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## Introduction

- Use of health and community resources are significant predictors of independent living among older adults.
- Rural seniors compared to urban seniors often have limited access to health and community services, which may place them at risk for poor health outcomes.
- The purpose of this study is to explore the availability of health and community services for rural older adults by examining the spatial distribution of older population and service organizations in Montgomery County, VA.

## Research Questions

- What is the spatial distribution of older adults (65+) in Montgomery County, VA and how has the older population in this area changed from 2000 to 2010?
- What is the spatial distribution of health and community service agencies in Montgomery County, VA and how does this compare with the spatial distribution of older adults?

## Data Sources

- Block-level demographic data of older adults (65+) from 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census Bureau and NHGIS.
- List of health and community service agencies in Montgomery County, Virginia
- Interviews with service providers

## Analysis

- Geocoded the addresses on the list of health and community service agencies in Montgomery County, Virginia, using Geographic Information System software (GIS).
- Calculated the older population in Montgomery County by adding the number of older adults 65 years and older in both 2000 and 2010.
- Analyzed the change of older population in this area by subtracting the number of older population in 2010 by that in 2000.

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## Results

Figure 1 shows that:

- The total population aged 65 and older in Montgomery County, VA increased in the last decade.
- The most population increase was between age 65 to 74.

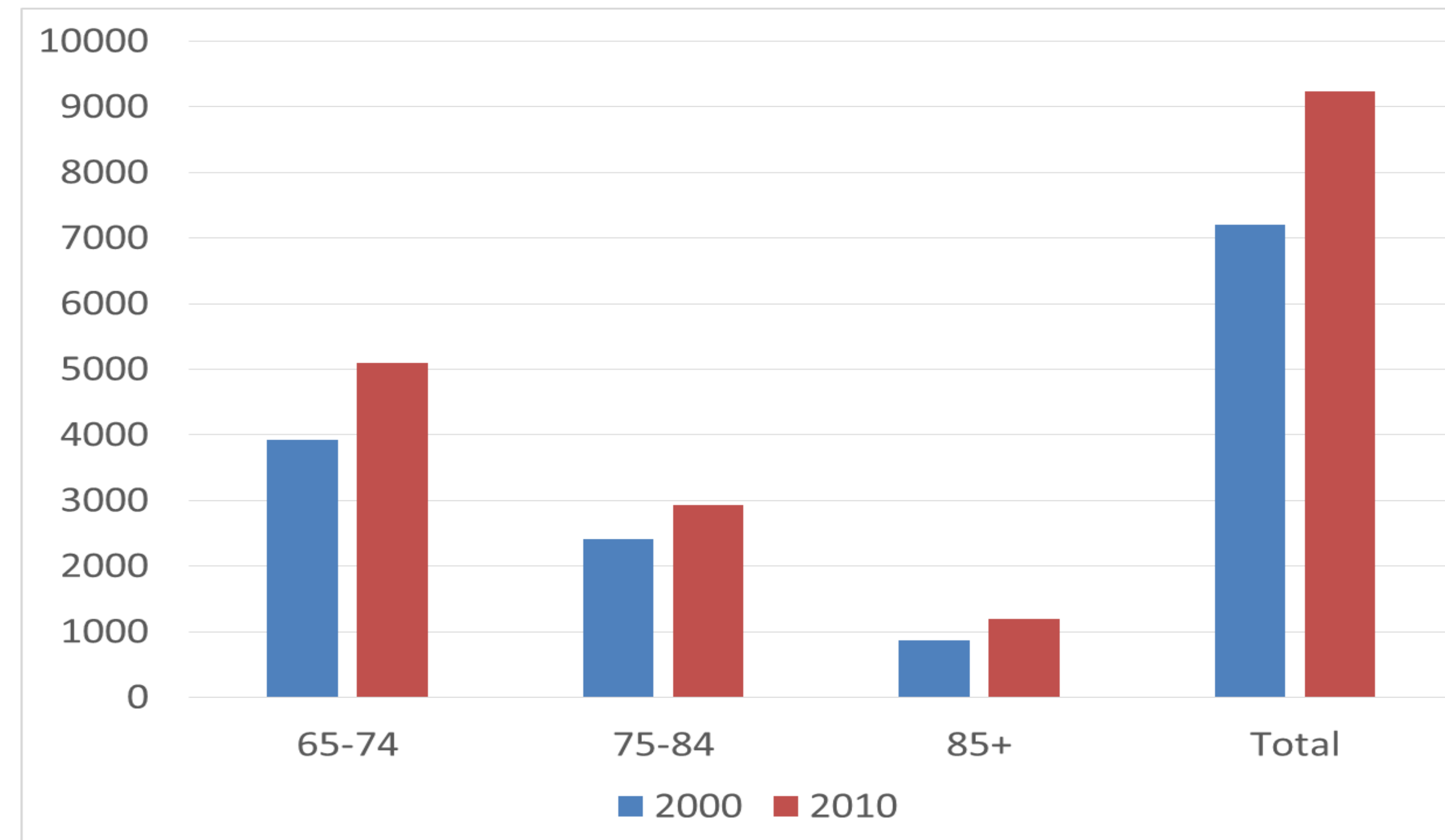
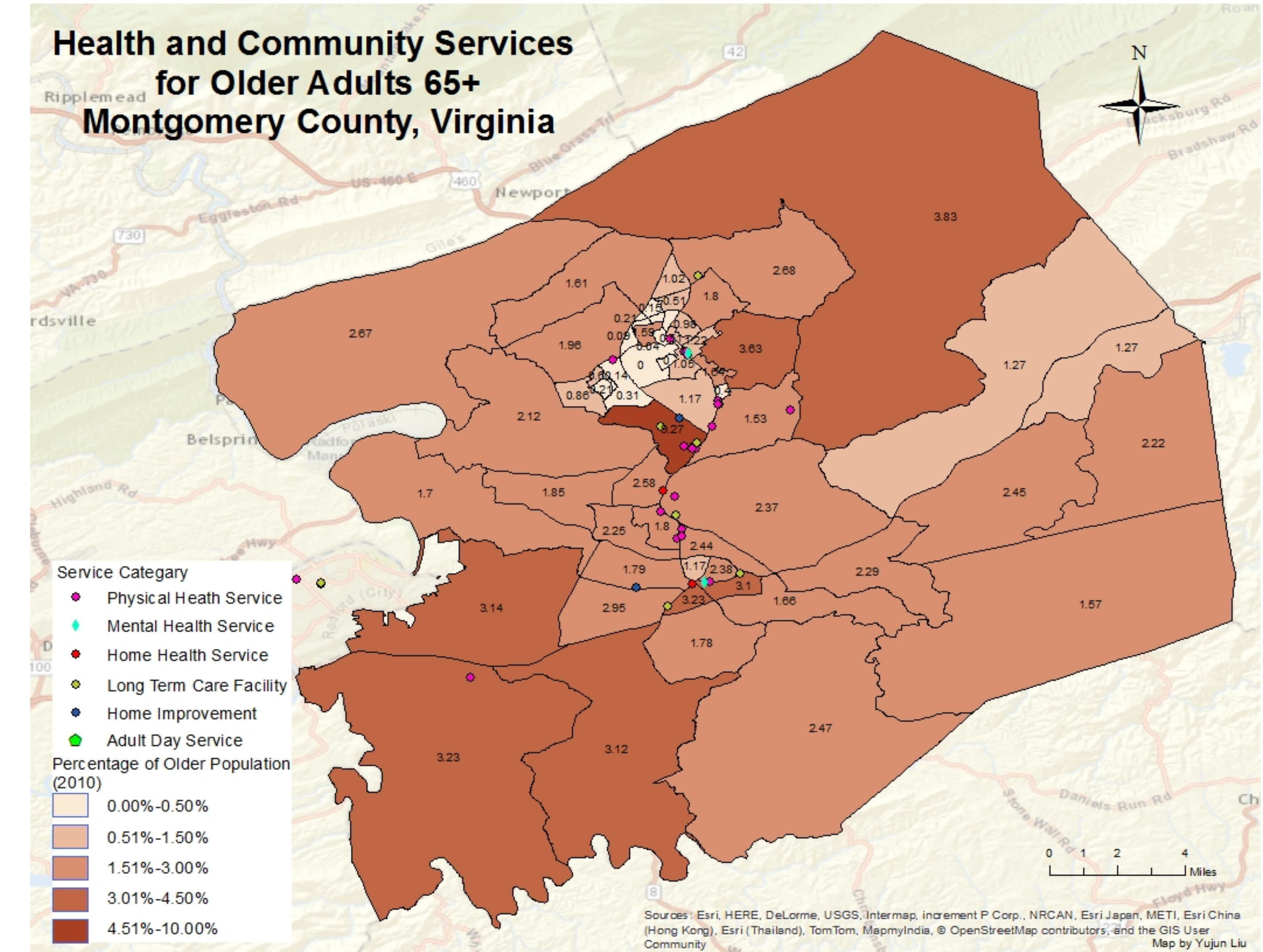


Figure 1: Number of Older Adults 65+ in Montgomery County in 2000 and 2010



The geospatial analysis shows that:

- The population in the center of the county, where most services were located, decreased or remained the same while the older population in the northern and southern part of the county, where there were fewer services, increased more than 50%.
- The 44 health and community services in the area included adult day care, physical and mental health services, home health services, home improvement services, and long term care facilities.

## Conclusions and Implications

Findings point to the need for more health and community services for rural older adults.

- In the next decade there will be an increase in 75+ population who are likely to need support from health and community services.
- Given the distribution of health and community services in this area, older adults in north and south part of the county may be under-served.
- To address current and future needs of the older adults, the local area agency on aging, which provides a comprehensive array of services, needs to work in partnership with the local health and social service agencies to address the needs in this region.
- Future research needs to solicit information from rural older adults to address their health and community services expectations and needs.