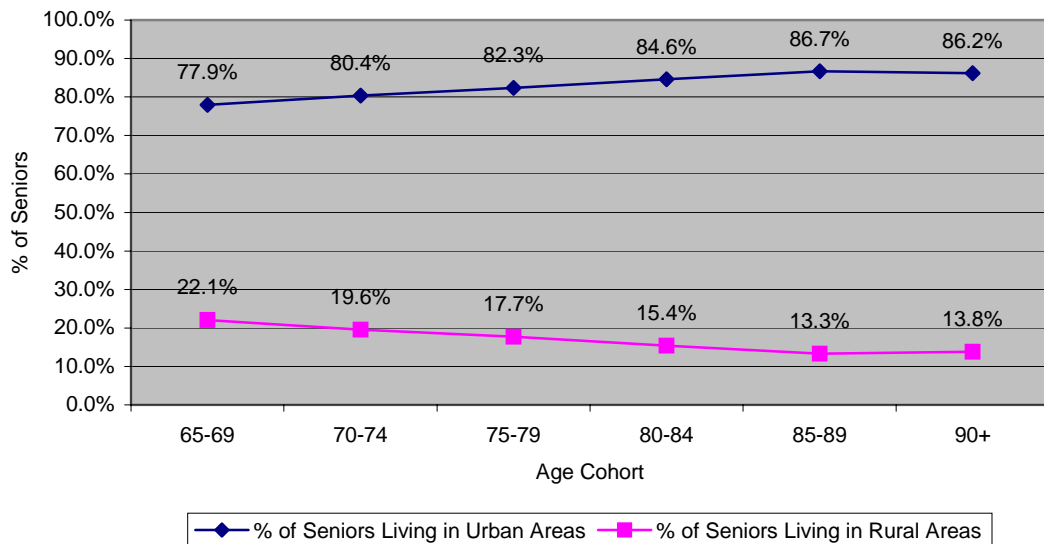
- In 2001, the majority of seniors (57 percent) were married, almost one third were widowed (29.6 percent) and the remainder were divorced (6.6 percent), separated (1.8 percent) or were never married (4.9 percent).
- Almost three-quarters of Alberta males aged 65 and older were married, and 12 percent were widowed.
- The picture for female seniors was dramatically different. An equal percentage of female seniors in Alberta were married (44 percent) and widowed (44 percent). Beyond the age of 80, the majority of senior women were widowed, and the likelihood of being widowed increased steadily with age.
- Only at 90 years or older were men as likely as women to be married or widowed.

Location of Residence

More Seniors in Urban Areas

- Overall, 81 percent of Alberta's seniors were located in urban areas in 2001.³
- In 2001, 60 percent of Alberta's seniors lived in the two Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) of Edmonton and Calgary.⁴ Seniors accounted for 11 percent of the population in the Edmonton CMA and 9 percent of the population in the Calgary CMA.
- A greater proportion of the urban seniors population was comprised of older seniors. In 2001, 86.2 percent of urban seniors were aged 90 years and older, compared to 13.8 percent of rural seniors (see Chart 5).
- The proportion of male seniors was greater in rural areas whereas female seniors made up the majority in urban areas. For instance, in 2001, 54 percent of seniors in rural areas were male. In urban areas, 44 percent of seniors were male.

Chart 5
A Higher Percentage of Older Seniors Live in Urban Areas



Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Canada Custom Tabulations

³ As defined by Statistics Canada, urban areas have a population of 1,000 or more and a population density of at least 400 people per square kilometre. Rural areas include all territory lying outside urban areas.

⁴ Statistics Canada defines a Census Metropolitan Area as being a very large urban area that is combined together with adjacent urban and rural areas and has an urban core population of at least 100,000 based on the previous Census.

- As a percentage of the total population, the Camrose (20 percent) and Wetaskiwin (18 percent) Census Agglomerations (CAs) had the highest percentage of seniors, followed by the Lethbridge (15 percent) and Medicine Hat (14 percent) CAs.⁵ CAs in Northern Alberta, such as Wood Buffalo, had the lowest percentage of seniors.
- The age distribution of seniors also varies by CA and CMA. For instance, in 2001, one-third of all Alberta seniors were between 65 to 69 years. In comparison, over 50 percent of the seniors in the Wood Buffalo CA were between 65 to 69 years old. The Lloydminster, Camrose and Wetaskiwin CAs had the highest percentage of 85 year olds, at approximately 12 percent, 11 percent and 10 percent respectively.

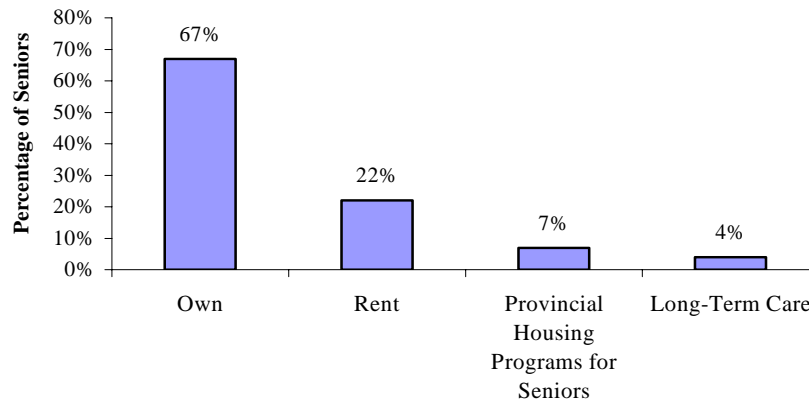
Housing

Most Seniors Live in Private Housing

- In 2001, approximately 67 percent of the entire seniors population lived in homes that they owned. An estimated 22 percent of seniors resided in rental accommodation and about 7 percent lived in provincial housing settings, including seniors lodges. Approximately 4 percent (13,000) of seniors lived in long-term care facilities (see Chart 6).
- The percentage of home ownership amongst seniors was higher than the Alberta population as a whole. Home ownership was linked to location, with a higher percentage of rural seniors being owners as compared to renters, while the opposite was true for urban seniors.
- Of seniors who owned their homes, almost 16 percent had a mortgage in 2001. The remaining 84 percent had no mortgage. In comparison, almost 60 percent of all Alberta homeowners had a mortgage. While seniors were more likely to be mortgage-free than other Albertans, the percentage of seniors with a mortgage increased from almost 12 percent in 1996, to 16 percent in 2001.

⁵ Statistics Canada defines a Census Agglomeration as an area that is combined with other municipalities that has an urban core of at least 10,000 people.

Chart 6
Estimated Distribution of Seniors by Type of Residence



Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Canada Custom Tabulations, Alberta Health and Wellness and Alberta Seniors updated to 2004

- The majority of senior households (65 percent) in private households lived in single-family detached houses, as did the Alberta population as a whole. However, seniors were more likely to live in a high-rise apartment building than non-seniors. One-fifth of senior households lived in an apartment; including multi-storied apartment buildings or a detached duplex apartment. The remaining senior households lived in a semi-detached house, a row house or a movable dwelling.
- Approximately 7 percent of seniors accessed provincial housing programs in 2004. This included almost 15,000 seniors in self-contained subsidized rental accommodations and over 9,400 seniors in the lodge and cottage programs.

Dwelling Value and Major Payments

- In 2001, senior homeowners believed that they would receive, on average, \$140,413, if their dwelling were to be sold. This was up from \$109,602 in 1996.
- The average major monthly payment for owner-occupied private non-farm, non-reserve seniors dwellings in 2001 was \$459.⁶ The gross rent of tenant occupied private non-farm, non-reserve senior dwellings was \$576 per month; more than \$100 higher than the average owner-occupied payment.⁷

⁶ Owner's major payments include payments for electricity, oil, gas, coal, wood or other fuels, water and other municipal services, monthly mortgage payments, property taxes and condominium fees.

⁷ Gross rent for tenant occupied dwellings includes payments for fuel, water and other municipal services, and monthly cash rent.

Dwelling Size and Age

Seniors Live in Smaller and Older Homes

- Census data from 2001 indicates that seniors have homes with fewer rooms as compared to younger people. As well, Alberta's seniors lived in homes that were generally older than housing in the province overall. For instance, 47 percent of Alberta's seniors lived in homes built before 1971, compared to 34 percent of the total population.

Need for Repair

Seniors Less Likely to Feel Need For Minor Repairs

- In 2001, approximately 70 percent of senior homeowners judged that their dwellings required only regular maintenance such as furnace cleaning or painting. The remaining seniors believed that their dwellings required minor repairs (23.2 percent) or major repairs (7.7 percent).⁸

Living Arrangements

Number of Senior Households Rises with Growth in the Number of Seniors

- According to the 2001 Census, there were 188,780 private households in Alberta in which the primary homeowner was aged 65 years or older.⁹ This is an increase of approximately 15 percent from 1996 and of almost 35 percent since 1991.

Household Size

As Age Increases, Household Size Decreases

- Almost all senior households consisted of one- or two-person households (90 percent), while 44 percent of all Alberta households were larger than that. In 2001, the average senior household was home to 1.7 people, compared to 2.6 in the average Alberta household.
- Household size declined with age. Among senior women, the decline occurred more rapidly in the younger age categories, stabilizing at 80 to 84 years. The decline was more gradual among senior men.
- A higher percentage (56.7 percent) of rural senior households were two-person households compared to urban senior households (46.6 percent).

⁸ Minor repairs include the repair of loose floor tiles, brick or shingles, defective steps, railing or siding. Major repairs include the repair of defective plumbing or electrical wiring, or structural repairs to walls, floors or ceilings.

⁹ The primary homeowner is the first person in the household identified as being the household maintainer. It is normally the person who contributes the greatest amount towards shelter expenses.

Household Family Status

- In 2001, the majority of senior households (55.4 percent) consisted of one-family households or non-family households (43.5 percent).¹⁰ The remaining senior households (1.2 percent) had two or more families occupying the same dwelling.
- The proportion of male one-family households remained virtually unchanged since 1996, whereas the proportion of female one-family households increased from 17.2 percent in 1996 to 22.6 percent in 2001.
- There were fewer non-family households in rural areas (34.4 percent) than in urban areas (45.6 percent).

Presence of Children

One-Tenth of Seniors Live With Children

- In 2001, approximately 13 percent of Alberta households headed by a senior had children living in their home.¹¹
- According to the 2001 Census, 3.2 percent of Alberta children aged 0 to 14 shared a home with at least one grandparent. Almost one percent of Alberta children lived with their grandparents, without the presence of parents.

¹⁰ According to Statistics Canada: **Family household** refers to a household that contains at least one census family, that is, a married couple with or without children, or a couple living common-law with or without children, or a lone parent living with one or more children (lone-parent family). **One-family households** refers to a single census family (with or without other non-family persons) that occupies a private dwelling. **Non-family household** refers to either one person living alone in a private dwelling or to a group of two or more people who share a private dwelling, but who do not constitute a census family.

¹¹ According to Statistics Canada, children refer to blood, step- or adopted sons and daughters, regardless of age or marital status and grandchildren in households where there are no parents present. Sons and daughters who are living with their spouse or common-law partner, or with one or more of their own children are not considered to be members of their parent's household, even if they are in the same household.

Income¹²

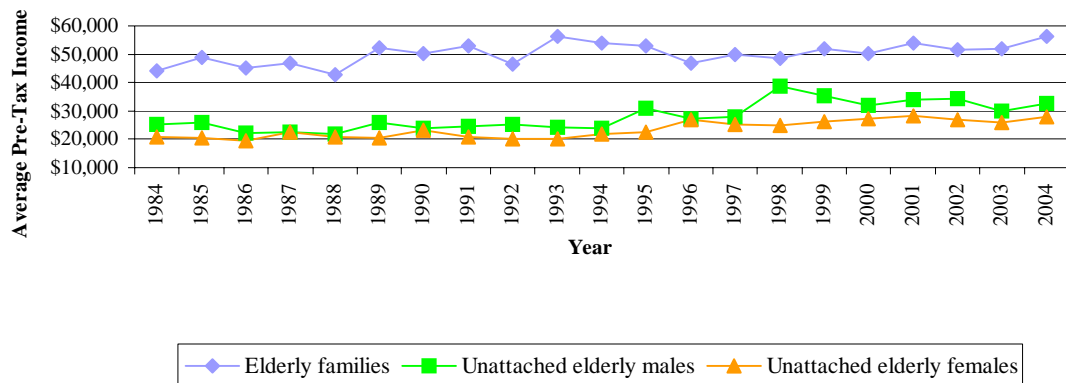
Household Income

2003 Average Income Up From 2002

- The average pre-tax income of senior families in Alberta was \$56,200 in 2004. This was up from \$52,000 in 2003 and from \$44,200 in 1984 (based on 2004 constant dollars).

Chart 7

Seniors' Average Pre-tax Income Up From Two Decades Ago (2004 Constant Dollars)



Source: Statistics Canada, *Income Trends in Canada 1983 – 2004*

Individual Income

- According to the 2001 Census, the average total income of seniors was \$26,336 in 2000. This was \$5,014 lower than the total average income for Alberta's population in general.
- In 2003, the average pre-tax income of unattached senior males was \$29,500. The comparable figure for females was \$25,500.¹³

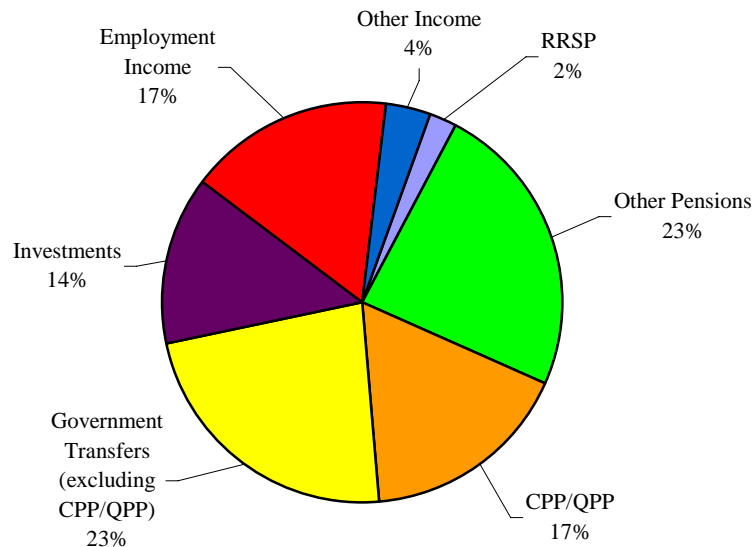
Sources of Income

- Alberta's seniors receive income from a variety of sources, including government transfers along with a number of non-government sources.

¹² This section includes recent information on income from Statistics Canada and Social Development Canada. The information presented on income comes from various years. Wherever possible, the most current information has been used.

¹³ Statistics Canada: *Average Total Income by Economic Family Types*

Chart 8
Alberta's Seniors Receive Income from a Variety of Sources (2004)¹⁴



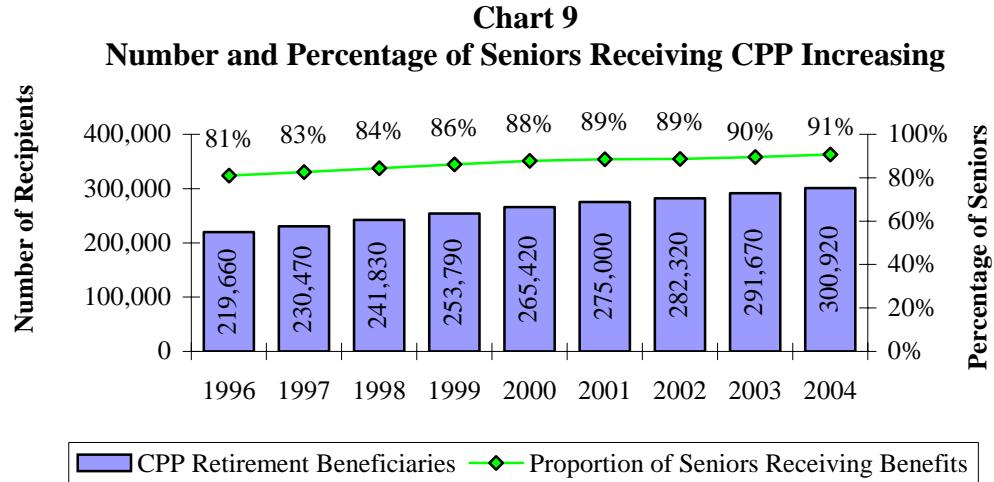
Source: Statistics Canada, Small Area and Administrative Data Division

Government Transfer Payments

Almost All Seniors Receive Government Transfers

- In 2004, almost all (99 percent) of Alberta seniors received some income from government transfer payments. Approximately 40 percent of Alberta seniors' average total income was composed of government transfers, which include Old Age Security (OAS), Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), social supports (including the Alberta Seniors Benefit), and Goods and Services Tax Credits.
- As of March 2005, 328,045 Alberta seniors received OAS benefits, averaging \$454 per person, each month.
- The proportion of Alberta seniors receiving GIS payments declined from 45 percent to 34 percent between 1986 and 2005. The average monthly amount received from GIS was \$338, as of March 2005.
- In 2004, 91 percent of Alberta seniors (300,920) received retirement benefits from the Canada Pension Plan (CPP). Of seniors receiving CPP, the average monthly amount received was \$496 in 2004. The percentage of seniors receiving CPP increased by 10 percent from 1996 to 2004.

¹⁴ Chart 8 represents the seniors population who received income in 2004.



Source: Statistics Canada, *Annual Demographic Statistics, 2004* and the Small Area and Administrative Data Division

Non-Government Sources of Income

Majority of Seniors' Income Comes From Non-Government Sources

- In 2004 approximately 60 percent of Alberta seniors' average total income came from non-government sources. The majority of non-government income was comprised of Canada Pension Plan payments, private pensions and employment earnings.
- Approximately 62 percent of Alberta seniors (206,960) had some form of investment income in 2004.¹⁵ Amongst those receiving investment income, the average annual amount received was approximately \$7,000.
- In 2004, almost 55 percent of Alberta seniors (182,080) received income from other pensions.¹⁶
- Approximately 25 percent of Alberta seniors (81,770) had some form of employment income. The average annual amount received was approximately \$21,468 in 2004. Of those seniors who were self employed, the average annual income from this source was \$5,265. For those seniors who had income from wages, salaries and commission, the average annual income was \$31,155 from these sources.
- In 2004, 25 percent of Alberta seniors (81,630) received "other income" and the average annual amount received from this source was \$4,737.¹⁷

¹⁵ Investment income includes interest income and dividend income.

¹⁶ Other pensions include pension benefits (superannuation and private pensions) other than Old Age Security and Canada/Quebec Pension Plan benefits.

¹⁷ As defined by Statistics Canada, "other income" includes net rental income, alimony, income from a limited partnership, retiring allowances, scholarships, amounts received through a supplementary unemployment benefit plan, payments from income-averaging annuity contracts, as well as all other taxable income not included elsewhere.

- In 2004, 10 percent of Alberta seniors (33,360) received income from Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSPs). These individuals received an average annual amount of \$6,673 from these sources in 2004.

Expenditures¹⁸

Spending Patterns Unique

- In 2005, Alberta seniors' spending patterns differed from those of the overall Alberta population. According to Statistics Canada, senior households' average total expenditure was \$40,956 compared to \$82,689 for Albertans under 65.
- Approximately 76 percent (\$30,954) of senior households' average total expenditure went towards consumption expenditures compared to 70 percent (\$57,691) for other Albertans.¹⁹
- Senior households' largest expense was shelter, accounting for 21 percent of overall total expenditures. In comparison, personal taxes were the largest expense for those under 65, accounting for approximately 22 percent of total expenditures. Taxes were the second largest expense for seniors, comprising approximately 14 percent of overall spending.
- In 2005, 32 percent of senior households reported maintenance and repair expenditures on dwellings that were owned, compared to 45 percent of non-senior households. The average expenditure for repairs and maintenance per senior household was \$355 whereas non-senior households' average expenditure was \$488.
- In 2005, seniors spent an average of \$1,733 per person on health care, which included health care supplies, medicinal and pharmaceutical products, eye-care goods and services, and health insurance premiums.²⁰ This was approximately \$487 less per person than the amount spent by non-seniors.
- Seniors spent considerably less on recreation than Albertans under 65 in 2005. Seniors spent an average of \$2,416 per person on recreation, compared to \$5,658 for non-seniors.

¹⁸ Source: Statistics Canada, *Survey of Household Spending, 2005*

¹⁹ Consumption expenditures include: Food, shelter, household operation, household furnishings and equipment, clothing, transportation, health care, personal care, recreation, reading materials and other printed matter, education, tobacco products and alcoholic beverages, games of chance, and miscellaneous expenditures.

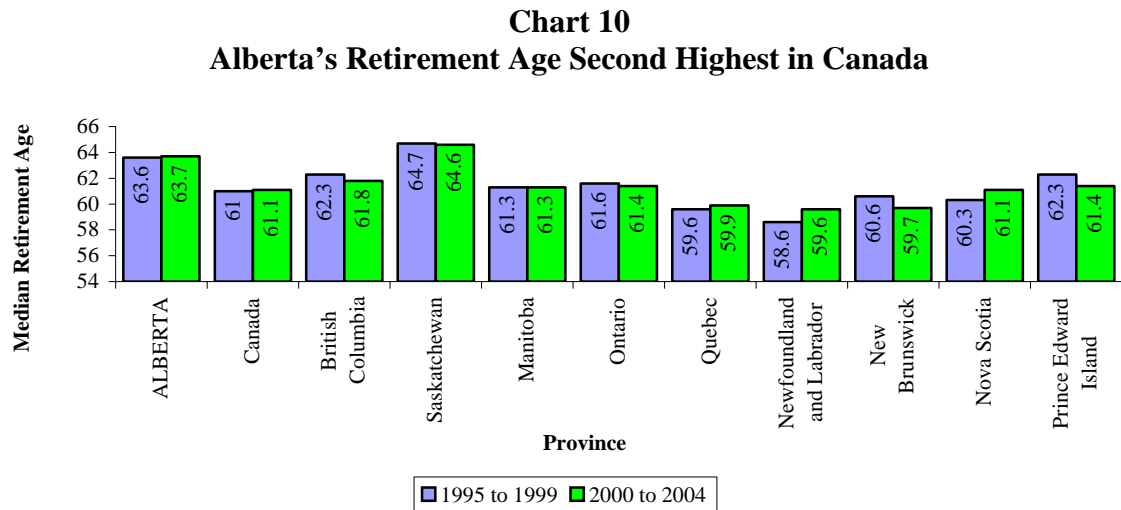
²⁰ As of October 1, 2004 all seniors, regardless of income, no longer have to pay Alberta Health Care Insurance Premiums.

Labour Force Characteristics

Retirement Age and Labour Force Participation

Retirement Age Increased in Last Decade

- The median retirement age in Alberta increased from 63.6 years in the 1995 to 1999 period, to 63.7 years in the 2000 to 2004 period.
- Alberta had the second highest median retirement age in the 2000 to 2004 period, behind Saskatchewan (see Chart 10).



Source: Statistics Canada, *Perspectives on Labour and Income*,
Fact-Sheet on Retirement, May 2006

Alberta Seniors More Active in the Labour Force Than Canadian Seniors

- In 2003, there were 33,800 seniors in the Alberta labour force.²¹ Approximately 33,200 of these seniors were employed, while the remaining 600 were actively seeking work.
- Workers aged 65 and older accounted for 2 percent of the total provincial workforce.

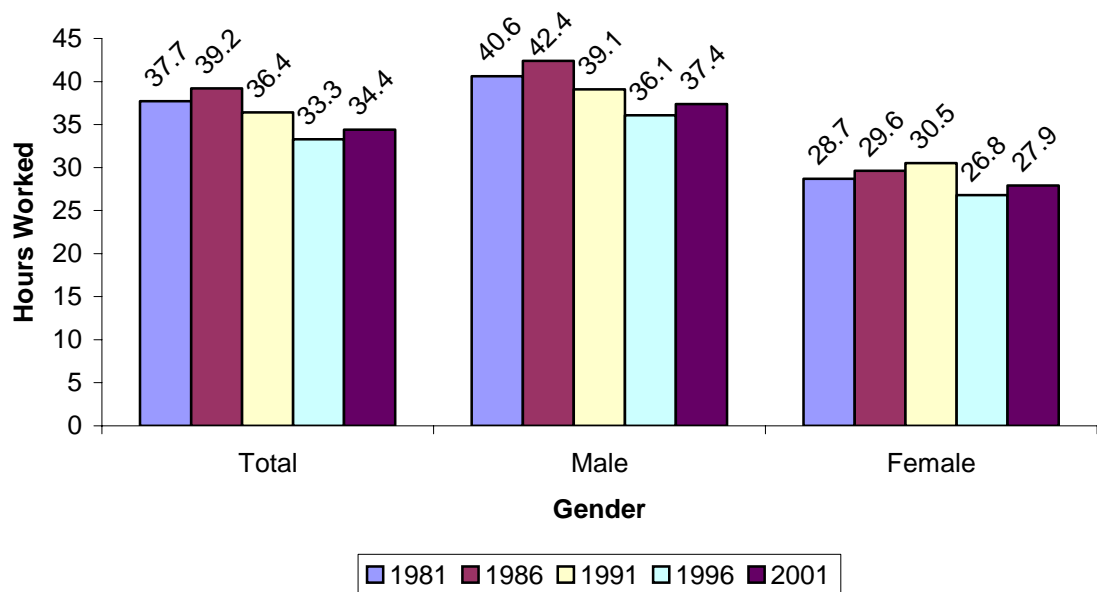
²¹ Labour force participants are those individuals who are employed and those who are actively seeking work.

- In 2003, Alberta’s seniors were more active in the labour force compared to seniors in Canada, as a whole. Senior males were more likely than their female counterparts to be part of the workforce; 17.7 percent of male seniors compared to 5.9 percent of female seniors were in the workforce in 2003.

Employed Seniors More Likely to Work Part-Time, From Home and be Self-Employed

- In Alberta, approximately 58 percent of employed seniors worked full-time in 2003.
- As with many other age groups, female seniors were more likely to work part-time than men. While 62 percent of Alberta female seniors in the labour force worked part-time, only 32 percent of male seniors did.
- Employed Alberta seniors worked, on average, 34.4 hours in the week prior to the Census. It appears that the average number of hours worked by seniors has decreased by 3.3 hours from 1981 to 2001.

Chart 11
Overall Decline in Average Hours Worked by Seniors From 1981 to 2001



Source: Statistics Canada, 2001, 1996, 1991 and 1981 Census Data

- In 2001, male seniors worked, on average, over ten hours more per week than females (37.4 hours versus 27.9 hours) in the week prior to the Census. While the average hours worked has declined for male seniors, it appears to have remained stable for female seniors (see Chart 11).

- In 2001, more Alberta seniors worked from their homes than the general population. Almost half (49 percent) of employed seniors worked from home compared to only 10 percent of Alberta's overall employed population.
- Of the seniors participating in the labour force, 46 percent of them were employees. The remaining senior workers were either self-employed (51.4 percent) or were unpaid family workers (2.6 percent).²²
- A higher percentage of female seniors were employees or unpaid family workers. Employed male seniors are more likely to be self-employed than females.
- From 1981 to 2001, the percentage of senior employees in the labour force decreased from 59.2 percent to 46 percent, while the percentage of self-employed seniors has gone in the opposite direction, increasing from 39 percent to 51.4 percent.
- In 2001, 31.6 percent of rural seniors participated in the labour force, while the participation rate for urban seniors was 10.2 percent.
- Urban senior workers were more likely to be employees, while rural employed seniors were almost twice as likely to be self-employed. The percentage of rural seniors who were unpaid family workers was also three times higher than that of urban seniors.

One-quarter of Seniors in Labour Force Work in Farming Industry

- Amongst seniors in the workforce, 26 percent worked as farmers or farm managers in 2001. In contrast, only 3 percent of the entire Alberta labour force worked in this industry.
- A higher percentage of female seniors worked in business, finance and administration, health, and sales and service occupations as compared to male seniors. A higher percentage of male seniors worked in primary industry, trades and transportation and management.

Unpaid Housework

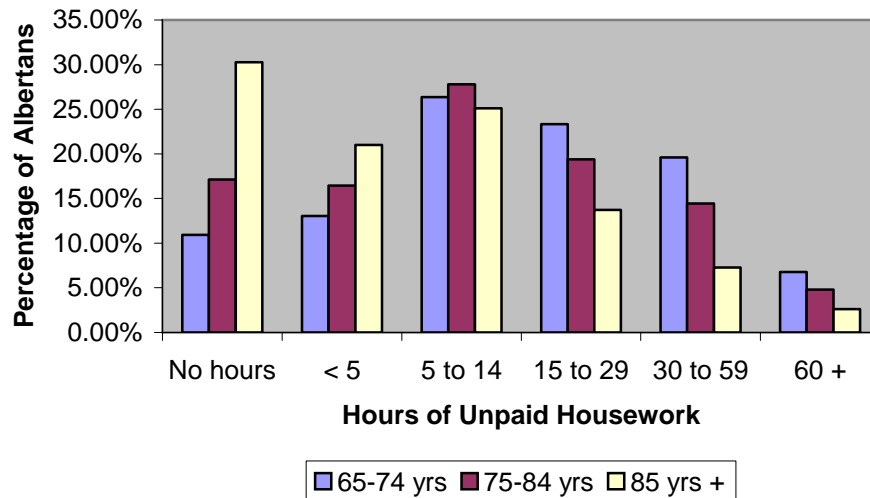
Of All Seniors, Those Aged 65 to 69 Spend Most Time Doing Unpaid Housework

- Overall, 85.6 percent of seniors spent some time doing housework in the week prior to the 2001 Census.
- The number of hours of unpaid housework varied by age, gender, location and marital status:
 - Younger seniors, especially those aged 65 to 74, contributed a significant number of hours to housework.

²² Unpaid family workers are persons who worked without regular money wages for a relative who is a member of the same household. Unpaid family members mainly contribute to the operation of a business, farm or professional practice, owned or operated by the relative.

- A higher percentage of rural seniors spent 30 hours or more on housework in a week.
- Female seniors were more likely to spend a greater amount of time doing housework.

Chart 12
Hours of Unpaid Housework Vary Significantly by Age



Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census Custom Tabulations

Aboriginal Seniors

Aboriginal Seniors Younger Than General Seniors Population

- As of the 2001 Census, there were 5,135 Aboriginal seniors in Alberta, comprising less than two percent of the seniors population.²³ This represents a 47 percent increase over 1996.²⁴
- Female Aboriginal seniors outnumbered males by 115 to 100 in 2001. As with Alberta's seniors in general, females outnumbered males in every age category, except in the oldest age group, 90 and older.
- In 2001, 47.2 percent of Aboriginal seniors lived in rural areas and 52.8 percent lived in urban areas. A higher percentage of Aboriginal seniors in older age groups lived in rural areas.

²³ As in previous Censuses, enumeration of Indian Reserves and Indian Settlements was incomplete in 2001. Caution should be exercised in analyzing trends for Aboriginal peoples based on previous Census data. Over time, patterns in Aboriginal self-identification have changed. In recent years, a growing number of people who had not previously identified with an Aboriginal group are now doing so. Changes in Aboriginal participation in the Census over time also result in comparability issues.

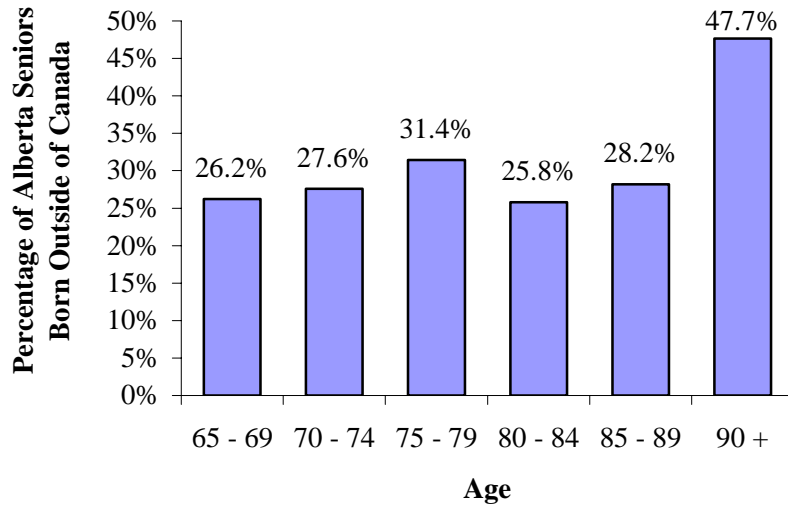
²⁴ Trend analysis for Aboriginal peoples is difficult, as enumeration of Indian Reserves and Indian Settlements was incomplete in 1996 and 2001.

Seniors Born Outside of Canada

Seniors More Likely to Have Immigrated to Canada Than Other Albertans

- Findings from the 2001 Census indicate that Alberta's seniors were more likely to have been born outside of Canada than the Alberta population in general. This was particularly true among those aged 90 and over.
- In 2001, 48 percent of seniors aged 90 years and over were born outside of Canada. The percentage born outside of the country varied between one-quarter and one-third, almost twice as high as the 15 percent found in the total Alberta population (see Chart 13).

Chart 13
Seniors 90 Years and Over More Likely to be Born Outside of Canada



Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Canada Custom Tabulations

- Alberta seniors born outside of Canada came from many parts of the world. The majority were from continental Europe (48 percent); Asia, excluding India (19 percent); and the United Kingdom (18 percent).
- In 2001, the percentage of seniors born outside Canada and residing in urban areas was almost twice that of rural areas (30.9 percent versus 16.1 percent). The Calgary and Edmonton areas had the highest percentage of seniors born outside of Canada, at 37.2 percent for Calgary and 33.3 percent for Edmonton.

Migration

Mobility within the province

- The majority of Alberta seniors had not moved in the year prior to the 2001 Census (94.1 percent).
- Of the seniors who moved in the year prior, or in the five-year period prior to the 2001 Census, over half (58 percent), moved within their census subdivision.²⁵

Interprovincial Migration and Immigration

Alberta Continues to Attract Seniors From Other Provinces

- More than 2,200 seniors moved to Alberta from another province in the year prior to the 2001 Census.
- From July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005, 619 more seniors moved into Alberta than moved out. Among provinces and territories, Alberta had the second highest number of senior interprovincial net migrants, after British Columbia.
- In every year since 1984, more seniors moved into Alberta from other parts of Canada than moved out. Since 1984, Alberta has averaged a net interprovincial migration of 715 seniors per year.
- About 830 seniors moved to Alberta from another country in the year prior to the 2001 Census.

Language

Seniors More Likely to Speak Non-official Languages at Home Than Other Albertans

- According to 2001 Census data, the mother tongue of almost one-third (30.8 percent) of Alberta seniors was neither English nor French. English was the mother tongue for 64.7 percent of seniors and French was the mother tongue for 2.9 percent of seniors.
- The vast majority of seniors were able to converse in English (96 percent). Seniors were also more likely than Albertans of other ages to speak a non-official language at home. Seniors over 85 were most likely to speak a non-official language.

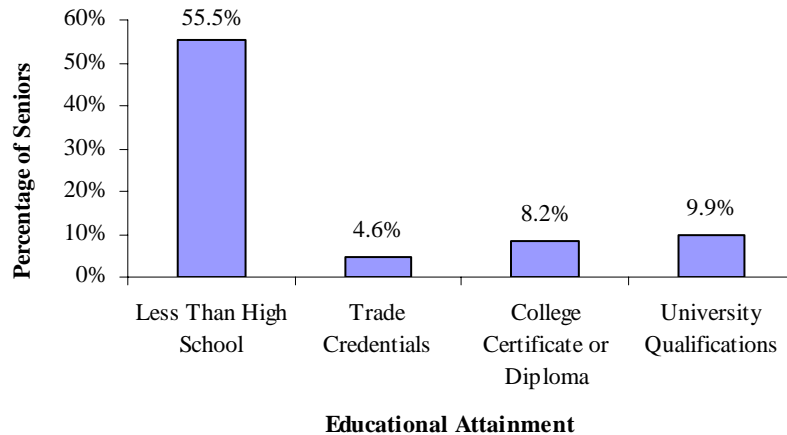
²⁵ A census subdivision is the general term used by Statistics Canada for municipalities (as defined by provincial legislation) or areas treated as municipal equivalents for statistical purposes such as Indian reserves.

Education

Educational Attainment Higher Among Males and Younger Seniors

- In 2001, just over half of seniors had less than a high school education, with 24 percent having less than a grade nine education. Almost 5 percent of seniors had trade credentials, 8.2 percent had a college certificate or diploma and 9.9 percent had university qualifications. In all, 25.8 percent of seniors had qualifications beyond high school.

Chart 14
Most Alberta Seniors Have Less Than High School Education



Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census Custom Tabulations

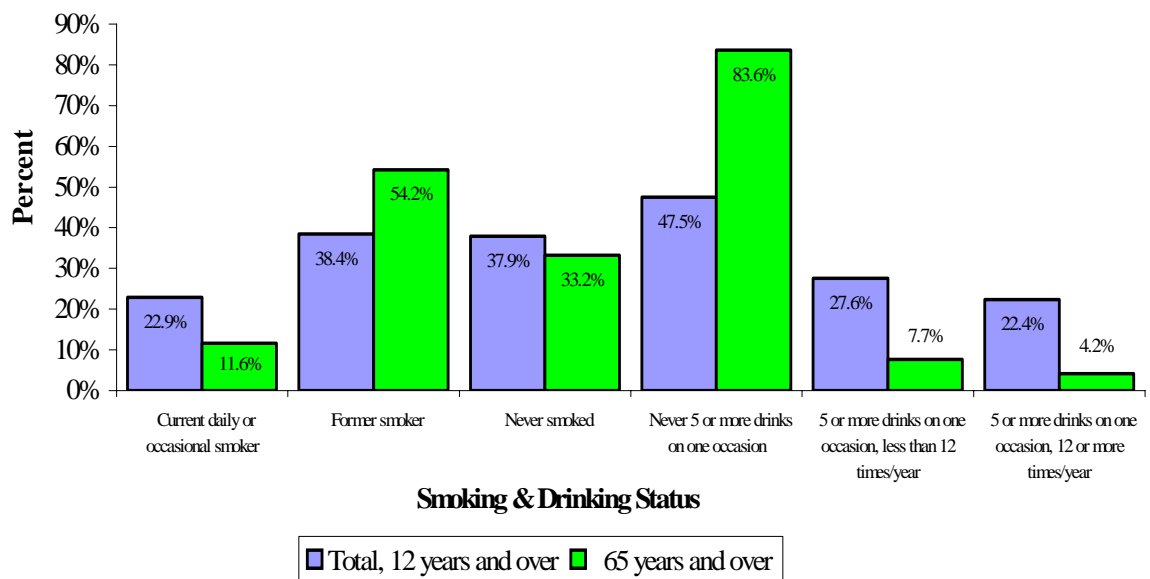
- Educational outcome varied by gender. For instance, 28.8 percent of male seniors had qualifications beyond high school compared to 23.3 percent of female seniors. Male seniors were over three times more likely to have trade credentials than females (7.5 percent of males versus 2.2 percent of females). Almost 12 percent of males had university qualifications compared to 8.2 percent of females. However, females were almost twice as likely to have a college certificate or diploma.
- In general, the levels of educational attainment were lowest among seniors aged 90 and older and highest among seniors aged 65 to 69.
- The level of educational attainment of Alberta seniors is increasing. For instance, in 1976, over 50 percent (56.4 percent) of seniors had less than a grade nine education and only 2.3 percent of seniors acquired a university degree or higher. In 2001, the number of seniors who acquired less than grade nine dropped to 24.4 percent and the number of seniors with a university degree more than tripled to 7.6 percent.
- From September 2000 to May 2001, less than one percent of seniors attended school full or part time. Only 360 seniors attended school full time, while 1,185 seniors attended part time.

Health

Seniors Reported Good Health Despite Increased Risk of Some Health Conditions

- A survey conducted in 2004 indicates that 78 percent of Alberta seniors reported that they enjoyed excellent, very good, or good health.²⁶
- According to Statistics Canada’s *Canadian Community Health Survey, 2003*:
 - smoking and drinking are less common among seniors. Approximately 12 percent of seniors considered themselves daily or occasional smokers, compared to 23 percent of the total provincial population. In 2003, 84 percent of seniors compared to 48 percent of Albertans (over 12 years) stated that they never drink five or more drinks on one occasion.
 - 39 percent of Alberta seniors reported being physically active or moderately active, and 53 percent reported being inactive. Four out of ten senior men and 37 percent of senior women reported that they were physically active.
 - 28 percent of surveyed Albertans over the age of 65 reported experiencing no stress, as compared to 10 percent of all adult Albertans in 2003.
 - seniors in Alberta, especially senior men, were more likely than the general population to report that they have low social support. The percentage of Alberta seniors reporting low social support increased from 1.4 percent in 1996 to 4.6 percent in 2000.

Chart 15
Smoking and Drinking Less Common Among Seniors



Source: Statistics Canada, *Canadian Community Health Survey, 2003*

²⁶ Source: *The 2004 Public Survey About Health and the Health System in Alberta*, Alberta Health and Wellness.

- In 2001, 44 percent of Alberta seniors reported they had a disability, that is, their everyday activities were limited because of a health-related condition or problem. Of the seniors who reported a disability, 34 percent reported that their disability was severe or very severe. Seniors' disabilities most commonly affected their mobility (32 percent), agility (29 percent), pain (28 percent) and hearing (18 percent).²⁷ In comparison, only 11 percent of 15 to 64 year old Albertans reported that they had a disability.

Community Contributions

Seniors are Involved in Their Communities

- According to Statistics Canada, 34 percent of Alberta's seniors participated in some form of volunteer work in 2004. This was slightly higher than the national average for seniors of 32 percent.²⁸
- Although fewer Alberta seniors volunteered compared to other Albertans (34 percent of seniors versus 49 percent of Alberta residents), seniors contributed more hours on average (254 hours per year versus 166 hours per year).²⁹
- In 2004, 83 percent of Alberta seniors made financial donations to charities, donating an average annual amount of \$563.³⁰ This is slightly less than the national average for Canadian seniors (87 percent) donating an annual average of \$572.

Religion

- In 2001, more than half of Alberta's seniors were Protestant (55 percent), compared to 39 percent of Albertans overall. Catholicism comprised the second most common religion for seniors (25 percent), followed by Christian Orthodox (3 percent).
- Seniors were less likely to state that they have no religious affiliation than Albertans in general (12 percent versus 24 percent).

²⁷ Source: Statistics Canada, *A Profile of Disability in Canada, 2001*

²⁸ Source: Statistics Canada, *Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, 2004*

²⁹ Sample size limitations affect the reliability of this estimate.

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