



Relevant South Carolina Facts¹

State Medicare Information

- There are 1,051,955 total Medicare beneficiaries in the State of South Carolina, which represents 20.7 percent of the total population.
- South Carolina Total Annual Medicare Spending equals \$9,369,000,000.

Documented Shortage of Primary Care Health Professionals

- According to the Health Resources and Services Administration, South Carolina has 92 total primary care Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA).
- South Carolina's population living in a primary care HPSA equals 1,928,557, which represents 37.9 percent of the overall population of South Carolina.
- There are 190 licensed audiologists in the State of South Carolina who could help.

Hearing Loss Statistics

- Of the more than 36 million Americans who experience hearing loss, 30 percent are 65-74 years old and 47 percent are 75 years old and older.
- South Carolina has 742,000 residents with hearing loss, which represents 14.6 percent of the state population.
- Untreated hearing loss results in a greater occurrence of other physical and mental conditions in elderly patients, substantially reducing the quality of life for older adults and increasing Medicare spending. Treated hearing loss enhances the quality of life and reduces health care costs.

National Data on Older Adult Falls

- Every 18 seconds, an older adult is treated in an emergency room for a fall. Falls are the leading case of trauma in the United States.
- The average cost for a fall injury is \$30,000 and the direct medical cost for falls is \$50 billion annually.
- Among older adults (those 65 or older), falls are the leading cause of injury death. They are also the most common cause of nonfatal injuries and hospital admissions for trauma.
- Elderly falls are preventable as are their associated financial and societal costs. Audiologists reliably diagnose and treat the vestibular disorders and help prevent older adult falls.

Medicare Beneficiaries by State <https://www.kff.org/medicare/state-indicator/total-medicare-beneficiaries/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D>

Medicare Spending <https://www.kff.org/medicare/state-indicator/medicare-spending-by-residence/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D>

Bureau of Health Workforce, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, [Designated Health Professional Shortage Areas Statistics: Designated HPSA Quarterly Summary, as of December 31, 2018.](#)

Audiologists by State <https://www.bls.gov/data/>

Blackwell, DL and Norris, T. Any Hearing Loss by State: Estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, United States, 2014–2016. National Center for Health Statistics. October 2017. Available from: https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/health_policy/disability.htm.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. [Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System \(WISQARS\)](#) [online]. Accessed August 5, 2016. Burns EB, Stevens JA, Lee RL. The direct costs of fatal and non-fatal falls among older adults—United States. J Safety Res 2016:58.

Safety of audiology direct access for Medicare patients complaining of impaired hearing (Zapala, 2010), <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20701834>;

Screening for vestibular disorders: A study of clinicians' compliance with recommended practices (Polensek, Sterk, Tusa, 2008), <http://www.medscimonit.com/download/index/idArt/855748>