

The Hickory Service Area has a population of 8,940 according to the 2000 Census of Population and Housing. The area is 50.5 percent female and 49.5 percent male. About a third of the population is 60 and older (33.2 percent compared to 17.6 percent statewide and 21.2 percent in the 13-county Care Connection Area).

The area's seniors age 55 and older are predominantly Caucasian (96%). The area also has 139 seniors of other races. The area also is home to 217 Multiracial seniors and 71 Hispanics age 55 and older.

About two-thirds (67.7%) of the households with householder age 65 and older reside in family households. This is just slightly over the state percentage of 61.3 percent. The Hickory Service Area has a lower proportion of persons 65 and older living alone – 26.3 percent compared to 30.2 percent both statewide and for the 13-county Care Connection Area.

The Hickory Service Area has a slightly higher rate of seniors living below poverty than the state overall. The poverty rate of persons 65 and older is 11 percent compared to 9.9 percent statewide. But it is lower than the 11.7 percent in the 13-county area. For persons 75 and older the rate is 19.3 percent compared to 12.3 percent statewide and 14.7 percent in the overall Care Connection Area.

There are 3,911 occupied housing units in this service area in which the occupant is age 55 and older. About 84.5 percent of these homes are owner-occupied compared to 70.2 percent statewide and 73 percent in the 13-county area overall. According to the 2000 Census, much of the housing stock in this service area was built during the seventies (25.1%). About 11 percent of housing stock was built between 1995 and 2000.

Disabilities are tallied per disability, i.e., a person with multiple disabilities would be counted multiple times – one for each disability. The ratio of disabilities per population age 65 and older is 73.5 in the Hickory Area compared to 78.5 statewide. The most common disability tallied was physical disability (28.5%) followed by sensory disability (14.4%) “go-outside-home” disability (14.2%), mental disability (9.9%), and self-care disability (6.5%).

More than half of persons age 65 and older in this area reported being married-couples in the 2000 Census (63.2%). Another 28.5 percent reported being widowed. As would be expected, the most likely to report being widowed are those age 85 and older (65.8%). This is slightly higher than the state rate of 63.2 percent and the 13-county area rate of 60.5 percent.

The Hickory Service Area had a slightly higher percentage of persons 65 and older who had completed high school (41.9%) than the state (33.9%) or the 13-county area (38.3%). Four and a half percent of Hickory area seniors reported having a Bachelor's Degree according to the 2000 Census.

