

ABA and NADRC Resources for SNT Trustees with Elder Orphan Beneficiaries

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Who are Elder Orphans?

= Aged (age 65+), community-dwelling individuals who are socially and/or physically isolated, without an available known family member or designated surrogate or caregiver.

Also referred to as Solo Agers or
Isolated Elders

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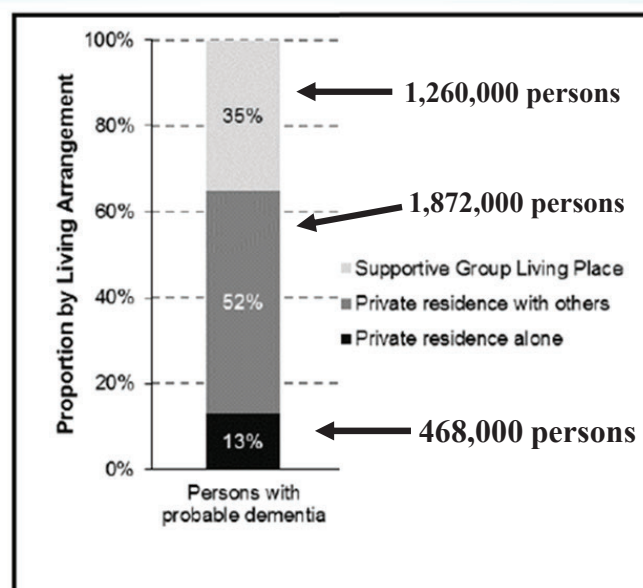
Who are “Unbefriended” Elders?

Older adults who lacks decision-making capacity, lack an advanced directive and the ability to execute the directive, and lack a family member or a friend to act as their representative

(Farrell et al., 2017; Karp & Wood, 2003; Pope & Sellers, 2012)

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Living Arrangements of Persons with Probable Dementia, Age 65+



Source: Unpublished analyses of NHATS data conducted by RTI International, 2015.

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Unbefriended Elders in Nursing Homes

Only Estimates of Prevalence.

- 3% to 4% - N. Karp & E. Wood, “Incapacitated and Alone: Health Care Decision-Making for the Unbefriended Elderly” (2003)
- 4.14% in Alberta LTC homes (S.A. Chamberlain et al., “Incapacitated and Alone: Prevalence of Unbefriended Residents in Alberta Long-Term Care Homes” (2019)

Equals roughly 56,000 residents
in US Nursing Homes

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Prevalence in Hospitals

Annals of Internal Medicine in 2007 found that in the ICUs of seven medical centers, 5.5% of patients who died lacked a surrogate decision maker and an advance directive

D.B. White *et al.*, “Life Support for Patients without a Surrogate Decision Maker: Who Decides?”

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17th Annual Changes and Trends Affecting Special Needs Trusts session
"ABA and National Alzheimer's and Dementia Resource Center Resources for SNT Trustees with Elder Orphan Beneficiaries"