

SENIORS AND INCOMES

Seniors' incomes have risen faster than the cost of living since 2006, but there has been a recent rise in poverty rates and food bank use. The proportion of seniors who are participating in the labour force has doubled since 2001.

Median incomes: In 2016, the median individual income for seniors in Hamilton was \$29,780, lower than the median for all Hamiltonians (\$33,010). Median incomes fell as people got older: \$31,606 for people 65-74, \$27,523 for people 75-84, and \$26,940 for people age 85+. Since 2006, median incomes for seniors have increased 30%, while the cost of living has increased 18% over the same time.

Number of seniors living in low income: In Hamilton in 2015, 11.6% of seniors lived in households that were below the Low Income Measure, up from 8.3% in 2010. Hamilton's rate was similar to the provincial average (12%), and lower than the national (14.5%) average. Senior women in Hamilton

were significantly more likely to live in poverty than senior men: 13.8% compared to 9.1%.

The percentage of seniors living below the Low Income Measure varied widely across neighbourhoods: several neighbourhoods had poverty rates above 48% (with one neighbourhood at 66.1%), while several had rates below 5%.

Data from Greater Hamilton Food Share revealed a 20% increase in seniors accessing a food bank in the last year. In 2018, seniors made up 4.6% of all visits to a food bank, up from 3.8% in 2017.

Labour force participation rates for seniors: In Hamilton in 2016, just over 13% of seniors reported participating in the labour force, nearly double the 6.7% from 2001. There was a similar increase provincially: 15% in 2016 up from 13.6% in 2011 and 11% in 2006.



Vital Signs®

A REFLECTION OF HAMILTON

SENIORS IN HAMILTON

A VITAL SIGNS UPDATE • SPRING 2019



Hamilton's Vital Signs checks the pulse of our city. Under the guidance of a panel of community experts, it curates existing data from key areas of community life into research you can read. Its goal is to provide an insight into Hamilton's overall vitality and to identify significant trends that matter to all of us.

This update to our 2018 report focuses on Hamiltonians aged 65 and over: their diversity, health, housing and income. Where possible, we compare changes over time, where we stand relative to provincial and national averages, differences between genders and how seniors in different neighbourhoods fare relative to each other.

Vital Signs is intended to stimulate awareness, spark conversation and spur action. We encourage you to share this report widely and to learn more by visiting hamiltonvitalsigns.ca, where you'll find expanded information about seniors, links to the original research and our full (and continually expanding) Vital Signs report, which covers a range of issues, including arts, education, environment and transportation.

About Hamilton Community Foundation

Hamilton Community Foundation has been working to drive positive change since 1954. We do this by:

- Helping people give in a way that has meaning to them and impact in the community
- Supporting all aspects of community life through grants and financing to a wide range of charities
- Bringing people, ideas and resources together to address priority issues that affect Hamiltonians

We would love to hear what you think about Vital Signs. Please drop us an e-mail: VitalSigns@hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca

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SENIORS IN HAMILTON



The number of seniors (aged 65 and over) has risen dramatically over the past decade. The number of seniors ages 85 and over has risen at an even higher rate, with men 85 and over being the fastest growing group of seniors.

As illustrated in the table below, in 2016, women made up 56% of seniors, and nearly two-thirds of those who were 85 and over. Men 85 and over were the fastest growing group of seniors between 2006 and 2016, increasing by over 70%.

City of Hamilton, Number of People, Ages 65+, 85+, by Gender, 2006–2016

		2016	2006	% increase, 2006-2016
65+	Total	92,910	75,395	23%
	Male	41,105	32,205	28%
	Female	51,805	43,190	20%
85+	Total	13,930	8,975	55%
	Male	4,815	2,820	71%
	Female	9,115	6,155	48%



SENIORS AND HEALTH



Hamilton seniors are similar to provincial averages in many areas of health, but trends show variation by neighbourhood. Similar to the general population, obesity is trending up.

Perceived health and mental health: According to the Canadian Community Health Survey 2015-2016, 44.3% of Hamilton seniors reported having very good or excellent health, which is similar to the provincial seniors average (46.5%), but lower than the rate for Hamiltonians of all ages (57.6%). The rate for Hamilton seniors is relatively unchanged since 2007-2008 (42.5%).

Just over two-thirds (67.8%) of Hamilton seniors reported very good or excellent mental health in 2015-2016, which is similar to the Ontario average (69.9%), as well as Hamiltonians of all ages (70%). In 2007-2008, the rate for Hamilton seniors was similar at 69%.

Physical activity and obesity: In 2015-2016, 40% of Hamilton seniors reported being active for 150 minutes per week, similar to the provincial seniors average of 41%, but lower than Hamiltonians of all ages (60%).

Obesity among Hamilton seniors has been trending up over the past decade: increasing to 32% in 2015-2016 from 22% in 2007-2008. The Hamilton seniors obesity rate is slightly higher than the 27.7% provincial average for seniors.

Seniors with a primary health care provider: In 2015-2016, 97.3% of Hamilton seniors reported having a regular health care provider, higher than the provincial seniors' average of 93.1%, and Hamiltonians of all ages (94%). The rate for Hamilton seniors is similar to the rate in 2007-2008 when it was 98.5%.



SENIORS AND DIVERSITY



Almost half of Hamiltonians 65 and over were born outside of Canada, and the percentage of seniors who are visible minorities or who have Indigenous heritage is increasing.

Place of birth: The 2016 census shows that 45% of Hamiltonians 65 and over, were born outside of Canada, down slightly from 47% in 2006. The vast majority (77%) emigrated from Europe, down from 82% in 2006. Approximately 14% were born in Asian countries, up from 9% in 2006. Seniors born in the Americas, not including Canada, made up 9%, and 2% were born in African countries.

Indigenous seniors: The census is known to have significant under-representation of Indigenous people, and this may be especially true for older Indigenous people. Given these

limitations, there were 890 people, 65 and over, in Hamilton who reported having Aboriginal ancestry, double the number in 2006 (405). Almost 60% of Indigenous seniors are women. There were 380 respondents (43%) who reported being a Registered or Treaty Indian. Of those who described their Indigenous heritage in more detail, 72% reported some First Nations heritage, 29% report Métis heritage, and 1% Inuk.

Racialized seniors (visible minorities): Just over 9% of Hamilton's seniors identified as a "visible minority" in the 2016 census, compared to 19% of all Hamiltonians. The proportion was higher for those between the ages of 65-74 (10.4%) than for those over 75 (8%). Both rates are higher than in 2006 when they were 8% and 4%, respectively.



SENIORS AND HOUSING



Nearly 75% of seniors own their own homes, most of which are single detached, and the percentage of seniors living alone is increasing. Hamilton has added 600 long-term care beds over the past 15 years.

Housing tenure: The 2016 census shows nearly three-quarters (74%) of Hamilton's seniors owned their homes, slightly lower than the 77% provincial average. This rate was consistent across age ranges: 65-74, 75-84 and 85+, and has not changed since 2006. The vast majority (78%) of their homes were single detached houses.

One-quarter of Hamilton seniors rent their homes; of those homes, nearly two-thirds are apartments in buildings with five stories or more.

Seniors living alone: In Hamilton, 26.6% of seniors lived alone in 2016,

higher than the provincial average of 23.5%. The likelihood of living alone increased with age: 21% aged 65-74 lived alone, 28% aged 75-84, and 33% aged 85+. Women are far more likely to live alone. Some 70% of seniors living alone are women, with the likelihood increasing with age: of those 85 and over, the percentage is 78%.

The number of seniors living alone in Hamilton is increasing, growing by 26% to 23,135 in 2016 from 18,295 in 1996.

Long-term care homes: For seniors who need more support than they can receive at home, long-term care (also known as nursing homes) is a housing option. In Hamilton, there are 27 long-term care homes totalling 3,866 long-stay beds — an increase from 21 homes with a total of 3,212 beds in 2003.

