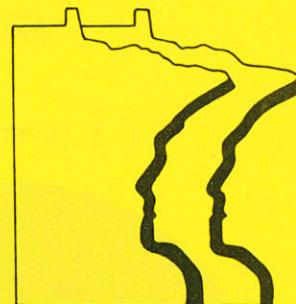


MINNESOTA STATE PLANNING AGENCY
Office of State Demographer

POPULATION NOTES

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NURSING HOME GROWTH IN 1970s LARGELY DUE TO
INCREASE IN POPULATION 85 YEARS AND OVER

The number of Minnesotans living in nursing homes grew sharply over the past decade, from 33,326 in 1970 to 44,553 in 1980. Most of this increase can be traced to the increase in the population aged 85 and over, the age group with by far the highest probability of being in a nursing home. Projected increases in the extremely old population suggest continued growth in the nursing home population between now and the year 2000.

Nursing Home Residents Are Mostly 75+

The Census data suggest that few persons under the age of 75 or 80 reside in homes for the aged. (Nursing home residents are referred to as "inmates of homes for the aged" in Census publications.) Over 75 percent of nursing home residents are over age 75, and it is only after age 75 that the probability of being institutionalized begins to rise dramatically (Table 1, Figure 1).

Growth in Extremely Old Population Fuels Nursing Home Growth

Although the number of nursing home residents grew by 38 percent during the 1970s, this does not reflect an increasing tendency to institutionalize the elderly. Rather it reflects the fact that more people are living to an extremely old age. Table 2 suggests that there was little change in institutionalization rates by age between 1970 and 1980, except among the extremely elderly (85+). For the 85+ category, the finding is misleading because it conceals changes that have occurred within this age group. There has been a rapid increase in the number of persons 90 and over and the 90+ contingent also makes up a

larger share of the total 85+ population. In 1980 there were 17,068 Minnesotans 90 or older, up from only 8,765 a decade earlier. The proportion of 90+ year-olds in the 85+ population was 32 percent in 1980 compared with 27 percent in 1970.

The probability of being in a nursing home in 1980 was far higher for those over 90 (48%) than for those 85-89 (29%). Taking these factors into account, it appears that almost all of the increase in the overall institutionalization rate for persons 65+ can be attributed to the growth in the number of people over 85 years of age and especially to the growth of the 90+ population.

TABLE 1.

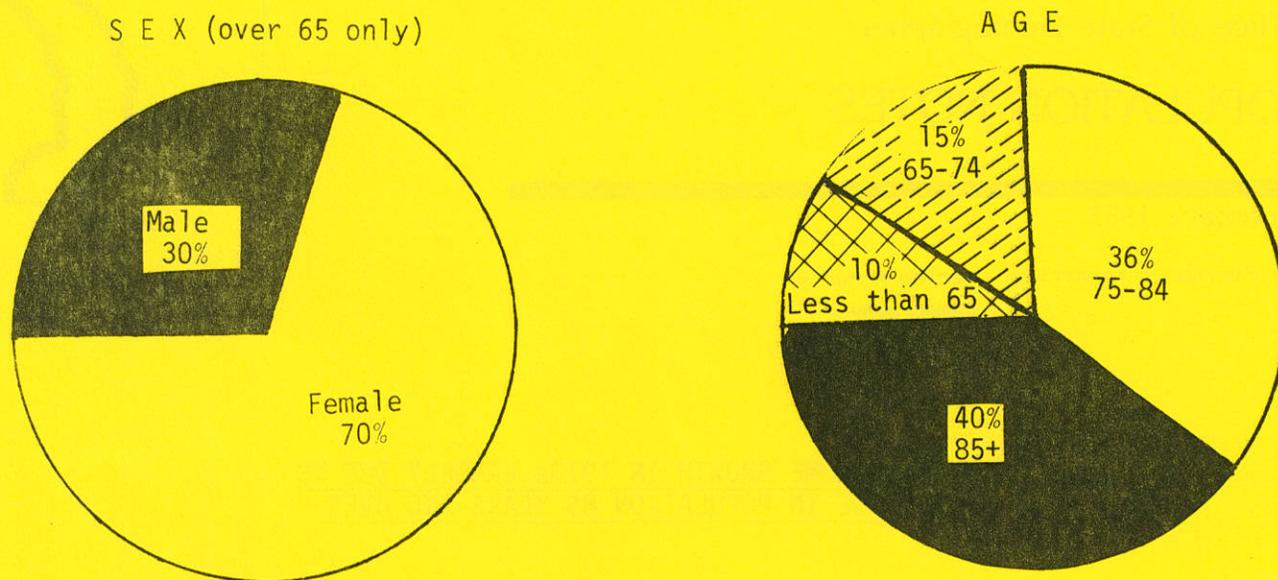
PERCENT OF MINNESOTA POPULATION 65+
IN NURSING HOMES BY AGE AND SEX

1980 Minnesota Public Use Microdata Sample

Age	Percent of Age Group in Nursing Homes	
	Males	Females
65-69	2%	2%
70-74	3	3
75-79	6	7
80-84	11	17
85-89	20	33
90+	40	52
TOTAL 65+	6	10

FIGURE 1.

AGE AND SEX OF MINNESOTA NURSING HOME RESIDENTS



Minnesota Ranks High in Nursing Homes

Although age-specific institutionalization rates did not change much during the 1970s, Minnesota remains far above the national average in the proportion of elderly people who are in nursing homes. According to data provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in 1980 Minnesota ranked seventh nationally in the number of nursing home beds per 1,000 persons over 65. Minnesota had 95 nursing home beds per 1,000

elderly, compared with a national figure of 62 per 1,000 elderly.

Women Outnumber Men

Women in nursing homes outnumber men by more than two to one (Figure 1). This is partly because women live longer and partly because women are more likely to be institutionalized, especially at older ages (Table 1).

TABLE 2. NURSING HOME POPULATION BY AGE:
MINNESOTA, 1970 AND 1980

Age	In Nursing Homes, 1970		In Nursing Homes, 1980	
	% of Age Group	No. of Persons	% of Age Group	No. of Persons
65-69	1.7%	2,157	1.9%	2,820
70-74	3.5	3,888	3.2	3,800
75-79	7.1	5,965	6.6	6,185
80-84	15.7	8,070	14.9	9,699
85+	28.9	9,293	34.6	17,812
TOTAL 65+	7.2	29,373	8.4	40,316
TOTAL NURSING HOME POPULATION, ALL AGES		33,326		44,553

TABLE 3. PERCENT OF MINNESOTA POPULATION 65+ IN NURSING HOMES,
BY AGE, SEX, AND MARITAL STATUS

1980 Minnesota Public Use Microdata Sample

Sex and Marital Status	Percent of Age Group in Nursing Homes by Age			
	65-74	75-84	85+	All 65+
<u>Males</u>				
Married	1%	3%	18%	2%
Widowed	6	15	33	17
Single	12	24	31	18
Divorced/Separated	11	15	(44) ¹	14
<u>Females</u>				
Married	1%	5%	25%	2%
Widowed	4	13	40	14
Single	9	15	47	17
Divorced/Separated	6	18	30	11

¹Based on a sample size of less than 25.

Married Are Less Likely To Be In Nursing Homes

One reason that women are more likely to be institutionalized is that they are less likely than men to be married, especially at extremely old ages. The social support provided by marriage appears to be instrumental in enabling elderly persons to stay out of nursing homes (Table 3). Unmarried people are many times more likely to be in a nursing home than their married peers. Since women on the average live longer than men, they are more likely to become widowed and lose the protection against institutionalization provided by marriage. Controlling for age and marital status greatly reduces the male-female differences in nursing home rates.

Living Arrangements of Elderly Outside Nursing Homes Vary

The living arrangements of persons 65 years and over who do not live in nursing homes vary by age, sex and marital status (Table 4). Generally, the older people become the less likely they are to be living with their spouses and the more likely they are to be living alone or with relatives. This reflects the increasing incidence of widowhood with advancing age.

Although the great majority of unmarried non-institutionalized elderly live alone, a substantial number live with relatives. Living with relatives is especially common among women, the extremely elderly, and, somewhat surprisingly, the never-married. Among single people 65+ who are not in nursing homes, almost one-third live with members of their families.

Asians Are Least Likely To Be In Nursing Homes

Elderly Asians are substantially less likely to be in nursing homes than are persons of other races. In Minnesota, less than one percent of Asians 65+ were in nursing homes in 1980, compared with ten percent of native Americans, eight percent of whites, and eight percent of blacks. Among persons of Spanish origin, six percent were in homes for the aged.

The lower institutionalization rate for Asians may reflect different cultural traditions concerning treatment of the elderly as well as different concepts about family roles and responsibilities. A similar pattern of lower institutionalization rates for Asians is also found in California and other states which have a considerably larger Asian population than Minnesota.

TABLE 4. LIVING ARRANGEMENTS OF PERSONS 65+ NOT IN NURSING HOMES,
BY AGE, SEX AND MARITAL STATUS

1980 Minnesota Public Use Microdata Sample

Age	Married Couple Householder or Spouse	In Other Family Setting ¹	Living Alone	Other ²
65-74	64%	8%	26%	2%
75-84	43	13	41	3
85+	24	25	45	6
Sex				
Male	74%	7%	16%	2%
Female	40	14	44	3
Marital Status				
Married	97%	1%	1%	0%
Widowed	-	21	76	3
Single	-	33	53	14
Divorced/Separated	-	20	70	11

¹Other family householder, or living with relatives.

²In non-family household but not alone; non-relative in family household; inmate of group quarters other than home for the aged.

TABLE 5. PERCENT OF POPULATION 65+ AND 75+ IN NURSING HOMES
BY URBAN AND RURAL RESIDENCE: MINNESOTA, 1980

	Urban								Rural Farm ¹
	State	Inside Urbanized Areas			Outside Urbanized Areas		Rural Cities		
		Total Urban	Central Cities	Urban Fringe	Cities 10,000+	2,500- 10,000	Total Rural	of 1,000- 2,500	
Percent of Population 65+ in Nursing Home	8.4%	9.7%	7.8%	10.6%	10.2%	12.2%	6.1%	13.9%	-
Percent of Population 75+ in Nursing Home	16.1	17.8	13.7	21.9	18.5	21.5	12.6	23.6	-

¹Because of the definition of the term "rural farm", no population in this category can be living in group quarters.

Institutionalization Rates Are Higher In Urban Areas

Elderly urban residents are more likely to be in nursing homes than elderly rural residents. The greatest concentration of nursing home residents is found in urban fringe areas and cities of less than 10,000 (Table 5). These patterns probably reflect the geographic concentration of nursing homes rather than differences in norms about institutionalization. Many new nursing homes, for example, have been built in suburban areas. The residents include not only long-term suburbanites but also many people who formerly lived in central cities. Similarly, former rural farm residents may be enumerated in small town nursing homes.

Future Increases in Nursing Home Population Are Possible

If the trends of the 1970s continue, the Minnesota nursing home population can be expected to increase to about 54,400 in 1990 and 66,000 by the year 2000 (Table 6). This would be a rate of increase several times greater than that projected for overall population growth, although it would be lower than the rate of increase in nursing home population observed during the 1970s.

The projections shown in Table 6 are based on two general assumptions. If these assumptions prove to be faulty, the projections will probably err in the direction of being too high. The first assumption is that there will be continued increases in survival rates at higher ages. If longevity does not continue to increase, the size of the 85+ population and of the nursing home population will level off.

The second assumption reflected in the nursing home projections is that institutionalization rates by age and sex will remain constant. Nursing home institutionalization rates reflect public policies and social practices as well as the debilities that often accompany old age. Successful efforts to lower the proportion of elderly people in nursing homes could reduce the 1990 and 2000 nursing home population well below the numbers projected even if survival rates at higher ages continue to rise. Examination of the 1980 Census data makes it clear that if such efforts are to be successful, there must be a substantial reduction in the rate of institutionalization for persons over 85. This is the age group most vulnerable to institutionalization as well as the one that will account for most of the projected increase in the nursing home population.

TABLE 6. MINNESOTA 1980 AND PROJECTED 1990 and 2000 NURSING HOME POPULATION¹

Age	1980	Projected 1990		Projected 2000	
	Census	Number	Change 1980-90	Number	Change 1980-2000
Under 65	4,237	4,503	266	4,713	476
65-74	6,620	7,343	723	7,345	725
75-84	15,884	18,461	2,577	22,031	6,147
85+	17,812	24,056	6,244	31,908	14,096
TOTAL	44,553	54,363	9,810	65,997	21,444
% Change From 1980			22.0%		48.1%

¹Assuming constant 1980 institutionalization rates.

TO POPULATION NOTE READERS:

A cumulative index with listings by title and subject, will be provided early in 1984.

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