

Engage

MB

What We Heard

Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care

In January 2022, the Government of Manitoba announced the creation of the department of Seniors and Long-Term Care. A key focus of this new department is to lead the development and implementation of a provincial seniors strategy. Through this strategy, the Government of Manitoba aims to make the province an ideal place to age and ensure that:

- Seniors can live a healthy and active life, safely and independently and in their own homes and community for as long as possible.
- Support and resources are available for the transitions between living settings; from living independently in their own home and community to living in another setting.
- Quality, dependable and affordable supports are available when independent living is no longer possible.

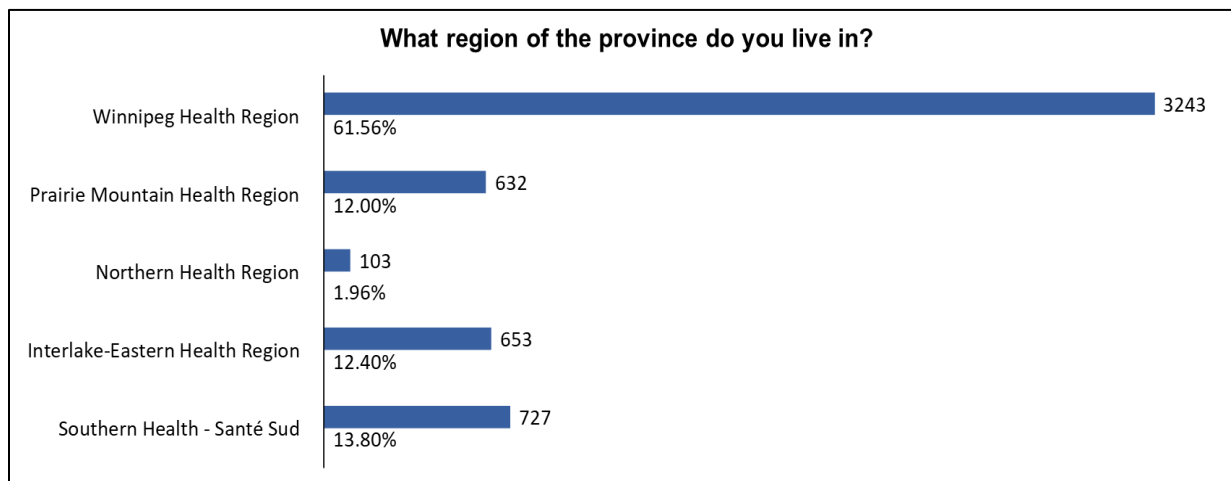
To guide the direction and focus of this strategy, the department released an EngageMB survey to consult with the public on the needs of seniors in Manitoba. The analyzed data covers 5268 responses collected in a period from April 2022 to July 2022.

The survey contained 25 questions focused on four main areas:

- 1) Demographics and representation
- 2) Current state experience
- 3) Future state expectations
- 4) Preferred engagement mediums

Demographics

Out of 5,268 participants, about 62% were from the Winnipeg Health Region, followed by approximately 14% of participants from the Southern Health Region.¹



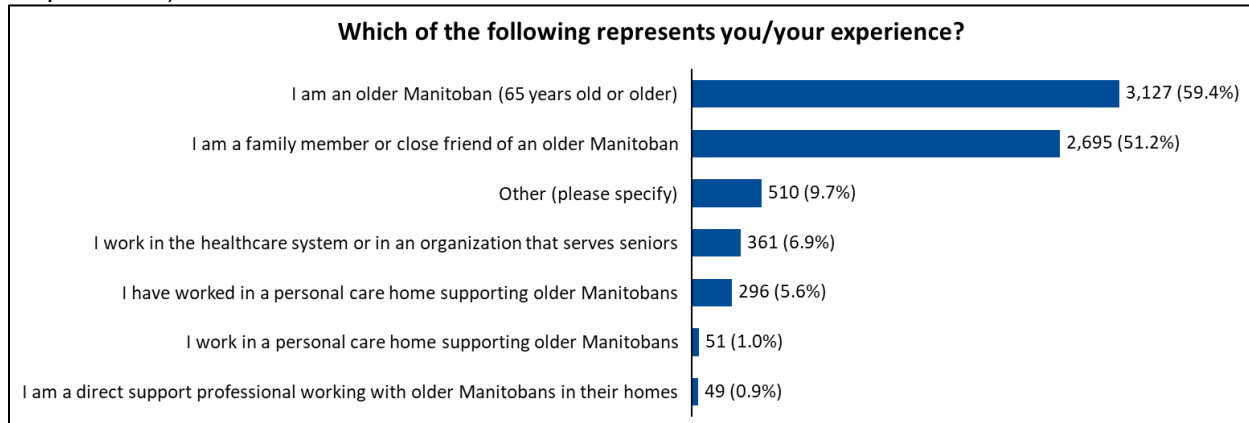
Most respondents were between the ages of 56 and 75, with this age group accounting for approximately 82% of the participants.

Age group	Number of participants	%
<25 years	1	0.02%
25-35	19	0.36%
36-45	26	0.49%
46-55	172	3.26%
56-65	2140	40.62%
66-75	2173	41.25%
76-85	371	7.04%
86-95	32	0.61%
96-105	11	0.21%
No answer	323	6.13%

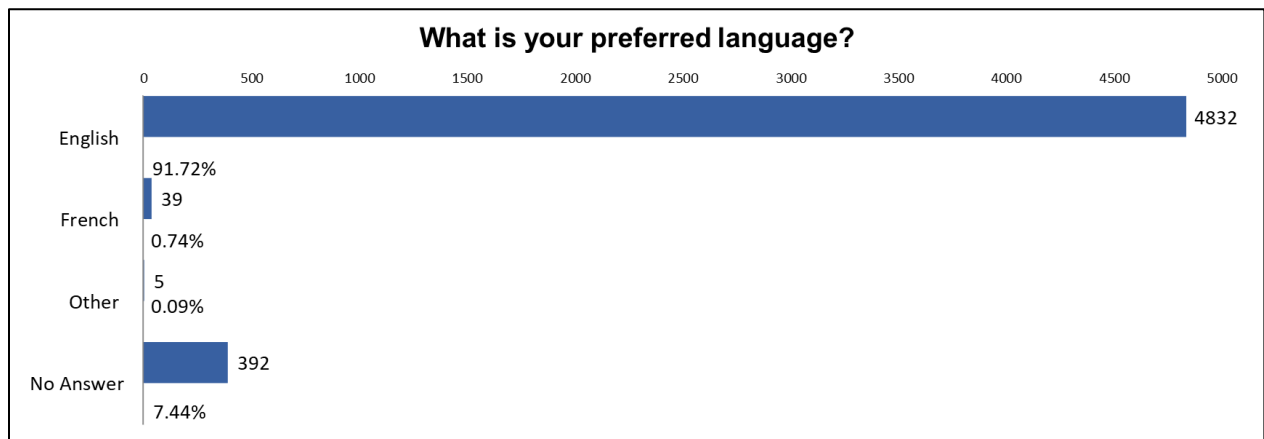
Most respondents identified as a woman (56.4%), with 31.4% identifying as a man, 0.3% identifying as another gender and 11.9% not answering.

¹ The overall number of answers in this question (5358), exceeds the number of the total survey participants (5268), which suggests that participants choosing more than one answer.

In total, 59.4% of the answers came from seniors, followed by family and close friends (51.2% of respondents).



Of those who answered the question, most chose English as their primary language (91.7%), while 0.74% chose French, and about 0.1% preferred other languages.

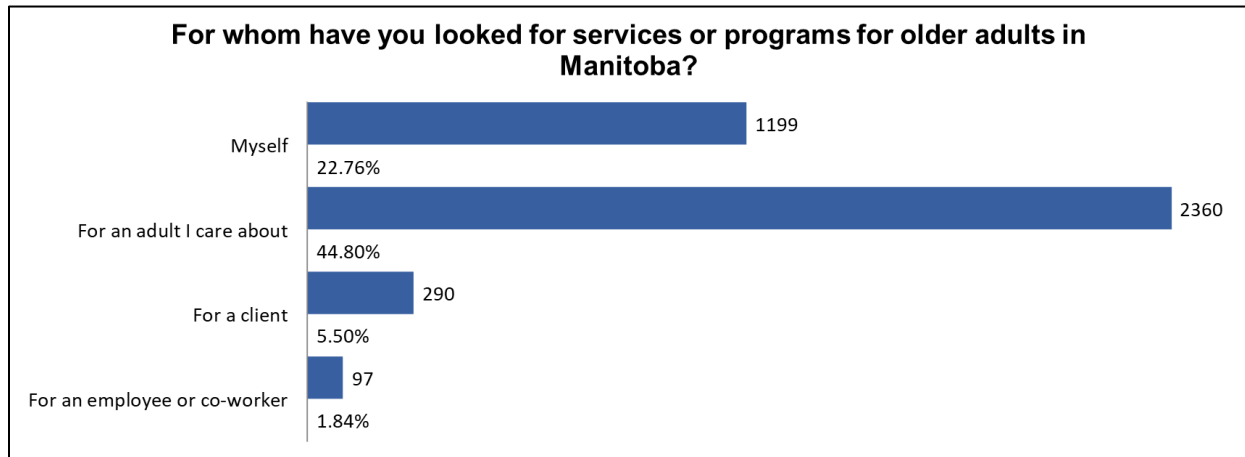


Less than 5% of the participants identified as Indigenous, with 3.85% identifying as Metis, 0.72% identifying as First Nation, and 0.06% identifying as Inuit.

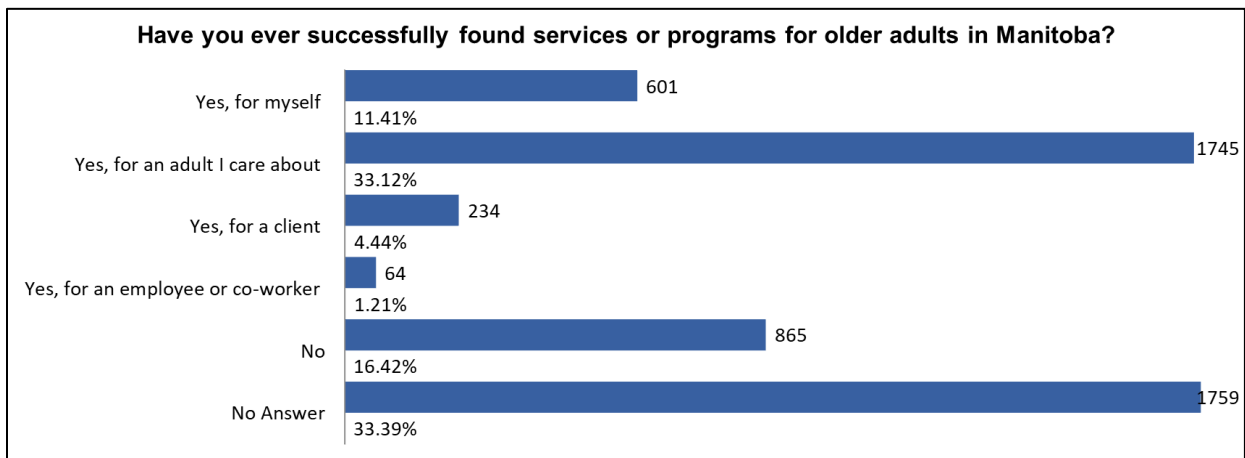


Current State

Of the survey participants, approximately 56% had either looked for or researched services or programs for older adults in Manitoba prior to their participation in the survey. The majority (45% of all participants) searched for services for a senior they cared about, with 33.1% successfully finding the services they were searching for. Of the remaining participants, approximately 22.8% searched for services for themselves, with half of these individuals (11.4%) successfully finding the services they sought.



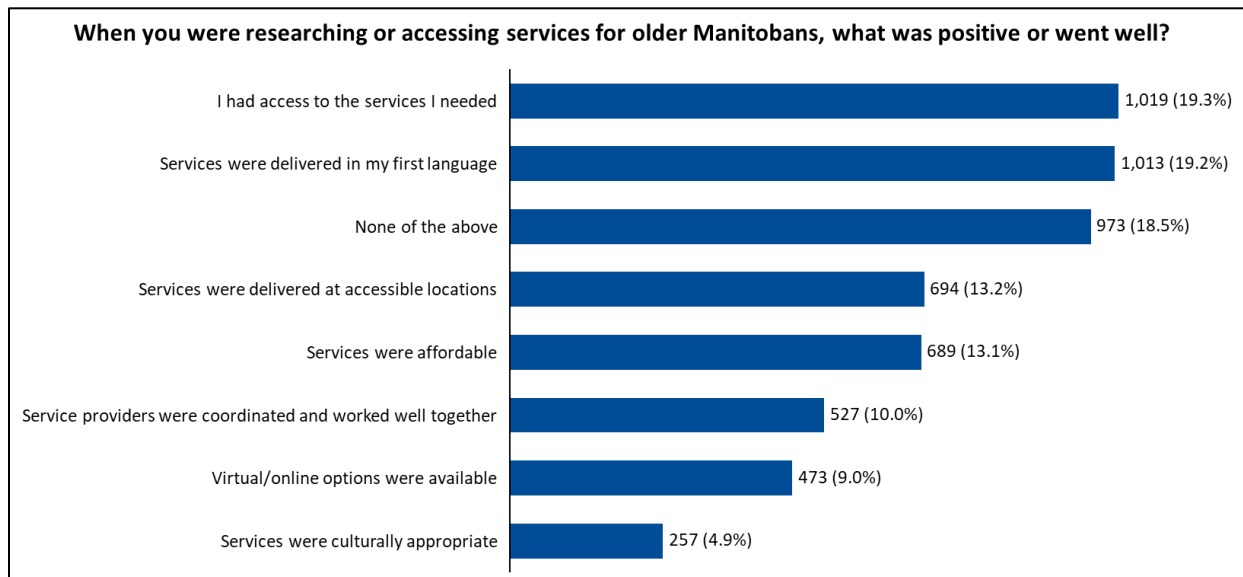
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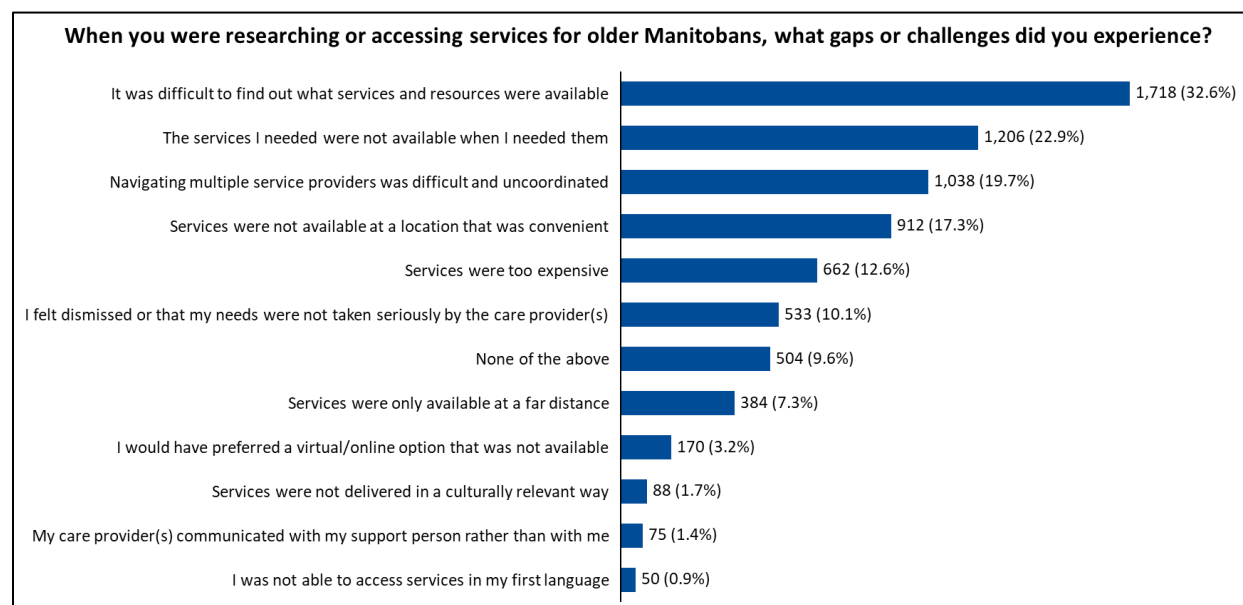
² The number of answers submitted for this question exceeds the number of participants who stated that they have looked for services in the province. This may be because participants sought services for multiple people (e.g., themselves and a family member).

Positive aspects of participants' experience included access the service they needed (19.3%), receiving services in their preferred language (19.2%), and the accessible location of service delivery (13.2%). 18.5% of the participants did not think any of the options represented positive aspects of their experience.

The free-text answers included positive experience with specific organizations, such as services like Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle (WAV), Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID), and others. Other positives included time-saving practices, such as the ability to quickly set-up home care and being waitlisted for Long-Term Care (LTC) when a senior is admitted to Supportive Housing units.



When looking at gaps and challenges faced by participants about a third of the participants (32.6%) were challenged to find out what services were available. This was followed by the unavailability of services when needed (22.9%), the difficulty in navigating multiple service providers (19.7%), and the unavailability of services in convenient locations (17.3%).

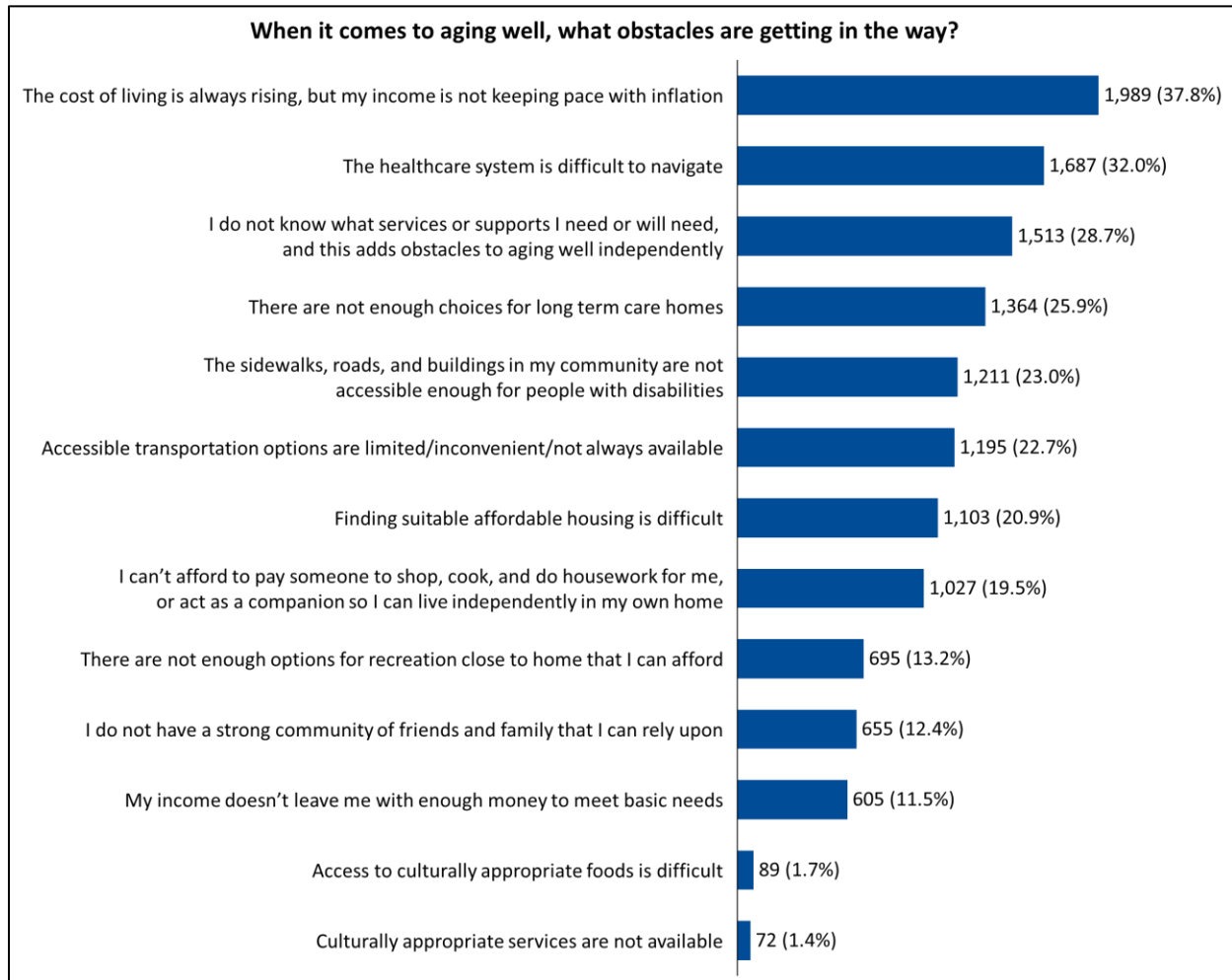


An analysis of the free-text answers to the question above identified 7 key themes for the gaps and challenges:

1. Physical accessibility of public spaces necessary.
2. Lack of access to physical and social activities that support the inclusion of seniors into their communities.
3. Challenges with the healthcare system (including personal care homes, the acute care system, and assisted living/home care), including:
 - a. Stigma and ageism
 - b. Service affordability
 - c. Coordination between facilities and care providers
 - d. Access to services/care in rural areas
 - e. Long wait times
 - f. Physical separation from spouses, families and friends
 - g. Transportation challenges
 - h. Lack of mental health supports
 - i. Access, safety, quality, and reliability of services
4. Lack of financial and training support for care givers.
5. Communication and access challenges when attempting to access services through digital methods or by the phone.
6. Lack of consideration for seniors from racialized communities, different cultural backgrounds, specialized needs (e.g., disabilities).
7. Lack of affordable and accessible housing options.

Overall User Experience

The most frequently identified obstacles to aging well included a growing gap between income and living costs and inflation (37.8%), difficulty in navigating the healthcare system (32%), not knowing what services or supports are needed (28.7%), and the lack of sufficient options for personal care homes (25.9%).



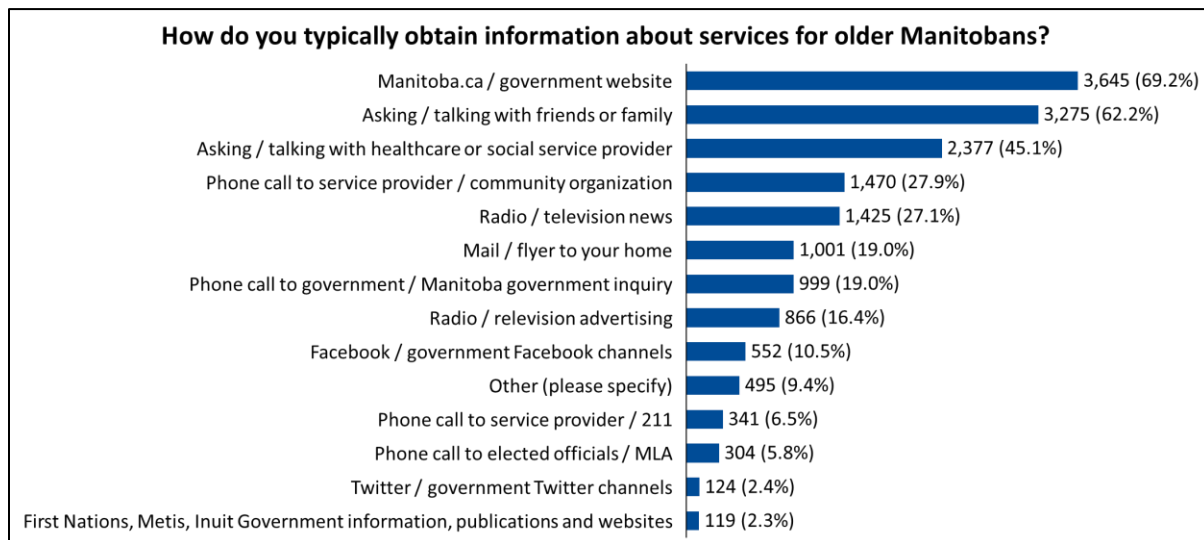
Future State Expectations

When asked about what the seniors strategy needs to include or focus on, the participants generally focused on nine key themes:

1. Respect and dignity are being provided to all seniors, in all interactions.
2. Accessible transportation including expanding available options and services, as well as enhancing safety and affordability.
3. Social engagement support, particularly programs and activities that would allow seniors to remain connected to their families and communities, support socially vulnerable seniors, and protect seniors from isolation regardless of location and income level.
4. Physical activity promotion and the presence of accessible and available services
5. Safe mobility support and increased accessibility of public spaces.
6. Delivery of culturally appropriate services, including:
 - a. Respecting language preferences
 - b. Including traditional/cultural health and healing rituals
 - c. Supporting belief systems
 - d. Diversity of representation of people providing services
 - e. Connection to community support systems
 - f. Familiar food and diet
 - g. Protection from discriminatory behavior
7. Providing better supports for aging-at-home, that would take a preventative and risk-reducing approach to keeping seniors living at home as long as possible. These could include:
 - a. Supports for housing options
 - b. Expansion of home care services
 - c. Standards for reliability and quality
 - d. Supports for daily needs like groceries and laundry
 - e. Social supports like check-in visits
8. Improved care services outside the home, with continued focus on prevention and risk reduction. This could include:
 - a. Better coordination between facilities
 - b. Supports for transitioning between different care settings (home care, personal care homes, assisted living facilities)
 - c. Improved access to healthcare services and reduced wait times
 - d. Improved quality
9. Improved communication with seniors using multiple communication methods, accounting for disabilities and computer literacy levels, the presence of a unified public source of information and seniors' service advocates, as well as better customer service in public facilities.
10. Financial support that takes into account the appropriate income threshold for support, coverage of various physical and cognitive disabilities and mental health conditions, support for social and emotional needs, rising inflation and costs of living, as well as non-stable types of pensions.

Engagement mediums

The majority of participants (69.2%) typically obtained information through the government website. This was followed by their own network of friends and family (62.2%), and service providers (45.1%). The 'others' category included internet searches and search engines, various organizations that provide services to seniors, as well as the respondents' own lived experiences.



The most preferred methods of communication included online surveys (80.4%), presentations (41.8%), discussions in community organizations (40.7%), focus groups (36.3%), and outreach to diverse community and cultural groups (34.2%). The 'others' category included telephone surveys, printed documents, and in-person communication modalities.

