

CRITICAL INSIGHTS

RESEARCH FOR PRECISE PRAGMATIC DIRECTION

# *Maine Elder Services Needs Assessment*

## **Summary Report of Findings**

**Prepared for:**

**Maine Association of Area Agencies on Aging**

**January 2012**

Focus Groups • Surveys • Public Opinion Polling

120 Exchange Street, Portland, Maine 04101

Telephone: 207-772-4011 • Fax: 207-772-7027

[www.criticalinsights.com](http://www.criticalinsights.com)

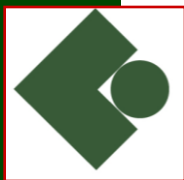


# Introduction



# Background & Purpose

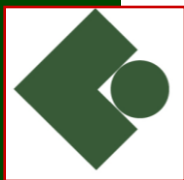
- The Maine Association of Area Agencies on Aging (M4A) retained Critical Insights, a market research and public opinion polling firm located in Portland, to conduct a statewide needs assessment for the purpose of assessing the daily living challenges and experiences of Maine's senior population.
- Specific aims of this baseline quantitative research effort are to identify and document the prevalence of issues related to:
  - Access to healthcare;
  - Transportation challenges;
  - Food insecurity;
  - Personal safety;
  - Housing; and
  - Overall well being.
- Additionally, the research aims to gauge the levels of awareness that exist for support services available to Maine's aging population at both the state and regional levels, and attitudes or barriers that may inhibit utilization of these services.



# Methodological Overview

Number of Respondents	Dates Research Conducted	Error Margin		Length of Interview
		90%	95%	
1,003	Dec. 19, 2011 to Jan. 2, 2012	+/-2.6	+/-3.1	12 minutes

- The questionnaire was developed collaboratively by Critical Insights and M4A.
- Interviews were conducted by telephone and coordinated from the Critical Insights Information Center in Portland, using the company's computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) system.
- In order to qualify for inclusion in the survey, respondents had to:
  - Be 50 years of age or older;
  - Not be employed by or have any affiliation with a local area agency on aging, legal services for the elderly, or the long term care ombudsman program.
- A total of 1,003 interviews were completed with randomly selected respondents across Maine.



# Methodological Overview

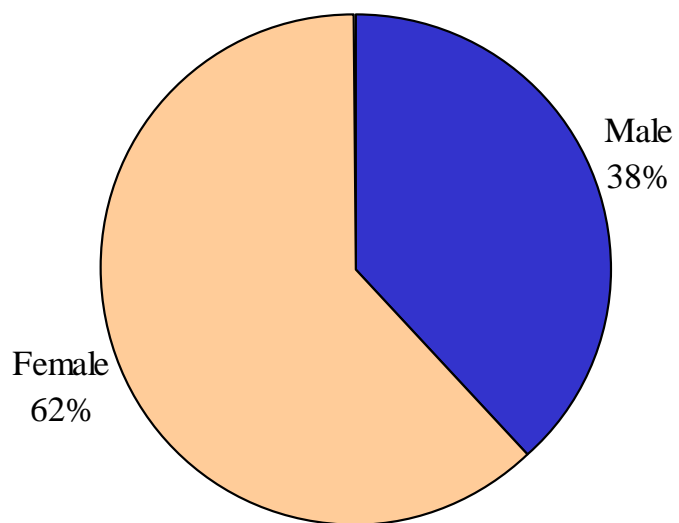
- As M4A is comprised of five area agencies, the total sample of 1,003 includes 200 interviews in each service area to provide precision at the regional level in addition to the statewide point of view. Service areas are as follows:
  - Aroostook Agency on Aging (Aroostook County);
  - Eastern Agency on Aging (Hancock, Penobscot, Piscataquis, and Washington Counties);
  - Spectrum Generations (Kennebec, Knox, Lincoln, Somerset, Waldo, and Sagadahoc Counties)
  - SeniorsPlus (Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford Counties); and
  - Southern Maine Agency on Aging (Cumberland and York Counties).
- Final data was statistically weighted according to relevant demographics to reflect the age 50 and older population of each individual service area.
  - Margins of error for analysis at the regional level will be higher.
- This report summarizes findings based on the total random sample with comparisons by area agency.



# Sample Profile



# Gender & Age



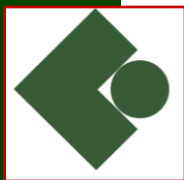
<i>Could you please tell me your age so that I might group your responses appropriately?</i>	<b>Percent</b>
50 to 64	59%
65 to 74	22
75 or older	19



# Ethnicity

<i>What is your race or ethnic background?</i>	<b>Percent</b>
Caucasian	96%
Native American	2%
Other	1%
Refused	1%





# Education & Income

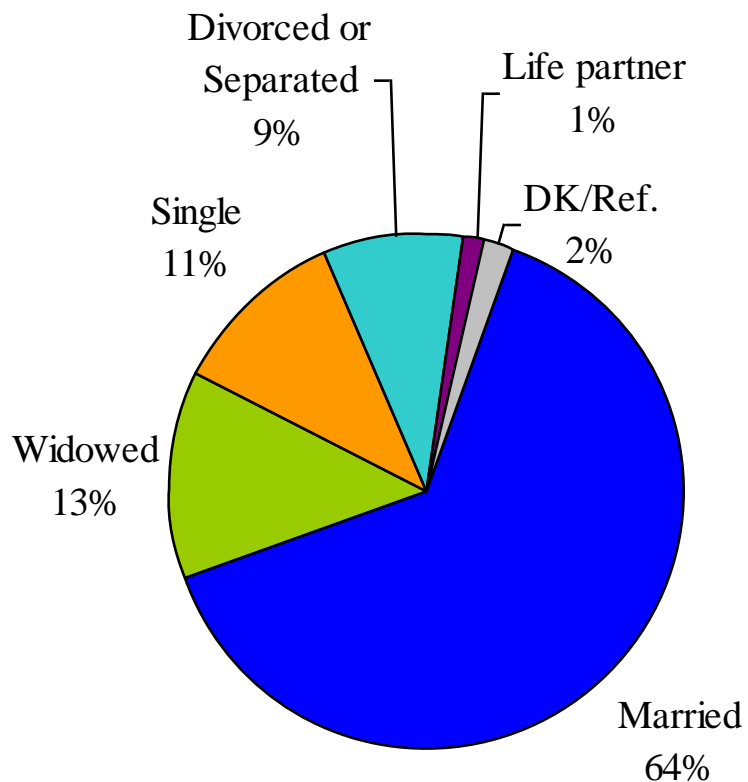
<i>What is the highest level of education you have completed?</i>	<b>Percent</b>
Grammar school (up to 8 <sup>th</sup> grade)	2%
Some high school	6
Graduated high school	30
Technical/Vocational/Community college	5
Some college	16
Graduated college	27
Graduate school	13

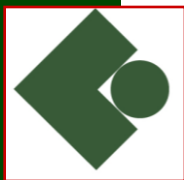
<i>Which of the following categories represents your annual household income?</i>	<b>Percent</b>
Under \$10,000	8%
\$10,000 to < \$20,000	12
\$20,000 to < \$30,000	10
\$30,000 to < \$50,000	17
\$50,000 to < \$70,000	11
\$70,000 or more	18
Don't know	7
Refused	18



# Marital Status

*What is your marital status?*





# Household Composition

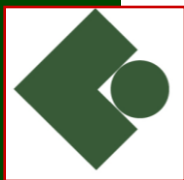
<i>How many people are currently living in your household, including children?</i>	<b>Percent</b>
One	27%
Two	55
Three	12
Four or more	6



# Research Results

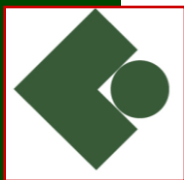


# *Perceptions of Physical Health and Healthcare Access*



# Physical Health & Access to Care

- Survey respondents residing in the Spectrum Generations and Southern Maine service regions are more likely than others to perceive their health as “excellent” and to claim they have had no difficulty getting medical care in the past two years.
  - Respondents with a higher socioeconomic status (i.e. college degree, income \$50K or more) and multiple people living in the household also tend to have a more favorable assessment of their physical health.
- Notably, only a very small proportion of respondents across the state indicate any difficulties accessing healthcare or prescription medications.
  - However, the proportion of respondents in the Aroostook service area who say they “never” have problems accessing non-emergency care when needed is not as robust as in other regions (63% compared to more than 8-in-10 elsewhere).
  - Additionally, reported utilization of prescription medications is significantly higher in Aroostook than in other service regions (82% vs. 71% statewide).



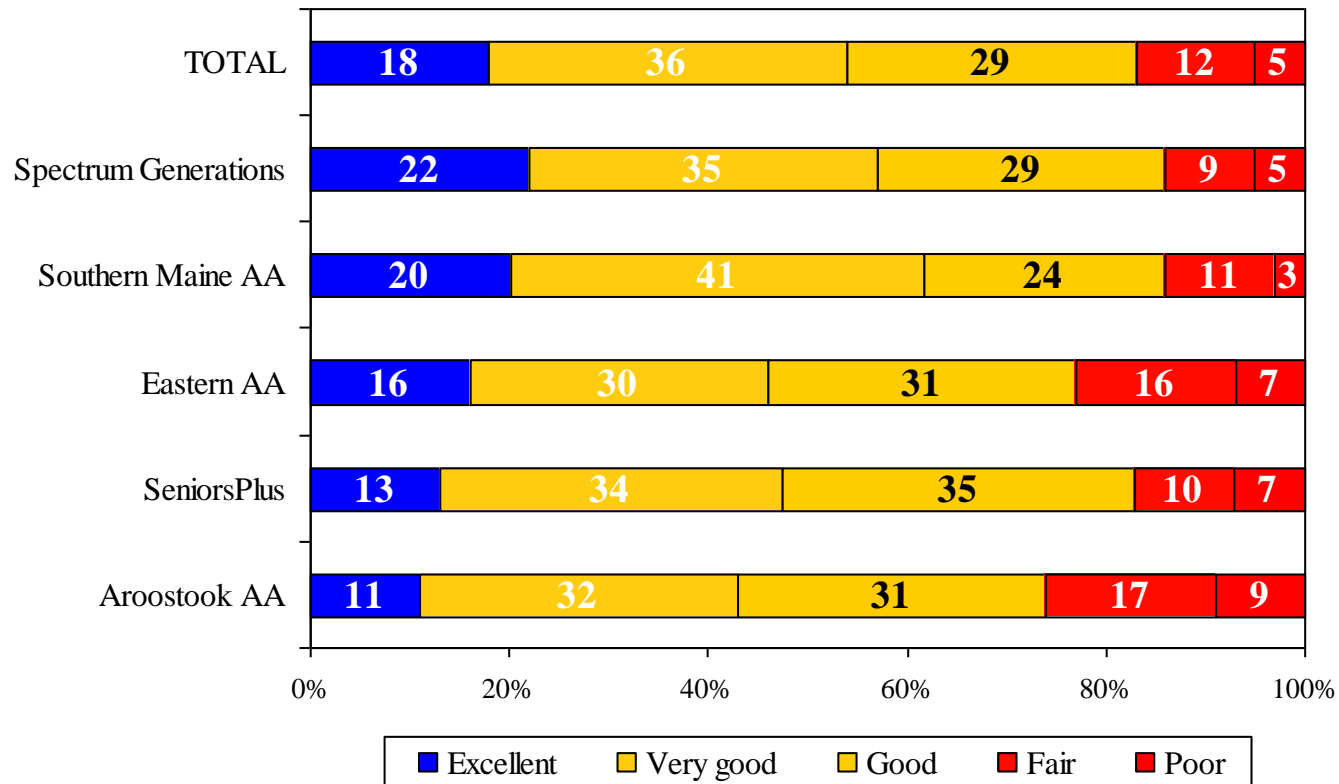
# Physical Health & Access to Care

- Among those who have had difficulty getting care or medication, the most frequently cited reason is finances.
- Interestingly, respondents aged 65 or older are more likely than younger respondents to report that they have experienced no problems accessing recent care, non-emergency care, or filling prescriptions.
  - Conversely, reported trouble with filling prescription medications is significantly higher among caregivers – though still a minor proportion.



# Perceived Physical Health: *By Area Agency on Aging*

*In general, would you say your physical health is:*

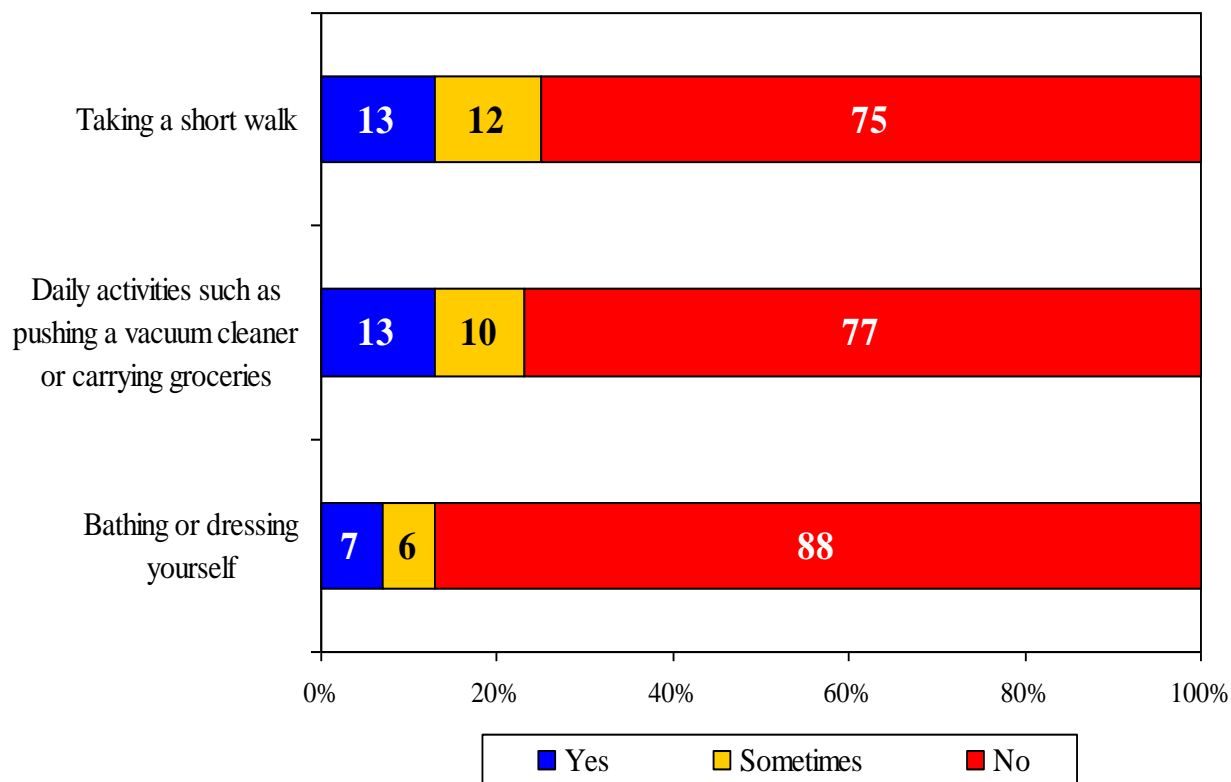






# Physical Limitations

*The following items are about activities you might do during a typical day. Does your health now limit you in these activities?*

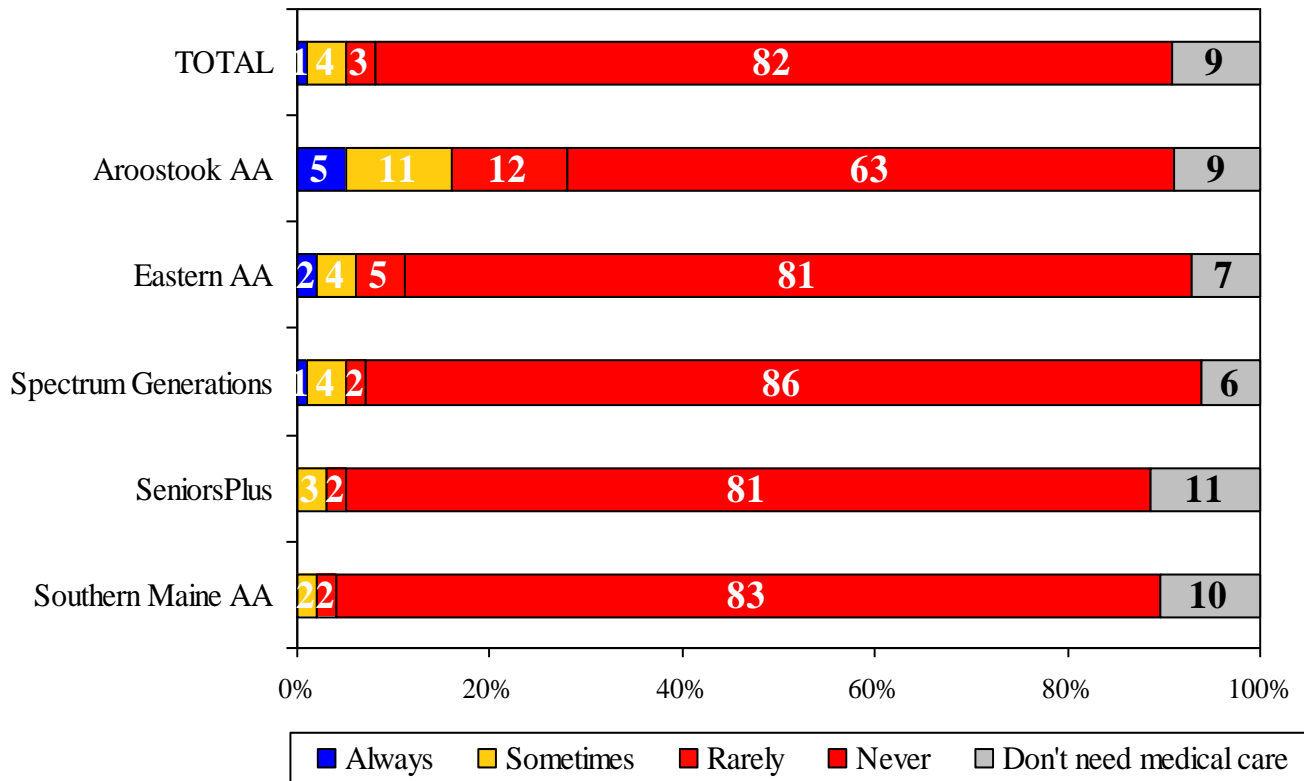


Respondents age 65 or older and those living alone are more likely than others to indicate that their health limits their ability to take short walks or perform other daily activities.



# Access to Non-Emergency Care: *By Area Agency on Aging*

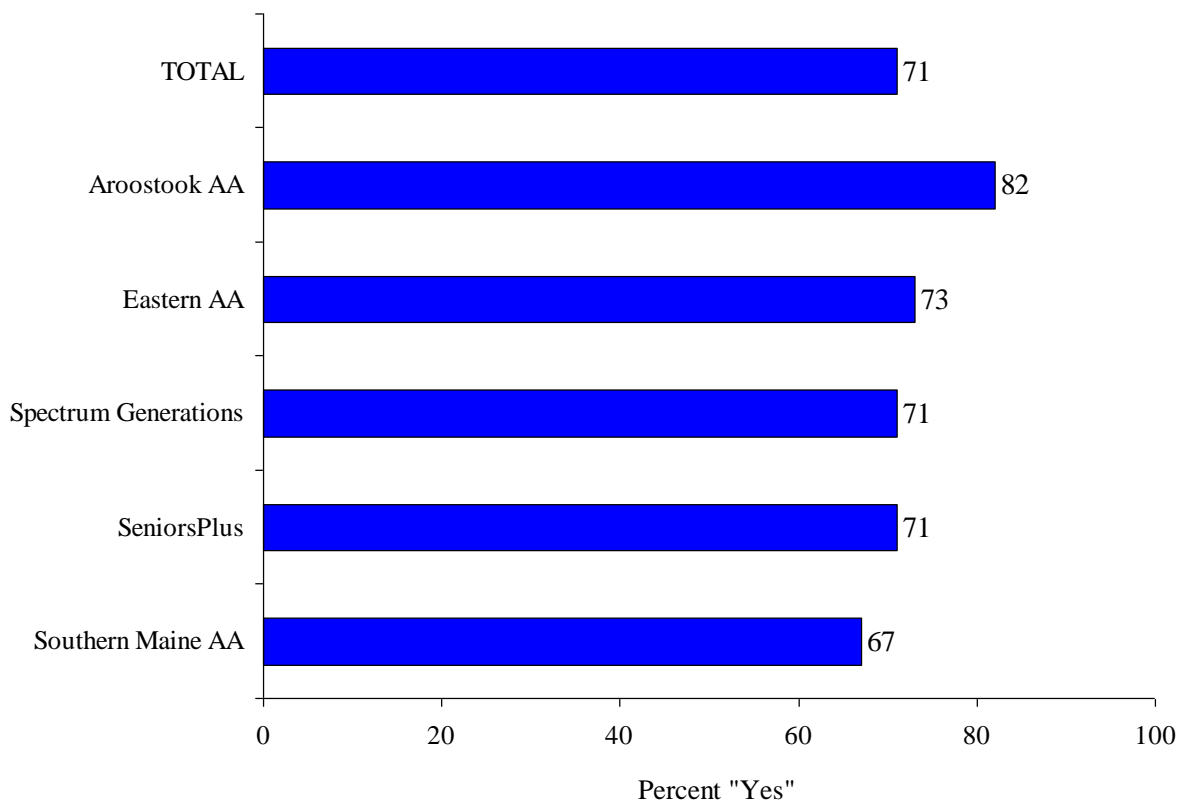
*Do you have problems getting non-emergency medical care when you need it?*





# Prescription Medication Usage: *By Area Agency on Aging*

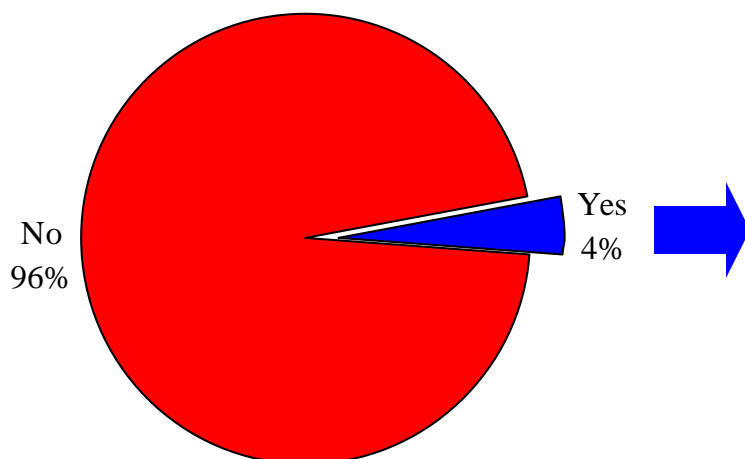
*Do you currently take any medications for a medical condition?*





# Recent Difficulty Getting Medical Care

*In the last two years, have you had a problem getting medical care?*



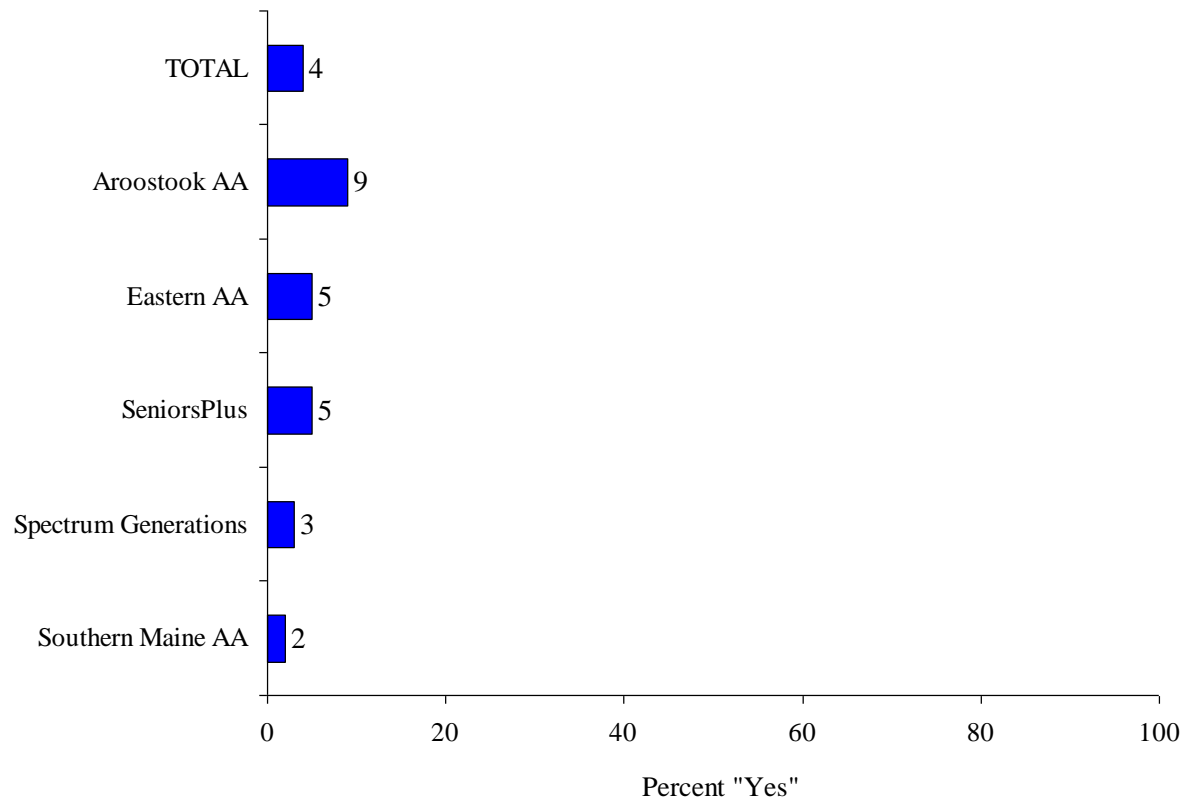
<i>If yes, what was the problem? *</i>	<b>Percent</b>
Can't afford care	35%
No doctor available	21
Can't get an appointment when you need it	18
No insurance	13
Don't have transportation to appointments	10
Doesn't accept my insurance	9
Other	8

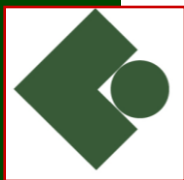
\* Based on those who claim to have had a problem getting medical care in the past two years (n=38). Multiple responses accepted. Top responses shown. Remaining responses can be found in the Detailed Tabulations. Due to a small base size, percentages should be interpreted with caution.



# Recent Difficulty Getting Medical Care: *By Area Agency on Aging*

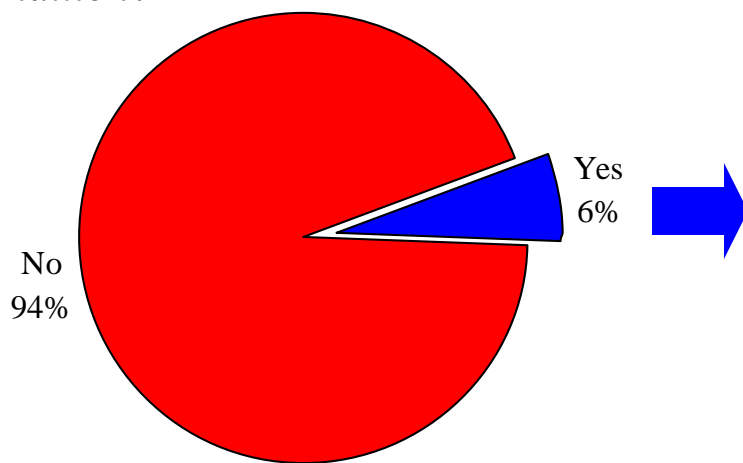
*In the last two years, have you had a problem getting medical care?*





# Difficulty Filling Prescription Medication

*Have you ever had a problem filling a prescription for medication that you needed for a health condition?*



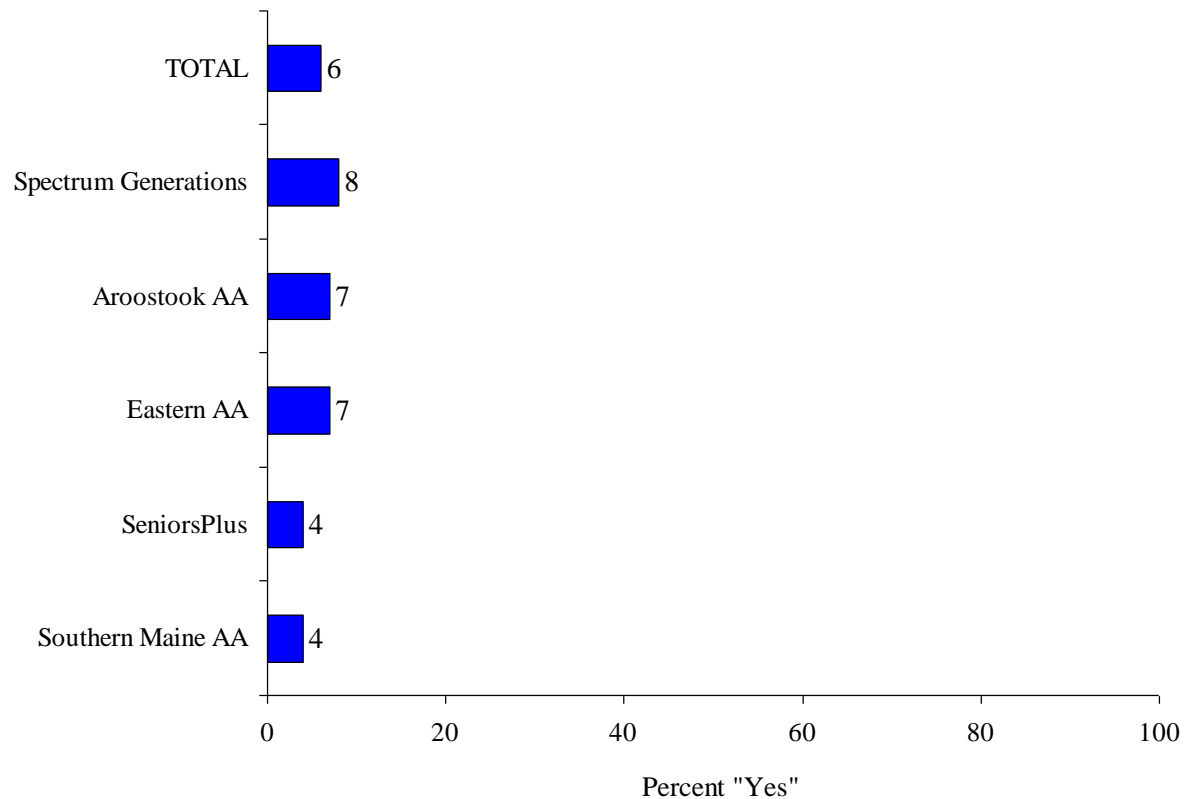
<i>If yes, what is the primary reason that you were unable to get your prescription medications? *</i>	<b>Percent</b>
Financial reasons/Could not afford	41%
No health insurance coverage for prescription	21
Not in store/Out of stock	15
Did not feel I needed medications	5
Other	8
Don't know	6

\* Based on those who claim to have had a problem filling a needed prescription (n=55). Multiple responses accepted. Top responses shown. Remaining responses can be found in the Detailed Tabulations. Due to a small base size, percentages should be interpreted with caution.



# Difficulty Filling Prescription Medication: *By Area Agency on Aging*

*Have you ever had a problem filling a prescription for medication that you needed for a health condition?*





*Perceptions of Oral Health and  
Access to Oral Care*





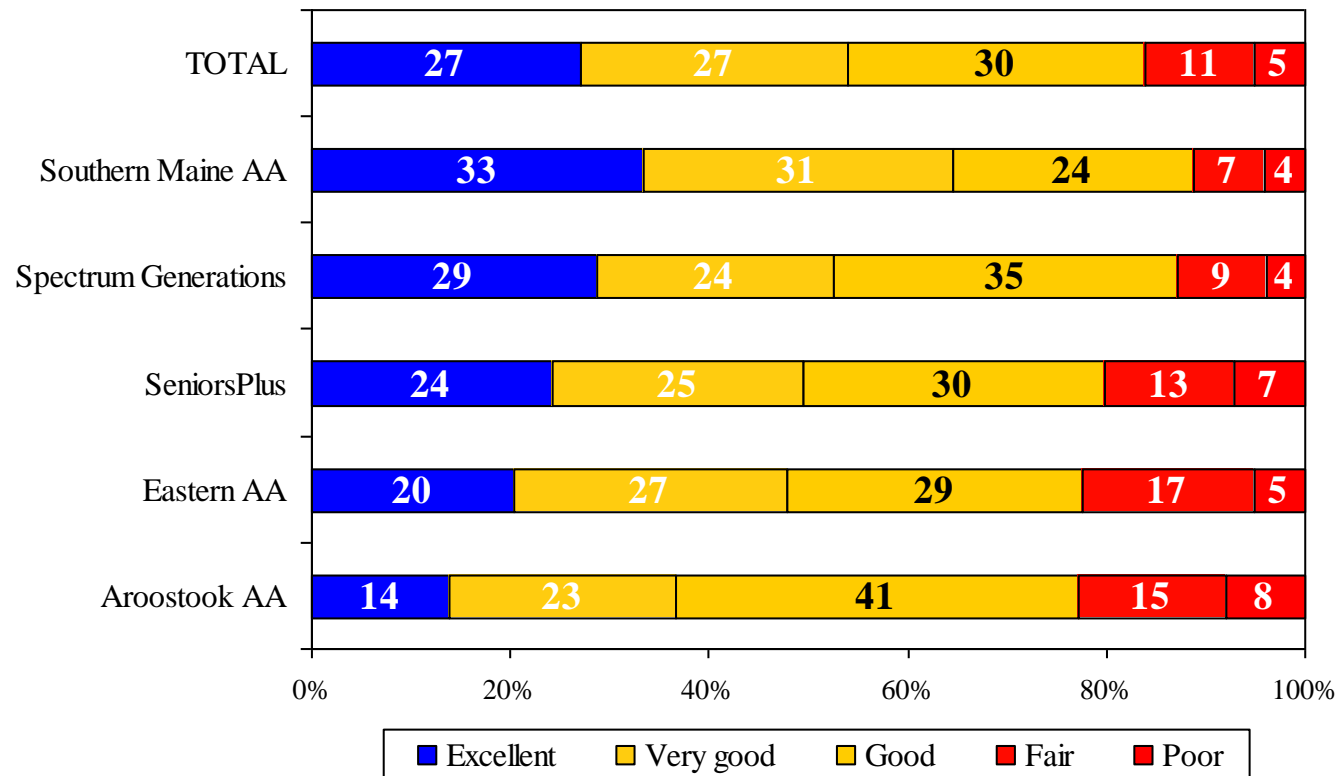
# Oral Health & Access to Care

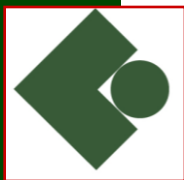
- Perceptions of oral health and access to dental care are comparable to results reported previously for physical health.
- Indeed, respondents with a higher SES tend to view their oral health more favorably versus respondents with a lower income and who are less highly educated, as do residents of the Spectrum Generations and Southern Maine service areas.
- Again, few respondents indicate difficulty accessing dental care when needed.
  - Those residing in the Spectrum Generations and Southern Maine service regions, as well as older respondents, are more likely than others to say they have no problems getting dental care.
- About 7-in-10 survey respondents claim to have seen a dentist within the past two years.
  - Younger respondents (50-64), those living with others, and those with a higher SES are more likely to claim to have seen a dentist recently.



# Perceived Oral Health: *By Area Agency on Aging*

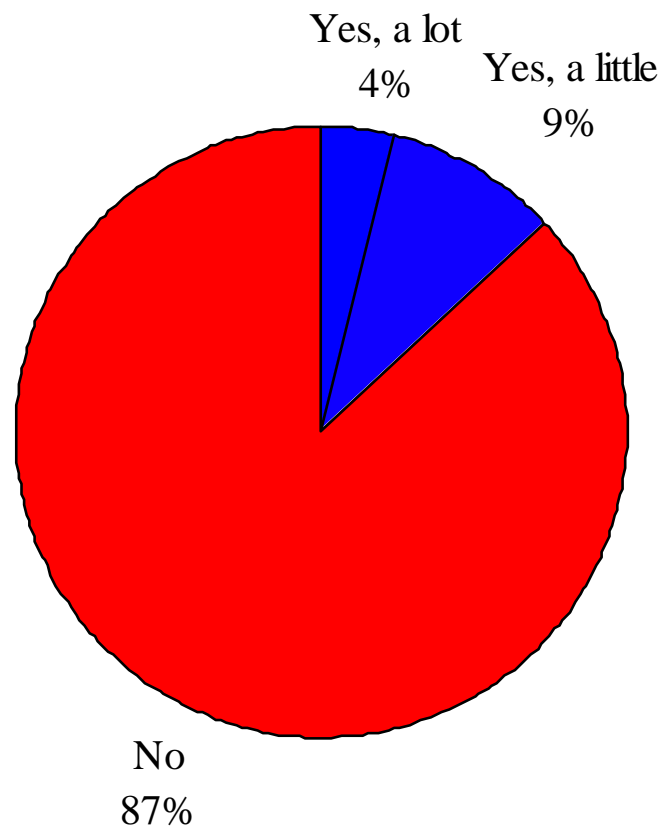
*How would you describe the condition of your teeth or dentures?*





# Limitations Due to Teeth or Dentures

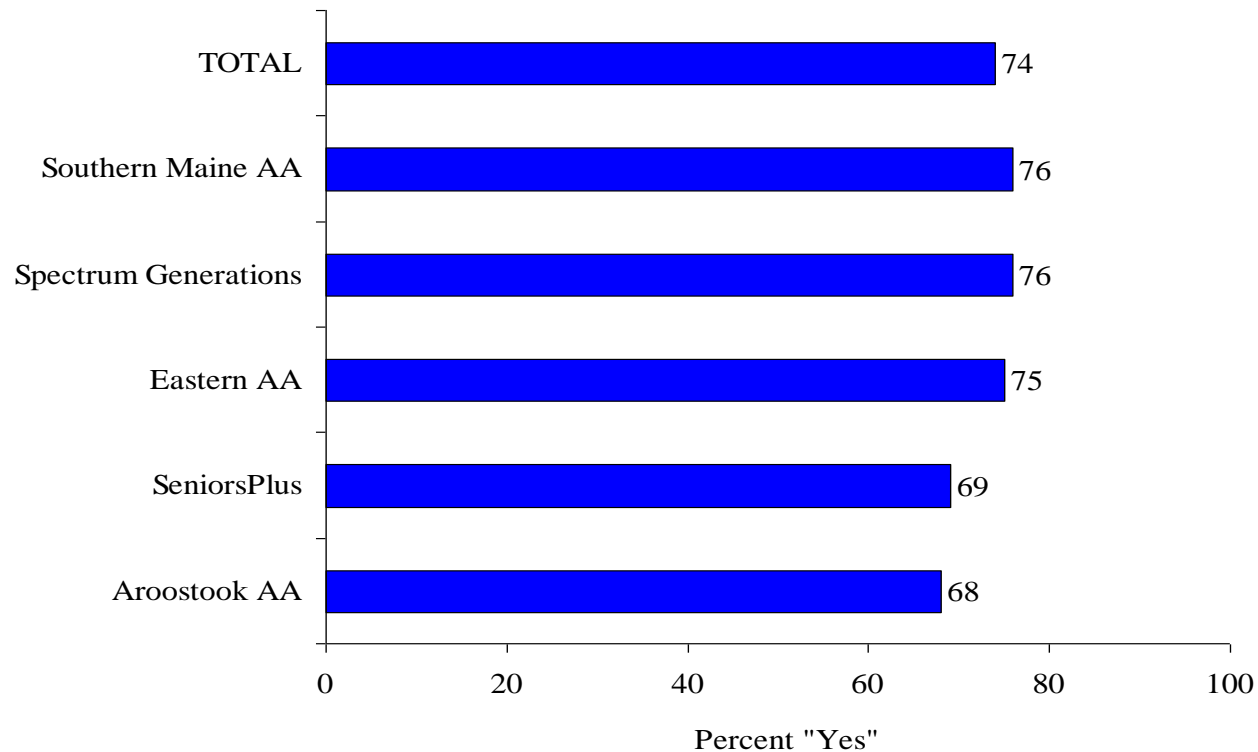
*Does the condition of your teeth or dentures limit the kinds of food you can eat?*





# Recent Dental Care: *By Area Agency on Aging*

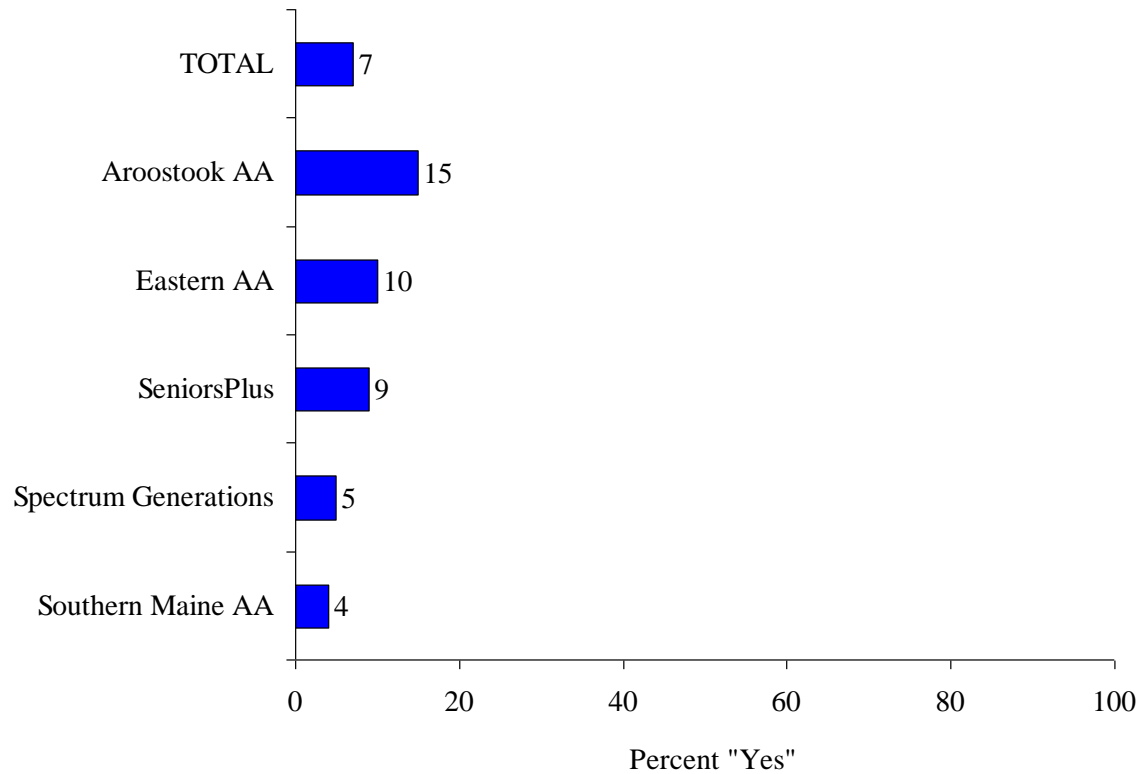
*Have you seen a dentist within the past two years?*





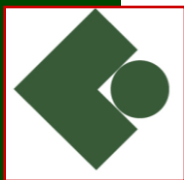
# Difficulty Getting Dental Care: *By Area Agency on Aging*

*Do you have problems getting dental care when you need it?*





# *Emotional Well-Being*



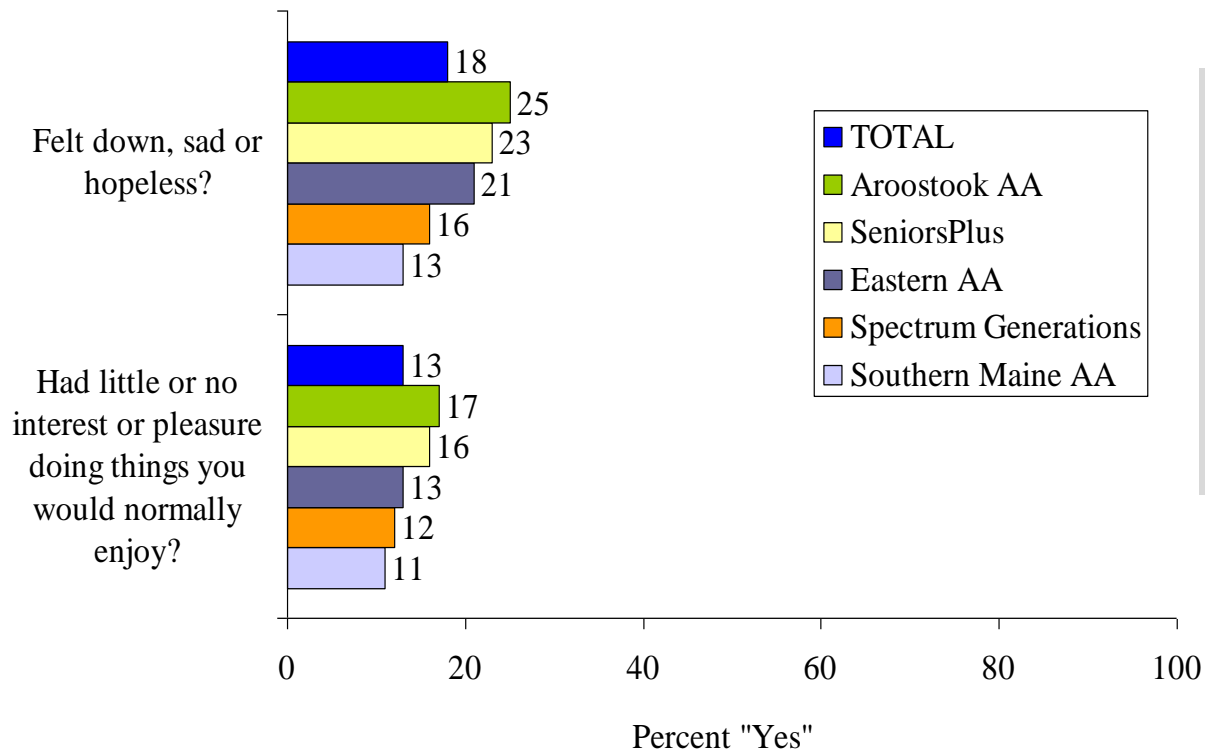
# Emotional Well-Being

- Nearly 1-in-5 respondents indicate recently feeling down, sad, or hopeless.
  - Incidence of feeling down/sad/hopeless is higher among women and single person households, as well as in the Aroostook, Eastern, and SeniorsPlus service regions.
- The vast majority of survey respondents claim to have contact with family or friends at least a few times a week; respondents with a higher SES tend to have more frequent interpersonal contact than others.
- Although a very small proportion of respondents say they “often” feel isolated or lonely, the solution mentioned most frequently among those who do is visitors/socializing opportunities.
  - Men are significantly more likely than women to say they “never” experience feelings of loneliness or isolation.



# Prevalence of Specific Emotions: *By Area Agency on Aging*

*Thinking now about the last two weeks, could you tell me if during that time you:*



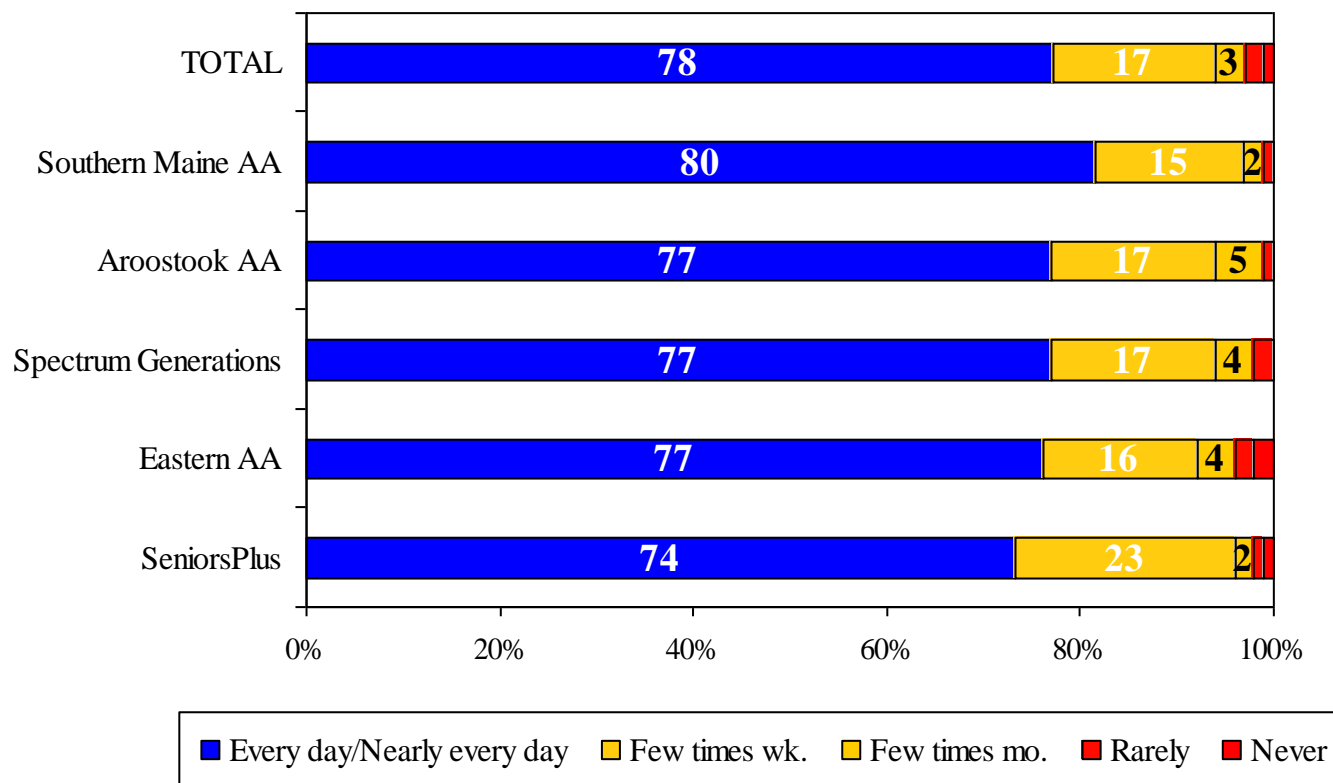
Self-reported caregivers are more likely than others to say they have recently experienced little pleasure in things they normally enjoy.





# Frequency of Contact with Family/Friends: *By Area Agency on Aging*

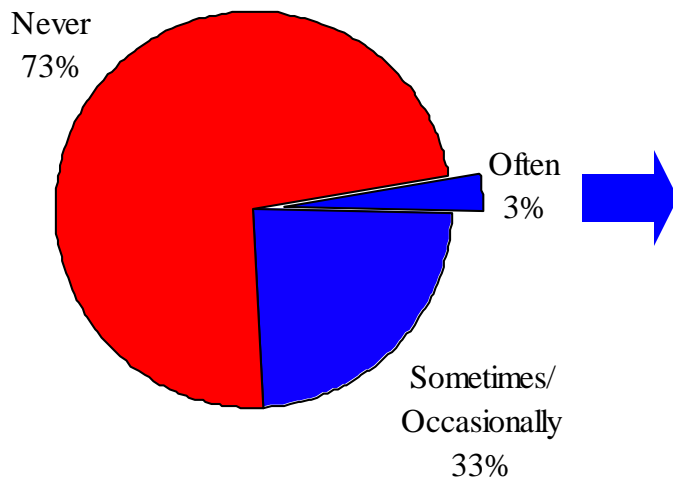
*How often do you have contact with family or friends?*





# Feelings of Isolation

*How often do you feel isolated or lonely?*

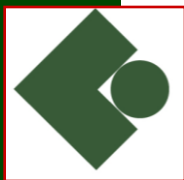


<i>If you often feel lonely or isolated, what changes or assistance would help? *</i>	Percent
Visitors/Socializing opportunities	24%
Mode of getting around/Wheel chair/Motorized chair	16
Job/More money	10
Getting out of my environment	8
A relationship/Soul mate	6
Other	5
Don't know	31

\* Based on those who claim to often feel isolated or lonely (n=34). Multiple responses accepted. Top responses shown. Remaining responses can be found in the Detailed Tabulations. Due to small cell sizes, percentages should be interpreted with caution.



# *Housing and Transportation*



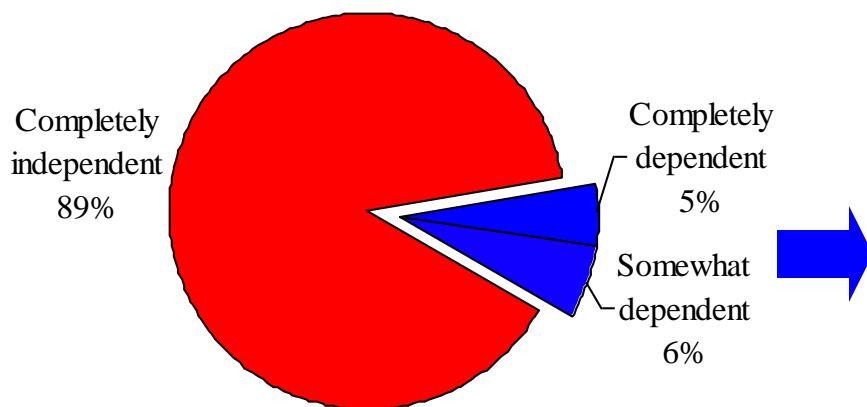
# Housing and Transportation

- In terms of transportation, nearly 9-in-10 surveyed describe their current situation as “completely independent.”
  - Among those who are at least “somewhat dependent,” fully 9-in-10 say they depend on a friend or family member to assist them with transportation.
  - Men are significantly more likely than women to claim complete independence.
- Women and residents of the Aroostook service area tend to express more concern than others over whether they can continue to afford their current housing, as well as the impact future health or transportation issues may have on their housing situation; both subgroups also assign greater importance to remaining in their current community for as long as possible.
  - Caregivers also indicate greater levels of worry than others about their future in terms of affording their housing and how it might be impacted by health or transportation issues.



# Current Transportation Arrangements

*How would you describe your current transportation situation?  
Would you say you are...*



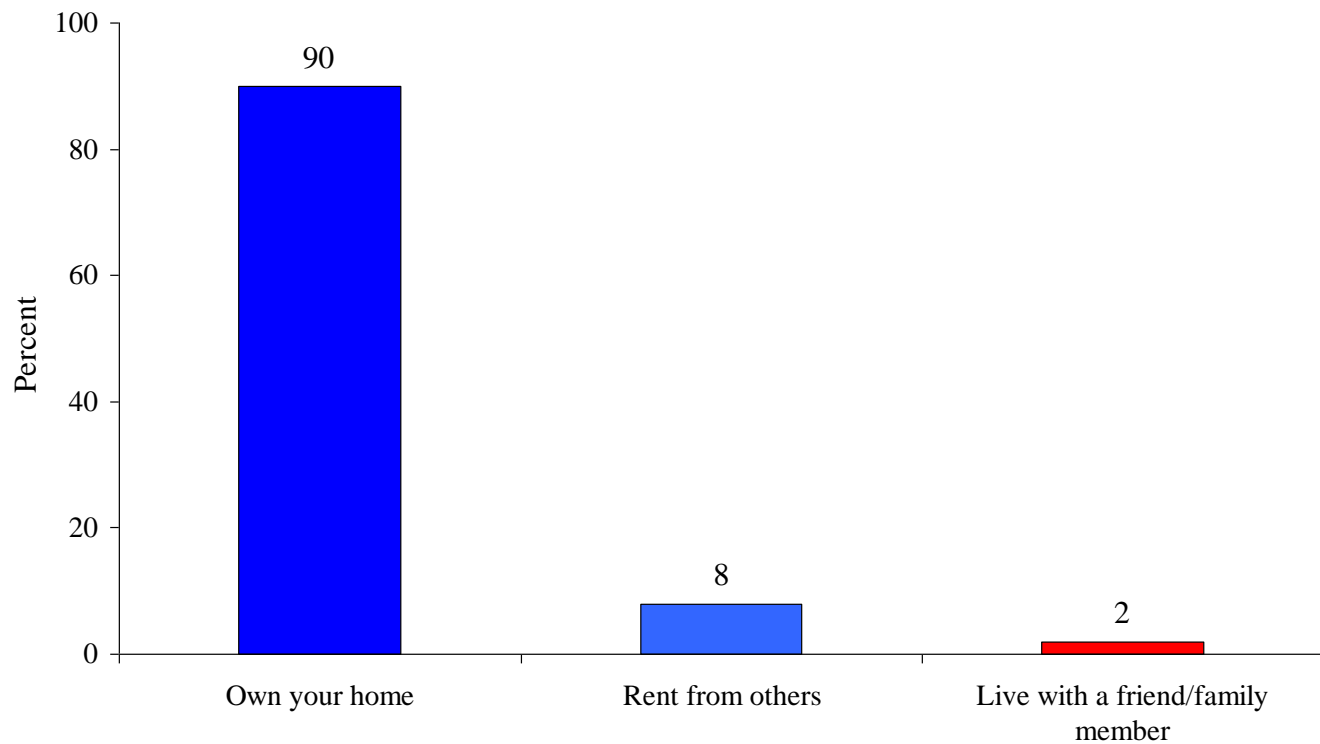
<i>Who do you rely on most for assisting you with transportation? *</i>	<b>Percent</b>
Friend or family member	90%
Public transportation	6

\* Based on those who claim to be at least somewhat dependent on others for transportation (n=111). Top responses shown. Remaining responses can be found in the Detailed Tabulations.



# Current Living Arrangements

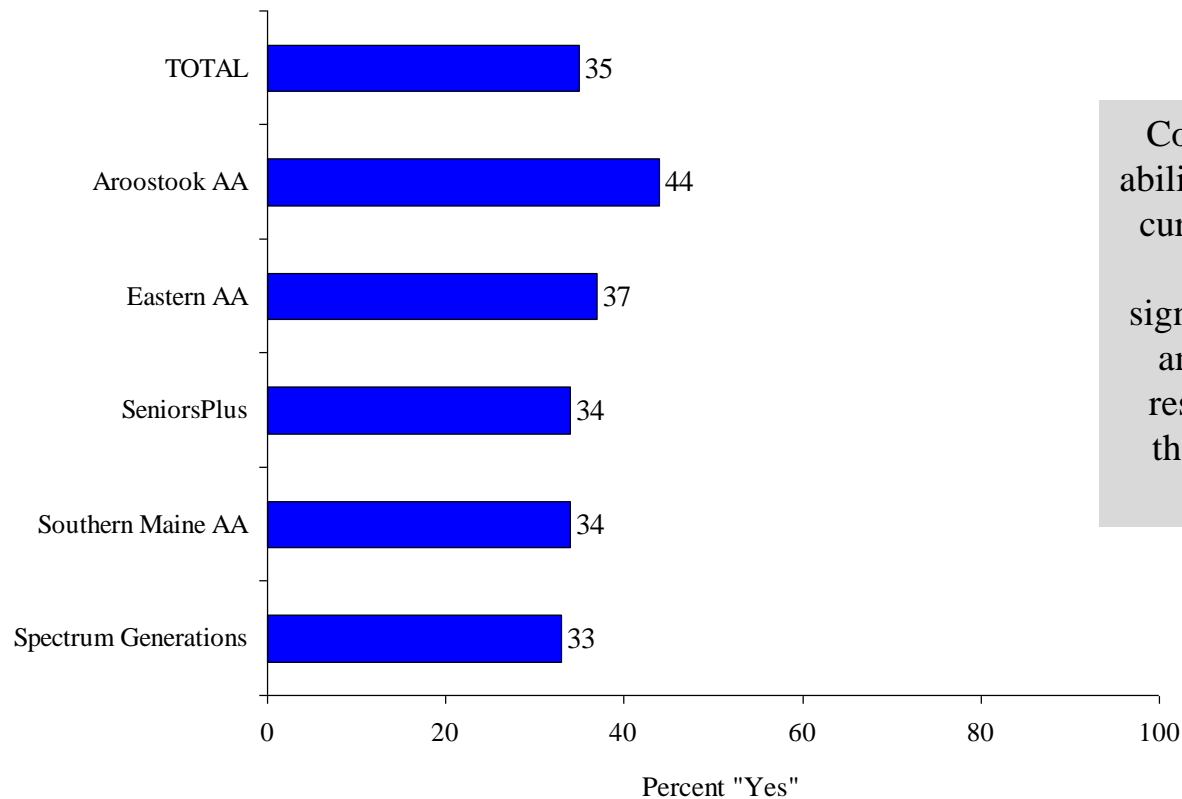
*How would you describe your current living situation? Do you...*





# Financial Concerns Pertaining to Housing: *By Area Agency on Aging*

*Do you worry about being able to afford your current living situation in the future?*

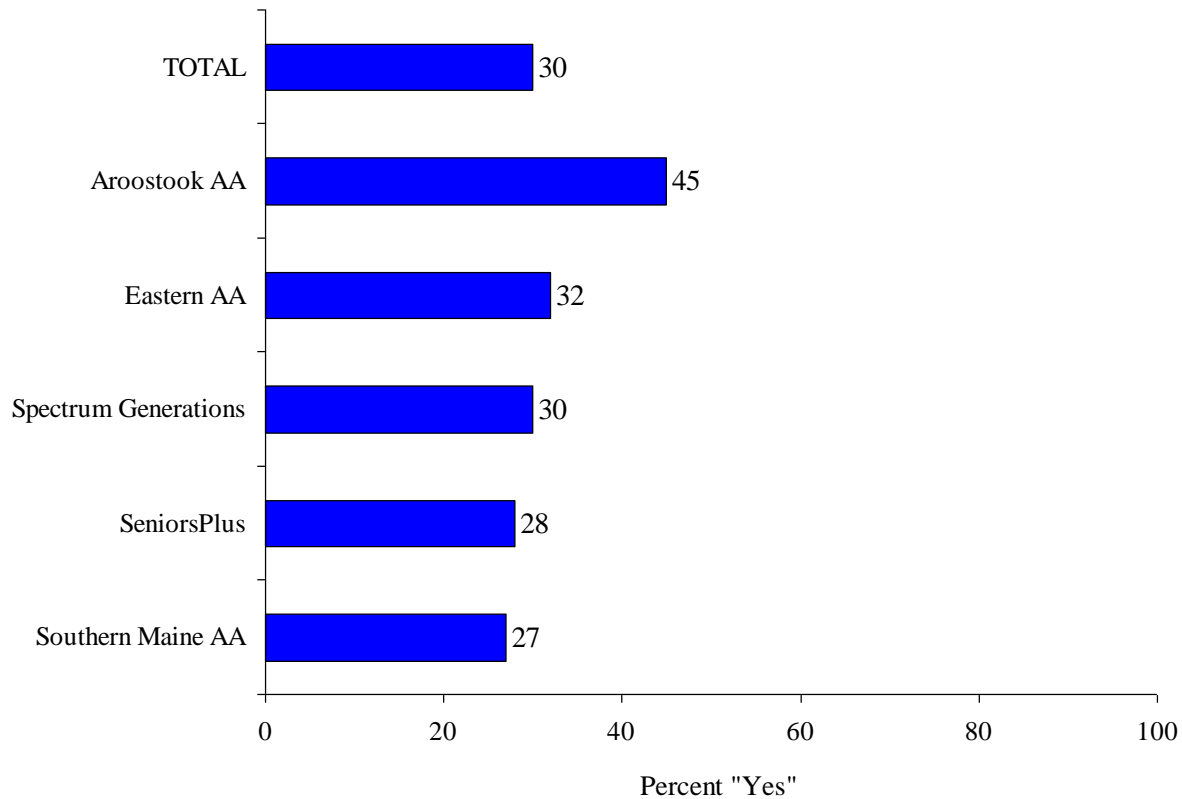


Concern over the ability to afford their current housing in the future is significantly higher among younger respondents than those aged 65 or older.



# Health or Transportation Concerns Pertaining to Housing: *By Area Agency on Aging*

*Do you worry that health or transportation issues may require you to change your current living situation in the future?*

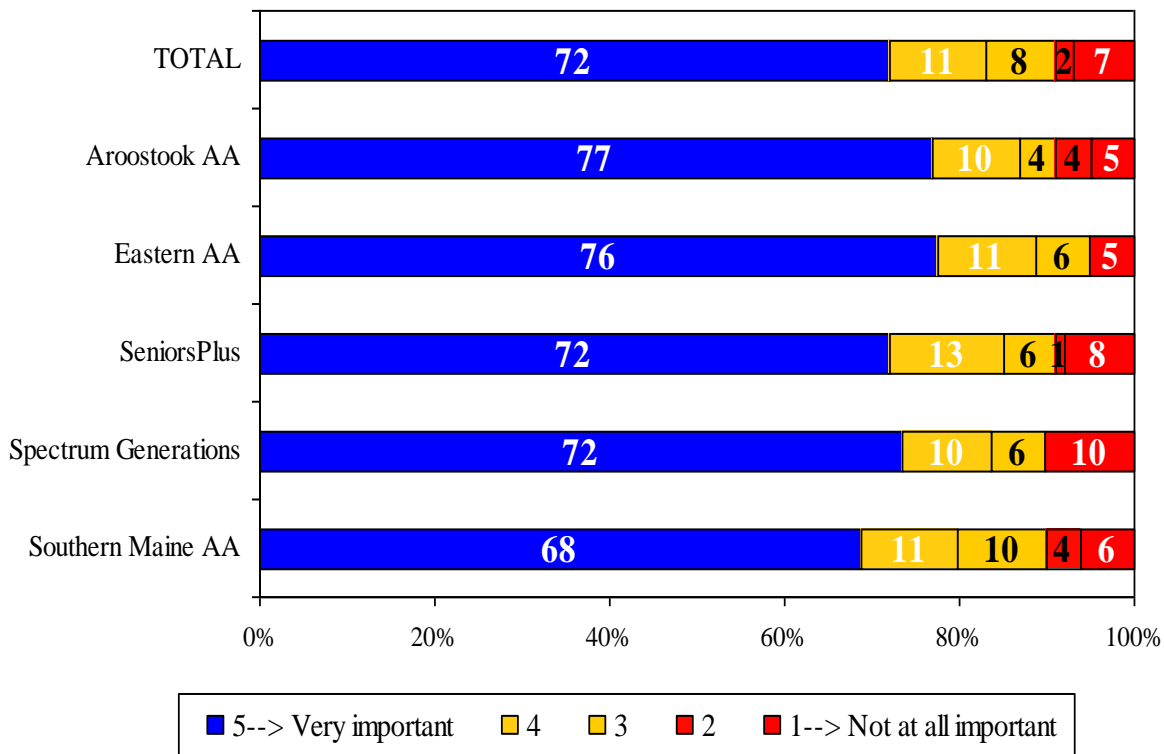






# Importance of Remaining in Community

*Using a scale of 1 to 5, where a 1 means “not at all important” and a 5 means “very important,” how important is it for you to remain in your current community as long as possible?*



Older respondents (65+) assign greater importance to remaining in their current community than those aged 50-64.



# *Food and Nutrition*



# Food and Nutrition

- A sizeable proportion of those surveyed reportedly do their own food shopping, prepare their own meals, and have not cut back on meals.
  - Although incidence of doing one’s own food shopping and meal preparation is weaker among residents of the Aroostook service area, the difference is directional in nature only and not statistically significant.
  - Among the 11% who do claim to have skipped meals, virtually all cite financial issues as the cause.
- When asked how often they worry about their household food budget, a majority say they “never” worry, with smaller blocs of respondents indicating occasional worry; fewer than 1-in-5 “constantly” worry.
  - Similar to concern over other issues related to aging (housing, etc.), women are more likely to worry at least “occasionally” about their food budget, while men are more likely to say they “never” worry.
  - Those residing in the Spectrum Generations and Southern Maine service regions also have a greater likelihood of saying they “never” worry.



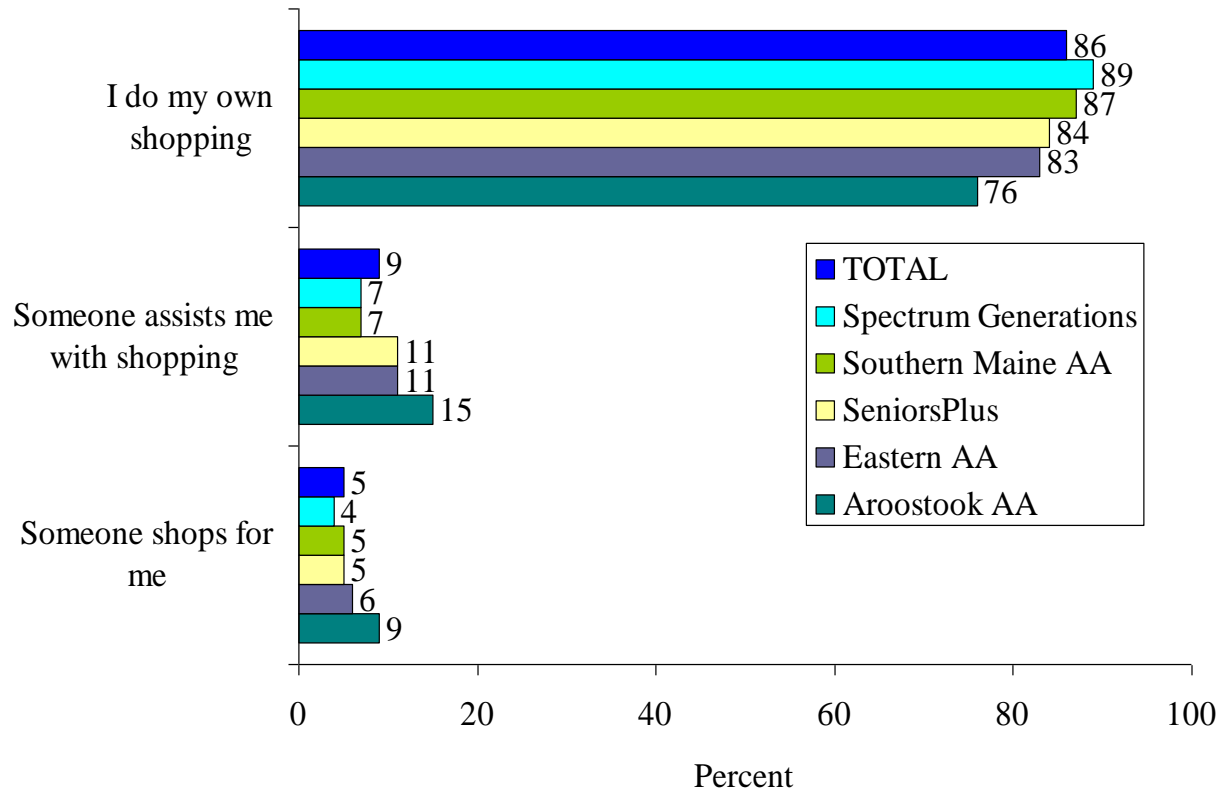
# Food and Nutrition

- Although there does not appear to be a substantial need for food services among those surveyed, it is important to note that awareness of food services is weak; indeed, more than half of all survey respondents “don’t know” what programs they would attempt to use should the need arise.
  - However, roughly one-quarter say that, if needed, they would go to a food pantry.



# Household Food Shopping: *By Area Agency on Aging*

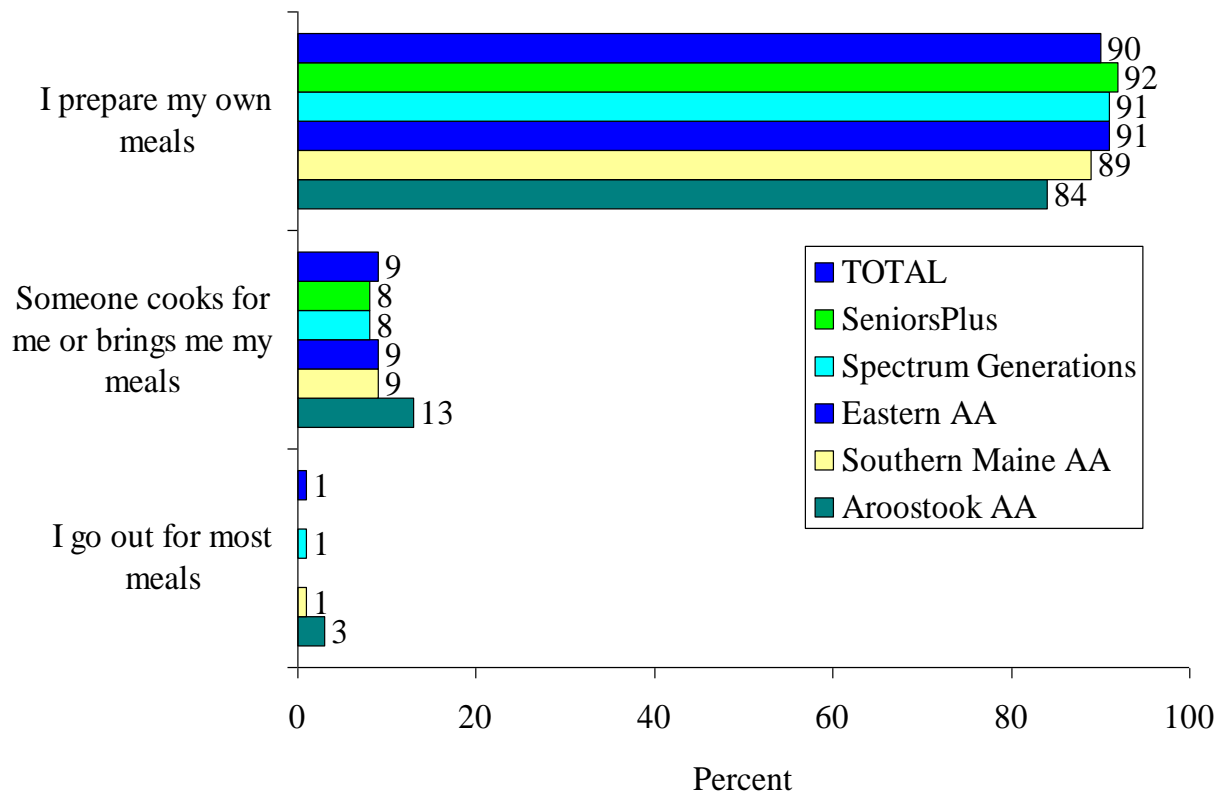
*Who does the food shopping in your household?*





# Household Food Preparation: *By Area Agency on Aging*

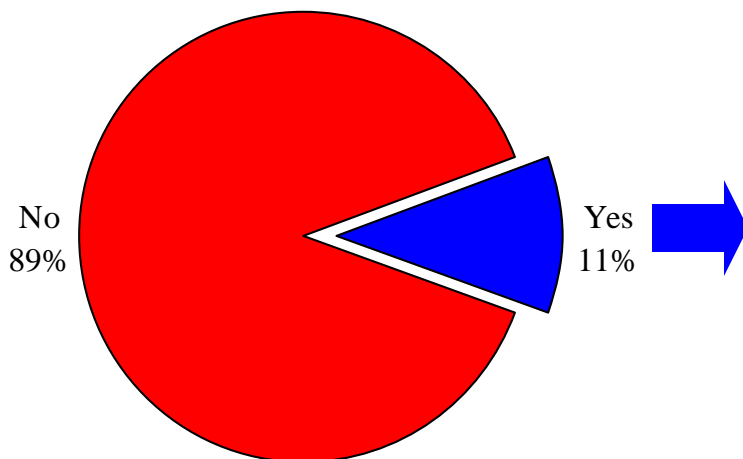
*Which of the following best describes who prepares your food?*





# Prevalence of Cutting Back on Meals

*Have you skipped meals or cut back on the amount or types of food you eat due to financial concerns or because you could not find transportation to get to a store?*



<i>If yes, why? *</i>	<b>Percent</b>
Financial reasons	98%
Transportation reasons	12

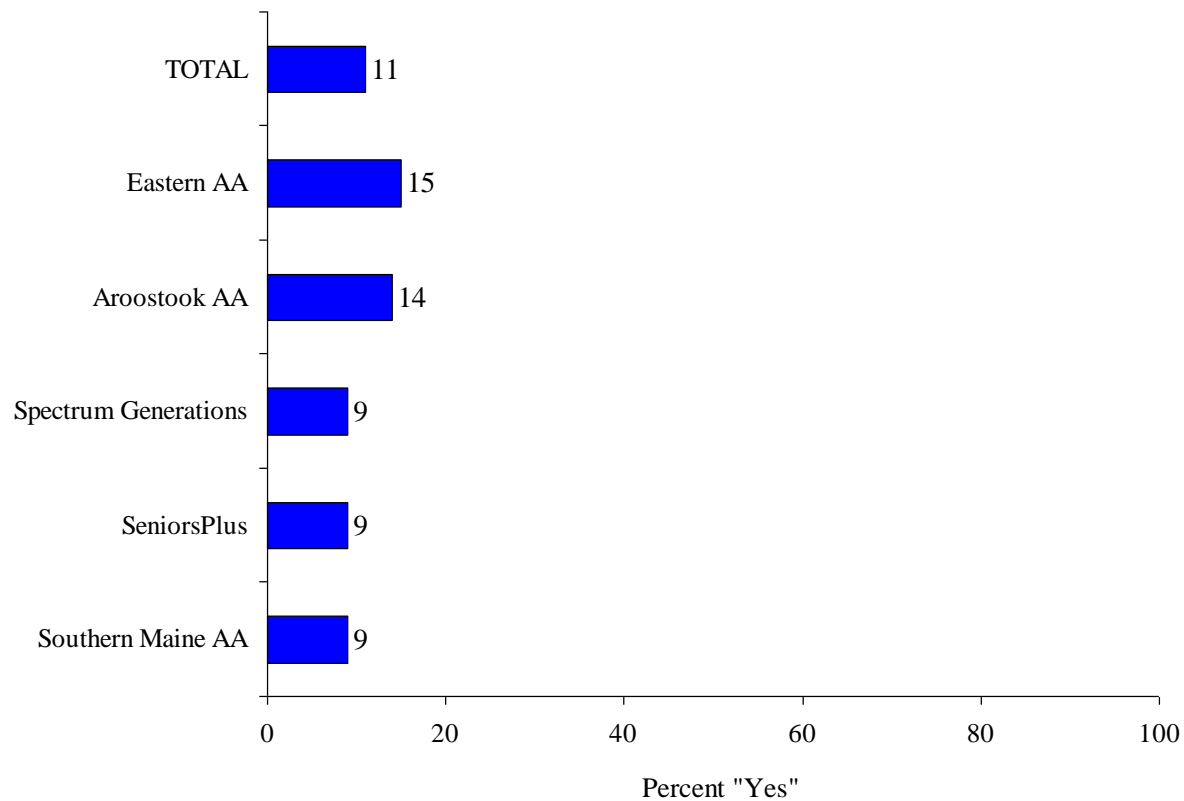
Younger respondents and, not surprisingly, those with a lower annual income are more likely to say they have skipped or cut back on meals.

\* Based on those who claim to have skipped or cut back on meals (n=107). Multiple responses accepted.



# Prevalence of Cutting Back on Meals: *By Area Agency on Aging*

*Have you skipped meals or cut back on the amount or types of food you eat due to financial concerns or because you could not find transportation to get to a store?*

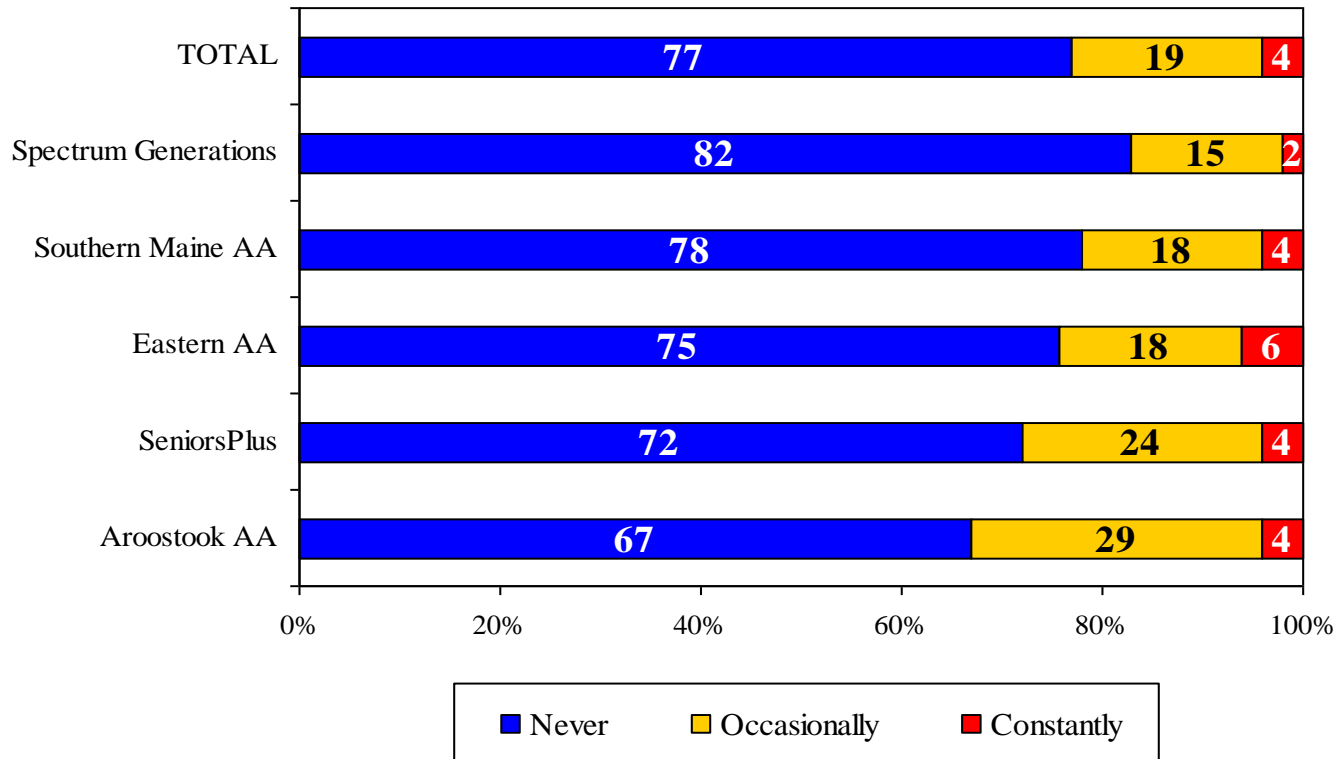






# Frequency of Worrying About Household Food Budget: *By Area Agency on Aging*

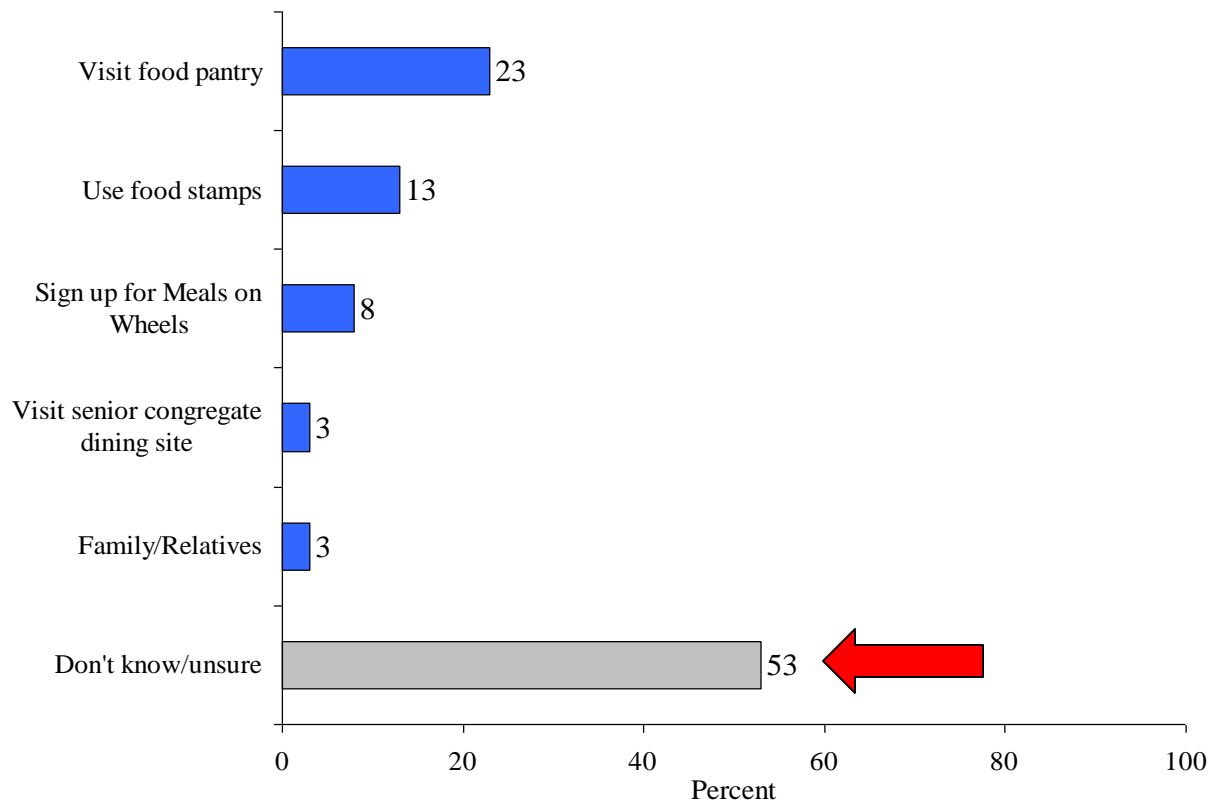
*Thinking now about your household food budget, how often do you worry that your household food budget will not be sufficient to meet your food needs? Would you say...*





# Food Assistance

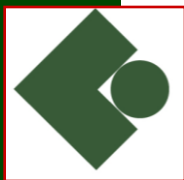
*If you needed help getting food, what programs or services would you attempt to use? \**



\* Multiple responses accepted. Top responses shown. Remaining responses can be found in the Detailed Tabulations.



# *Personal Safety*



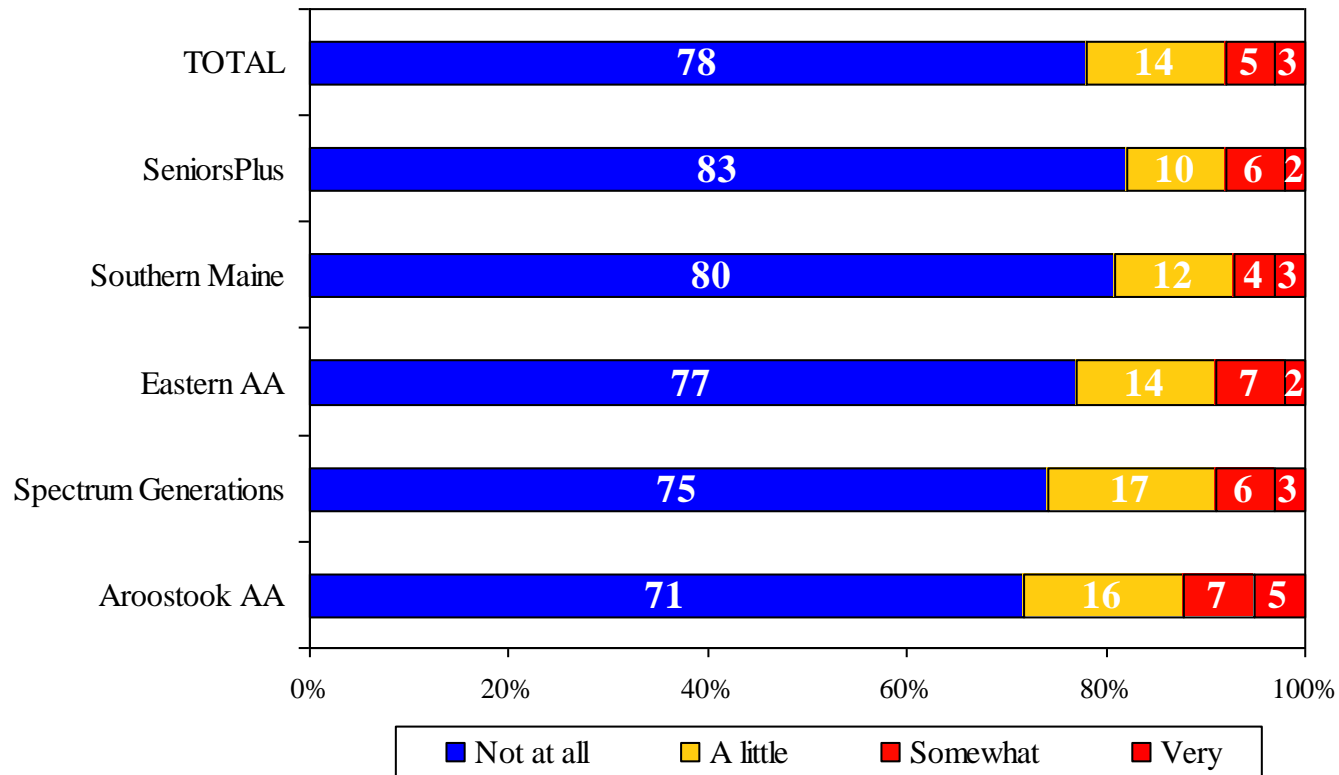
# Personal Safety

- 22% of respondents have some level of concern about their personal safety at home and 28% have some level of concern for safety in their communities. Of note:
  - Among respondents who are “somewhat” or “very concerned” about safety in the home, the most commonly cited reasons relate to physical safety (i.e. falling) rather than violence or crime.
  - However, 1% of respondents indicate concern for personal safety due to violence, threats of violence, or caregiver neglect.
  - In addition, 4% of respondents report being a victim of theft by someone living with them or providing care.
  - Younger respondents (50-64), multi-person households, and those with a higher SES tend to convey less worry than others about personal safety in their home.
  - There is significantly less concern about safety among those living in the Spectrum Generations, SeniorsPlus, and Southern Maine service areas than in other regions.



# Concern About Personal Safety in Home: *By Area Agency on Aging*

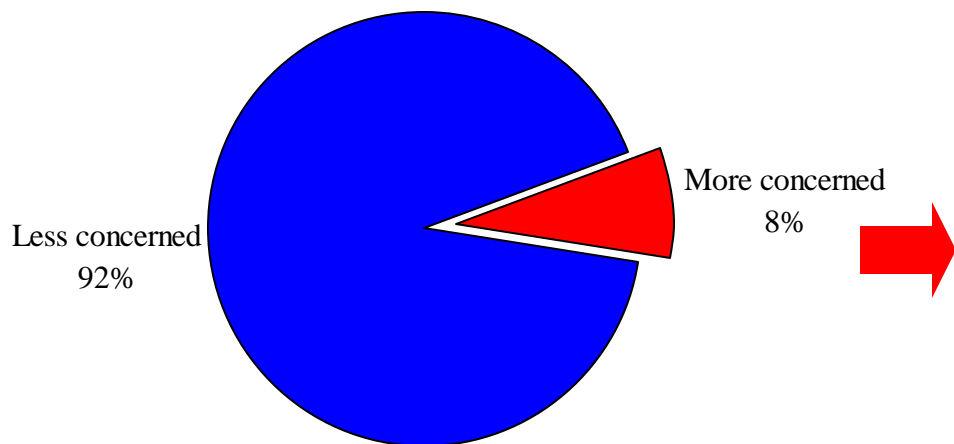
*How concerned are you about your personal safety in your home?*





# Concern About Personal Safety in Home

*How concerned are you about your personal safety in your home?*



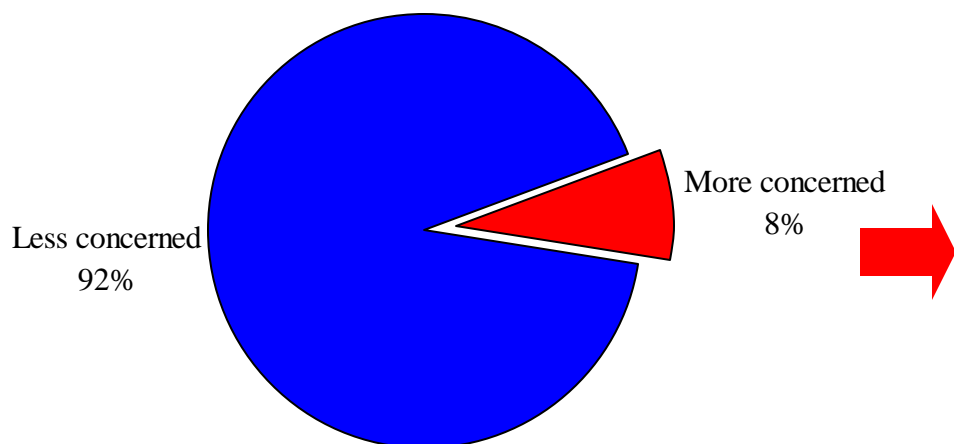
<i>If you are somewhat or very concerned, is it because you...*</i>	<b>Percent “Yes”</b>
Your home doesn't meet your physical needs	22%
Are experiencing physical violence or threats of violence	8
Your needs are not being met by a caregiver	6

\* Based on those who claim to be either “somewhat” or “very” concerned about safety in their home (n=82).



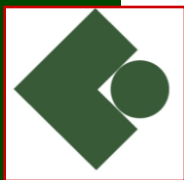
# Concern About Personal Safety in Home

*How concerned are you about your personal safety in your home?*



<i>Is there any other reason you are concerned about your personal safety in your home? *</i>	<b>Percent</b>
Falling	26%
Recent break-ins, robberies, assaults	13
House too big/Need ramp/House repairs, etc.	5
No other reason	41
Other	5
Don't know	8

\* Based on those who claim to be either “somewhat” or “very” concerned about safety in their home (n=82). Multiple responses accepted. Top responses shown. Remaining responses can be found in the Detailed Tabulations.



# Prevalence of Victimization

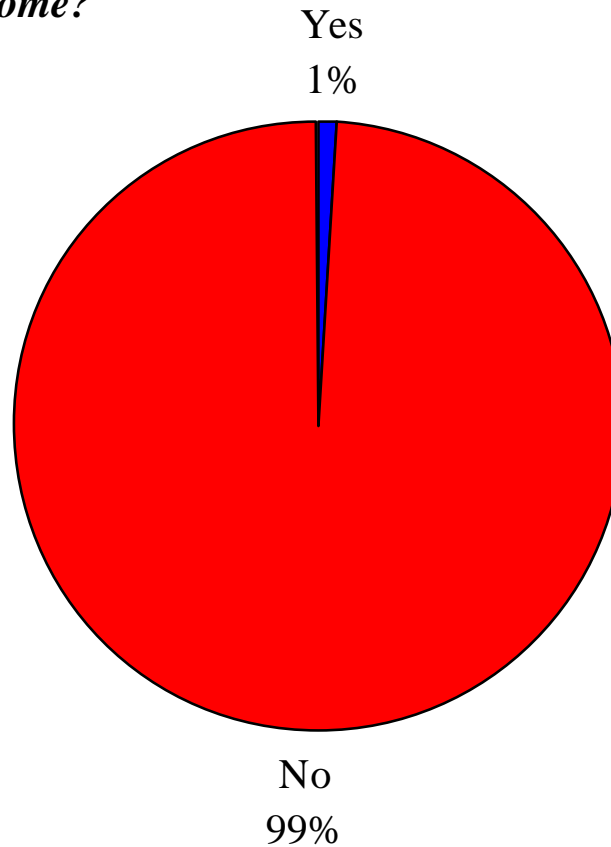
<i>In the past two years, has someone who lives with your or provides care to you done any of the following?</i>	<b>Percent “Yes”</b>
Stolen things from you?	3%
Used your money without your permission?	1
Made you give them something you did not want to give them?	< 1





# Prevalence of Others Using Medication Without Permission

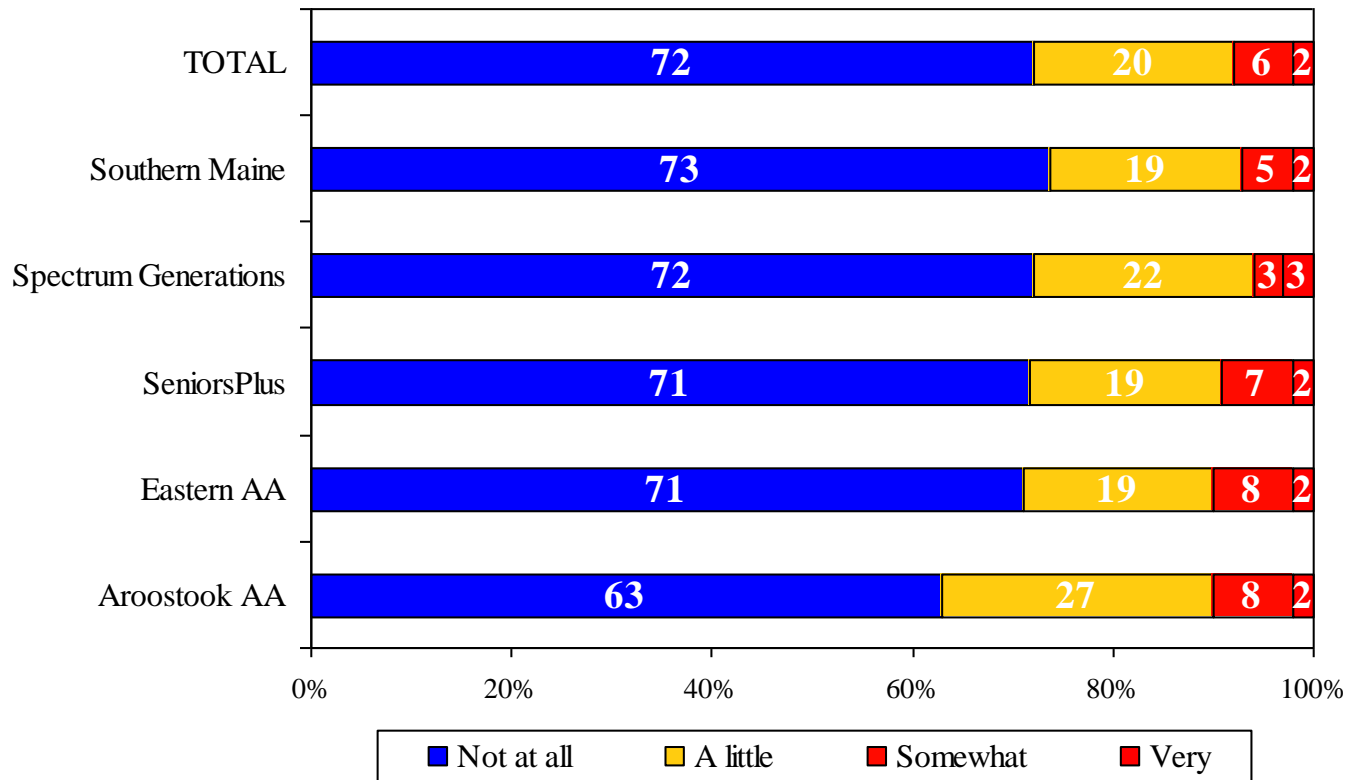
*Have others every used your medication without your permission or taken your medication from your home?*





# Concern About Personal Safety in Community: *By Area Agency on Aging*

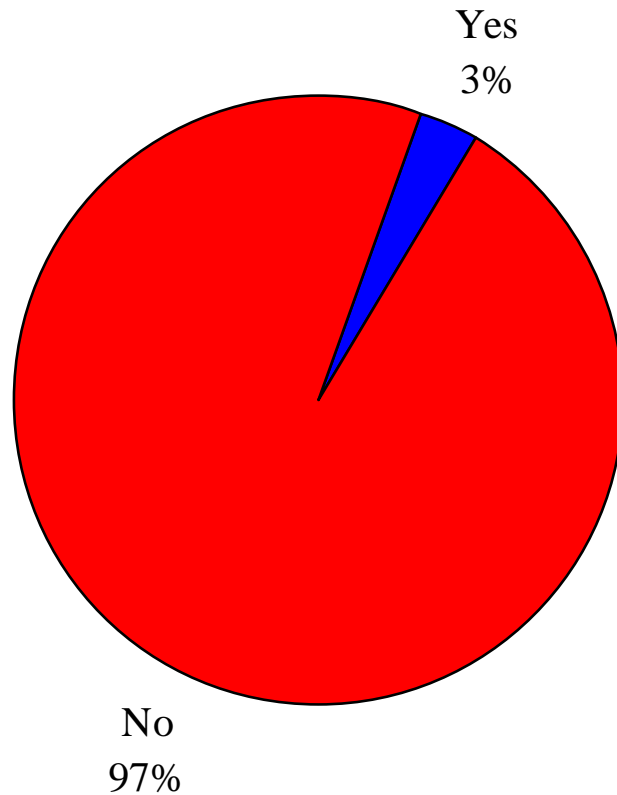
*How concerned are you about your personal safety in your community?*





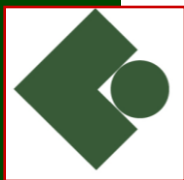
# Prevalence of Not Leaving Home Due to Concern About Safety

*Are there times when you don't leave your house because you're worried about your personal safety or the safety of your home?*





# *Caregiving*



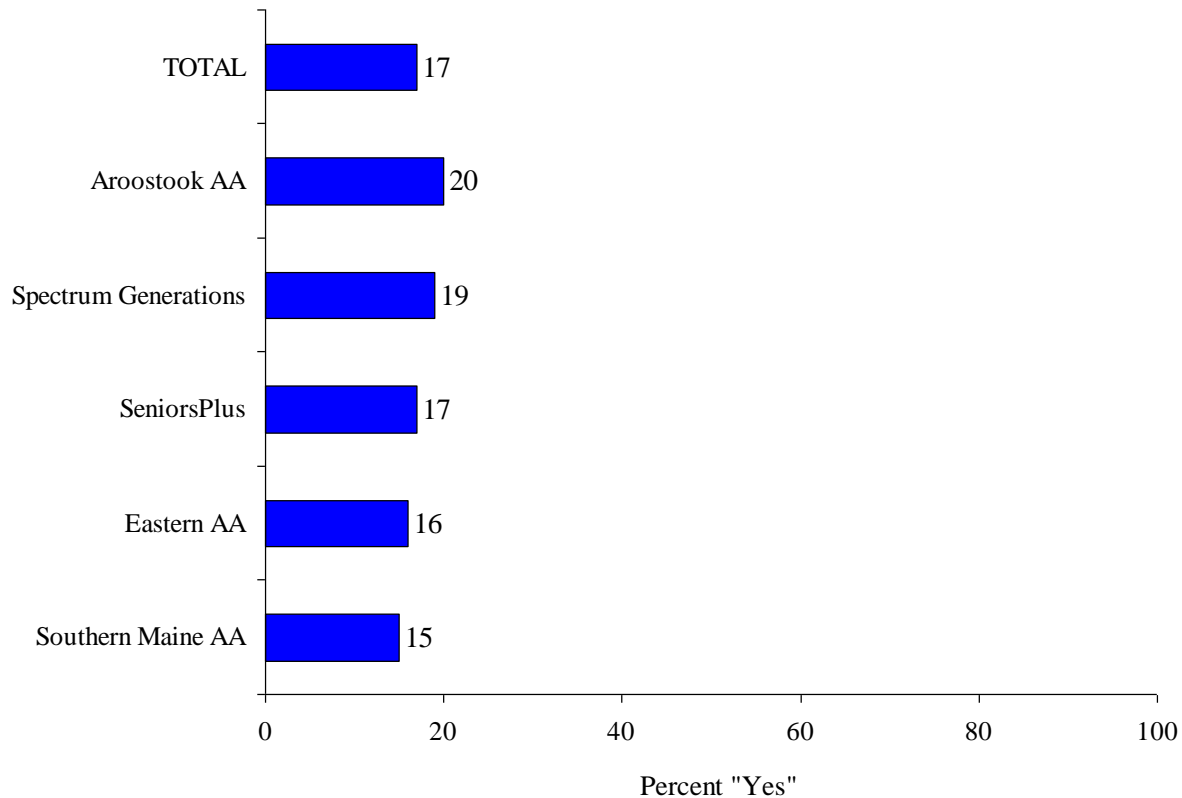
# Caregiving

- Nearly one-fifth of those surveyed assert that they are providing care for someone else who lives in their household.
  - More than 6-in-10 are providing care for just one other person in the home, and essentially the same proportion say that person is a spouse or significant other.
- Fully three-quarters of self-reported caregivers are performing daily living tasks such as meal preparation and cleaning.
  - Duties such as medical care, transportation, and help with nutrition/diet each garner roughly one-third of responses, while prescription medication assistance and help with finances each account for about one-quarter of caregiving tasks.
- Among the 6% of survey respondents who indicate receiving in-home care for themselves, others in the household, or both, daily living tasks are again the most frequently mentioned by a sizeable margin (66%), followed by transportation (25%) and self-care such as grooming (21%).
- Only 1-in-10 respondents overall, and 19% of self-reported caregivers, claim to have sought support or training.



# Caregiving Experiences: *By Area Agency on Aging*

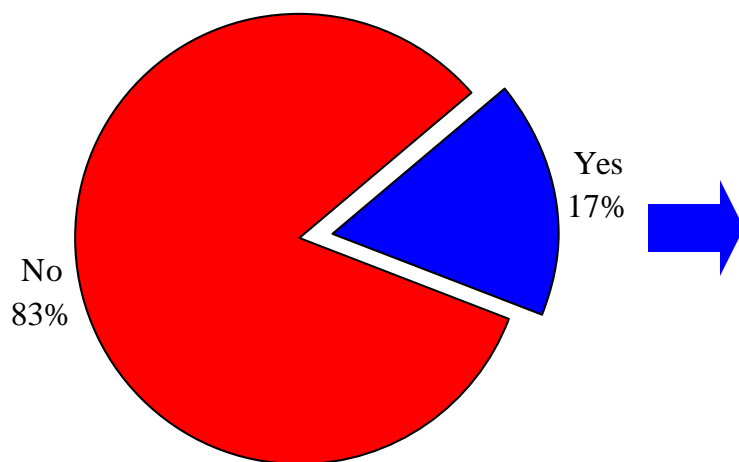
*Are you currently providing care for someone else who lives in your household?*





# Caregiving Experiences

*Are you currently providing care for someone else who lives in your household?*



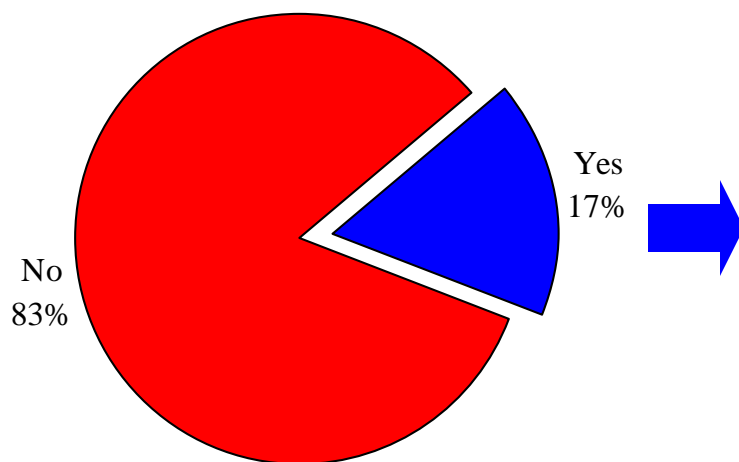
<i>How many people in your household are you providing care for? *</i>	<b>Percent</b>
One	64%
Two	22
Three or more	12

\* Based on those who claim to be providing care for another household member (n=168).



# Caregiving Experiences

*Are you currently providing care for someone else who lives in your household?*



<i>What is the relationship of this person/people to you? *</i>	<b>Percent</b>
Spouse/significant other	63%
Child	26
Parent or other elderly relative	17

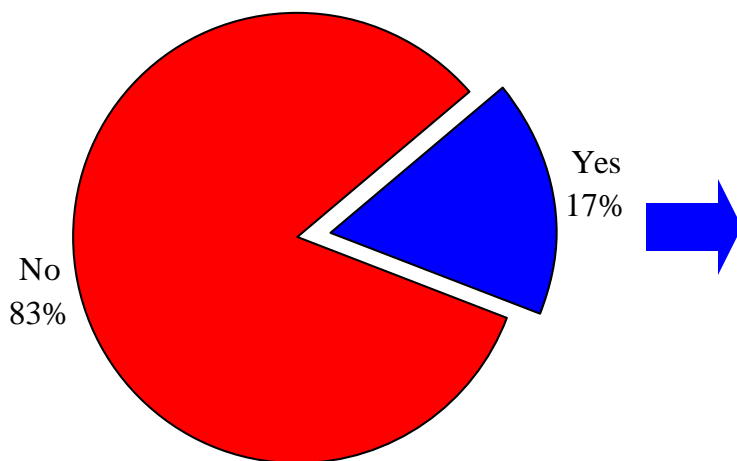
\* Based on those who claim to be providing care for another household member (n=168). Multiple responses accepted. Top responses shown. Remaining responses can be found in the Detailed Tabulations.





# Caregiving Experiences

*Are you currently providing care for someone else who lives in your household?*



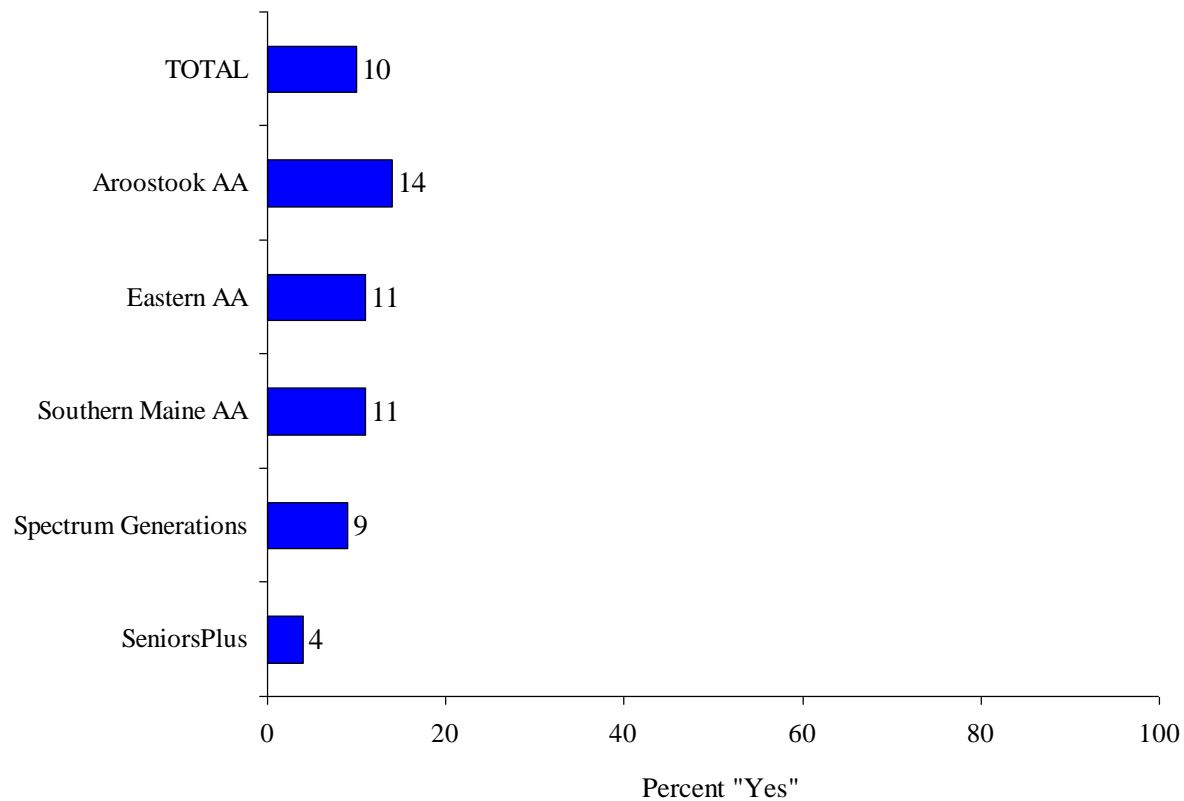
<i>What type of care do you provide to this person/people? *</i>	<b>Percent</b>
Daily living tasks (meal prep, cleaning, etc.)	75%
Medical care/Care for chronic medical condition(s)	34
Transportation	32
Nutrition & diet	31
Help with prescriptions/medications	25
Financial management/Bill paying	23
Grooming/Self-care	18

\* Based on those who claim to be providing care for another household member (n=168). Multiple responses accepted. Top responses shown. Remaining responses can be found in the Detailed Tabulations.



# Prevalence of Accessing Caregiver Support/Training: *By Area Agency on Aging*

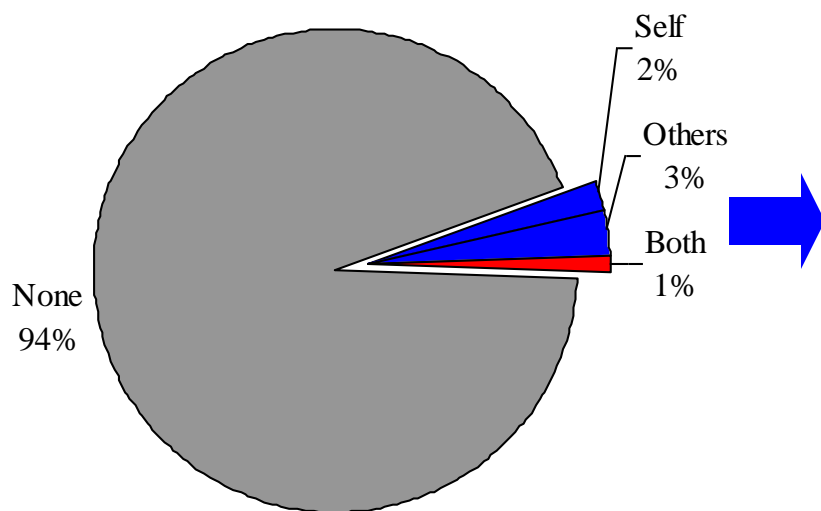
*Have you sought caregiver support or training?*





# Prevalence of Receiving Care in the Home

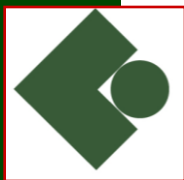
*Are you currently receiving in-home care from another person or outside organization for yourself or other person who lives in your household?*



10% of self-reported caregivers say they are receiving in-home care from someone else for others in their household.

<i>What type of care are you receiving for yourself or others in your household? *</i>	<b>Percent</b>
Daily living tasks (meal prep, cleaning, etc.)	66%
Transportation	25
Grooming/Self-care	21
Medical care/Care for chronic medical condition(s)	18
Help with prescriptions/medications	16
Nutrition & diet	11
Financial management/Bill paying	11

\* Based on those who claim they or another household member is receiving in-home care (n=55). Multiple responses accepted. Top responses shown. Remaining responses can be found in the Detailed Tabulations. Due to small base size, percentages should be interpreted with caution.



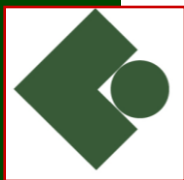
# Difficulties With In-Home Care

*Thinking now about your own situation, have you ever had difficulty:*

<i>Thinking now about your own situation, have you ever had difficulty:</i>	<b>Percent “Yes”</b>
Receiving sufficient care?	4%
Paying for in-home care?	2
Finding in-home care?	2
Keeping in-home care providers?	1



*Awareness of and Perceived Need for  
Elder Services*



# Awareness of and Need for Elder Services

- In terms of general awareness of elder resources and services, it is notable that fully 3-in-10 respondents claim they would not know how to find out about available elder services in their area.
  - About 20% would ask friends or relatives and an equal proportion would contact medical personnel; another 11% say they would use the Internet.
    - Women are more likely to claim they would employ a personal approach (ask friends/relatives/medical personnel), while men, younger respondents (50-64), and higher SES respondents would be more likely than others to use the Internet.
- When asked to predict what services they might need in the near future, more than 6-in-10 respondents are unsure.
  - Specific needs cited (transportation, in-home care, home maintenance, chronic disease management, etc.) garnered fewer than 10% of responses each, but tend to be more prevalent among respondents who live alone.
  - Younger and higher SES respondents are more likely to say they won't need any services in the near future.



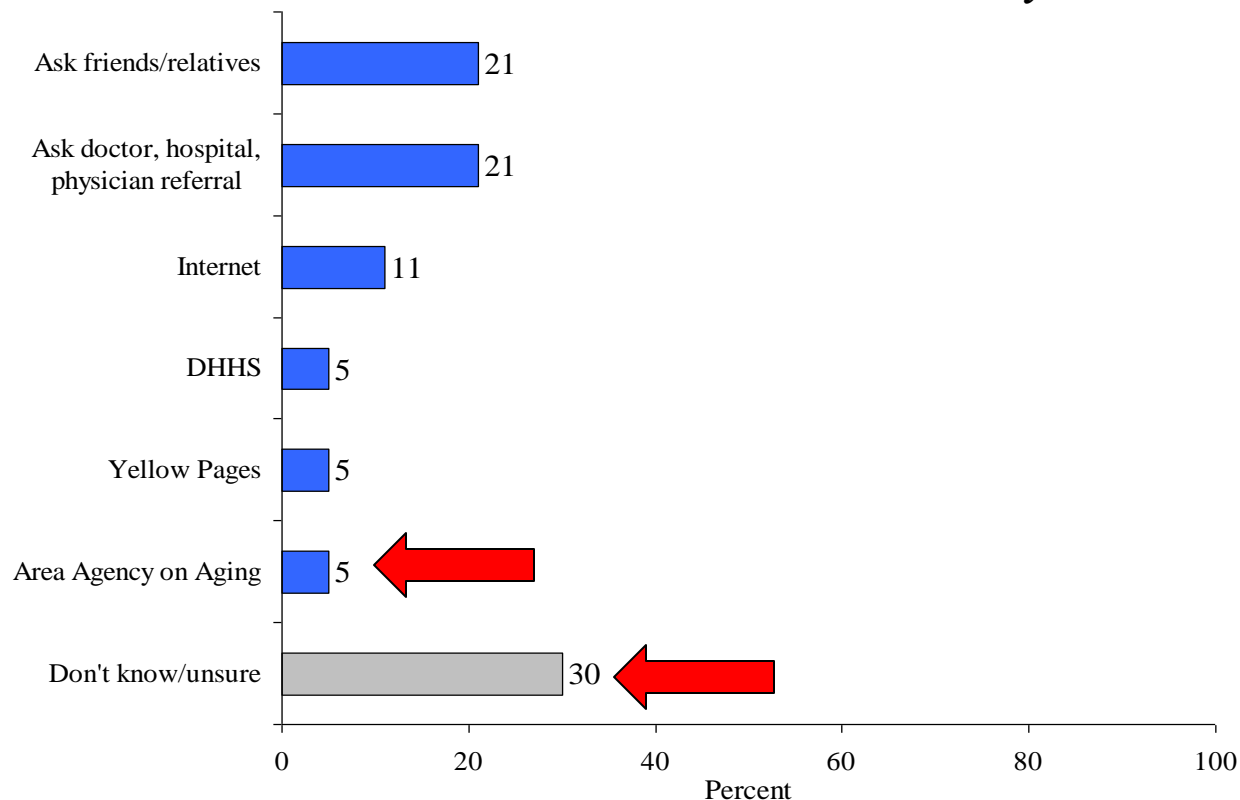
# Awareness of and Need for Elder Services

- While none of the specific services tested in the survey garnered majority support overall, residents of the Aroostook region are significantly more likely than others to say they would use all of the services measured if made available in their community.
  - The values associated with housekeeping services and programs to help with home repair are particularly high among Aroostook residents compared to the rest of the state (73% vs. 47% overall, and 71% vs. 47% overall, respectively).



# Resources Used to Find Elder Services

*If you or a close family member needed elder services, how would you most likely find out what was available in the area? What resources would you access? \**



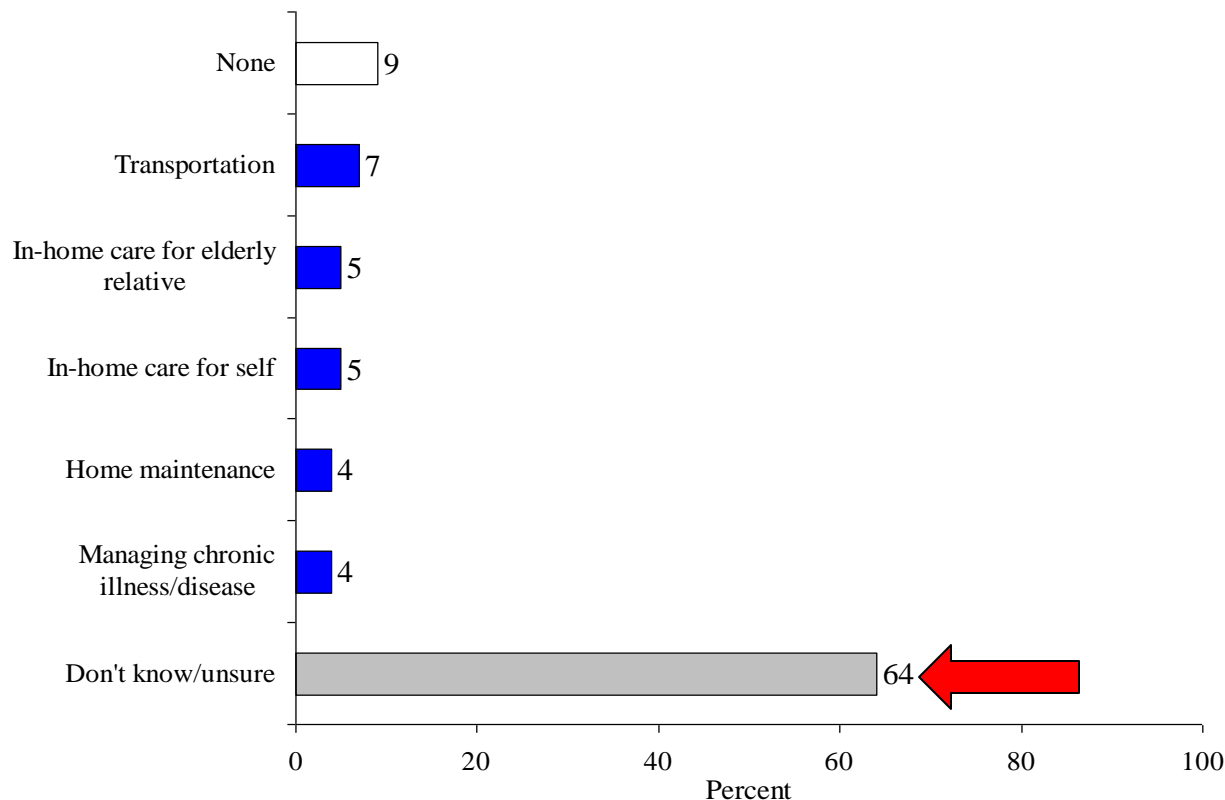
\* Multiple responses accepted. Top responses shown. Remaining responses can be found in the Detailed Tabulations.





# Perceived Need for Elder Services

*What services do you think you will need in the near future? \**

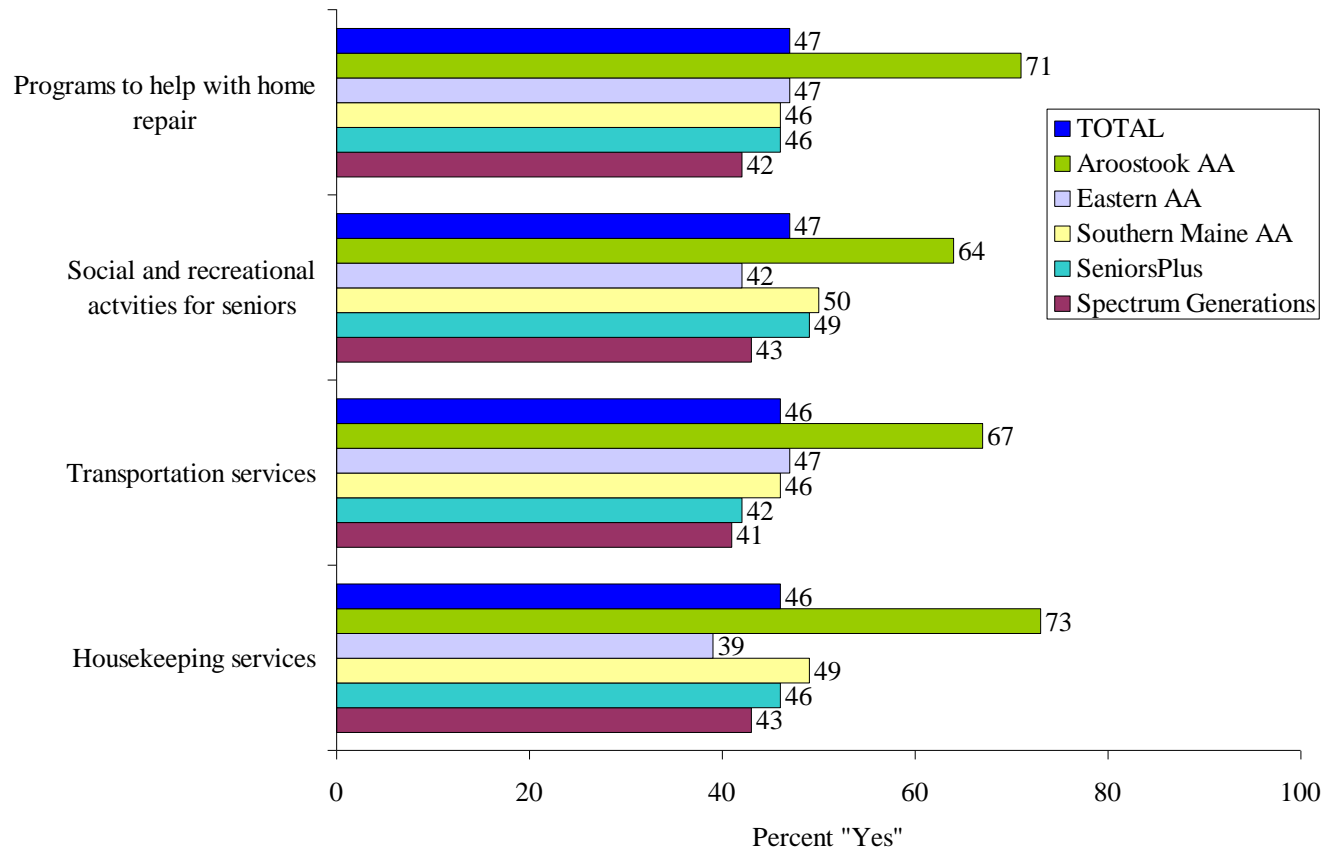


\* Multiple responses accepted. Top responses shown. Remaining responses can be found in the Detailed Tabulations.



# Potential Utilization of Specific Elder Services: *By Area Agency on Aging*

*Would you use these services if they were available in your community?*





# Potential Utilization of Specific Elder Services: *By Area Agency on Aging*

*Would you use these services if they were available in your community?*

