

# Fall Prevention at your Doorstep: A Howard County Alliance

## OUR VISION

A resilient community where everyone participates in the efforts to reduce falls for older adults who helped build our community.

#accidental falls #aged #communityhealthservices



## Did you Know?

In the United States (U.S.), falls are the leading cause of both injury and injury-related death among adults ages 65 and older.<sup>11</sup>

More than 1 in 4 older adults fall each year leading to

41,000

deaths

3.6M

emergency room visits

1.2M

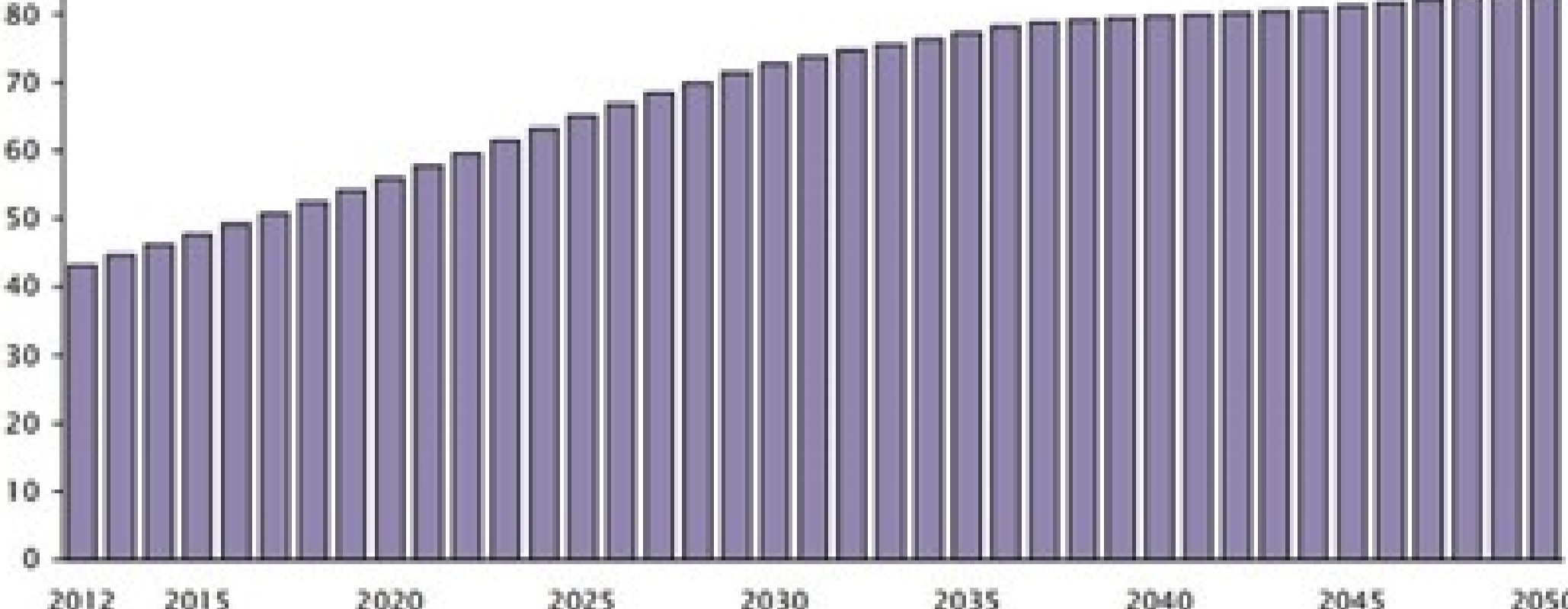
hospital stays

\$80 billion

annual medical costs

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2024)

Population Aged 65 and over for the U.S. 2012 to 2050

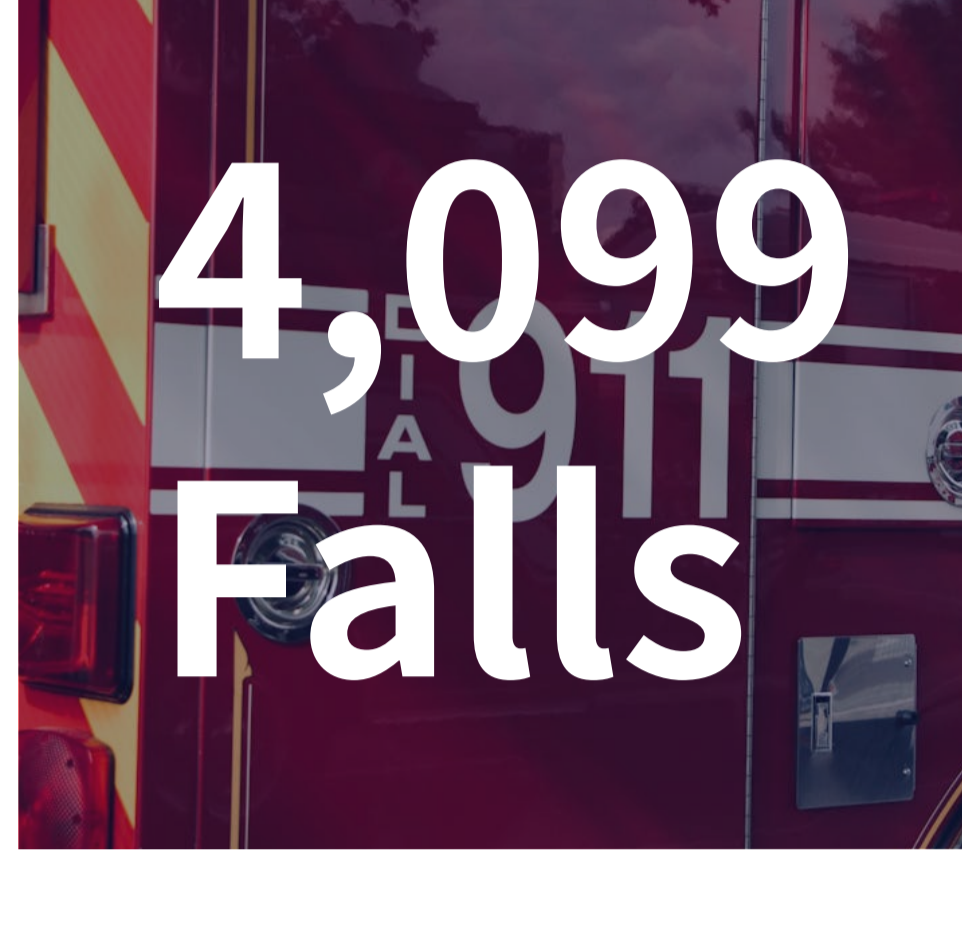


From "An Aging Nation: The older population in the U.S."

**Facts**

1. The aging population will increase by 47% in 2050.<sup>8</sup>
2. Falls are a public health concern.<sup>6</sup>
3. More than 50% of falls occur in the home.<sup>10</sup>

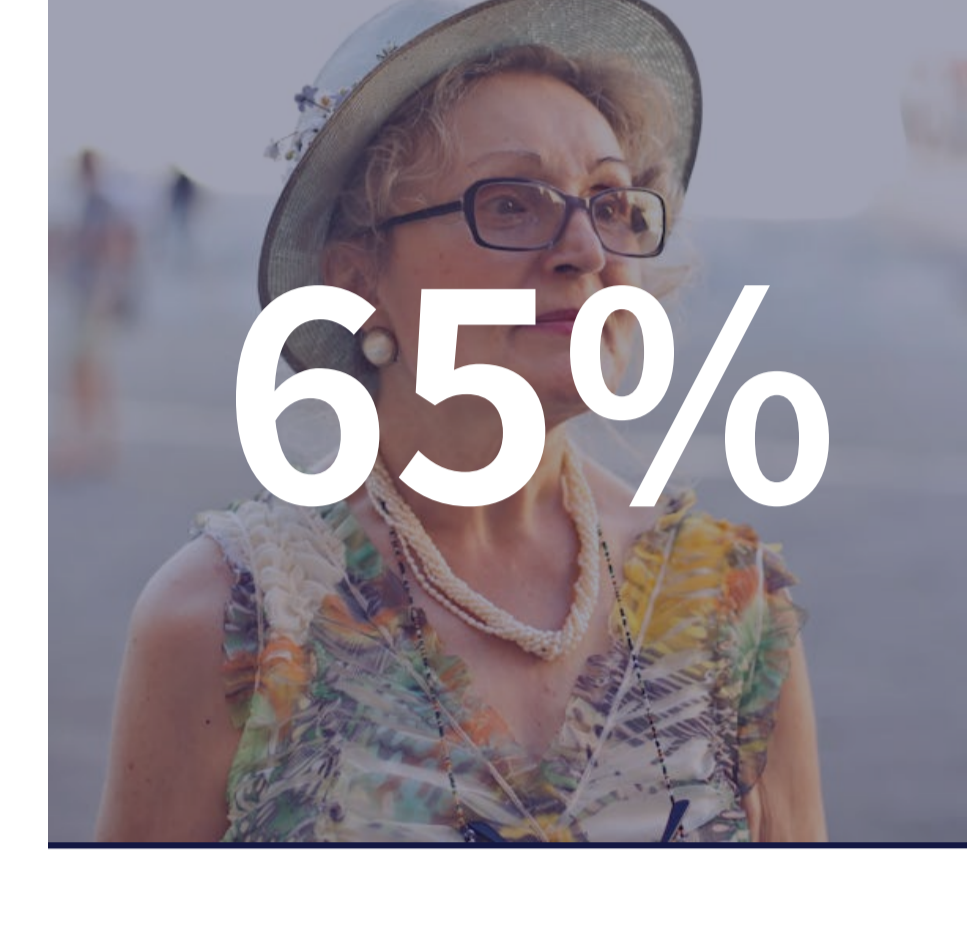
## 2023 | Howard County, MD



Falls were the leading cause of calls to 911.<sup>4</sup>

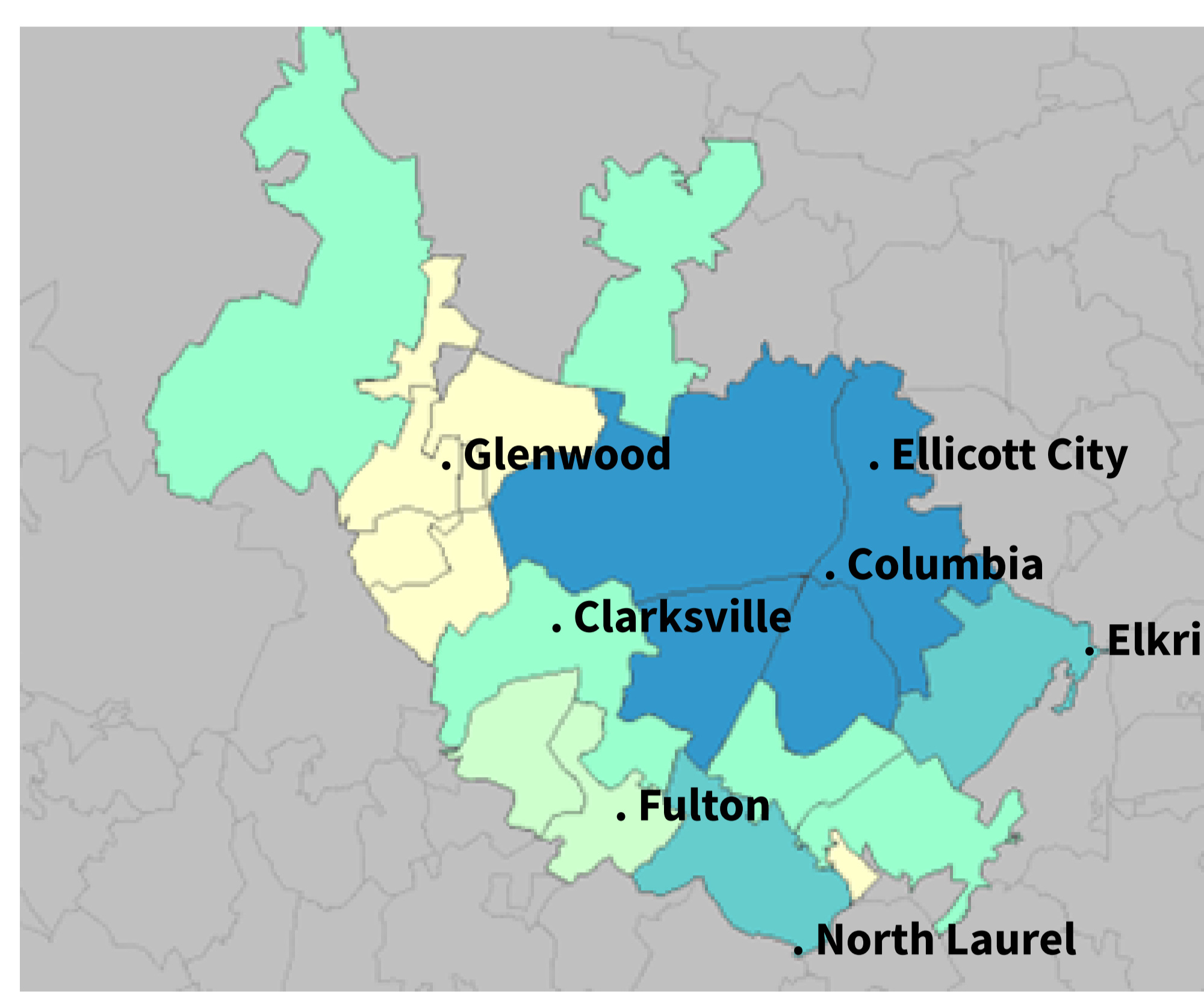
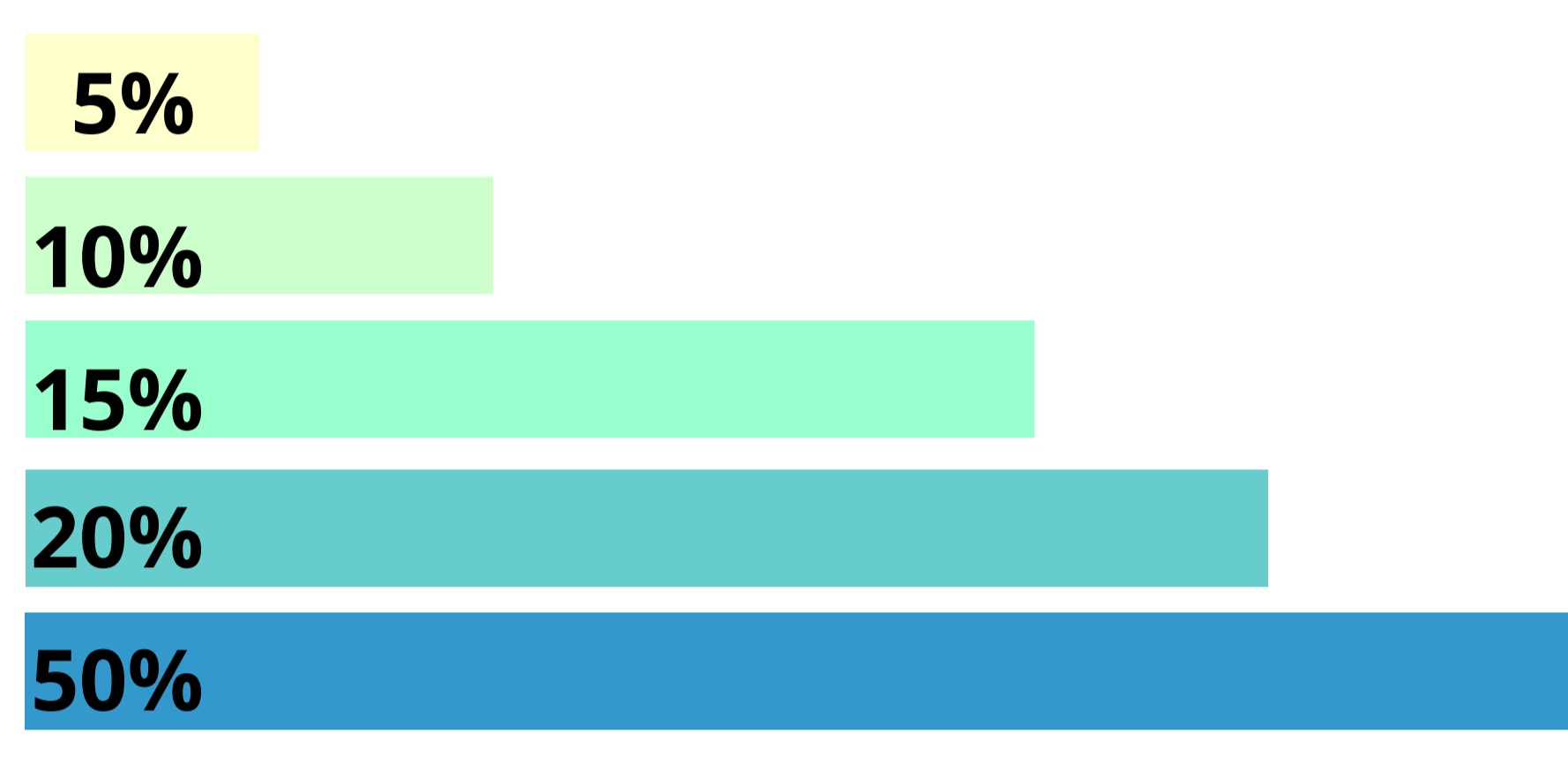


Percentage of falls that occurred in 65+ Communities.<sup>4</sup>



White women experienced the highest percentage of falls.<sup>4</sup>

## Number of Falls by Region in Howard County, MD



Data Source: Maryland ESSENCE; CRISP Public Health Reporting System

## Fall Prevention Barriers

- Restricted access to resources such as home modifications.<sup>9;10</sup>
- Decreased awareness about the risk of falls.<sup>10</sup>
- Insufficient screening to assess fall risk.<sup>4</sup>

## What can we do?

### Bring the Resources to Older Adults Living in the Community



#### 1 In Home Evaluations

Home safety assessments conducted by occupational therapists reduce fall rates and fall risk by 21%.<sup>4</sup>



#### 2 Community Partnerships

Building community capacity among organizations with common missions improves efficiency, referral networks, impact and cost effectiveness.<sup>3</sup>



#### 3 Improved Access to Services

Disparities in education, low social supports, and race suggest acquisition barriers for fall prevention interventions.<sup>9;12</sup>



## Partners



- Occupational Therapy Home Assessments
- Referrals & Information
- Digital Inclusion
- Home Modifications
- Education

- Risk Assessments
- Emergency Preparedness & Response
- Mobile Integrated Community Health Team

- 65+ Housing Communities
- Resident Engagement & Socialization
- Property Management

## Call to Action

Invest in fall prevention, expand healthcare access, and create programs that *empower older adults to thrive*. Contact your local government, volunteer with relevant organizations, and support initiatives that bridge the gap between services and those in need. Let's ensure a healthy and fulfilling future for our seniors.

## References

1. American Public Health Association. (2023, November 14). Falls prevention in adults 65 years and over: A call for increased use of an evidenced-based falls prevention algorithm (20235). <https://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2024/01/16/falls-prevention>
2. Ashida, S., Hellem, A., bucklin, R., Carson, M., & Casteel, C. (2024). Developing community-level implementation networks to connect older adults to evidence-based falls prevention programs. Health promotion practice. Besseck, D. (2023). ImageTrend EMS Fall Data Report 2023. Elite Platform.
3. Gillespie, L. D., Robertson, M. C., Gillespie, W. J., Sherrington, C., Gates, S., Clemson, L. M., & Lamb, S. E. (2012). Interventions for preventing falls in older people living in the community. The Cochrane database of systematic reviews, 2012(9), CD007146. <https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD007146.pub3>
4. Kakara R, Bergen G, Burns E, Stevens M. Nonfatal and Fatal Falls Among Adults Aged ≥65 Years—United States, 2020–2021. MMWR Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. 2023;72:938–943. DOI: 10.15585/mmwr.mm7235a1. Korhonen. (2023, September 22). U.S. - seniors as a percentage of the population 2022 | Statista. Statista. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/457822/share-of-old-age-population-in-the-total-us-population/>
5. Mather, M., Scommegna, P. (2024, January). Fact Sheet: Aging in the United States. Population Reference Bureau. <https://www.prb.org/resources/fact-sheet-aging-in-the-united-states/#:~:text=The%20number%20of%20Americans%20ages,than%20it%20has%20ever%20been>
6. Meucci F, Gozalo P, Dosa D, & Allen SM (2016). Variation of simple home modifications of older adults: Findings from the National Health and Aging Trends Study. Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, 64 (10), 2081–2087.
7. Ng BP, Lu J, Tiu GF, et al.: Bathroom modifications among community-dwelling older adults who experience falls in the United States: A cross-sectional study. Health Soc Care Community 2022; 30:253–263 [PMC free article] [PubMed] [Google Scholar]
8. US Centers for Disease and Prevention. (2024, May) Older Adult Fall Prevention. Older Adult Falls Data. <https://www.cdc.gov/falls/data-research/>
9. Wiseman, J. M., Stamper, D. S., Sheridan, E., Caterino, J. M., Quatman-Yates, C. C., & Quatman, C. E. (2021). Barriers to the initiation of home modifications for older adults for fall prevention. Geriatric orthopaedic surgery & rehabilitation, p. 12, 21514593211002161.

Carly Shilling, 2025