

Chinese Community Center
The Houston Asian Senior Needs Assessment Survey

Abstract

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The Houston Asian Senior Needs Assessment Survey

The Long-range Planning Committee of the Chinese Community Center (CCC) conducted a needs assessment surveying the elder Asian population in Houston and the Greater Houston Area in consultation with the Asian Senior Coalition. The Graduate College of Social Work at the University of Houston (UH-GCSW) provided technical support for the project. The goals of the needs assessment study were: (1) to understand the needs of the Asian elderly; (2) to prioritize the needs as identified by the Asian elders; and (3) to provide recommendations to the Asian Senior Coalition and the Asian communities. The instrument was developed by the staff of CCC in consultation with the Asian communities and UH-GCSW. Data collection started in October, 2012 and ended on January 31, 2013. Data were collected from nursing homes, senior housing, social service agencies, and local Asian communities. About 1,200 surveys were distributed in the Asian communities.

The findings indicate that the following areas exceeded 10% of the respondents who need help “with minor home repairs” (13.8%), “finding affordable utility services” (24%), finding an affordable place to live” (12.1%), “finding a safe place to live” (11.3%), and “choosing housing made for seniors” (17.9%). The following learning items exceeded 10% of the respondents who want to learn how to “protect myself from crimes/scams” (25.4%), “manage my health” (39.1%), “find affordable meals” (18%), “use metro buses” (19%), “use a computer” (26.4%), and “use a phone” (12.5%). The following areas exceeded 10% of the respondents who need help getting to and from a place they go to “learn something I like” (18.2%), “get food” (18.6%), “have fun with other people” (22.2%), “for my religion, culture or spirit” (26.1%), “exercise my body” (19%), and “get medical services” (28.4%). The results show that the elders surveyed ranked both their health and social life needs as high priority. Regarding “I need help with” items, the following areas exceeded 10% of the respondents who needed assistance with “grocery shopping” (12.6%), “cleaning” (13.9%), “exercising” (11.9%), “improving my strength” (13.3%), “improving my memory” (19.1%), “improving my speech” (13.5%), “translation” (16.5%), improving my health” (22.2%), “managing my disease” (14%), and “understanding doctor’s directions” (18.9%).

In regards to adult caregiving, the majority of the elders (66.3%) did not report receiving any caregiving. Of those who reported that someone takes care of them (33.7%), 21% indicated the caregiver is a family or friend. Of the 33.7% caregivers, 10.2% received pay. Elders who do not receive any caregiving attribute this to their inability to afford someone to help them (11%), while over 39% report they do not need assistance. More than 20% of participants reported they take care of someone, and more than 20% indicated that the person they take care of is a family member or friend. A significant percentage of elders (25.9%) indicated they do not want to take care of someone.

Concerning healthcare, most participants reported having a regular doctor (82.4%) and an annual health check-up (87.2%). However, a high percentage of respondents (67.4%) admitted to having a “health condition that needs regular care by a doctor.” Of these participants, most fall

into the categories of Medicaid recipients, elders with health insurance, elders receiving money from SSI, elders not receiving money from employment, elders living in the U.S. less than 5 years, elders over 76 years old, elders living in senior housing, elders not living with family or friends, elders living with a spouse, and elders below poverty level. Certainly, the most vulnerable populations are those with a health condition who are living below the poverty level, those over 76 years old, those not receiving money from employment (perhaps unemployed), and those living in the U.S. less than 5 years.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from this study, we recommend that:

1. More workshops are needed in the following areas: with minor home repairs, finding affordable utility services, finding an affordable place to live, finding a safe place to live, and choosing housing made for seniors.
2. More workshops are needed on how to: protect seniors from crimes/scams, manage my health, find affordable meals, use metro buses, use a computer, and use a phone.
3. More information should be provided on getting to and from a place they go to: learn something I like, get food, have fun with other people, for my religion, culture or spirit, exercise my body, and get medical services.
4. More services be provided to seniors in: grocery shopping, cleaning, exercising, improving my strength, improving my memory, improving my speech, translation, “improving my health, managing my disease, and understanding doctor’s directions.
5. More workshops are needed in assisting elderly under poverty level in: finding an affordable place to live, finding a safe place to live, choosing housing made for seniors, and finding affordable utility services.
6. More social activity opportunities are needed for male seniors to reach social life needs.
7. Outreach volunteers are required to visit seniors on a regular basis in order to connect with seniors and assess their daily needs.
8. More information sessions are needed to provide elderly under poverty level in daily life tips on how to: protect myself from crimes/scams, manage my health, find affordable medical services, find affordable meals (food), pay a bill, use metro buses, and use a computer.
9. More support services are to be provided to seniors who live alone in addressing: minor and major home repairs, home modification, affordable utility services, an affordable place to live, and how to choose housing made for seniors.
10. More support services are also needed for elders who live alone in: assisting them in walking, cooking, grocery shopping, laundry, cleaning, and exercising.
11. More support services are needed for elders who live with their spouse in: finding affordable utility services, finding a safe place to live, choosing housing made for seniors, finding a job, and finding affordable meals (food).

12. More support services are to be developed for elders not living in senior housing in: minor and major home repairs, finding affordable utility services, and finding an affordable place to live.
13. More support services to be provided to elders in senior housing in: getting food, shopping, improving elders' speech, and translation.
14. More support services are needed for seniors who received money from SSI in: finding affordable utility services, an affordable place to live, and choosing housing made for seniors.
15. More support services are needed for elders with no health insurance in: using a phone, and finding a job.
16. More support services are needed for non-Medicare elderly participants in: exercising their bodies, getting medical services, improving their speech, improving their health, managing disease, understanding doctor's directions, and making translations.
17. More support services are needed for Medicaid elderly participants in: finding affordable utility services, finding an affordable place to live, finding a safe place to live, choosing housing made for seniors, finding affordable meals, managing their health, paying a bill, using a phone, learning something that they like, getting food, shopping, having fun with other people, having fun by themselves, getting medical services, and participating in their religion, culture or spiritual activities.