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# **The Healthcare System from the Perspective of Adults Aged 65+: Trends and Gaps, 1999–2021**

## **A Secondary Analysis of the Population Surveys on the Level of Service and Health Care System Performance**

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# Abstract

## Background and Objective

Population aging in Israel has led to a steady increase in the number of adults aged 65+, creating growing challenges for the healthcare system. The aim of this study was to examine trends in satisfaction with healthcare services, patterns of use, and barriers to accessing care among adults aged 65+ between the years 1999 and 2021, and to offer projections for the coming years.

## Methods

A longitudinal analysis was conducted using 13 public opinion surveys carried out by the Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute between 1999 and 2021. The analysis included descriptive statistics, logistic regressions, and forecasting models to identify trends and estimate expected developments.

## Key Findings

- Improvement in self-rated health among adults aged 65+ and a decline in psychological distress, especially among adults aged 71+.
- Family physicians play a central role in caring for older adults. Satisfaction with family physicians is a key component of the healthcare experience for this age group. However, only one-fifth to one-third reported that their family physician discussed various health-promoting behaviors with them.
- Increased use of telemedicine services, though usage among adults aged 71+ remains lower than among younger groups.
- Increased wait times for specialist care, especially among adults aged 65+, accompanied by a rise in private physician visits.
- Increased satisfaction with healthcare services, particularly with family physicians, but a decline in trust in receiving optimal treatment in the event of severe illness.
- Adults aged 65+ rely more heavily on the public healthcare system compared to younger age groups. The rate of purchase of voluntary health insurance is lower among adults aged 71+, despite the increase in their purchase of this insurance over the years.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Strengthening Israel's public healthcare system and adapting services to the needs of an aging population is essential. This includes improving accessibility, reducing waiting times, and expanding the availability of digital services. Additionally, the central role of the family physician should be reinforced, and communication about health-promoting behaviors should be expanded as part of routine care.