

## Section 5. Research Findings

### 2. Description of Human Needs of Senior/Elder Cape Codders

#### Household Issues

As a part of the Monitoring The Human Condition on Cape Cod Study, respondents from households with senior/elder member(s) were asked to detail the types of issues and challenges that may have recently been a problem in their own household. Respondents chose topics from a list of potential problems that they or members of their household might have encountered during the previous twelve months. Further, survey respondents were asked to estimate how serious each of those issues was in their household. This way, potential issues and challenges affecting Cape senior/elder households have been determined and ranked as to degree of seriousness. From these overall rankings, a “picture” of the most serious, and least serious issues affecting senior/elders was revealed, at the household level, at the town level, and at the County level. Knowing which issues are the most serious, where they exist, and for whom they have been a problem, will aid human service planners, program funders, legislative leaders, and other policy advocates to develop, adapt, and lobby for human services to best satisfy the unmet needs of senior/elder Cape Codders.

Many respondents from households with a senior/elder that were surveyed reported having had such problems. The most serious issues are graphically illustrated in Figures 5.3.1 and 5.3.3.

#### Potential Issues and Challenges

##### *Potentially, What are the Human Needs?*

Potential issues and challenges thought to be relevant to senior/elder households responding to the **Monitoring The Human Condition on Cape Cod Study (“MTHC”)** survey include the following:

- Adult substance abuse (alcohol, drugs, etc.)
- A lot of depression in the household
- Children or teenagers experiencing emotional problems
- Discrimination (due to HIV, AIDS, TB, etc.)
- Discrimination (due to race, age, language, sexual identity/orientation, etc.)
- Discrimination toward mentally ill persons
- Experiencing an alcohol or drug problem
- Experiencing physical conflict in the household
- Having a lot of anxiety or stress in the household
- Immigration status or visa disputes
- Inadequate opportunities to learn new skills or for advancement at work
- Inadequate time for recreation
- Not being able to afford nutritious food
- Not being able to find appropriate senior (65+) housing
- Not always having enough money for food
- Not being able to afford legal help
- Not being able to afford recreational/leisure-time activities
- Not being able to find or afford after-school child care

- Not being able to find or afford child day care
- Not enough room in your house for all the people who live there
- Not having enough money to pay for housing
- Not having enough money to pay the doctor, the dentist, or to buy prescriptions
- Paying for a mental health counselor
- Paying for or getting dental [insurance] care
- Seriously overweight person(s) in household
- Underage drinking
- Underage smoking or other tobacco use

### **Potential Barriers to Assessing Needed Senior/Elder-Related Human Services**

Respondents to the Monitoring The Human Condition on Cape Cod Study survey from households with a senior/elder member were also asked to detail the types of barriers that they or members of their household have encountered in attempting to access needed human services on Cape Cod during the previous twelve months. Further, survey respondents were asked to estimate how serious each of those service barriers had been in their household. This way, potential barriers to service access affecting senior/elder Cape households have been determined and ranked as to degree of seriousness. From these overall rankings the most serious and least serious service access barriers affecting senior/elders have been revealed, at the household level, at the town level, and at the County level. Knowing which access barriers are the most serious, where they exist, and for whom they have recently caused difficulty, will aid in the development of human service programs that best satisfy the needs of senior/elder Cape Codders.

Respondents from some households with a senior/elder reported encountering barriers to accessing needed human services. The most serious barriers to human service access are graphically illustrated in Figures 5.3.2 and 5.3.4.

### **Potential Barriers to Service**

#### ***Potentially, What are the Barriers to Service?***

Potential barriers to accessing human services relevant to senior/elder households responding to the **Monitoring The Human Condition on Cape Cod Study** survey include:

- Cost of taking time away from work
- Could not afford fees or costs for services
- Feelings of discrimination
- Hours of services were not convenient
- Insurance not being accepted for services
- Lack of information on where to go for services
- Lack of transportation
- Lacked information on available services
- Lacked handicap access
- Paying insurance deductible/co-payment
- Services located too far away
- Services not in appropriate place or part of town
- Service(s) not accepting new patients/clients
- Unable to take time away from work to go to service