

NCI-AD AND THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT FINAL RULE



INTRODUCTION

The Older Americans Act (OAA) final rule, released February 2024, greatly expands upon requirements related to State Plan on Aging content, nutrition services, the National Family Caregiver Support Program, and more. Importantly, states will be required to collect data for monitoring the quality and effectiveness of service delivery. National Core Indicators-Aging and Disabilities (NCI-ADTM) Adult Consumer Survey (ACS) can be a key component of states' aging and disability quality improvement strategies. States often use their ACS data to drive quality improvement, set benchmarks, and track progress. Aging systems may use their ACS data for State Plans on Aging and Multisector Plans on Aging goals. This brief provides examples of some ways states are using NCI-ADTM to monitor and track performance related to OAA regulations.

The 2023-24 NCI-AD Adult Consumer Survey (ACS) includes responses from 21,041 older adults and people with physical disabilities receiving long-term services and supports across 20 states.

Five states included their Aging systems, **with a total of 1,134 individuals receiving OAA supports and services.**

STATE EXAMPLES IN THIS BRIEF

A growing number of states are using the NCI-AD ACS to help understand experiences of people using OAA services. Regularly measuring indicators provides critical insights, allowing states to track progress over time, benchmark changes, and assess the quality of impact.

This data-driven approach not only helps in adjusting strategies and improving service delivery, but also in making informed decisions that lead to better outcomes for older adults. These improvements can increase efficiency and efficacy of service delivery and improve outcomes for older adults.

To support understanding and improving aging systems, states may tailor the NCI-AD ACS by developing targeted surveying strategies - such as surveying by Area Agencies on Aging (AAA).— States may also add state-specific questions in addition to the core survey questions. State-specific questions can help states better assess their OAA programs and make quality improvements. States also make modifications to their questions over time to reflect the needs and priorities of the state and people that they serve.

Using NCI-AD and other sources, states can leverage the voices of people with lived experiences. In this brief, we highlight two states' surveys and how they are using the data they collect to improve quality related to the OAA.



>>> GEORGIA

Georgia has participated in NCI-AD since 2015. Georgia's Department of Human Services, Division of Aging Services (DAS) collaborates with the state's contracted Quality Improvement Organization and Qlarant to implement the NCI-AD ACS survey in Georgia. Georgia DAS serves roughly 40,000 individuals through its OAA programs, and they highly value the ability to assess participants' experiences with these programs.

Georgia DAS also participates in Namers and the National Survey of Older Americans Act Participants (NSOAP) through the Administration for Community Living (ACL). Additionally, DAS implements several internal program-specific surveys to assess individuals' experiences with state OAA programs.

Georgia 2023-2024 OAA Respondent Demographics



86% are female

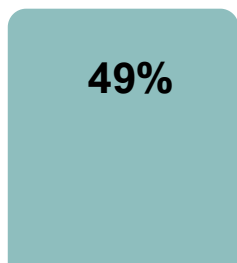


8% are 90 and older

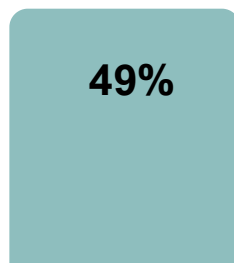


13% have Alzheimer's or other dementia

Race and Ethnicity



Black/African American



White

1%

Asian

0%

Hispanic/Latino

1%

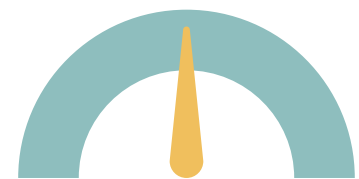
Unknown



45% live in a zip code with a median income of less than \$50,000



93% live in their own or family home or apartment



50% live alone

GEORGIA STATE-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

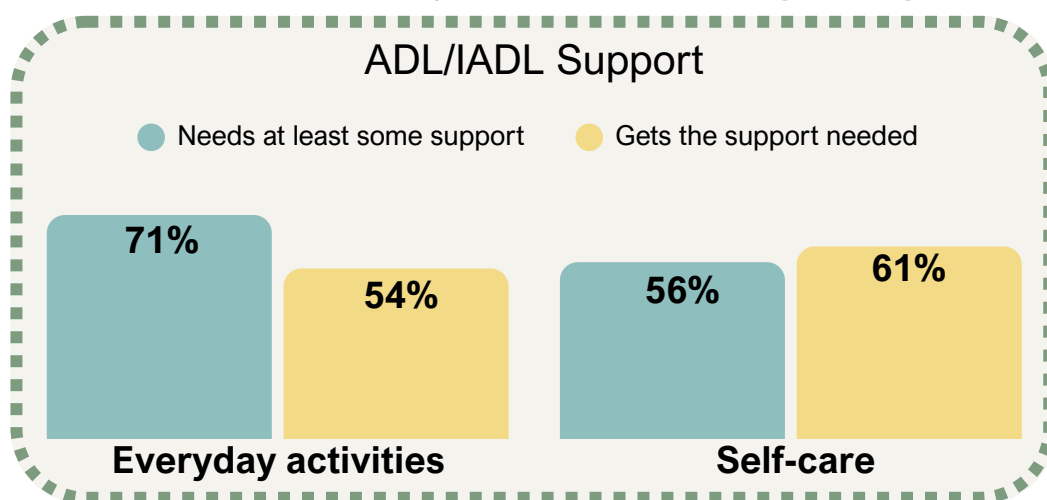
Georgia reported that they find particular value in the ACS state-specific questions. In previous years, Georgia asked nutrition-specific questions to show the importance and benefit of nutrition programs for older adults. The data collected from these questions was also used to assess dental health and establish dental assistance partnerships. The state is still conducting work in this area, but they shifted the focus of their state-specific questions from nutrition to dementia in the past two years.

This focus shift is due in part to the creation of a dementia unit within the aging division and the acquisition of a dementia care specialist on the state team. The state is currently collecting self-reported dementia data, and they are interested in combining it with their ACS findings to get a more comprehensive view of this population and their experiences. They are particularly interested in identifying any regional differences (i.e., AAA or county) in client experience.

HOW DOES GEORGIA USE THE SURVEY RESULTS?

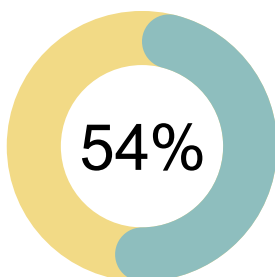
Following each survey year, the state conducts an internal analysis of their raw NCI-AD ACS data. They then compare their statewide ACS survey data to the program-specific data to identify trends and areas for improvement. Georgia uses their NCI-AD results to compare their performance to other states, advocate for older adults in their state, and request funding from the state legislature. Georgia also finds that NCI-AD is a valuable tool to show system improvements over time, as well as areas of continued need. The state is conducting a longitudinal study of their OAA population to identify areas of need among these program participants.

Select 2023-2024 GA Survey NCI-AD OAA Participant Experience

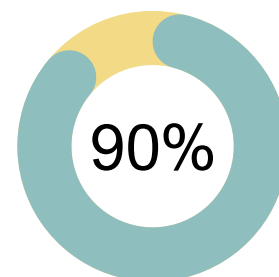


Nearly three-quarters (74%) of respondents who have a regular helper **rely on unpaid support** from family and friends.

85% of people report having **access to healthy foods** when they want them



report services **meet their current needs and goals**



report the services they receive **help them live the life they want**

GEORGIA INITIATIVES

Georgia is committed to expanding supports for individuals with dementia and their families, and they have partnered with Emory University, who has created several Integrated Memory Care Clinics to provide support for dementia patients and their families. There are currently 7 clinics across the state, but the university is trying to raise awareness and establish more clinic sites to provide better coverage and care to this population. Georgia DAS is working to establish a closed loop referral system with Emory University. Once this system is established, both partners will be able to share data, further enabling system and service delivery improvements. This initiative is supported by data collected in the NCI-AD ACS, including state-specific questions focusing on dementia. These questions help the state track progress and quality improvement among adults with dementia who receive supports and services under the OAA.



GEORGIA'S ADVICE TO OTHER STATES

To the states that are not currently participating in NCI-AD: do it! It is a great way to understand your clients' experiences and improve service delivery, especially if you do not have the bandwidth to collect client feedback in another way.

➤➤➤ NORTH CAROLINA

The 2024-2025 survey cycle is North Carolina's first year participating in the NCI-AD ACS. North Carolina plans to use their NCI-AD data to inform the state multisector plan on aging (MPA), develop a data dashboard, shape outcomes, track progress, and inform decision-making. The state will use OAA data to inform service delivery and quality improvement efforts, tracking their progress over time.

NORTH CAROLINA STATE-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

Many states opt to add state-specific questions in later years so that they can use NCI-AD data to assess where they need to make improvements and collect more information. North Carolina opted to include a handful of state-specific questions for their first survey cycle.

State-specific question include:


- Have you received information or had someone talk to you about what to do if you or someone you know is hurt, mistreated, or neglected?
- The State of NC has an Adult Protective Services program to help people who are mistreated, hurt, disrespected, or neglected by others. Are you aware of this Adult Protective Services program?
- Has someone talked to you about your individual rights (like the right to lock your bedroom door, the right to open your own mail, or the right to see a doctor if needed)?
- In the last year, have you ever been given the option to attend a telehealth appointment instead of an in-person appointment by a doctor or other healthcare provider?

While these questions are not specific to OAA service delivery, they help to create a more complete picture of the individual experience and may help the state to identify areas for quality improvement.

**LEARN MORE ABOUT
HOW NORTH CAROLINA
IS USING NCI-AD IN
THIS PRESENTATION:
[HTTPS://SHORTURL.AT/
SBEPc](https://shorturl.at/SBEPc)**

➤➤➤ WHAT CAN YOUR STATE DO?

- Work with state aging and Medicaid agencies to implement NCI-AD.
- Develop state-specific quality measures to track priorities for the state's OAA population.
- Use assessment results to refine, expand, and improve OAA programs to better meet the needs, preferences, and goals of older adults in the state.



MORE BACKGROUND ON THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT (OAA) FINAL RULE AND NATIONAL CORE INDICATORS - AGING AND DISABILITIES (NCI-AD)

➤➤➤ OLDER AMERICANS ACT FINAL RULE

On February 14, 2024, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) released the Older Americans Act (OAA) final rule, and the rule became effective on October 1, 2025. The OAA provides supports and services to help older adults live independently in their homes and communities. The recent updates include:

- Policies and procedures for direct service provision and fiscal requirements;
- Submission and content requirements for State Plans on Aging;
- Expanded guidelines for nutrition services;
- National Family Caregiver Support Program requirements; and
- Flexibilities for emergency management.

Additionally, states must also develop and implement a qualitative and quantitative monitoring process to ensure that services are both quality and effective in meeting participant needs, preferences, and goals. States that do not already have an existing monitoring process will need to select and implement a quality monitoring system quickly; entities must comply with the final rule by October 1, 2025.

➤➤➤ NATIONAL CORE INDICATORS—AGING AND DISABILITIES

Established in 2015, National Core Indicators—Aging and Disabilities™ (NCI-AD™) is a voluntary effort by state aging and physical disability agencies to measure and track their performance using a standardized set of nationally validated measures. The effort is coordinated by ADvancing States and Human Services Research Institute (HSRI). The NCI-AD Adult Consumer Survey (ACS) is a standardized survey conducted with a person receiving long term services and supports (LTSS) through state aging and physical disability systems. Surveys are conducted by trained surveyors through in-person, secure video meetings, or over-the-phone conversations with service participants. The survey contains questions about services and supports as well as background information on the person.