

# Aging and Long Term Care in Puerto Rico: The Role of Academic Public Health

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March 14, 2013

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# Topics

- The University of Puerto Rico Graduate School of Public Health
- The Profile of the Aging Population in Puerto Rico
- Advocacy and Future Directions

# UPR Graduate School of Public Health: Then

- School of Tropical Medicine, 1923
- Master in Sanitary Sciences, 1942
- Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health, 1950
  - School of Medicine
- Accredited School of Public Health, 1955
- Graduate School of Public Health, 1970

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# UPR Graduate School of Public Health: Present

- Faculty of Biosocial Sciences and Graduate School of Public Health, Medical Sciences Campus
  - Three doctoral programs
  - Fourteen Master Level Program
  - Four Graduate Certificates
- Students ~ 500
- Faculty ~ 120
- Research Portfolio
  - ~ \$20 million

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# UPR Graduate School of Public Health: Focus on Aging

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# Focus on Aging: What do we doing?

- Training the next generation of leaders in public health
- Developing the new knowledge on aging in Puerto Rico
- Advising and advocating for healthy aging

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# UPR GSPH: Focus on Aging

- Degrees & Certificates
  - Master in Public Health, Gerontology
  - Graduate Certificate in Gerontology
  - Doctoral Degrees
    - Social Determinants of Health
    - Health Systems Analysis
- Census & Vital Statistics Center
  - Demography program
- PREHCO Project
  - PR Elderly: Health Conditions
    - <http://prehco.rcm.upr.edu/>
- Network for Aging Adult Issues

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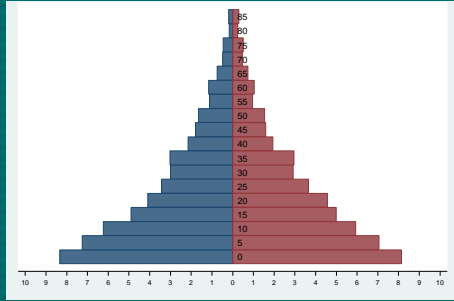
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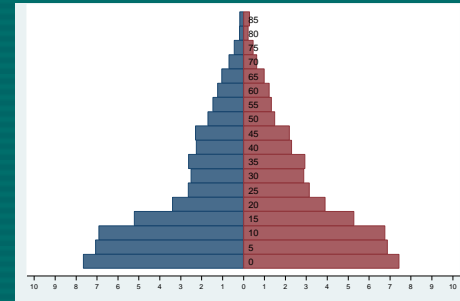
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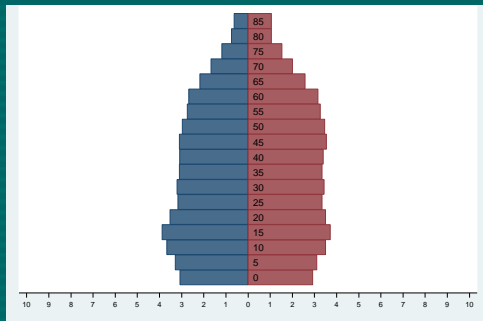
# Aging in Puerto Rico, 1950-2025



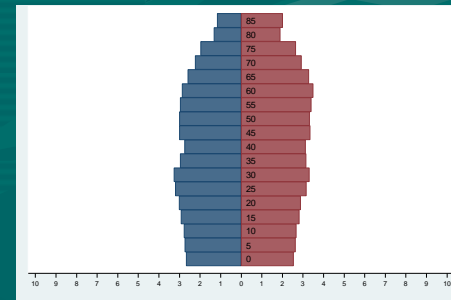
1950



1960



2010



2025

Courtesy of Dr. Hernando Mattei, Center for Census Data and Health Statistics

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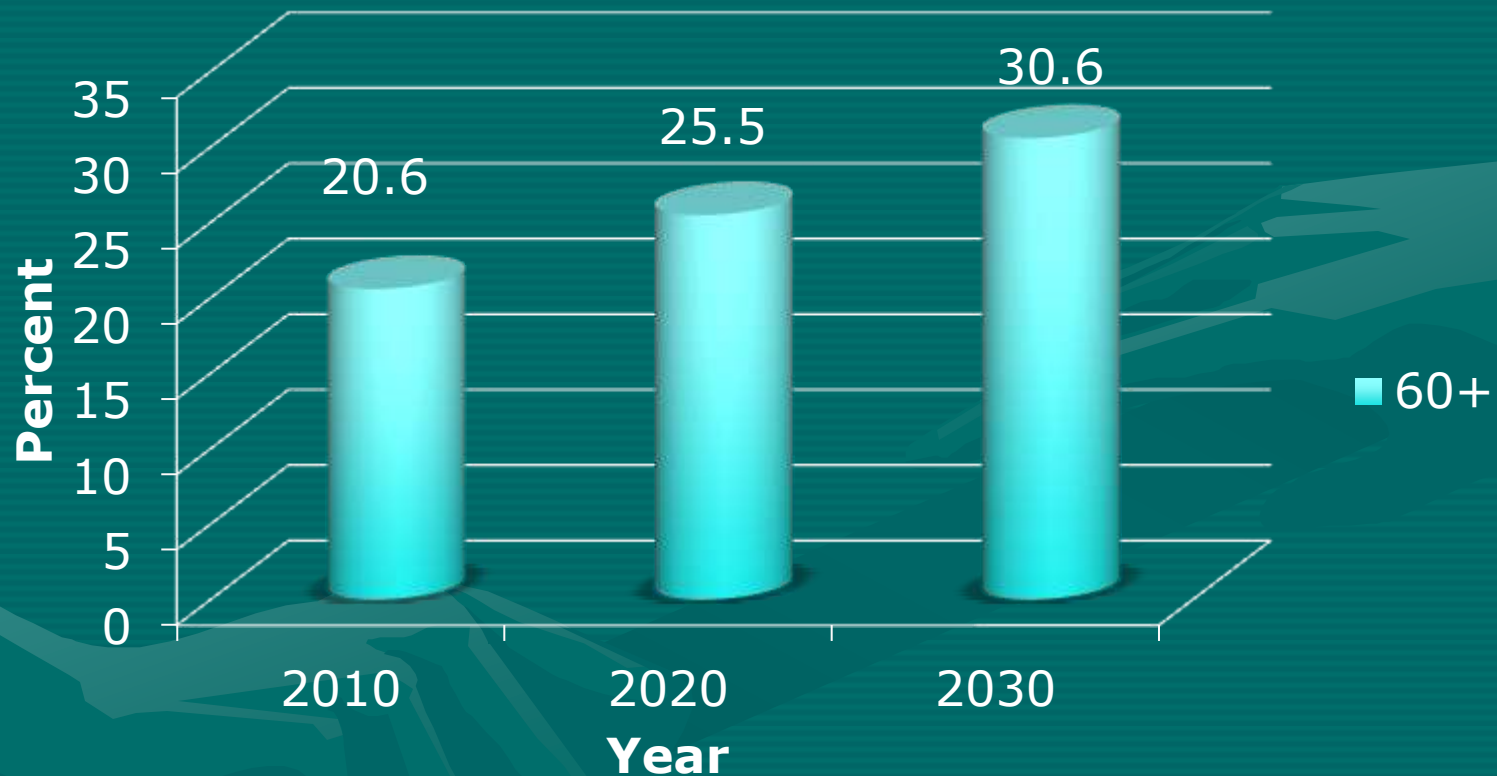
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# Aging in Puerto Rico, 60+ From 2010 to 2030



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# Aging in Puerto Rico: Profile

- Life expectancy
  - 79.1 years
    - Males 75.5
    - Females 82.8

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# Births in Puerto Rico are Declining

- 1960 ~ 76,000
- 1990 ~ 68,000
- 2000 ~ 50,000
- 2010 ~ 40,000

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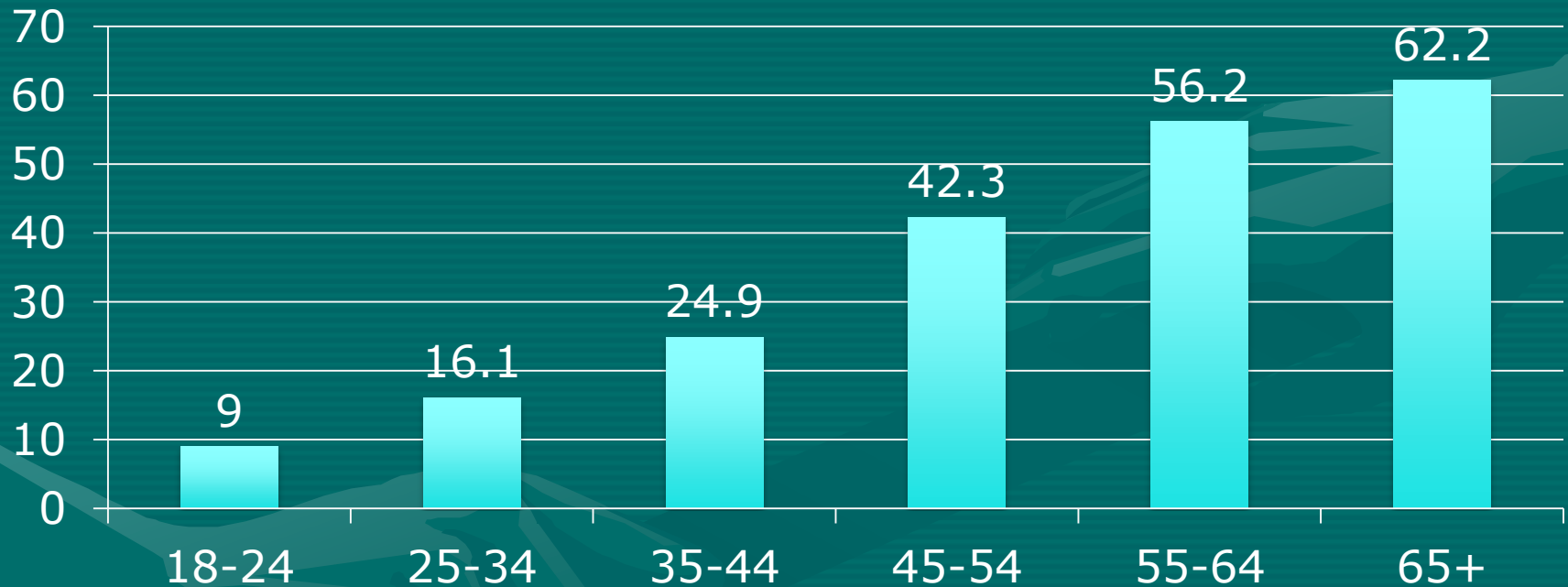
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# Health Status, By Age Group, Puerto Rico, 2011

## Poor or Fair



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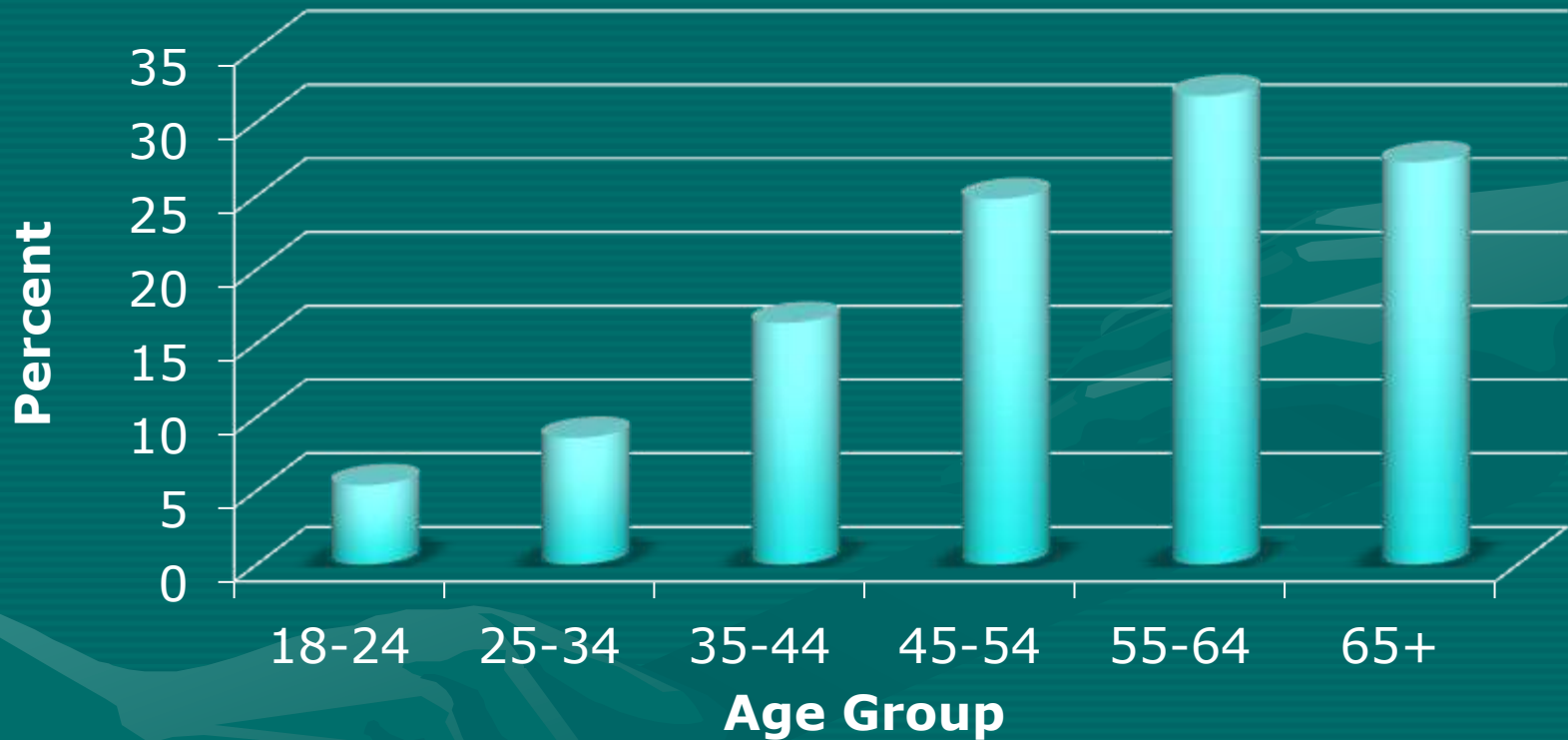
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# Disability, by Age Group, Puerto Rico, 2011



BRFSS: Accessed at <http://www.cdc.gov/brfss/>

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# PREHCO: A Resource

- A cross-sectional survey of adults 60+
  - Health status
  - Housing
  - Transportation
  - Labor history
  - Income
  - Health Insurance
  - Many others

Courtesy: Dr. Ana L Dávila, Department of Social Sciences

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# PREHCO Findings, 2003

- 16.5% of adults 60+ report being victims of some form of abuse or maltreatment
- Challenge of stigma, being and older adult

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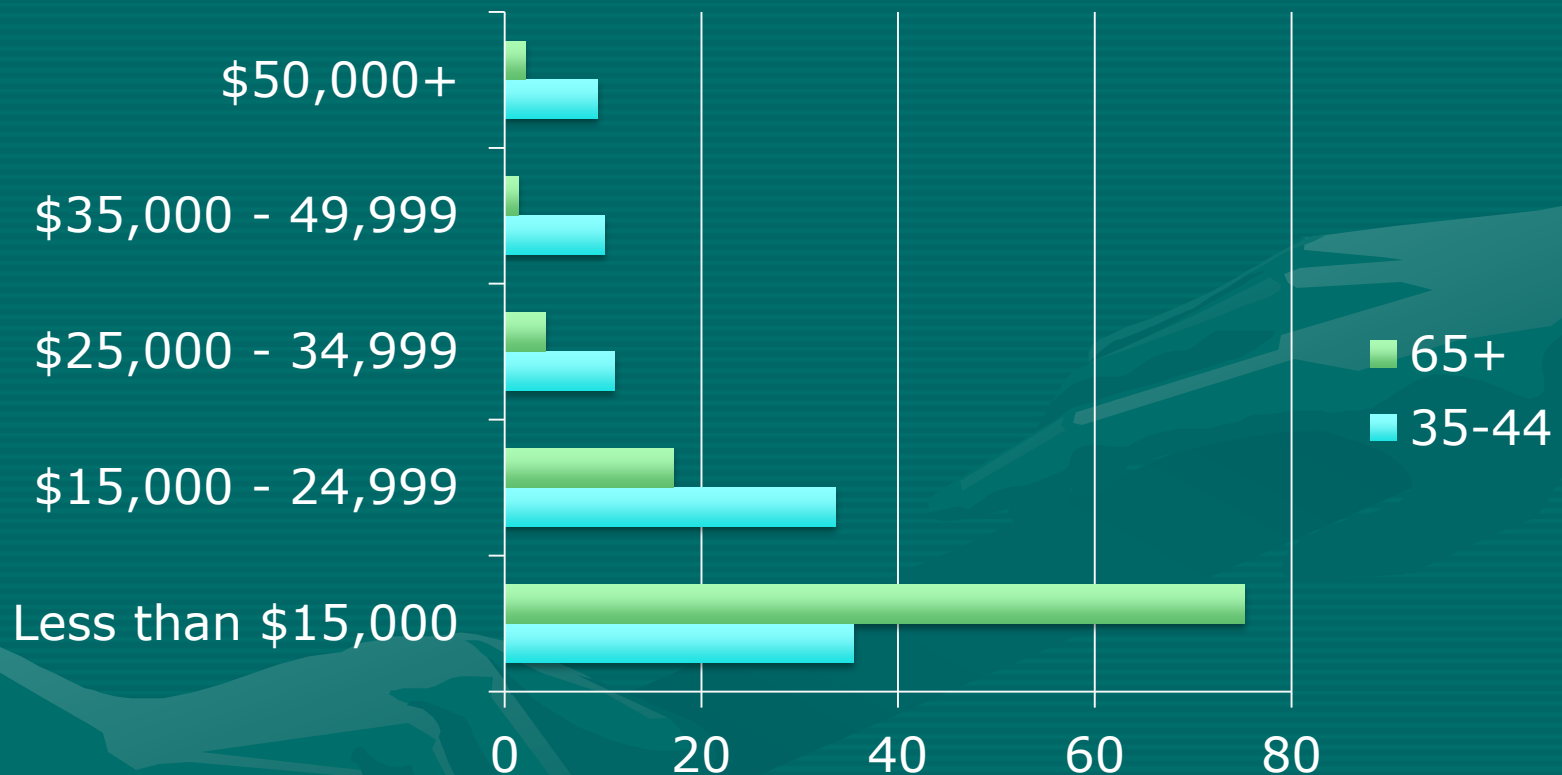
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# Annual Income, By Age, Puerto Rico, 2011



BRFSS: Accessed at <http://www.cdc.gov/brfss/>

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# Older Adults & The Workforce

- 12.4% of 60+ are working
- Reasons to stay in the labor force
  - Keep health insurance
  - Saving for retirement
  - Qualify for Social Security
  - Need the income
  - Pay for medicines

Courtesy: Dr. Carrión-Baralt

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# Healthy Living: The Older Adult Perspective

- What Older Adults perceive as their ideal healthy community living?
- What barriers they face?
  - Study of three communities
  - Older adults ~ 72-78 years
  - Locations: Caguas, Bayamón, San Juan

From: Ruiz Cora, Labault-Cabeza & Oliver Vázquez

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# Challenges Identified

- Transportation
  - Get to shopping, recreation, and services
- Walkability
  - Physical activity, safe neighborhood
- Social Support
  - Friends, family, church
- Health Services
  - Quality care and access
- Commerce and Shopping
- Safety
  - At home and in the street
- Recreation

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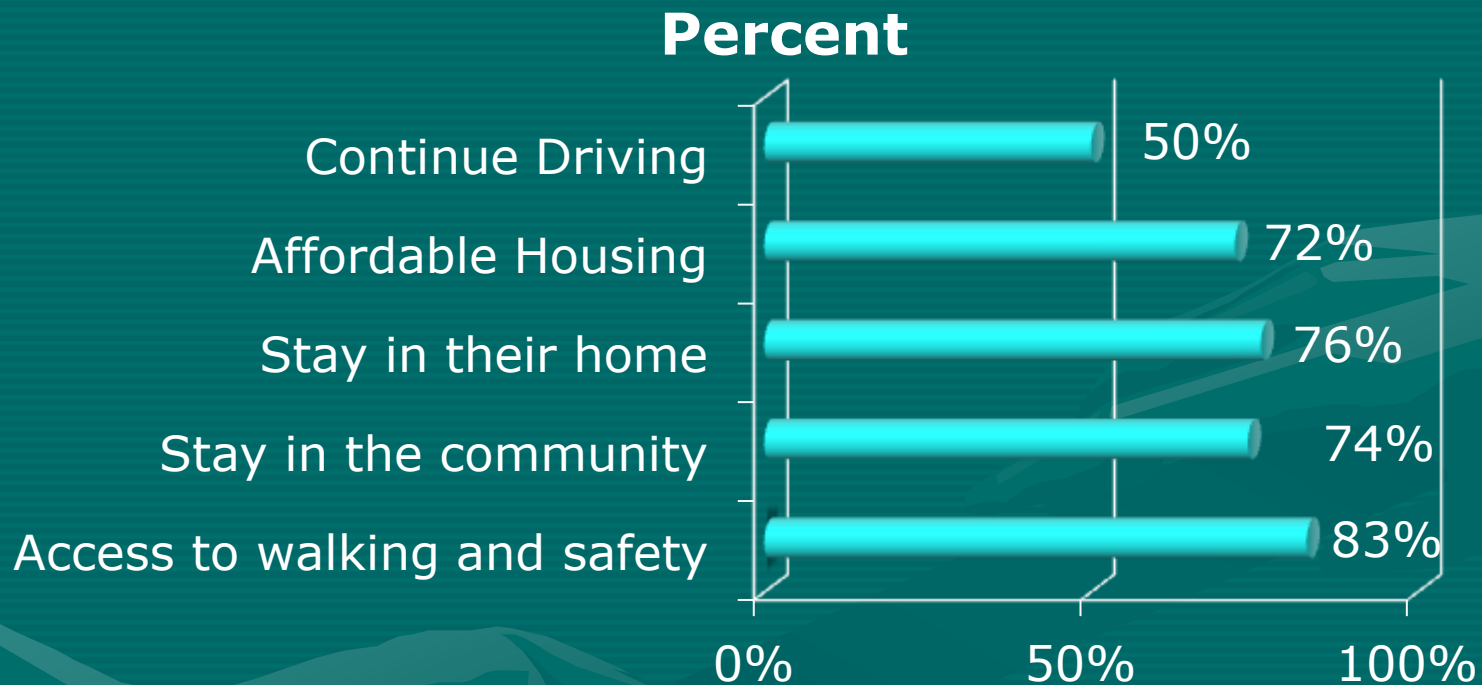
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# Older Adults Major Concerns, Puerto Rico, 2010



Courtesy of Dr. J Carrión Baralt, 2013

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# Network for Older Adults

- Agent of change to promote successful healthy aging
- Brings together organization from many sectors
- Focus on Education, Consulting, Advocacy, Research

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# Summary

- The Puerto Rico population has aged and will continue aging for many decades
- Aging Adults face many challenges to stay healthy, safe and fulfilled
- Addressing these challenges require a strong multisectorial effort, from housing, transportation, social services, health services, and safety

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**Gracias  
Thank You**

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