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## **Follow-Up COVID-19 Survey Reveals Ongoing Challenges for Older Adults in Snohomish County**

**SNOHOMISH COUNTY, Wash., October 18, 2023** — Today, Snohomish County’s Human Services Department announced the release of the [Follow-Up COVID-19 Seniors Survey Report](#). The report is based on a survey conducted with residents 55 and older in January-February 2023 and shows the extent of COVID-related challenges still impacting seniors.

“As our community transitions through the recovery phase of the pandemic, it is crucial to understand the continuing challenges faced by older adults in Snohomish County,” said Human Services Director Mary Jane Brell Vujovic. “As we better understand where there are continuing challenges for those who had some of the highest negative impacts from COVID-19, we can ensure everything possible is being done to help them fully recover.”

The survey was conducted in multiple languages and distributed through various channels, including hardcopy surveys with paid return postage, online links shared via social media and community partners, and prominent advertisements in local publications and newsletters. This comprehensive survey received responses from 3,564 older adult residents.

Key findings from the report include:

- **Increased Participation:** This year's survey saw a 46% increase in participation from BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) seniors compared to the [2021 survey](#), with 64% of BIPOC responses coming from the Asian community.
- **Veterans and Disabilities:** 17% of those surveyed identified as veterans, 76% of whom shared they are retired or not seeking employment due to a disability. Overall, 37% of residents who took the survey reported living with a disability.
- **Seniors with Pets:** Nearly half of seniors have a pet in their household, which was shown to increase active lifestyles.
- **Household Composition:** Household composition was found to be related to resilience during the pandemic, with 46% of seniors living with their partner or spouse, 38% living alone, 14% living with family, and 2% living with a roommate.

- **Income Inequality:** Approximately 12% of seniors reported that their household earns less than \$1,200 per month, below the federal poverty limit (FPL) for a 1-person household. Of the senior households living below the FPL, 30% are BIPOC. This income group primarily consists of seniors living alone, with 76% being women and 23% of which are BIPOC women.
- **Housing Cost-Burden:** Older residents are more likely to be housing cost-burdened than residents younger than 60, especially renters, with 58% of senior renters aged 60 or older paying more than 30% of their monthly income on housing and utilities. A stunning 87% of senior residents who live alone reported that they cannot afford a one-bedroom rental in Snohomish County.
- **Social Security Reliance:** Most surveyed seniors rely on Social Security as their primary source of income, with an average monthly benefit of \$1,827.
- **COVID-19 conditions:** 63% of seniors reported life is returning to pre-COVID conditions with the availability of vaccines and treatments, and of the seniors feeling hopeful, 89% shared they have received COVID-19 vaccines/boosters.

COVID-19 Reminder: Protect yourself and others by being up to date on vaccines. For more information, please visit: <https://www.snohd.org/587/How-to-Get-Your-Shot>.

The data from this survey highlights the ongoing need for support and resources for older adults in the community, in particular residents living on fixed incomes. As we navigate the recovery phase of the pandemic, Human Services intends to address these challenges and work with partners to ensure a brighter future for all our seniors.

For more information or to access the full Follow-Up COVID-19 Seniors Survey Report, please visit <https://bit.ly/2023SnoCoSeniors>.

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