

NEBRASKA DATA USERS 2021

CONFERENCE SERIES

JUNE 24



CENTER FOR PUBLIC
AFFAIRS RESEARCH

#NebraskaByTheNumbers

#DataUsersNE

**Understanding
Vulnerable
Populations: An
Exploration of
Data Sources and
Research Methods**
AGING



Lindsay Wilkinson, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Department of Gerontology,
University of Nebraska at Omaha

Imprint of Major Historical Events on the Lives of Older Adults: Lessons Learned and Future Directions

*“[...] the life course of individuals is embedded in and
shaped by the historical times and places they
experience over their lifetime”*

(Elder 1998:3; emphasis added)

Purpose and Outline

Purpose: Overview past and current research on the influence of major historical events and suggest next steps, including identifying relevant data sources

Past research on historical events

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

Data and findings from a survey of older Nebraskans

Future directions for consideration

Background

Past research has uncovered both short- and long-term consequences of major historical events on individual life trajectories

(Pruchno et al. 2016; Roseboom et al. 2006; Wilkinson et al. 2020)

Emergent evidence on the COVID-19 pandemic has begun to reveal how it has impacted not only physical health and longevity, but also the psychosocial well-being of older adults

(Krendl and Perry 2021; Whitehead 2021; Sharma 2021)

Great Depression of 1929

“the Depression was not the ‘worst of times’ for all parents and children [...] although few were in a position to regard it as the ‘best of times’”

(Elder 1974:150)

Children of the Great Depression was an “experiment in nature” and emphasized the significance of historical time and place in discerning life course trajectories

(Elder 1998; Elder 1974)

Contextual influence of the **Great Recession?**

Fast Forward to the Great Recession

“Significant decline in economic activity spread across the economy;” began in December of 2007 and ended in June of 2009

(National Bureau of Economic Research 2009)

Unemployment peaked at 10% and household spending decreased in nearly every major category

(Bureau of Labor Statistics 2012)

Significant losses in wealth, especially among Black and Hispanic households

(Kochar et al. 2011)

How Did Older Adults Fare?

Delayed retirement decisions, increased unemployment, decreased household wealth, and contributed to financial worries

(AARP 2011; Gustman et al. 2011; Hurd and Rohwedder 2010)

Many cutback on expenses and turned to savings

(AARP 2011)

Harmful to both mental and physical health

(Boen and Yang 2016; Wilkinson 2016)

Lessons Learned from Past Research

Major historical events such as the Great Recession impact multiple life domains, including mental and physical health

Effects persist well beyond the conclusion of the event

Not all social groups are equally affected

Snapshot of the COVID-19 Pandemic

In the U.S. the number of total cases exceeds 33 million to date, with more than 600,000 deaths since the start of the pandemic (CDC 2021)

Risk for COVID-19 Infection, Hospitalization, and Death By Age Group									
Rate compared to 5-17-years ¹	0-4 years	5-17 years	18-29 years	30-39 years	40-49 years	50-64 years	65-74 years	75-84 years	85+ years
Cases ²	<1x	Reference group	3x	2x	2x	2x	2x	2x	2x
Hospitalization ³	2x	Reference group	7x	10x	15x	25x	35x	55x	80x
Death ⁴	2x	Reference group	15x	45x	130x	400x	1100x	2800x	7900x
All rates are relative to the 5-17-year age category. Sample interpretation: Compared with 5-17-year-olds, the rate of death is 45 times higher in 30-39-year-olds and 7,900 times higher in 85+-year-olds. Compared with 18-29-year-olds, the rate of hospitalization is 8 times higher in 75-84-year-olds (55 divided by 7 equals 7.9).									

Older adults are especially vulnerable to hospitalization and death from COVID-19

(Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/older-adults.html>)

Impact of COVID-19 on Older Nebraskans



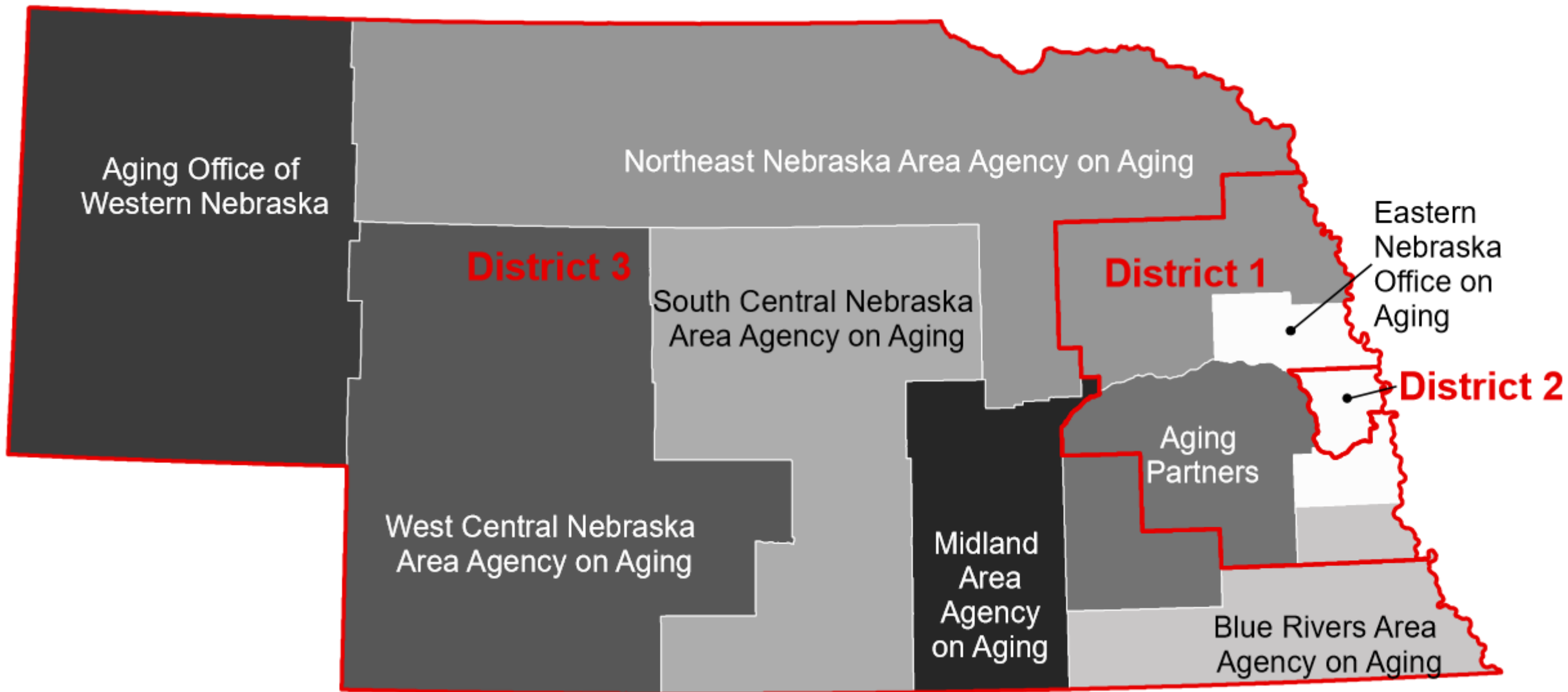
Study of the pandemic-related experiences of rural and underserved older adults living in the state of Nebraska

- Julie Masters, Christopher M. Kelly, and Lindsay R. Wilkinson (University of Nebraska Omaha)
- Miechelle McKelvey, Ladan Ghazi Saidi, and Toni L. Hill (University of Nebraska Kearney)

Overview of Data

Self-administered surveys were distributed to Meals on Wheels/Home-Delivered Meals recipients across Nebraska's eight Area Agencies on Aging

- Conducted in July 2020
- Contact-free delivery
- Small number of grab-and-go meal recipients
- Sample = 1,852 respondents age 60 or older



Overview of Data

Focused on pandemic life changes, loneliness and social engagement, and technology use

- Life changes due to COVID-19
- Loneliness
- Sheltering in place
- Social connections
- Telehealth
- Ownership or access to communication devices
- Internet access

Summary of Survey Findings



DECEMBER 2019

70%

perceived that their
life had changed
as a result of the
COVID-19 pandemic.



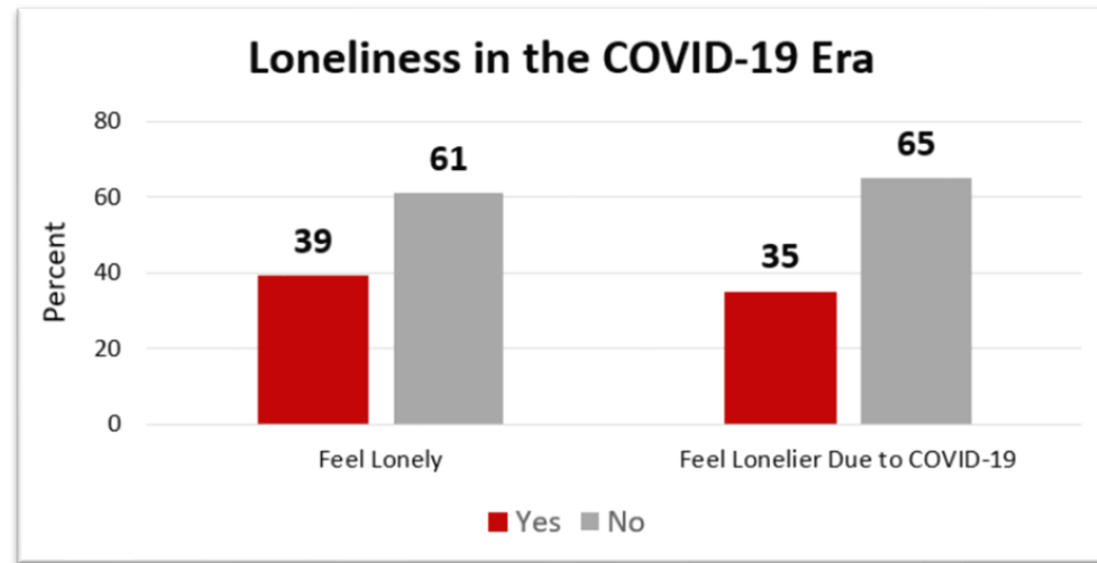
MARCH 2020

Most respondents reported leaving their home less (57%) or being unable to leave (7%); 1 in 4 had not left their home in over a week

42% of respondents had to skip or postpone a health care visit

Summary of Survey Findings

39% of respondents reported feelings of loneliness, whereas 35% indicated that they felt *lonelier* as a result of the pandemic



Summary of Survey Findings

The vast majority (98%) of respondents had someone they could contact if they needed help or would like to visit by phone or video chat

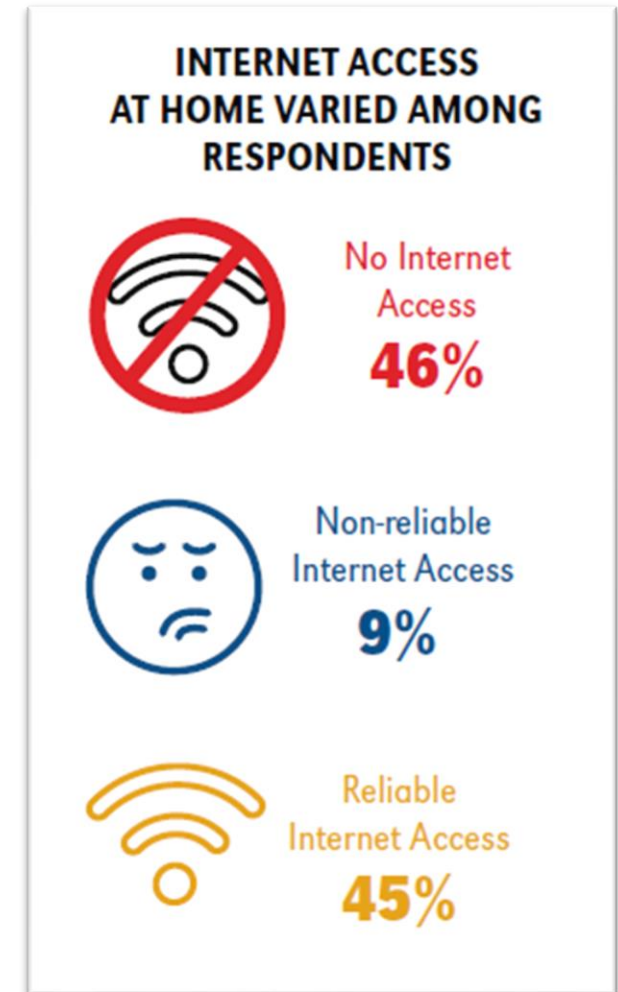
While 73% of respondents interacted with someone by phone/video chat or in person within the last day, 7% reported that it had been more than a week since their last interaction

Summary of Survey Findings

Less than half of respondents (41%) have neither internet access nor a smartphone device

99% of respondents own or have access to a communication device: *telephone* (88%), *computer* (35%), *smartphone* (31%), *tablet* (21%)

27% of respondents have received health care services via telephone or video chat



Implications

Expose vulnerabilities among rural and underserved older adults during the COVID-19 pandemic

Lead to effective interventions focused on older adults

Help inform future policy

Future Directions for Consideration

Longitudinal data, which are important for

- capturing change
- identifying mechanisms
- examining longer-term effects

Spillover effects across life domains

Differential effects across social groups

Health and Retirement Study

Largest, nationally representative panel study of older adults living in the United States

- Began in 1992 and is ongoing
- 30,000+ respondents
- Oversamples Black and Hispanic adults
- 51 years of age and older
- Most data are publicly available (<https://hrs.isr.umich.edu/about>)

Health and Retirement Study

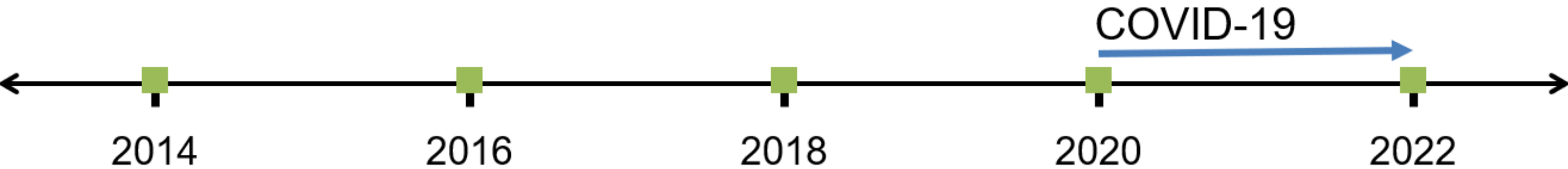
Focused on four main areas: “income and wealth; health, cognition, and use of health care services; work and retirement; and family connections”

(Sonnega and Weir 2014)

Psychosocial leave-behind questionnaire was introduced to a random one-half sample in 2006; re-interviewed in alternating years

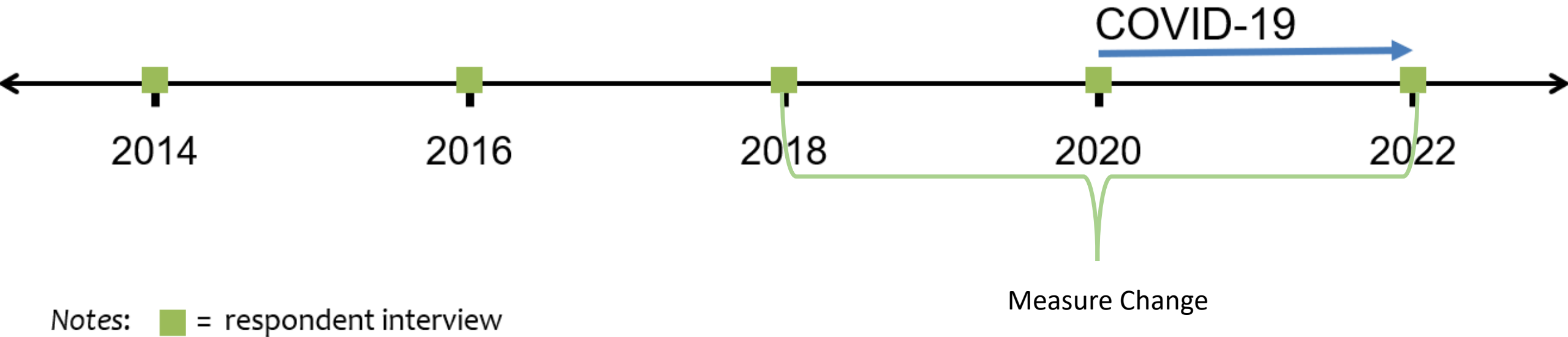
- Physical measures and biomarker data are also available

Health and Retirement Study

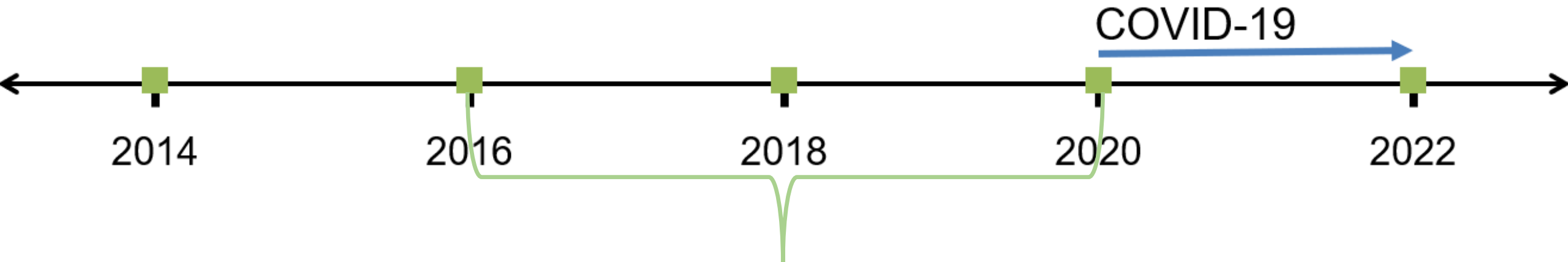


Notes: ■ = respondent interview

Health and Retirement Study



Health and Retirement Study



Notes: ■ = respondent interview

Measure Change

Other Data Sources

National Social Life, Health, and Aging Project

- Learn more about: <https://www.norc.org/Research/Projects/Pages/national-social-life-health-and-aging-project.aspx>

Midlife Development in the United States

- Learn more about: <http://midus.wisc.edu/index.php>

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



AAA DIRECTORS

Aging Office of Western Nebraska, Cheryl Brunz
Aging Partners, Randy Jones
Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging, Carla Frase
Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging, Trish Bergman
Midland Area Agency on Aging, Casey Muzic
Northeast Nebraska Area Agency on Aging, Connie Cooper
South Central Nebraska Area Agency on Aging, Rod Horsley
West Central Nebraska Area Agency on Aging, Linda Foreman

FACULTY RESEARCH TEAM

Julie Masters, Ph.D., Terry Haney chair and professor, UNO Department of Gerontology
Lindsay Wilkinson, Ph.D., assistant professor, UNO Department of Gerontology
Christopher Kelly, Ph.D., chair and professor, UNO Department of Gerontology
Miechelle McKelvey, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, chair and professor, UNK Department of Communication Disorders
Ladan Ghazi Saidi, Ph.D., assistant professor, UNK Department of Communication Disorders
Toni Hill, Ph.D., associate professor, UNK Department of Family Studies

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA, GRAPHICS, AND MAPS

David Drozd, research coordinator, UNO Center for Public Affairs Research
Tara Grell, graphic designer, UNO Center for Public Affairs Research
Melanie Kiper, community service specialist, UNO Center for Public Affairs Research

DATA ENTRY

Kara Negley, UNO Department of Gerontology
Heng Wu, UNO doctoral student
Taylor O'Brien, Home Instead Champions of Aging Program

Partial funding for this project was provided by the UNO BIG (Business, Informatics and Gerontology) Ideas grant and the UNO Department of Gerontology Terry Haney Chair funds.

Thank you.

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING THE
NEBRASKA DATA USERS 2021
CONFERENCE SERIES!

[CPAR.UNOMAHA.EDU]

Follow CPAR:  @UNOmahaCPAR  cpar.unomaha.edu/youtube

#NebraskaByTheNumbers | #DataUsersNE

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Omaha



The University of Nebraska does not discriminate based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and/or political affiliation in its programs, activities, or employment. UNO is an AA/EEO/ADA institution.