

M-Dash Overview: Pilot Community, Millinocket

Data reflects dashboard as of May 1, 2023



Overview: Background

In February 2022, Age-Friendly (AF) Millinocket committee became a pilot site for Maine Council on Aging's (MCOA) Municipal Data Across Sectors for Healthy Aging (M-DASH) Project. As a municipal project, newly appointed Town Manager, Peter Jamieson, signed the Memorandum of Understanding solidifying the commitment to participate in the project and to accept the technical assistance provided by MCOA for the 18-month project.

- The goal of the project was to create a municipal dashboard that could be used to make data-driven decisions about the actions and investments we make that support healthy aging.

Jess Maurer, MCOA Executive Director, Effie Rorke, Principal Consultant for This Land Consulting, Inc., Larry Clifford and Kat Blackstone, M-DASH Consultants worked with Age-Friendly Millinocket committee members (local task force) over the course of the project.

- The task force was provided a dashboard of census data that was updated over the course of the project as new data became available. Local data previously collected through Thrive Penobscot was also integrated into the dashboard.
 - Census data supported anecdotal information and past survey data already collected as an Age-Friendly Committee and community.

With the dataset compiled, we now have specific numbers, information, and figures to create evidence-based plans to better serve and reach our community members.

Overview: What We Learned

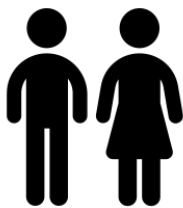
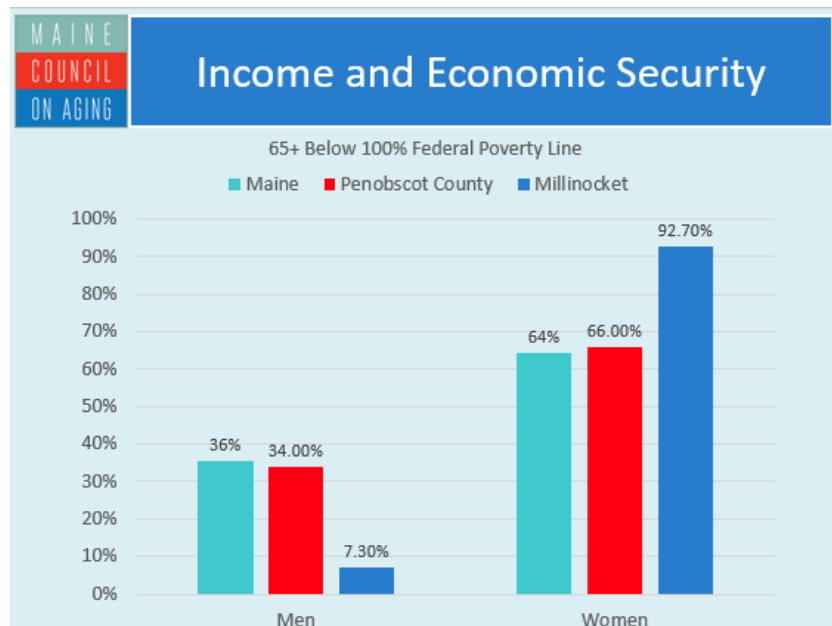
It was identified that **Millinocket**, as a community within Penobscot County and in relation to Maine as a whole, **is an outlier when it comes to:**

- Median age (ours is higher ↑):
 - Millinocket 57.4; Penobscot County 42.1; Maine 44.7
- Households with one or more people age 60+ (ours is higher ↑):
 - Millinocket 59%; Penobscot County 42%, Maine 45%
- Ratio of overall working-age residents to older adults (ours is lower ↓):
 - Millinocket 1.37; Penobscot County 3.42; Maine 2.93
For every older adult there are X.XX working age adults (18-64/65+)
- Individuals age 65+ living alone (ours is higher ↑):
 - Millinocket 39.7%; Penobscot County 29.3%; Maine 28.5%
- Individuals age 65+ who own their home (ours is higher ↑):
 - Millinocket 84%; Penobscot County 77.5%; Maine 79.8 %
- Median home value of owner-occupied units (ours is lower ↓).
 - Millinocket \$74,800; Penobscot County \$157,100; Maine \$212,100
- 84.2% of housing stock for those age 65+ (renting or owning) in Millinocket is 50+ years or older, compared to 61.3% in Penobscot County 58.9% in Maine.

Income and Economic Security Data showed us the following:

We have 178 individuals age 65+ in our community that are living below the Federal Poverty Line (FPL) which is more than 10% of the population age 65+. Of those 178 individuals, 92.7% (165 individuals) are women and 7.3 % (13 individuals) are men.

- This data aligns with the historical employment of Millinocket, being that Great Northern Paper employed primarily men with women staying at home, leaving men with retirement plans but no retirement income for women.



The median income for men and women who are 65+ living alone is also starkly different. Men 65+ who live alone have a median income of \$43,002 while women who are 65+ living alone have a median income of less than half that at \$20,031. A difference of \$22,971.

- Women's (65+ who live alone) median income of \$20,031 in Millinocket is only \$5,451 more than the Federal Poverty Line (FPL) which is \$14,580 as of 2023.
 - *The Federal Poverty Level is the income threshold below which a "family" and every individual in it, is considered to be in poverty. The poverty definition is based on money income before taxes and does not include capital gains or non-cash benefits.*

With this data, our committee set a top priority audience of those around, at or under the FPL and women 65+ who are living alone.

Through the AF Committee, it is known there are services and systems in place within our community which impact and support residents who need assistance.

- We set out to answer the following questions:
 - What are the challenges in reaching older adults?
 - How can we increase visibility and use of emergency/stop-gap relief resources available?
 - What information do our older adults need in order to seek preventative intervention(s) and resources to avoid emergency situations?

These questions informed our **Primary Area of Focus**, *which was to improve financial security by focusing on actions that would benefit low-income members of the community, starting with older adults*. Within this more specifically, Medicare navigation/enrollment assistance that would include both eligibility and enrollment assistance. This would allow beneficiaries to 1) maximize their health plans and 2) keep more money in their pockets. Suggested activities include public outreach, education/technical assistance, and guided training.

Action 1. Identify, inventory, and understand resources available here within our community.

- **Task 1.** Research and understand current resources via information sharing across the committee.
- **Task 2.** Ensure the committee is aware of what is available, them being masters of assisting in navigation of these resources.

Action 2. Create trust and share information with our audience in the community.

- **Task 1.** Educate our community on preventative and emergency aide resources available, regardless of age. Our committee recognizes that there is value in educating all ages with this information to empower individuals to able to share with an older adult if presented the opportunity.
- **Task 2.** Create resource card to share with community. Utilize grant funding received by Thrive Penobscot to print cards in order to be mailed out with fall municipal billing cycle and extras printed to be shared across the community via events, placed in waiting areas and other key locations etc. *(Included at end of document.)*
- **Task 3.** Use tactics such as word of mouth, radio commercials, in person education sessions at MML, Ads in the local paper, and a mailer insert in a Town of Millinocket correspondence to share resources. Many community members do not utilize social media and we must focus on traditional/alternative ways of communication.

Future Action of the Committee

Hold community sessions at the Millinocket Memorial Library that share preventative information with community.

- **Task 1.** Identify important community organizations who are the entity the resources lead to (Such as Penquis, KVHC, EAAA, etc)
- **Task 2.** Invite organizations identified to hold information sessions in Millinocket, at the library, to directly interact with and support our residents.
 - **KVHC** to hold insurance sign up info sessions at the library this fall (2023), dates TBD.

Footnote: Age-Friendly Millinocket has been a member of the AARP network of Age-Friendly States and Communities since 2019. As such, an action plan is in place that guides the work of the committee. While issues around older housing stock and women living alone was identified as a need to be addressed, it wasn't selected as a priority within the M-DASH project because it is already a priority area of the AF committee.

AGE-FRIENDLY MILLINOCKET COMMUNITY RESOURCES

PENQUIS



Need a ride?

With current grant funding, rides are available within Penobscot and Piscataquis Counties at no cost to residents of Millinocket through **Penquis Lynx general public transportation**.

Reservations required three business days prior.

For reservations and to learn more call **(207)973-3695**.

EASTERN AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Eastern Area Agency on Aging offers food assistance, including meal delivery for those homebound, monthly Senior food boxes, and a Community Café here in Millinocket!



Call **723-2045** to reserve your spot at the Community Café! **Open Tues and Wed from 10:30am-1pm** at 80 Maine Ave (Stearn's Assisted Living).

Need assistance choosing the right Medicare plan for you? Call EAAA at **(207)941-2865!**

Learn more at www.eaaa.org

FOOD PANTRIES

St. Martin's Every other Wednesday
19 Colby St, Milkt. 9am-11am (746-3333)

I Care Ministries Thursdays
45 Spring St, Milkt. 9am-12pm (447-1603)

Tri Town Baptist 3rd Saturday of the Month
8 Cone St, E. Milkt. 8am- 12pm (598-7674)

MILLINOCKET MEMORIAL LIBRARY



We're here to help. The library's **Resource Navigation** program will show you what local programs and services are available and connect you to them. To talk, call us at **(207)370-1581**, stop in at the library, visit the library's website or make an appointment.

Do you have a plan to pay for heating fuel this winter? Every Wednesday starting 8/2 through 10/25 from 12:30-3:30pm, **Penquis** will be at the library to help you sign up for the low income heating assistance program (LIHEAP). For more info or to make an appointment, call Penquis at **973-3630**.

MillinocketMemorialLibrary.org
5 Maine Ave, Millinocket | 723-7020

TOWN OF MILLINOCKET



The Town of Millinocket General Assistance program is available to those with no other options for assistance by providing vouchers for basic necessities and essential services.

To make an appointment, call **723-7010** or email humanresource@millinocket.org



July 2023