REQUEST:

What are the five most prevalent chronic medical and behavior health conditions affecting individuals in Texas over the age of 60?

RESPONSE:

Data regarding medical and behavioral health conditions typically come from two different sources. One source is actual utilization data, such as that generated by physician (provider) visits and hospital admissions. Another source is survey data, in which people are asked if they have been diagnosed with certain conditions or are affected on a daily basis by particular physical problems. In our response, we will provide data from both sources. Also, although the question notes "over the age of 60," the best and most accurate data for both utilization and survey data is aggregated for ages 65 and over. Because it is more accurate and avoids dealing with estimations, we have chosen to present data for the 65 and over age group.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS, 2012) provide actual utilization data on chronic conditions, based on inpatient and outpatient visit data. The five most prevalent chronic medical conditions are:

Medical Chronic Condition	Ages 65 and Over
Hypertension, or high blood pressure	60.5%
Hyperlipidemia, or high cholesterol	48.1%
Ischemic heart disease, or coronary artery disease *	33.1%
Arthritis	32.0%
Diabetes	28.4%

* Note: Ischemic heart disease includes stable angina, unstable angina, myocardial infarction, and sudden coronary death.

The five most prevalent chronic behavioral conditions or diseases are:

Behavioral Chronic Condition	Ages 65 and Over
Depression	13.9%
Alzheimer's, or other dementia	13.1%
Schizophrenia, or other psychotic disorders	2.5%
Alcohol and/or drug abuse (treated)	0.6%
Autism Disorders	Less than 0.1%

Every year, the State of Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) conducts the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS). This is a self-reported survey. Among the questions asked of respondents are whether they have been diagnosed by a medical provider to have certain illnesses, whether they are affected on a daily basis by some conditions, and whether they engage in certain risky behaviors. The State forwards the results of this survey to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

The five most prevalent physical conditions from the BRFSS (2013) are:

Physical Chronic Condition	Ages 65 and Over
Overweight or obese (BMI 25.0 or more)	65.6%
Overweight (BMI 25.0 to 29.9)	38.0%
Obese (BMI 30.0 to 99.8)	27.6%
High Blood Pressure	63.3%
High Blood Cholesterol	54.2%
Arthritis	48.9%
Diabetes	24.9%

The BRFSS does not provide much information on mental health. However, there are two conditions on which they can report:

Behavioral Chronic Condition	Ages 65 and Over
Depression	13.7%
Alcohol use, heavy (2010 data) *	3.2%

* Note: Heavy alcohol use is defined as five or more drinks a day, five or more times a month.

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