

Kent County Senior Millage

Survey Overview

SURVEY BACKGROUND

The 2009 Kent County Senior Millage Needs Survey provided consumers, caregivers and service providers an opportunity to provide information of value regarding the current use and future need of services funded by the millage. This survey brief provides the most important positive and negative consumer and caregiver findings from the survey.

FIELDING OF THE MILLAGE SURVEY

The Millage Survey was fielded between March 15th and April 30th, 2009, and had 805 respondents. Approximately half of these respondents took the survey on line through Survey Monkey, the remainder filled out identical paper surveys available at service providers across the Area Agency on Aging of West Michigan (AAAWM)'s Kent County service area. The respondent type is not distinguishable within the merged survey data file.

The survey's fielding was advertised in the following ways:

1. On the AAWM website
 2. Via the Caregiver Resource Network website and the March 2009 meeting of this group
 3. To Older Americans Act providers (via email)
 4. To Kent County Senior Millage providers (via email)
 5. At the AAWM Board meetings
 6. At both the March and April Advocates for Senior Issues meetings
 7. At several Kent County Senior Centers
 8. At several Grand Rapids Public Libraries
 9. At local assisted living facilities
 10. Via an interview with WGVU public television, and
 11. Via the Kentwood Public Schools Newsletter.
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SURVEY PURPOSE

AAAWM conducted its last Millage Survey in 2005. This survey is intended to provide up to date information from consumers, caregivers and providers of services under the Kent County Senior Millage. Information from this survey is shared across all affected providers and with their consumers. The information gained is within the following areas:

1. Demographics
2. Plans for Future Use
3. Expectations of ability to pay for services in the future
4. Health behaviors
5. Caregiver issues
6. Awareness of services/issues

The information from respondents is used to follow changes in these areas and plan for changes in the consumer population, in terms of interests, resources and health behaviors.

This report represents analysis of the quantitative responses (multiple choice questions) from the 2009 survey. Analysis of the open-ended responses from this survey will be handled in a separate report.

USE OF THIS ANALYSIS

This survey was not conducted using a rigorous, random sample of the population of consumers, caregivers and service providers. However, the sample demographics are reflective of the demographics of AAWM client demographic data. The broad advertising effort preceding and during the survey, as well as the traditionally high response rate of the older adult population accounts for the closeness of the respondents' reported demographics with the service use demographic data. Thus we can interpret these findings as being reflective of the consumer population within the AAWM service area.

A note on response rates

For each survey question there are some respondents that did not answer. The percent of people who responded to each question (regardless of the response) is referred to as the "response rate." These persons are listed as "no response" throughout. In most cases the percent of "no response" is small enough to not cause an issue (generally less than 20-25% of all respondents). Where the rate of "non-response" is high enough to raise caution in interpreting a finding, it is noted in the text.

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Age, race and gender are generally representative of the service use population of the Kent County Senior Millage. Over half of the respondents were between 65 and 84 years of age, while almost 9% were 85 years of age or older. Over half of respondents were female.

	Frequency	Percent
No Response	100	12.4
Female	494	61.4
Male	211	26.2
Total	805	100.0

	Frequency	Percent
No Response	98	12.2
60-64	131	16.3
65-74	257	31.9
75-84	226	28.1
85-94	69	8.6
95	1	.1
Less than 60	23	2.9
Total	805	100.0

	Frequency	Percent
No Response	111	13.8
African American	92	11.4
Asian	4	.5
Caucasian (white)	549	68.2
Hispanic	18	2.2
Multi-Racial	7	.9
Native American	24	3.0
Total	805	100.0

In 2008, the Kent County Senior Millage provided service to 17,700 older adults. Seventy percent of those served were female.

White	9,835	82.94%
Black	1,874	15.80%
Asian	82	0.69%
American Indian	67	0.57%
Unknown or Denied	5,842	
Hispanic	522	2.95%

60-64	3,295	18.6%
65-74	5,263	29.7%
75-84	4,264	24.1%
85+	2,242	12.7%

KEY CONSUMER FINDINGS

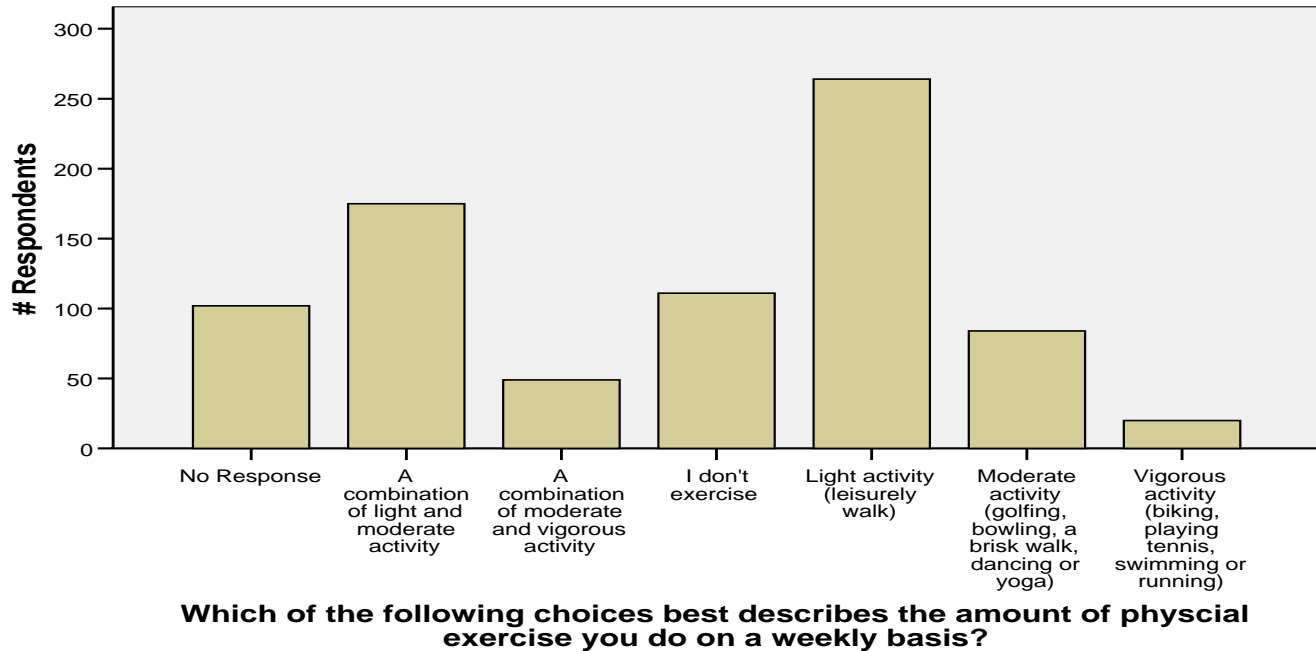
Positive findings from the survey suggest that the services funded by the senior millage are:

- highly valued by those surveyed, and
- even recently debuted services have attained recognition and are valued (Kent County Rx Card)

Positive health findings include:

- Most respondents report being healthy (68% at least in good health),
- Eat regularly and choose healthy foods,
- Obtain recommended health screenings (blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, etc.)

Figure One



Positive daily living findings show that:

- Most respondents live on their own or with a spouse (76%),
- Expect to remain on their own over the next five years (90%) and
- Over half volunteer (56%).

Findings of concern regarding consumers include:

- 58% of respondents do not know who to turn to if they face a financial crisis that risked them staying on their own
- 24% report being unable to fill a prescription over the past year and 37% report no prescription coverage through Medicare Part D
- 24% of respondents report not having enough money to purchase groceries at least one time within past 12 months.

KEY CAREGIVER FINDINGS

Positive findings include:

- Caregivers are most likely to be well known to those they provide care; being a friend, spouse, parent or child.
- Caregivers provide a wide variety of services
- 71% report getting a break from their care giving duties primarily through housekeeping or transportation assistance.

Findings of concern regarding caregivers include:

- 64% of caregivers had been providing care more than two years
- The greatest need for assistance was with bathing

SUMMARY

The community served by the Kent County Senior Millage is aware of, or users of, and appreciative of the services provided under the millage. The ethnically diverse population served is generally physically active, aware of and obtaining regular health screenings, and generally eating a varied diet. Some problems accessing and paying for prescriptions are reported, these problems affect roughly a quarter of the population, and may be assisted by the new prescription discount program debuted just prior to the fielding of this survey.