

The Current American Aging Care System No Longer Works*

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- *America is aging fast.* By 2030, one in five Americans will be 65 or older, and by 2034 older adults will outnumber children for the first time. This year, the oldest baby boomers turn 80.¹
- *Retirement is one of the largest — and fastest-growing — forces in the economy.* That demographic shift is reshaping a vast share of the U.S. economy, from participation in the labor force to retirement savings, Social Security and Medicare outlays, health care spending, housing and financial services.²
- *Baby Boomers don't have sufficient financial resources for their frail years.* More than 50% of the 72-million Boomers do not have sufficient resources for their older age;^{3 4} 75% lack resources for their frail years.^{5 6}
- *Aging is already accounting for 40% of federal spending (50% in 10 years)⁷ and Medicare costs are expected to double in 10 years.⁸* Medicare costs are already accounting for one third of the annual deficit.⁹
- *The national retirement plan* is now additionally impacted by chronic conditions that occur at younger age. Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) constitutes 11% of Social Security benefits paid in 2023.¹⁰ 16% of all the nation's insured workers are age 60–66-year-olds receiving SSDI benefits. This further draws down the Social Security Trust Fund (scheduled to run out in 2035).¹¹
- *Human resources have become inadequate.* By 2026 there is a projected shortage of 4 million healthcare workers (physicians, nurses, and health aides).¹²
- *Hospitals are disappearing.* Hospital beds per 1,000 Americans have declined by 75% since 1960.^{13 14}
- *200-300 nursing homes close each year.¹⁵* Surviving nursing homes are becoming short-term Medicare facilities. There will be little long-term care in nursing homes available for Boomers.

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- *Assisted living, where the average lengths-of-stay is now just one year, ¹⁶ will be financially unaffordable to 72% of Americans. ¹⁷*
- *Pharmacies, a few years ago viewed as future community care centers, are in shambles. From 2013- 2023, Americans lost 4,500 pharmacies (7.5%). Of the big 3 chains, Rite Aid declared bankruptcy, CVS and Walmart shares are down 16% and 48% respectively. ¹⁸*
- *Annually, nearly 650,000 people are pushed into bankruptcy by medical bills each year. Nearly 80% had insurance at the time they got sick. ¹⁹ 66.5% of all personal bankruptcies are caused directly by medical expenses. ²⁰*
- *Medicaid accounts for 53-100% of the decline in state higher education support,²¹ a result is \$1.75 trillion of student debt. ²²*
- *1 in 4 American adults (63 million) are now family caregivers, facing rising stress, health risks, and financial strain.²³*
- *There are an estimated 5.4 million children under the age of 18 providing care to parents, grandparents or siblings, up from about 1.3 million nearly 20 years ago. ²⁴*
- *80 percent of older households don't have the financial resources to weather major financial upsets such as widowhood, serious illness, or the need for long-term care.²⁵*

¹ Demographic Turning Points for the United States: Population Projections for 2020 to 2060. [census.gov](https://www.census.gov)

² Seven Numbers Shaping Retirement in 2026, Mark Miller, New York Times, January 3, 2026.

³ Annie Nova, "Baby Boomers Face More Risk to Their Retirement Than Previous Generations," CNBC, November 7, 2018, <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/11/07/one-third-of-baby-boomers-had-nothing-saved-for-retirement-at-age-58-.html>.

⁴ "Seeing Our Way to Financial Security in the Age of Increased Longevity," Stanford Center on Longevity, October, 2018, <https://longevity.stanford.edu/seeing-our-way-to-financial-security-in-the-age-of-increased-longevity-2/>.

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- ⁵ AARP. Nearly half of Americans 55+ have no retirement savings. AARP. March 28, 2019. <https://www.aarp.org/retirement/retirement-savings/info-2019/no-retirement-money-saved.html>.
- ⁶ BarnesWendling CPAs, Inc. Retirement planning for Baby Boomers: It's not too late to save. BarnesWendling. December 5, 2021. <https://www.barnesw.com/retirement-planning-for-baby-boomers-its-not-too-late/>.
- ⁷ Howard Gleckman, "The Federal Government Will Spend Half Its Budget on Older Adults in Ten Years," *Forbes*, February 1, 2019, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/howardgleckman/2019/02/01/the-federal-government-will-spend-half-its-budget-on-older-adults-in-ten-years/?sh=3fbd4dbc56b6>.
- ⁸ The Facts About Medicare Spending, KFF, June 2023, <https://www.kff.org/interactive/the-facts-about-medicare-spending/>
- ⁹ Jackson Hammond and Gordon Gray, "The Future of America's Entitlements: What You Need to Know About the Medicare and Social Security Trustees Reports," *American Action Forum*, September 1, 2021, <https://www.americanactionforum.org/research/the-future-of-americas-entitlements-what-you-need-to-know-about-the-medicare-and-social-security-trustees-reports-4/#ixzz7POdntyue>.
- ¹⁰ Fact Sheet SOCIAL SECURITY
<https://www.ssa.gov/news/press/factsheets/basicfact-alt.pdf>
- ¹¹ Chart Book: Social Security Disability Insurance, DECEMBER 13, 2023
<https://www.cbpp.org/research/social-security/social-security-disability-insurance-o>
- ¹² The Shortage of US Healthcare Workers in 2023, Oracle, Rob Preston | Content Director | January 2023 <https://www.oracle.com/human-capital-management/healthcare-workforce-shortage/>
- ¹³ Michas, F. Number of All Hospital Beds in the U.S. 1975 to 2019," *Statistica*. February 9, 2021. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/185860/number-of-all-hospital-beds-in-the-us-since-2001/>.
- ¹⁴ United States Hospital Beds, *Trading Economics*, 2022. United States Hospital Beds – 2022 Data – 2023 Forecast–1960- 2021 Historical – Chart (trading economics.com)
<https://tradingeconomics.com/united-states/hospital-beds#:~:text=Hospital%20Beds%20in%20the%20United%20States%20averaged%204.77%20per%20100,per%201000%20people%20in%202016>.
- ¹⁵ Span, P. In the nursing home, empty beds and quiet halls. *New York Times*. September 28, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/28/health/nursing-homes-occupancy.html>.
- ¹⁶ What Is the Average Length of Stay in Assisted Living? - Senior Services of America
<https://seniorservicesofamerica.com/blog/what-is-the-average-length-of-stay-in-assisted-living/>
- ¹⁷ 72 percent of middle-income older adults won't be able to afford assisted living by 2033: study - McKnight's Senior Living.
<https://www.mcknightsseniorliving.com/home/news/72-percent-of-middle-income-older-adults-wont-be-able-to-afford-assisted-living-by-2033-study/>
- ¹⁸ Maria Aspan, "A crisis is hitting your local drugstore. Why the slow demise of a 130-year-old-family-owned pharmacy chain spells disaster," *Fortune*, June 3, 2024, <https://finance.yahoo.com/news/crisis-hitting-local-drugstore-why-102500058.html>
- ¹⁹ Medicare-for-All Prevents Medical Bankruptcies
<https://www.citizen.org/article/medicare-for-all-prevents-medical-bankruptcies/>

²⁰ RetireGuide. Terry Turner, August 30, 2022

<https://www.retireguide.com/retirement-planning/risks/medical-bankruptcy-statistics/>

²¹ Levy, G., Increases in Medicaid spending come at the expense of higher education: Study. *U.S. News & World Report*, May 1, 2018, <https://www.usnews.com/news/national-news/articles/2018-05-01/increases-in-medical-spending-come-at-the-expense-of-higher-education-study>.

²² Alicia Hahn, "2024 Student Loan Debt Statistics: Average Student Loan Debt," *Forbes*, April 18, 2024, <https://www.forbes.com>advisor>

²³ A report from AARP and the National Alliance for Caregiving released July 25, 2025

<https://www.aha.org/news/headline/2025-07-25-63-million-americans-are-family-caregivers>

²⁴ Millions of American Kids Are Caregivers Now: 'The Hardest Part Is That I'm Only 17,' Clare Ansberry, *The Wall Street Journal*, April 27, 2024 <https://www.wsj.com/health/wellness/child-caregivers-caring-parents-2b956149>

²⁵ National Council on Aging, September 2025 Issues Brief. assets.ncoa.com