



Statistical Profile of the Elderly In Anguilla

'WHAT IS THEIR MARITAL STATUS?' CONT'D...

The difference between the two age groups lies in the proportion who are widowed or single. 26% of the elderly are widowed and 17% have never been married compared to the younger population where 2% are widowed and 44% have never been married.

WHAT IS THE LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF THE ELDERLY?

The starkest difference between the elderly and the younger population of Anguilla is in the educational opportunities available to the two age groups. This has resulted in the elderly not having as high a level of education as their younger counterparts. 80% of those 65 and over have only primary education or less compared to 37% of those aged 25 to 64 years of age.

WHAT DO THE ELDERLY DO?

Interestingly not all the elderly are retired. Nearly a quarter consider themselves to be part of the work force and 17% are actually working, giving a very high unemployment rate 16% for the elderly. The unemployment rate for those aged 20 to 64 years of age is only 5%. About two thirds of those 65 and over are retired, the remainder is either too sick to work or are carrying out home duties.

HOW HEALTHY ARE OUR ELDERLY?

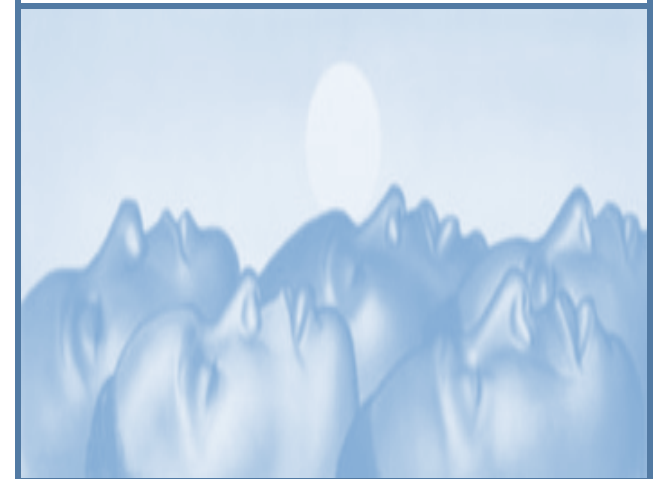
Unfortunately, but to be expected, our elderly are not as healthy as the rest of the population. Nearly a quarter of the elderly are living with some kind of long-term illness or disability. The most common complaint among the elderly who are suffering from a long-term illness is arthritis. Hypertension and diabetes are the second and third most common complaints among the elderly. On the other hand the elderly do not suffer from allergies and asthma in the same way that our younger population does.

WE NEED TO LOOK AFTER OUR ELDERLY!

Our elderly do not have health insurance coverage like many younger people do. This is partly because they are not working and therefore cannot participate in the employers work plans but it also reflects the fact that until recently it was not commonplace to take out insurance.

We all have a responsibility to help our elderly population in any way we can. They are our heritage and our culture. We all too, will fall into that elderly group being over 65 one day too God willing.

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ANGUILLA'S ELDERLY

In Anguilla, we have not really had to show a great deal of concern for the elderly in the past, especially over the past three decades. However, this is likely to change in the future, as those in the working age group move into their retirement years and Anguillians who have worked overseas choose their home country to return to spend their retirement years.

WHO ARE THE ELDERLY?

For these purposes, the elderly are looked at as all the persons who are usually in the old age- dependent category, meaning persons whose main activity status is neither employed nor unemployed who are aged 65 years or more.

HOW MANY "ELDERLY" ARE LIVING IN ANGUILLA?

In the age group 65 and over, there are 872 people according to the 2001 census. This means that for every 100 people there are only 8 people who fall into this age group.

This is less than in 1984 when there were 11 elderly for every 100 Anguillian residents. However over the next decade those who are between 55 and 65 years of age are going to move into the "elderly" age group and change the importance of the elderly in the overall population. Those 55 to 65 represent 42% of all those in the 55 and over age group.

Table 1: Age groups of persons 55 and over for the census years 1984, 1992 and 2001

Age Groups	1984	1992	2001
55-59	16.80%	19.80%	21.50%
60-64	16.80%	17.40%	20.30%
65-69	22.10%	17.70%	19.20%
70-74	21.20%	16.70%	14.10%
75-79	12.00%	14.30%	10.30%
80-84	5.90%	8.40%	6.80%
85-89	3.00%	3.60%	5.30%
90 & over	2.20%	2.10%	2.50%
Total (55 and over)	100%	100%	100%

ARE OUR ELDERLY ANGUILLIANS?

Our elderly population has a greater tendency to be born in Anguilla and to be Anguillian than the rest of the population. 97% of those 65 and over were born in Anguilla compared to 88% for the rest of the population.

WHAT RELIGIOUS GROUPS DO THE ELDERLY BELONG TO?

Religion tends to play a very important role in our elderly peoples' lives. They belong to the more traditional denominations, that is, the Anglican and Methodist churches rather than being Pentecostal, Baptist or Church of God which appeal to the younger age group.

Table 2: Religion of the Population by age group Non- Elderly(0- 64 years) and Elderly (65+ years)

Religion	0 - 64 years	65+ years
Anglican	28.10%	39.60%
Baptist	7.60%	3.40%
Brethren	0.30%	0.70%
Church of God	8.00%	3.10%
Methodist	23.10%	34.30%
Pentecostal	8.20%	1.90%
Roman Catholic	5.90%	3.80%
Other	18.90%	13.20%
Total	100%	100%

WHAT IS THEIR MARITAL STATUS?

Some people think there is a greater tendency among the younger generation to be divorced or separated. This is not the case. 8% of those aged 25 to 64 years of age are divorced or separated and the percentage is the same for those 65 and over. Similarly the percentage who are married, at 47%, is the same for both age groups.