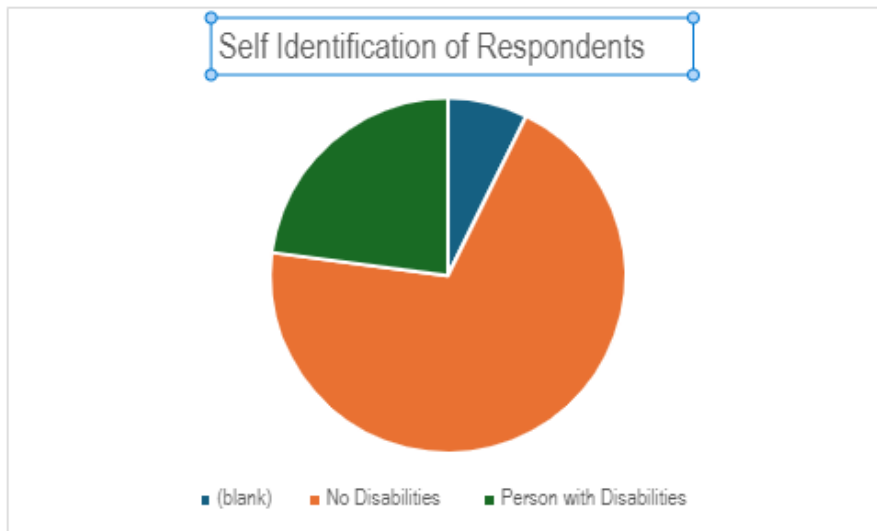


# SLO Master Plan on Aging

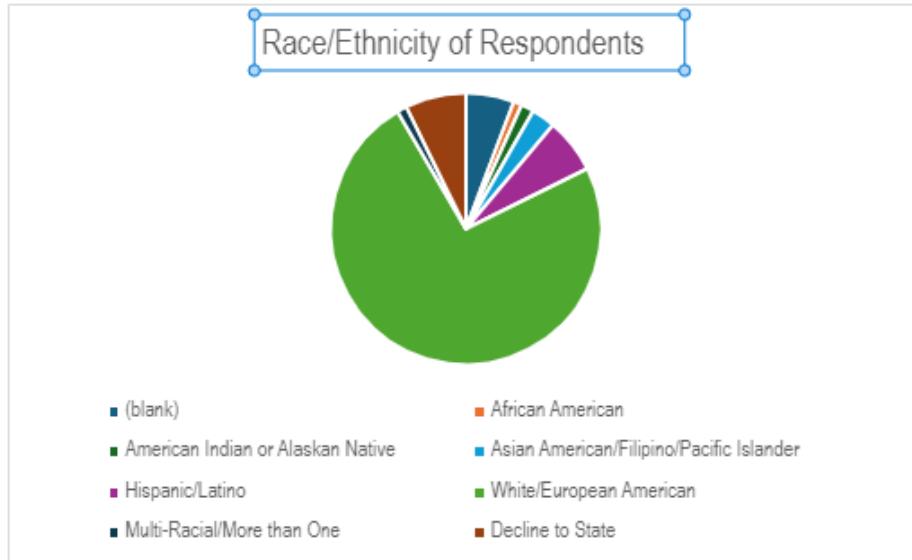
## Summary of Older Adult and People with Disabilities Survey (N=593)

### Respondent Characteristics

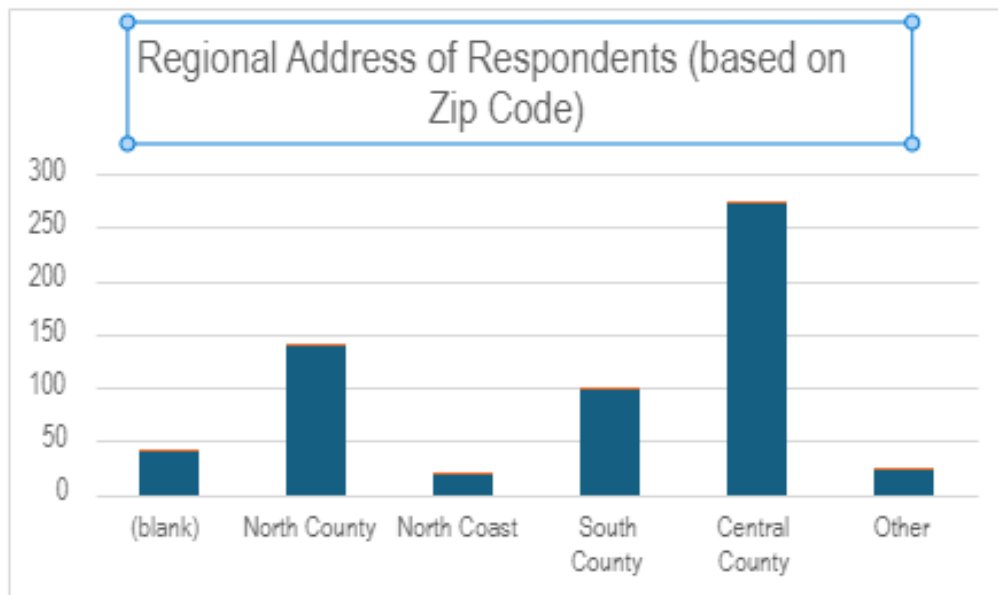
The majority of respondents (70%) identified as only Older Adults. An additional 23% identified as a person with Disabilities. A total of 16% identified as both, with 7% leaving this question blank. It is interesting to note that males were over-represented (7% more) among the respondents who identified as Individuals with Disabilities.



The vast majority (74%) respondents were White, followed by Hispanic/Latino (7%), Asian/Filipino/Pacific Islander (3%), and Black/African American (1%). Most (68%) were Female, with 23% identifying as Male.



In terms of regional representation, respondents' zip codes indicated that they were most likely to live in the Central part of the County (46%), followed by North County (24%), South County (17%), and North Coast (3%). A small percentage (4%) checked "Other" and 7% left this item blank.



## Physical Health

Respondents tended to be satisfied with access to healthcare. Older adults and people with disabilities were most positive and satisfied (% reporting "Agree" or "Strongly Agree") with the care from primary health care (82%) and specialized healthcare (65%). Respondents were mostly satisfied (75%) with access to prescriptions and medications. The majority (71%) of respondents also said that they understood their healthcare insurance and benefits coverage.

Disabled respondents were more satisfied with access to specialized care, but more negative about access to prescriptions and understanding of health insurance coverage.

Respondents were less satisfied (59%) with the extent to which medical professionals understood the needs of older adults and people with disabilities. The lowest satisfaction was comfort meeting with these health professionals by phone or computer (i.e., telehealth). Interestingly, respondents from the Central region were the least comfortable with telehealth approaches.

## **Housing**

Most respondents were satisfied with their current housing/living situation. Respondents were most satisfied with the safety (83%) and their degree of independence within their living situation (82%). Housing affordability also ranked high (76%) among respondents.

Overall, survey responses suggest a desire and readiness to age in place. Less than half (39%) of respondents said that they were considering moving to accommodate age and/or disability needs in the next five years. Similarly, only 36% said that they wanted to modify their residence to accommodate age and/or disability needs.

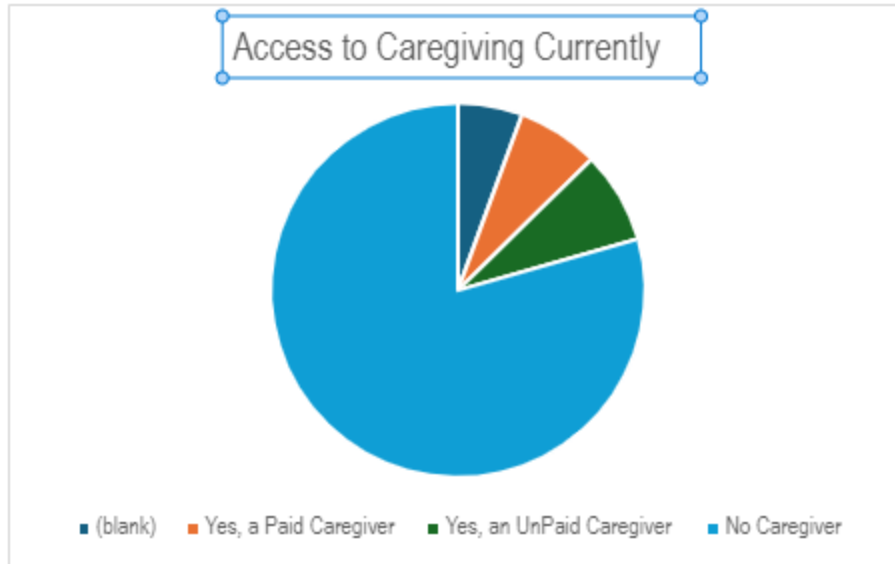
However, there were clear differences based on disability. Individuals with disabilities were less likely to be satisfied with housing affordability, safety, or independent living compared to older adults without disabilities. They were also more likely to express a need for moving to better accommodate their age and/or disability within the next five years.

Non-White respondents were also less likely to express satisfaction with housing affordability, safety, or independent living compared to White survey respondents. In addition, North County respondents were the least satisfied with housing affordability, and the most likely to say that they contemplated a move in the next five years to better accommodate age and/or disability needs.

## **Caregiving**

Survey data show relatively high levels of concern and anxiety about caregiving, along with a lack of knowledge and awareness about caregiving resources. Approximately two-thirds (67%) of respondents were worried about finding quality, affordable care as they grow older. At the same time, only 33% knew about program and organizations that link people to caregivers. Even fewer (21%) knew about the resources available for caregivers, whether paid or unpaid. Disabled and non-White respondents were more likely to know about these caregiving resources compared to non-Disabled and White respondents, respectively.

It is important to note that the vast majority (79%) of respondents did not have a caregiver currently. Of those with a caregiver, 8% had an unpaid (typically a spouse, family member, or friend) caregiver. Only 7% reported a paid caregiver, but this percentage rose to 18% among individuals with disabilities. Paid caregiving was also more likely in the Central region and among non-White respondents.



At present, the survey data suggest that respondents are most likely (61%) to express concern about home cleaning, repair, and maintenance as aspects of caregiving they want or need. More than half (52%) agreed that they worry about declining mental abilities (e.g., dementia, Alzheimer's, and memory loss). Nearly half (47%) agreed that they worry about meeting personal care (e.g., eating, bathing, dressing, etc.) needs as they age.

Disabled respondents expressed higher levels of concern about home cleaning, repair, and maintenance, as well as more concerns about meeting personal care needs.

### **Well-Being and Social Connectivity**

Survey respondents were most likely (72% agreed or strongly agreed) to say that they had someone to call if they felt depressed, anxious, or overwhelmed. Among Disabled respondents, this percentage dipped to 61%.

Similarly, more than half (61%) reported that they regularly go to places that provide social interactions. Disabled respondents reported lower levels of social interactivity (50% compared to 67% among non-Disabled respondents).

Roughly 15% of respondents overall expressed low levels of Social Connection, manifest as lack of companionship (15%), feeling left out (13%), and feeling isolated from others (14%). Among Disabled respondents, these percentages were considerably higher -- 23%, 20%, and 19%.

It is interesting to note that most (78%) survey respondents said that they had transportation and typically drive themselves, with an additional 24% reliant on family or friends to drive them. A small (15%) reported walking or biking to social events and activities, and 16% relied on public transportation (inclusive of buses, vans, and shuttles). Users of public transportation were more likely to be Disabled, non-White, and live in the South region of the County.

Survey data suggest room for improvement on destigmatizing and publicizing behavioral health resources in the County. Approximately half (53%) said that they knew where to go for therapy or mental health support if they needed it (24% disagreed and 5% did not know). Respondents in the South region were least likely to know where to get therapy or other mental health assistance. Similarly, less than half (46%) knew about wellness, self-care, or support groups in their community (18% disagreed and 8% did not know).

Awareness of resources and support was lowest for Substance Use, a rising issue among older adults. Only 39% said that they knew who/where to call about alcohol or drug misuse (26% disagreed and 12% did not know). Awareness was lowest among respondents residing in North County.

### **Most Important Services and Supports**

When asked which services and supports were most important, survey respondents were most likely to cite:

- Access to physical activity and fitness programs and classes (50%)
  - Highest in the South region at 56%
- Healthy meals and food (41%)
  - 52% among Disabled respondents
  - 51% among non-White respondents
- Help with legal issues (34%)
  - Highest in the North County region at 41%
- Help understanding health insurance and benefits (32%)
  - 41% among non-White respondents
  - Highest in the North County region at 39%
- Transportation - Help getting to and from appointment and activities (32%)
  - 45% among Disabled respondents
  - 45% among non-White respondents
- Technology - Help using a computer or phone (28%)
  - Highest in the Central Region at 34%
- Help getting financial assistance and benefits (26%)
  - 40% among Disabled respondents
- Help understanding and managing finances (18%)
  - 28% among non-White respondents

In sum, respondents were most interested in improving their physical health (food and physical activity), as well as assistance navigating the different systems (legal, health insurance, transportation) that provide information, resources and services to older adults and people with disabilities. More than one-in-four (28%) expressed a desire for help with using technology, presumably to access information and navigate these different services and systems.