



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

**INADEQUATE HEALTH SERVICES AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR THE ELDERLY MAY
CONTRIBUTE TO DIMINISHED HEALTH AND DISABILITY**

A briefing was held by the National Journal and other organizations on an “Aging Nation: Impact on America’s Senior Population”. Presenters at the briefing were journalists, a media specialist, and representatives of consumers of the elderly, policy experts on aging, public health scholars, minority representatives, and experts on personal finance.

Summary Retirement of elderly populations is generally viewed as a positive event by them, Retirement can mean not having to work, living comfortably, reaching a certain age, spending more time with the family and increased recreational opportunities. The level of trust of the elderly for financial, corporate and government institutions has eroded on solutions to provide expected benefits of retirees. Seventy percent of Americans think the country is on the wrong track with respect to provision of adequate retirement income. Many people believe they will be less secure than their parents. For instance, average retirement age is 59 years of age and 28% of retirees find it difficult to save or make ends meet every month. Retirement problems are on the increase because of increased basic living expenses, job losses, increases in health care expenses, and loss of investment income. Sixty five percent of retirees say Social Security will be the major source of income in retirement. Forty three percent of potential retirees believe they will have to work during retirement because of necessity. There is a perception that the economic down turn of the late 2000 will have a lasting effect on the long term impact of retirement. Twenty eight percent of retirees are not living in their homes independently and there are doubts that many retirees will be able to cover long term care expenses.

Disability Prevention Issues Elderly people are of poorer health than younger populations and are at risk of diminished health and disability. Fifty eight percent of people who are elderly are of fair or poor health. Many elderly people, in retirement, face economic hardships that adversely affect their health. For instance, 41% of retirees indicate they are not healthy enough to work, and half have worries that they will not be able to pay for health care cost, These stressful conditions about retirement may further adversely affect mental and physical health of some retirees. Other stressful conditions during retirement that may diminish health and contribute to disability are outliving retirement money.

Activity There is on-going study of policies that affect the health of people who are elderly.

Principle Elderly people should have adequate fiscal and health resources that prevent unnecessary diminished health and disability.