



Relevant Georgia Factsⁱ

State Medicare Information

- There are 1,721,548 total Medicare beneficiaries in the State of Georgia, which represents 16 percent of the total population.
- Georgia Total Annual Medicare Spending equals \$15,318,000,000.

Documented Shortage of Primary Care Health Professionals

- According to the Health Resources and Services Administration, Georgia has 235 total primary care Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA).
- Georgia's population living in a primary care HPSA equals 3,217,771 which represents 30.6 percent of the overall population of Georgia.
- There are 326 licensed audiologists in the State of Georgia 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.
- Georgia has 1,630,519 residents with hearing loss, which represents 15.5 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.
- 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.

Sources

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/>

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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>