Economic Circumstances of Older Adults in Connecticut and Links to Health and Well-Being

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Presentation Objectives

- Provide overview of demographic characteristics of Connecticut's older population, with comparisons to New England and the U.S.
- Draw links between economic circumstances and health-related well-being in Connecticut's older population.
- Explain how economic and health-related characteristics of older adults compare throughout the state to identify areas of high risk for poorer health outcomes.
- Provide data to foster discussion about how to help at-risk older adults live their best lives.

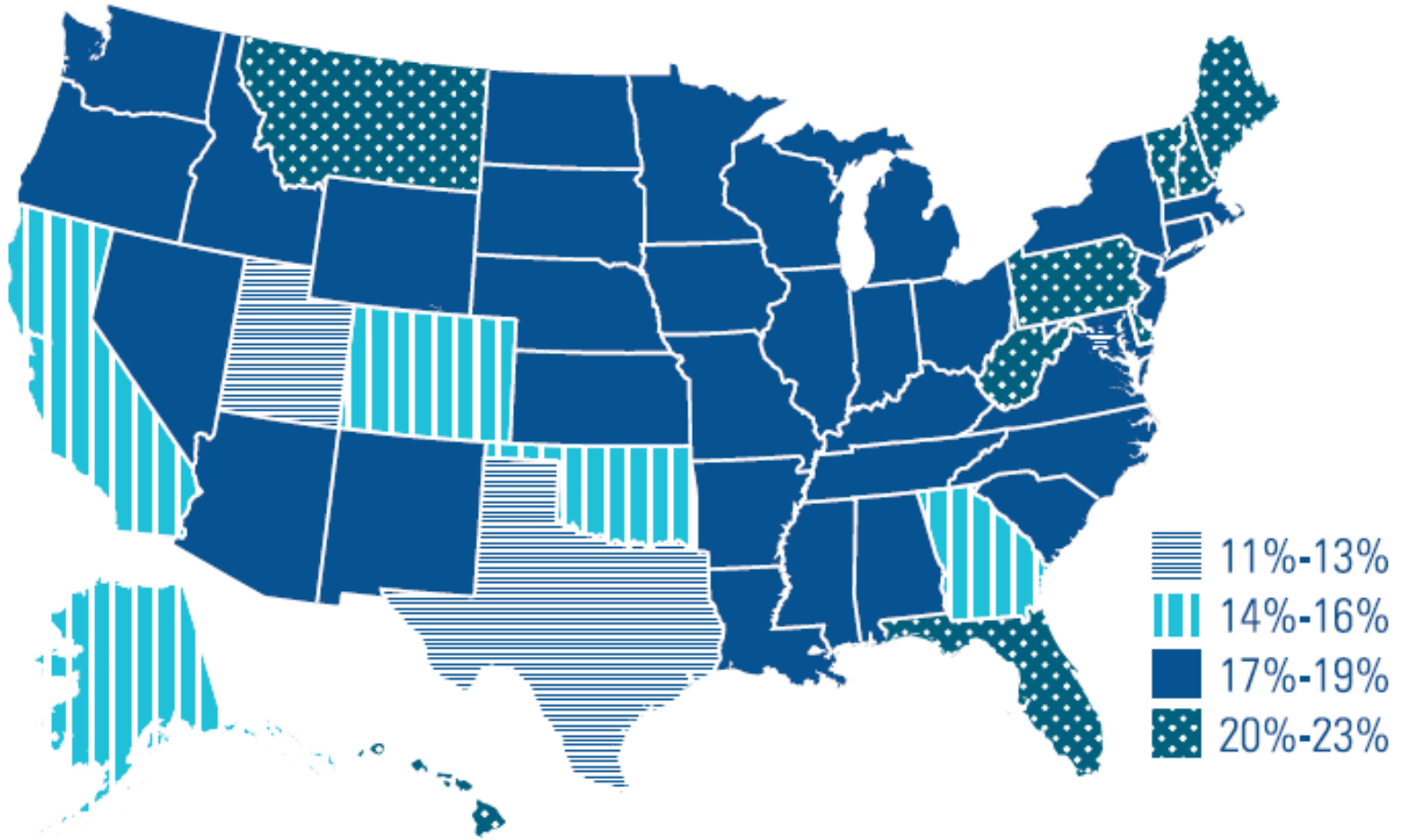
Data Sources

- Dugan, E., Silverstein, N.M., Lee, C.M., Porell F., (2021). *Connecticut Healthy Aging Data Report*. www.healthyagingdatareports.org
- *2023 Profile of Older Americans*. U.S. Administration for Community Living, May 2024.

Demographic Characteristics of Connecticut's Older Population

- Age distribution
- Racial and ethnic group characteristics
- Level of education
- Living alone

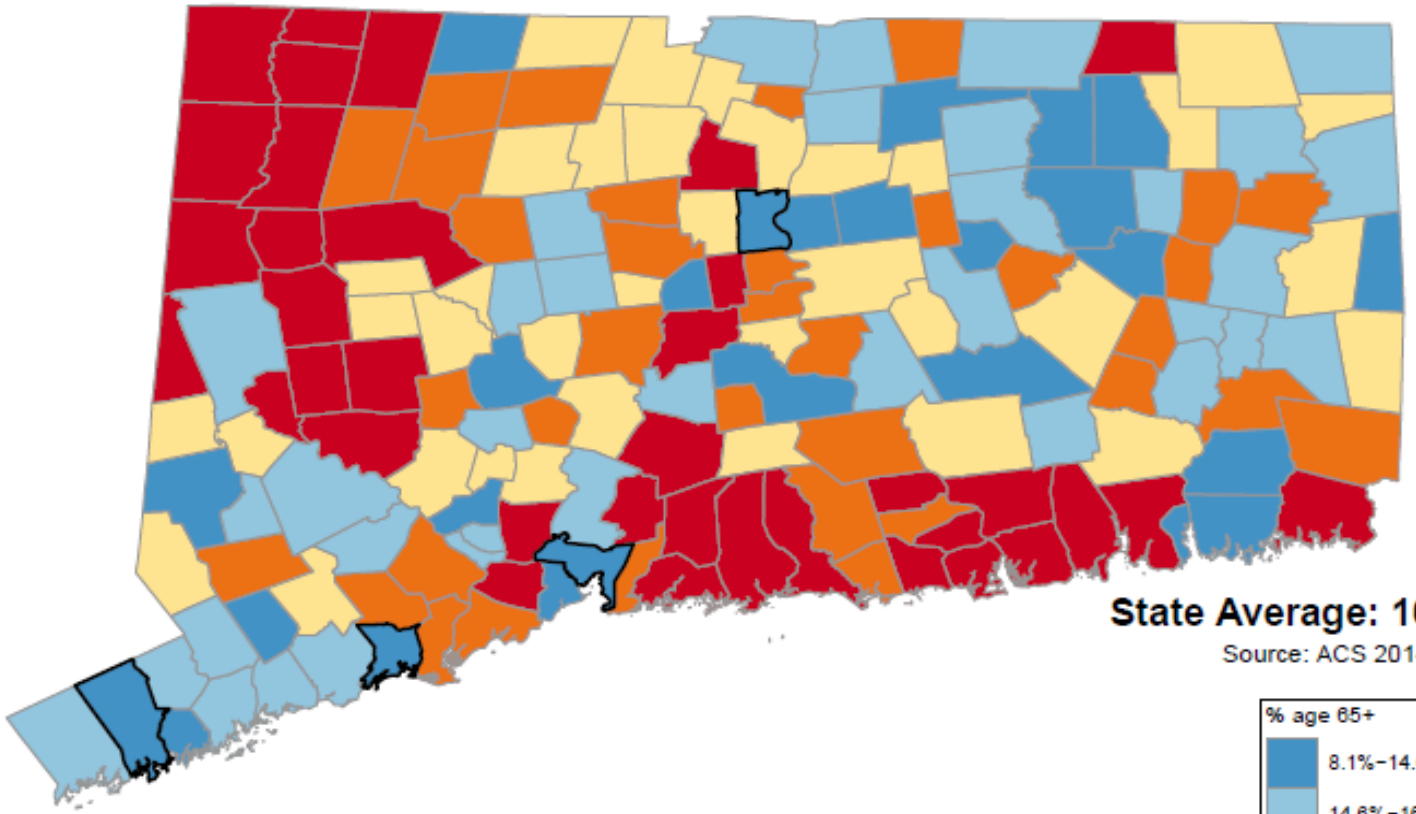
Persons Age 65 and Older as a Percentage of Total Population, 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates

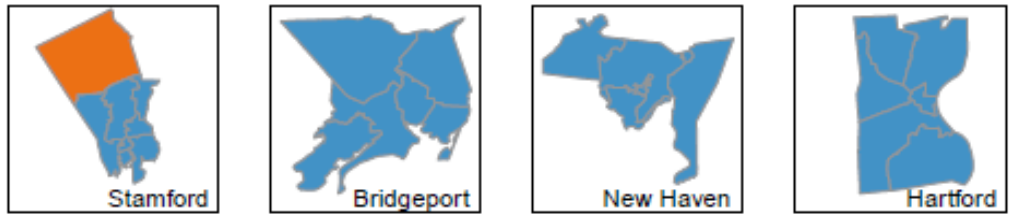
Map 4

Percentage of Population Age 65+ Years



State Average: 16.4%

Source: ACS 2014–2018



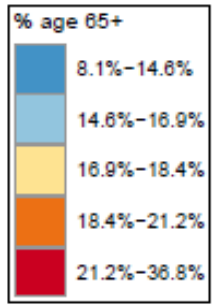


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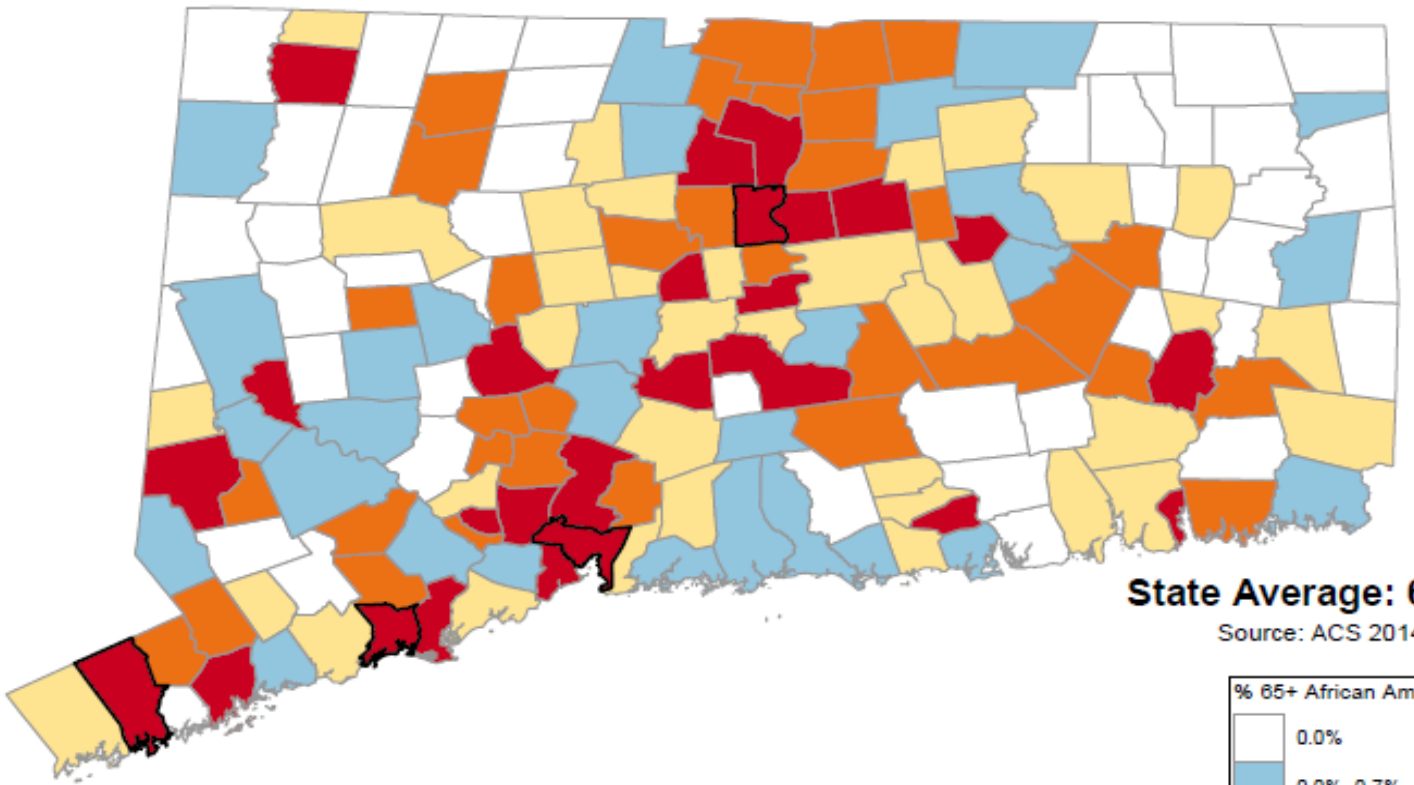
Table 2. Race and Ethnicity of Older Residents in Selected States

Race and ethnicity of the 65+ population	CT	MA	NH	RI
% 65 White	88.4%	90.0%	97.7%	92.0%
% 65 Black/African American	6.8%	4.3%	0.5%	3.2%
% 65 Hispanic	5.8%	3.8%	0.9%	4.9%
% 65 Other race	2.6%	2.5%	0.9%	3.3%
% 65 Asian	2.3%	3.2%	0.9%	1.6%

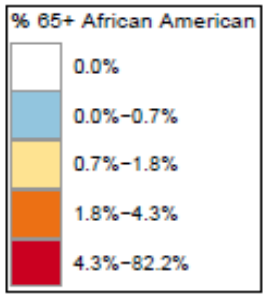
Map 12

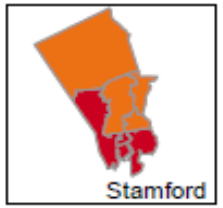
Percentage of Population Age 65+ Years African American

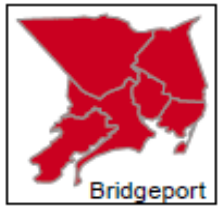


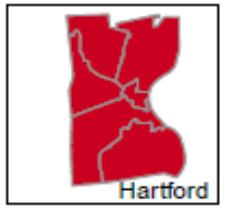
State Average: 6.8%

Source: ACS 2014–2018









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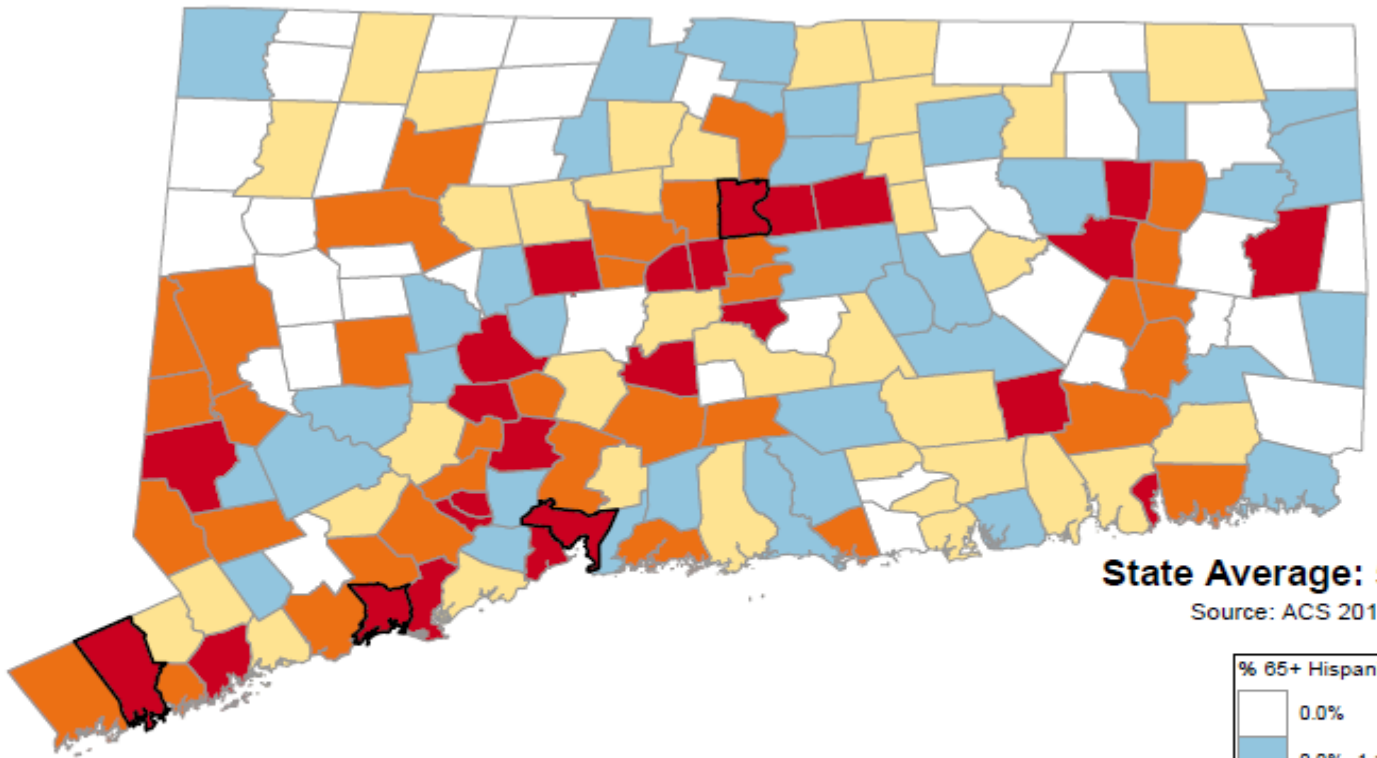
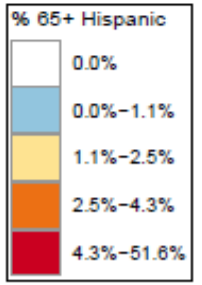
Map 15

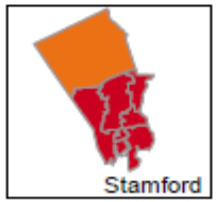
Percentage of Population Age 65+ Years Hispanic

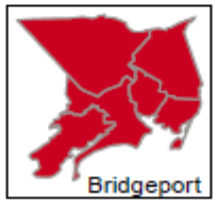


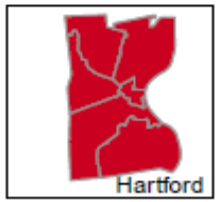
State Average: 5.8%

Source: ACS 2014–2018









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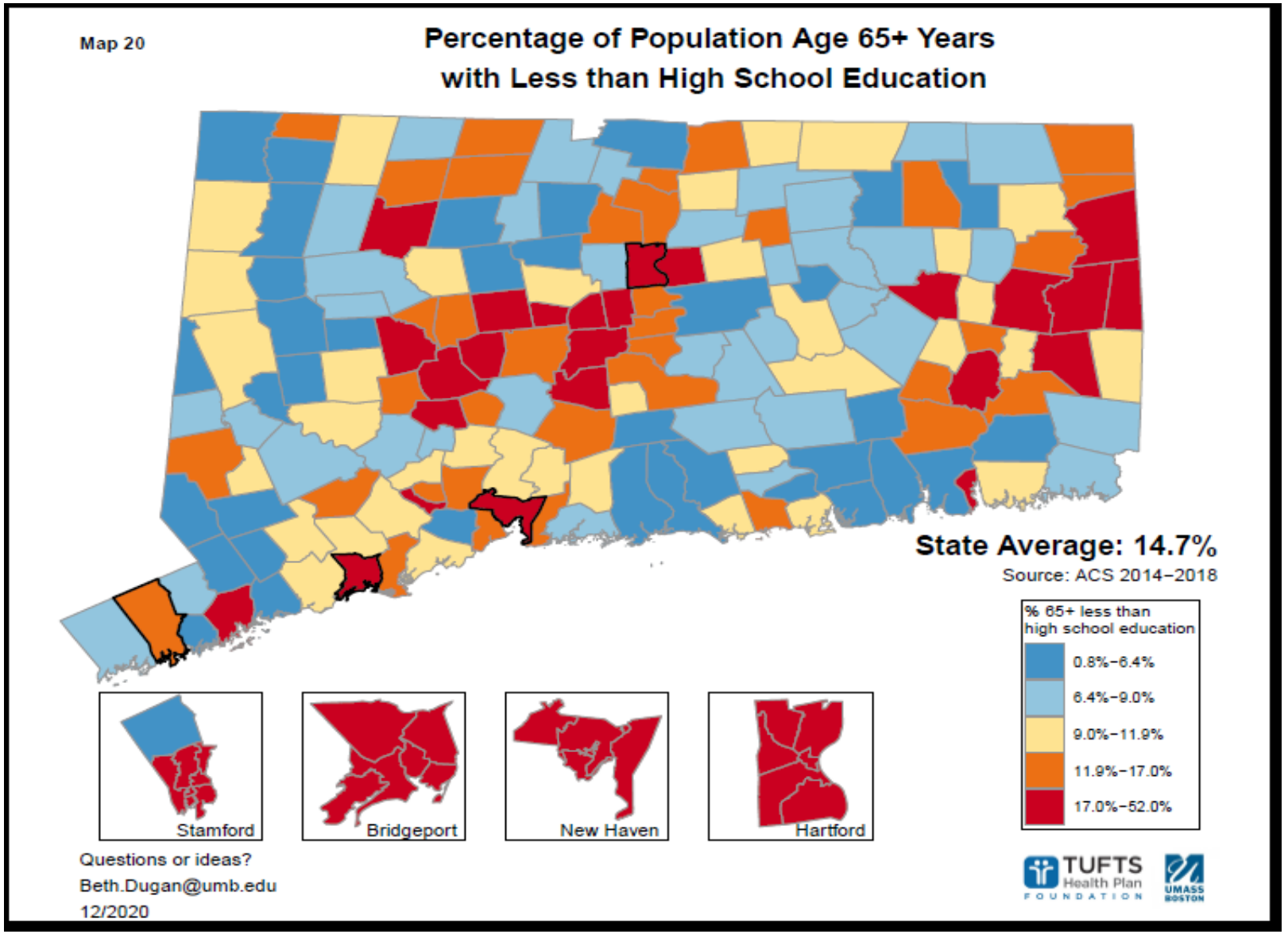

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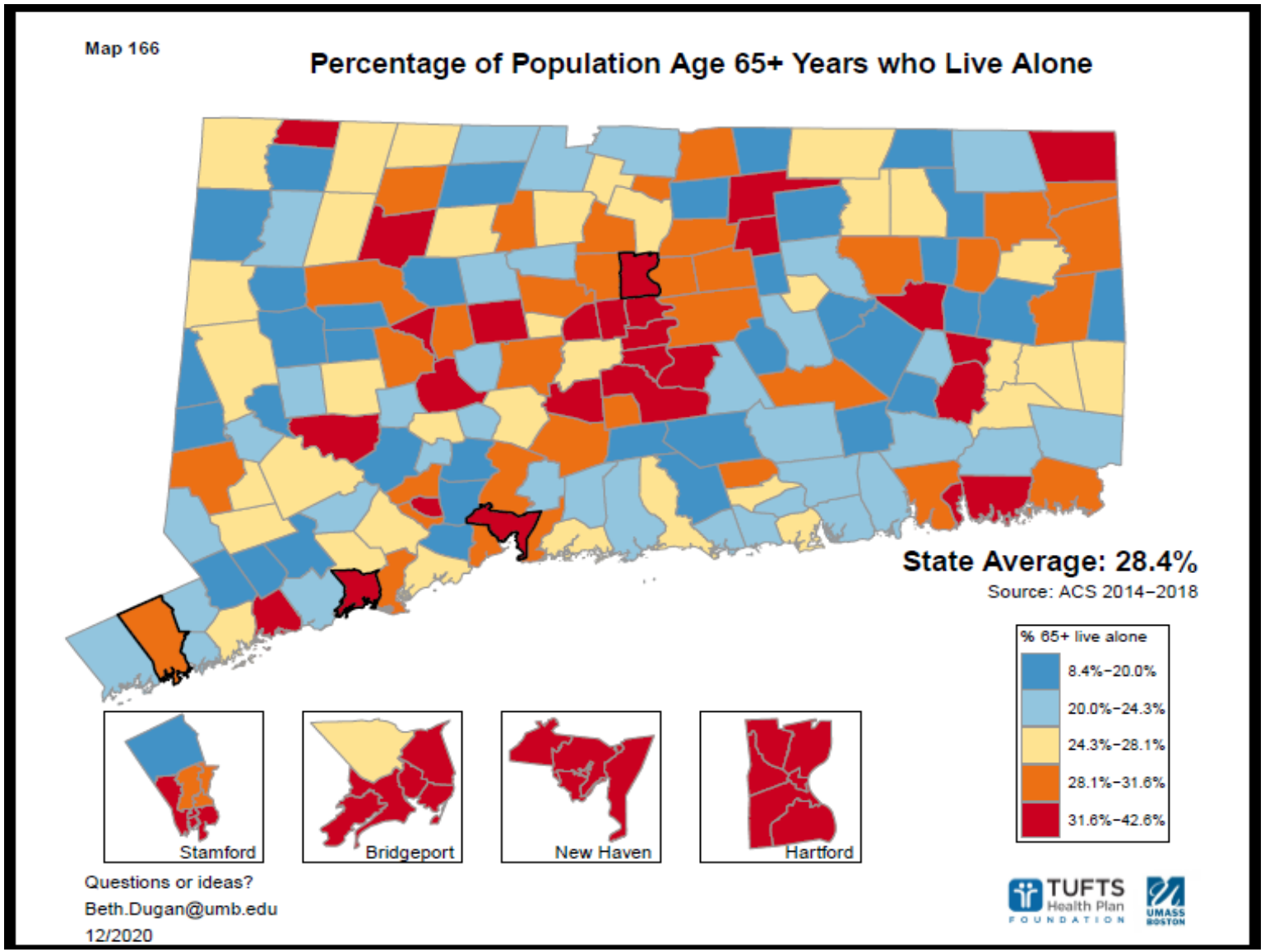

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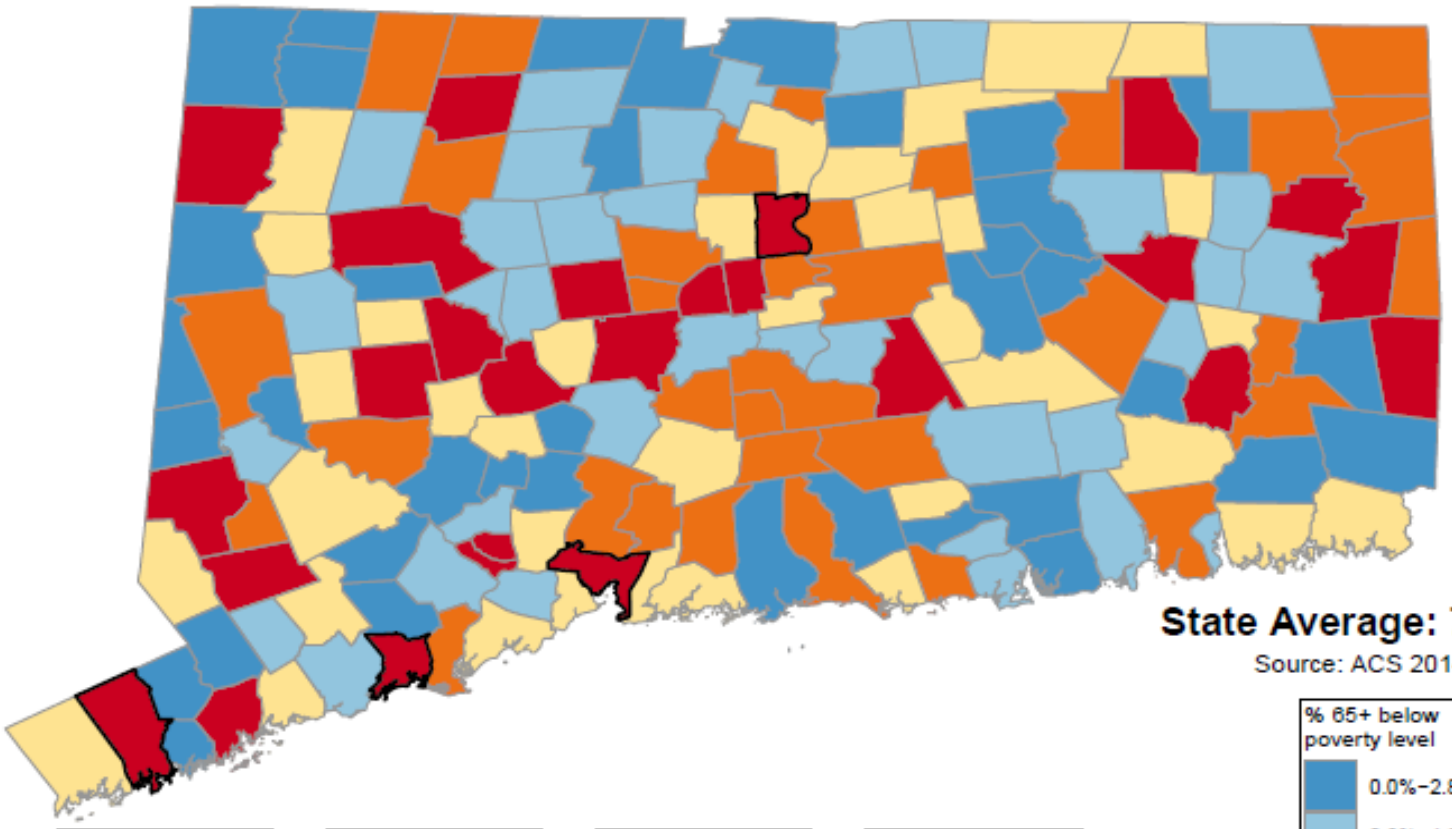
Economic Circumstances of Connecticut's Older Population by Geographic Area

- Poverty and household income
- Food insecurity
- Housing insecurity
- Cost deters visits to doctors
- Medicaid eligibility
- Internet use

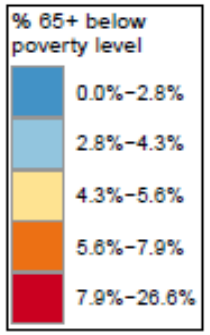
Map 181

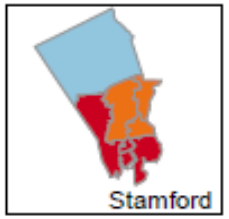
Percentage of Population Age 65+ Years with Income Below the Poverty Level in the Past Year

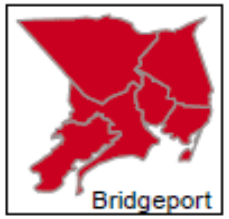


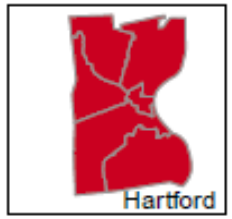
State Average: 7.0%

Source: ACS 2014–2018









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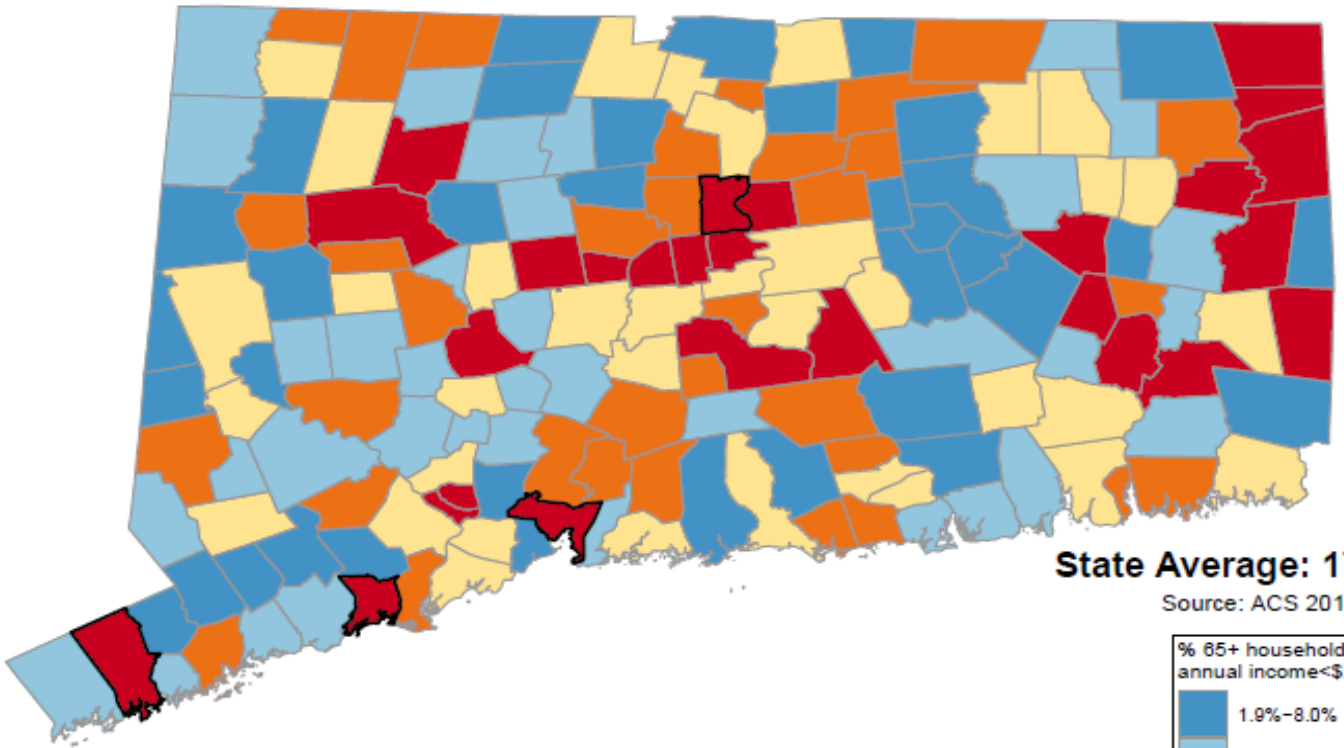
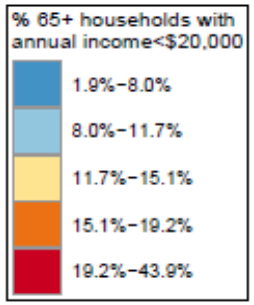
Map 183

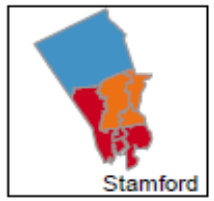
Percentage of Households with a Householder Age 65+ Years with Annual Income Less than $20,000

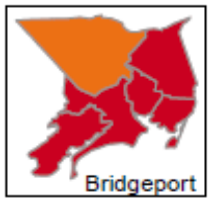


State Average: 17.1%

Source: ACS 2014–2018







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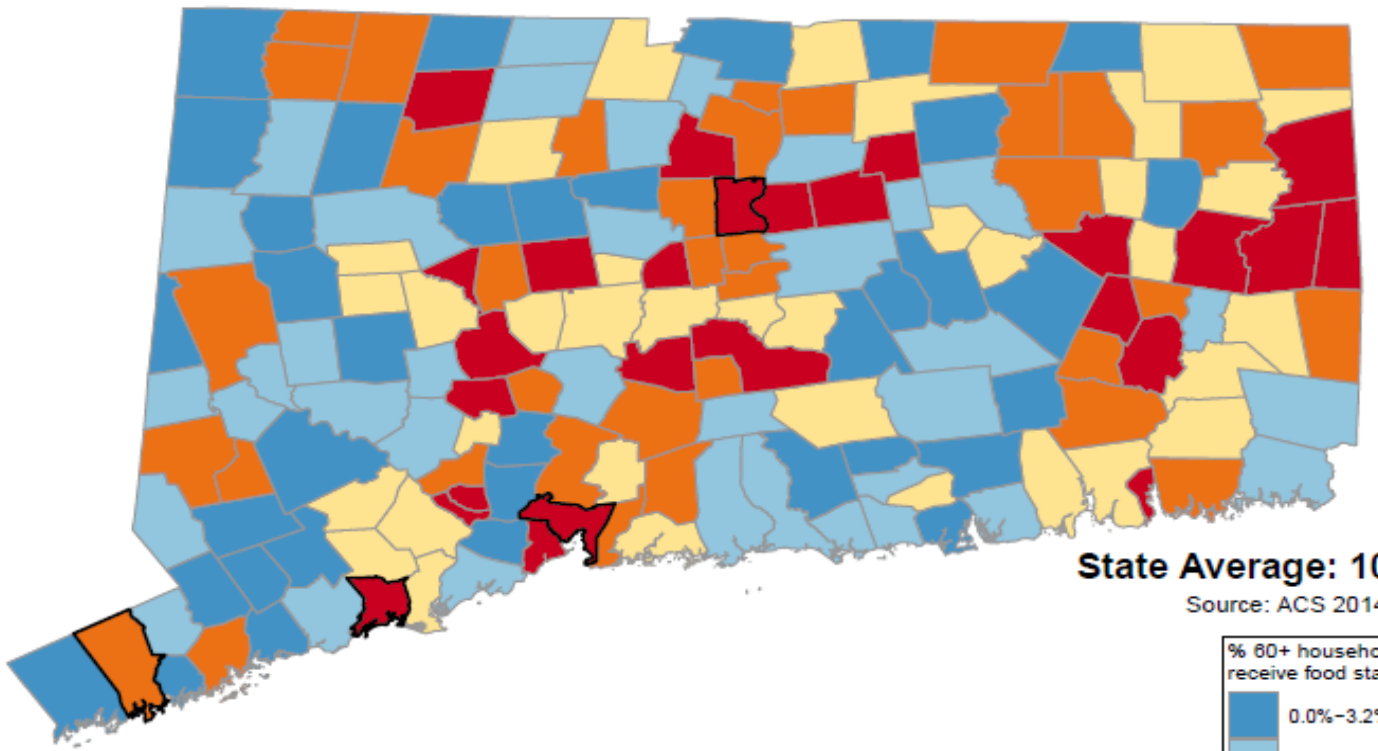
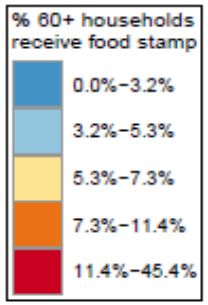
Map 179

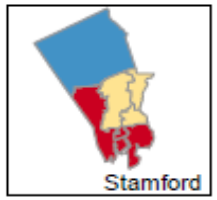
Percentage of Households with Persons Age 60+ Years Receiving Food Stamp in the Past Year

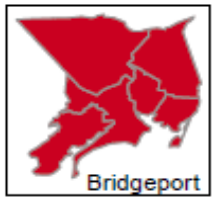


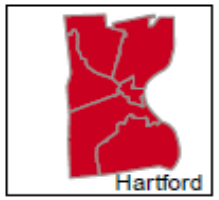
State Average: 10.9%

Source: ACS 2014–2018









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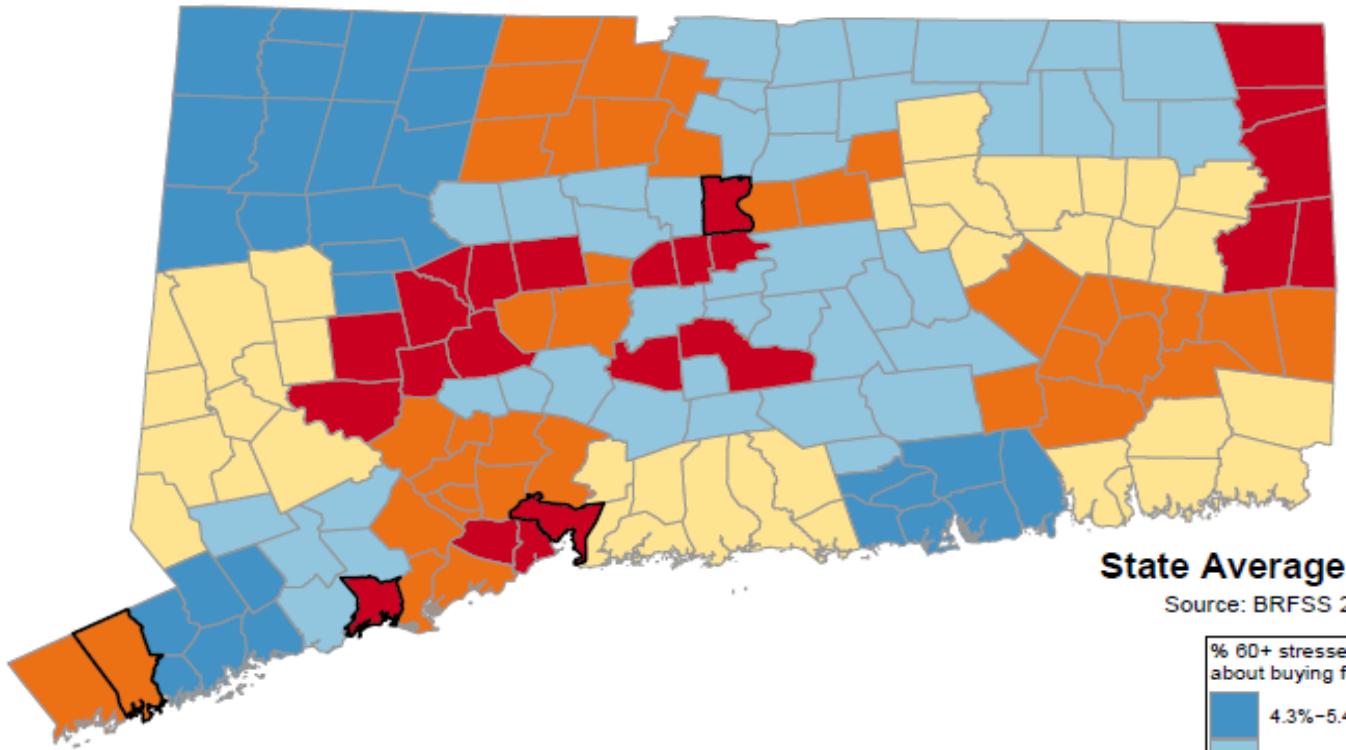
Map 50

Percentage of Persons Age 60+ Years with Stress About Buying Food in Last Month

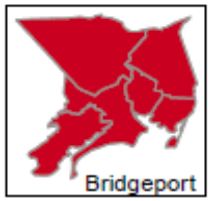


State Average: 8.6%

Source: BRFSS 2016-2018

% 60+ stressed about buying food

- 4.3%–5.4%
- 5.4%–7.3%
- 7.3%–8.2%
- 8.2%–9.6%
- 9.6%–19.5%



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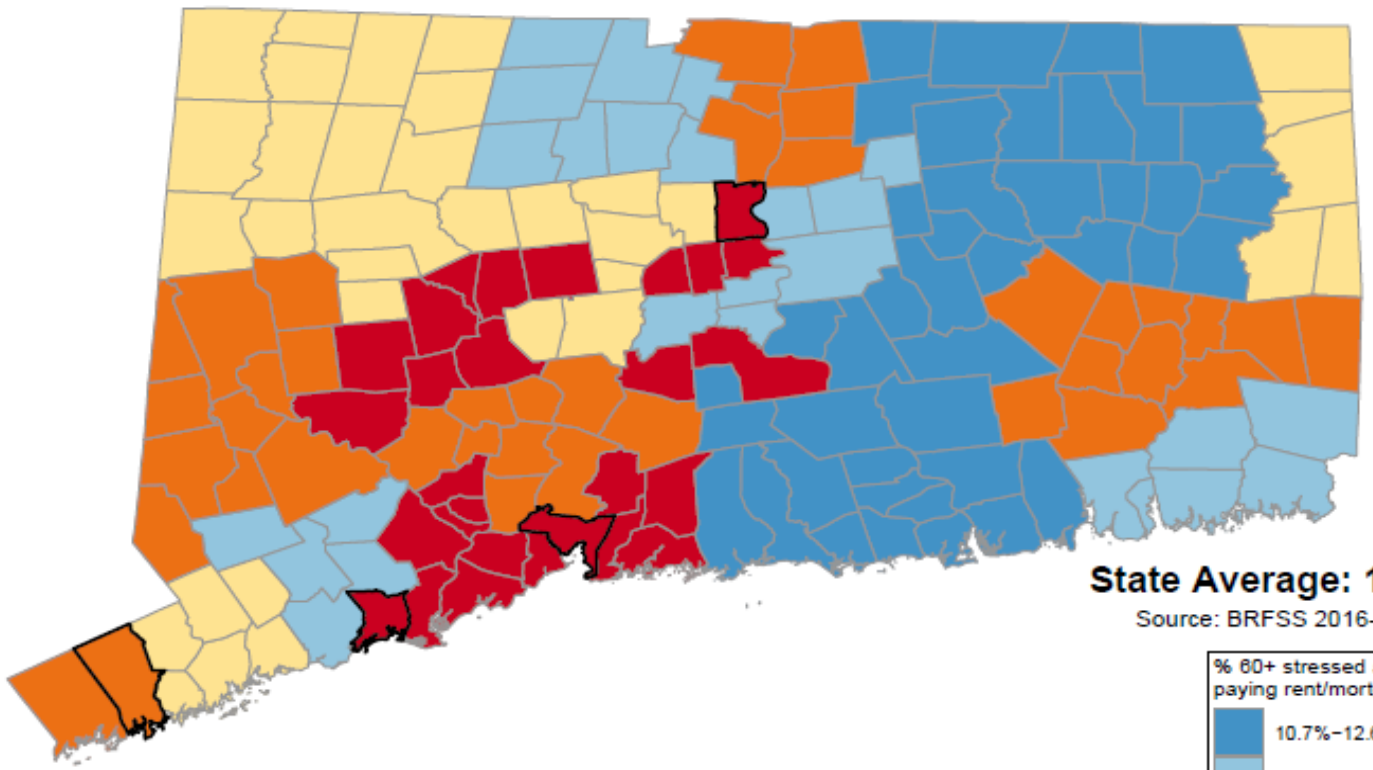
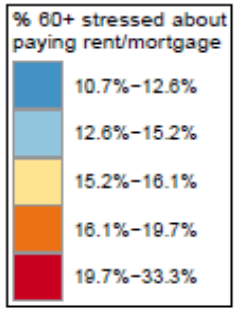
Map 171

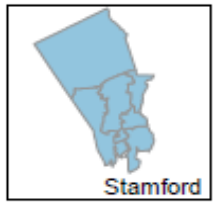
Percentage of Persons Age 60+ Years with Stress About Paying Rent/Mortgage in Last Month

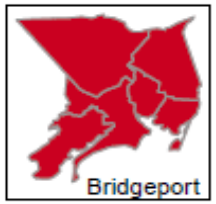


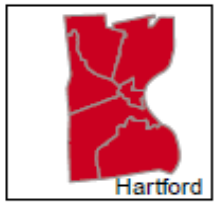
State Average: 17.4%

Source: BRFSS 2016-2018









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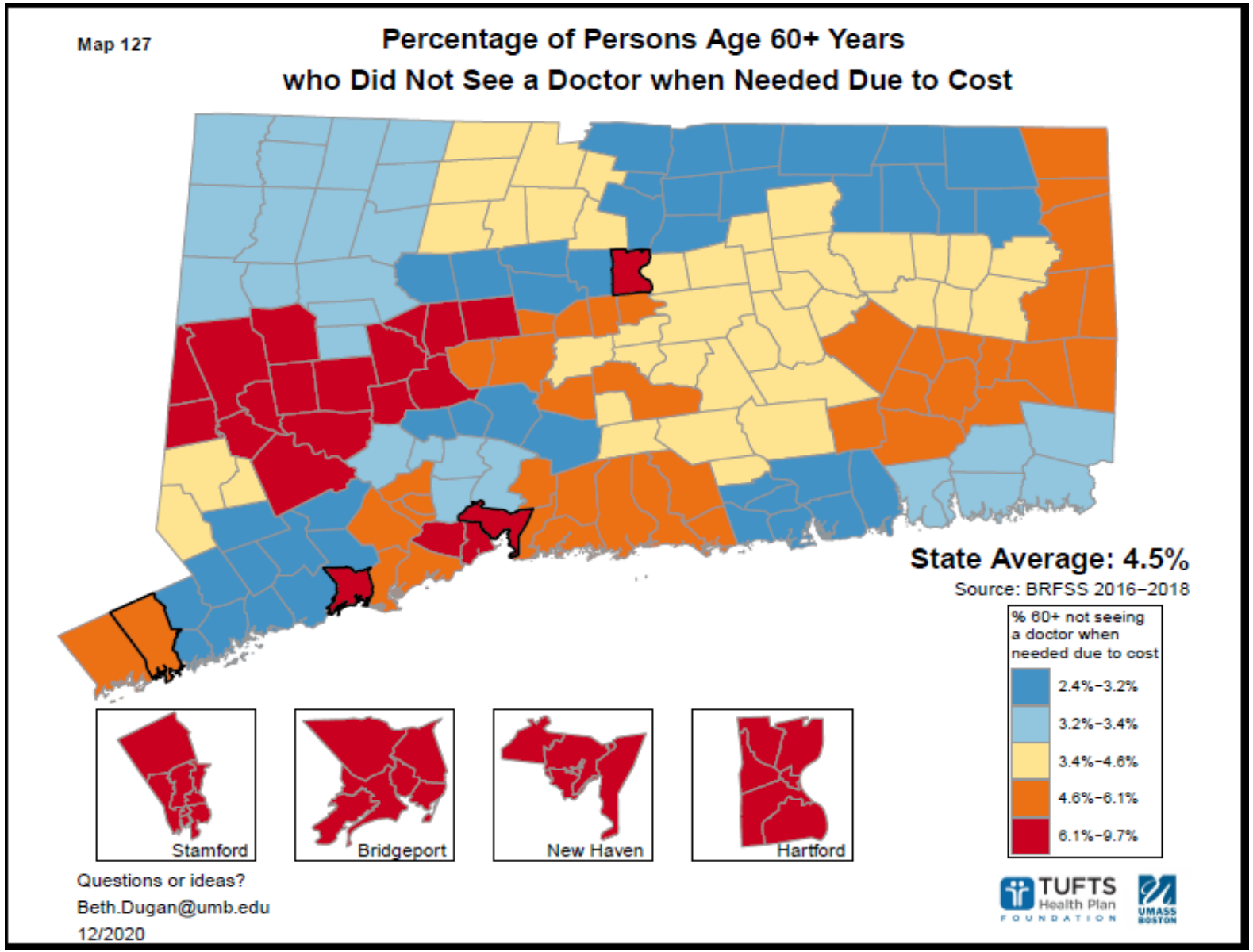

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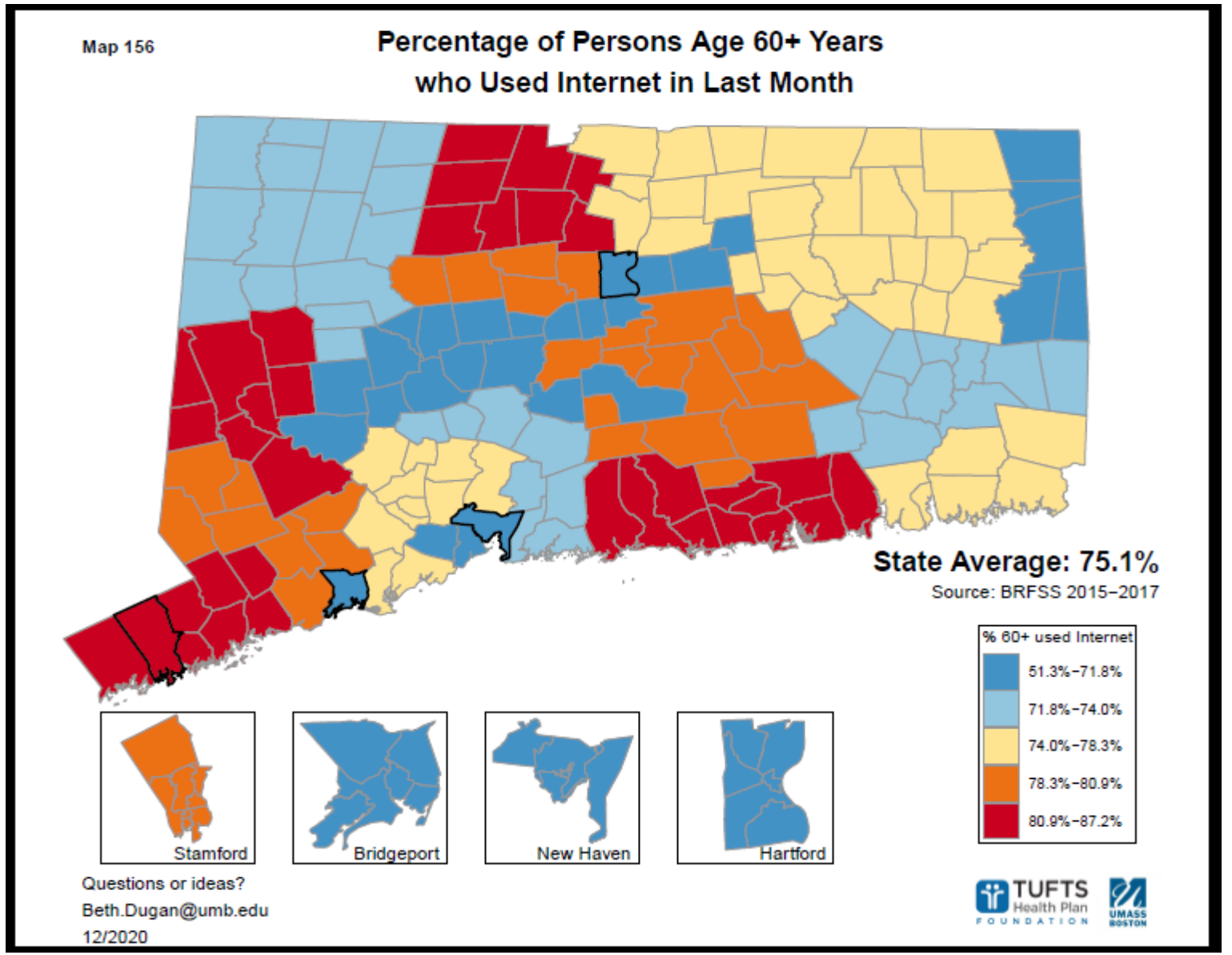

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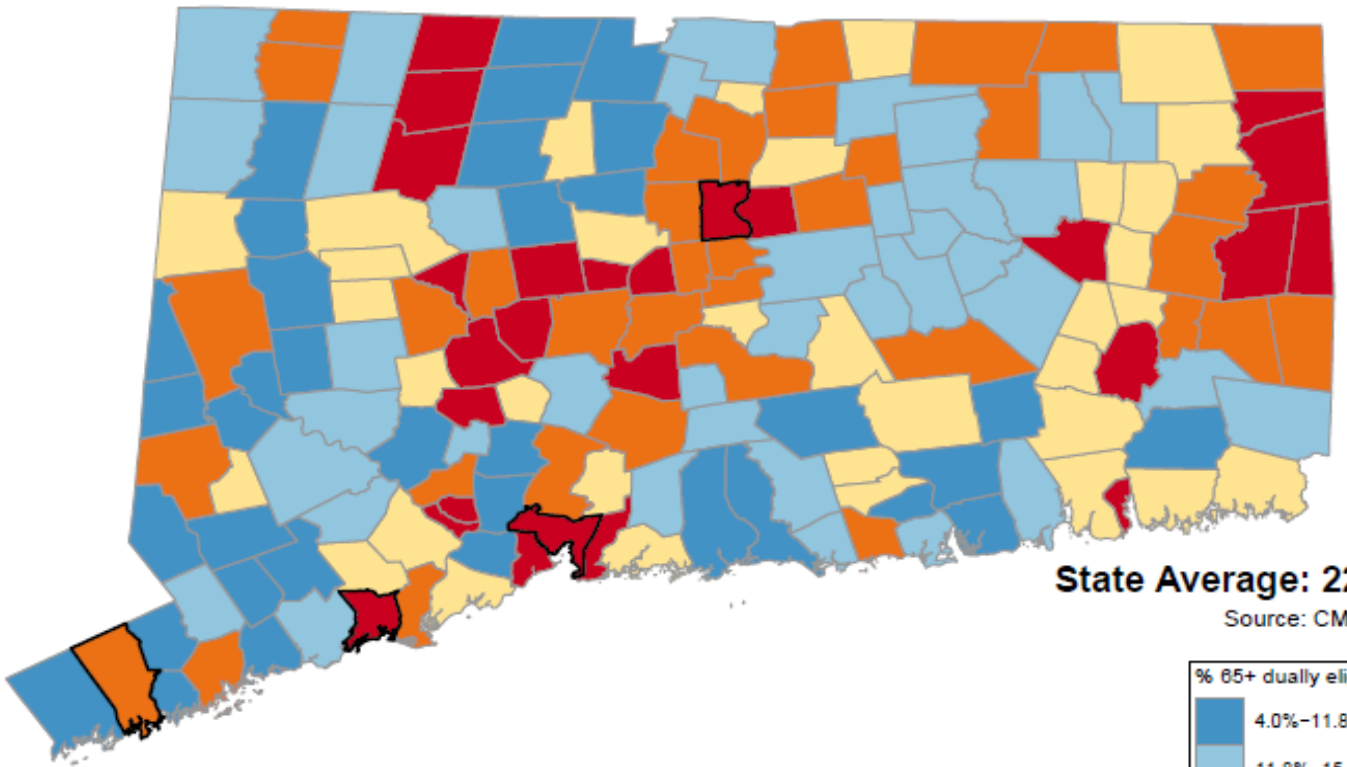
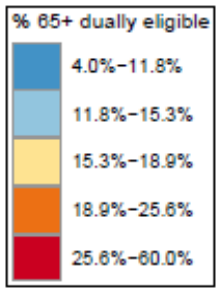
Map 124

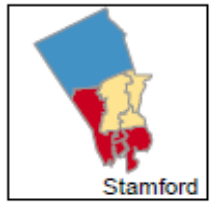
Percentage of Medicare Beneficiaries Age 65+ Years who Are Dually Eligible for Medicare and Medicaid

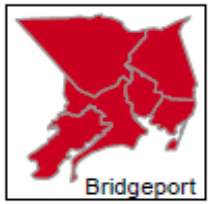


State Average: 22.1%

Source: CMS 2017







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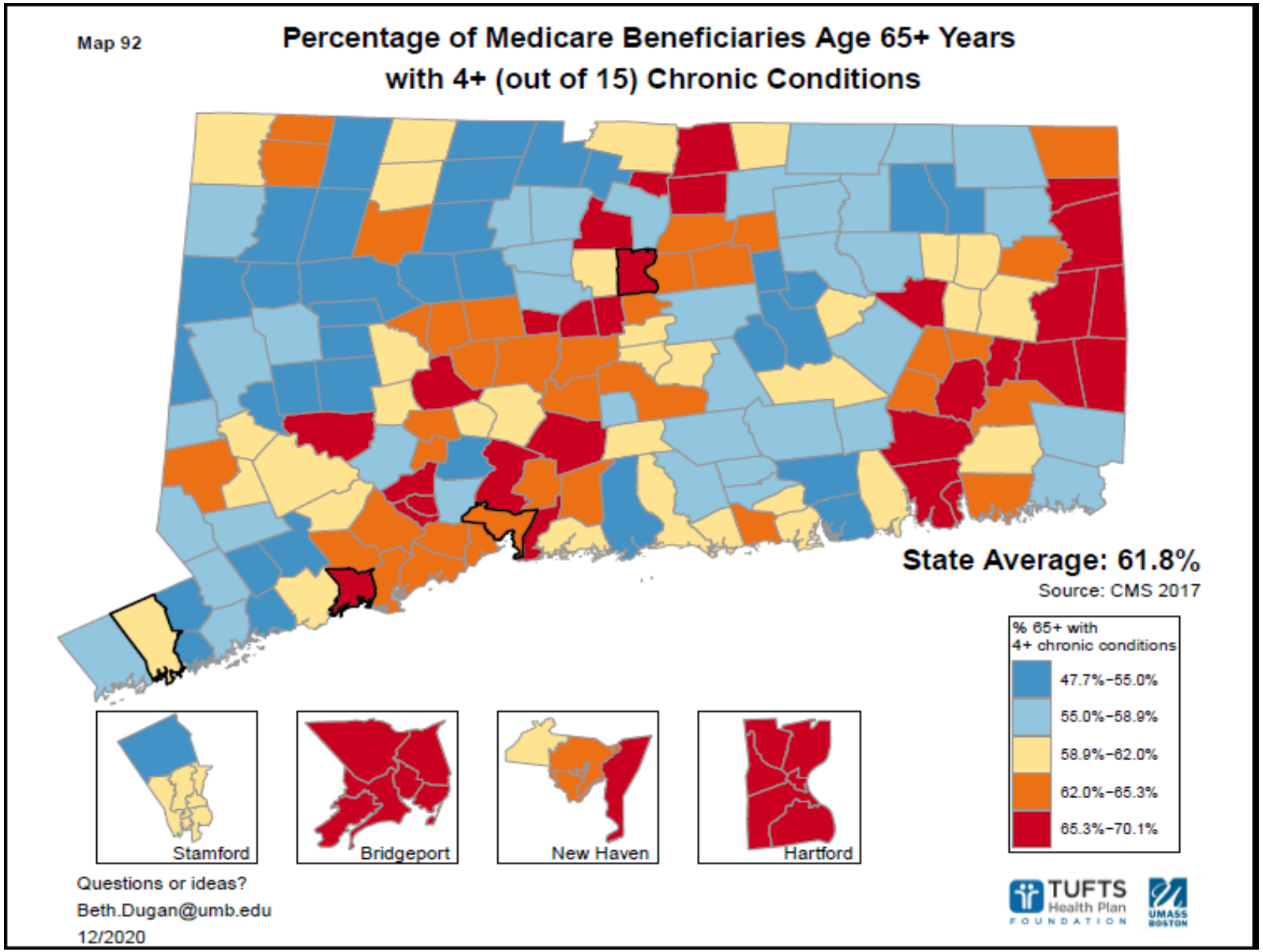
Health-Related Characteristics of Connecticut's Older Population by Geographic Area

- Diagnosed chronic diseases
- Self-reported health and mental health
- Self-reported ambulatory disability
- Falls
- Emergency department use
- Hospital use
- Average life expectancy at birth



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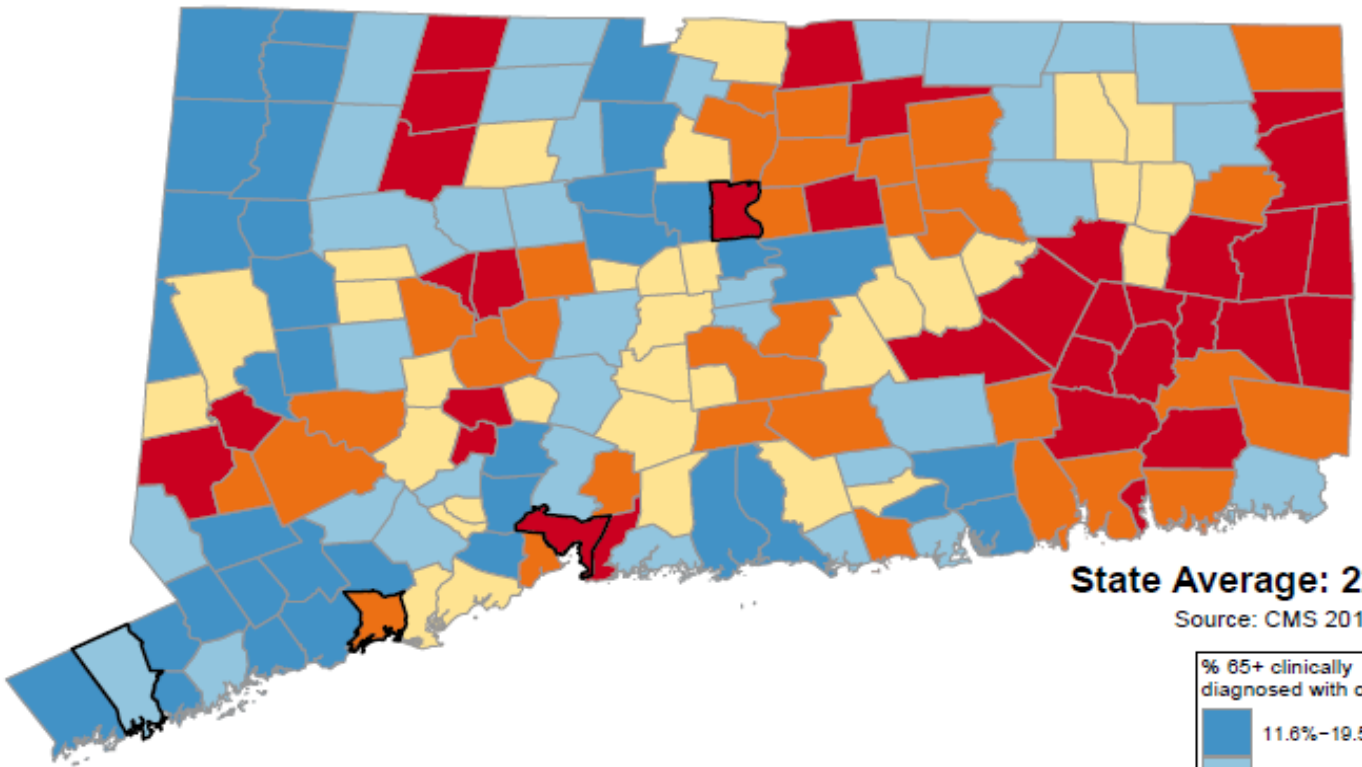
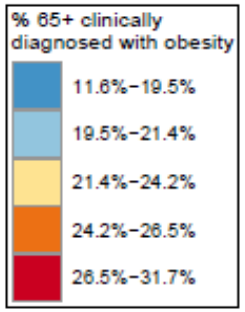
Map 52

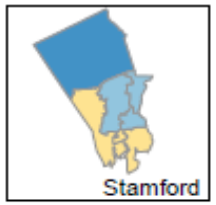
Percentage of Medicare Beneficiaries Age 65+ Years Clinically Diagnosed with Obesity

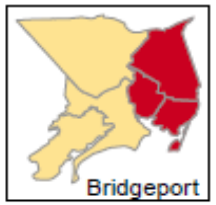


State Average: 22.5%

Source: CMS 2016–2017







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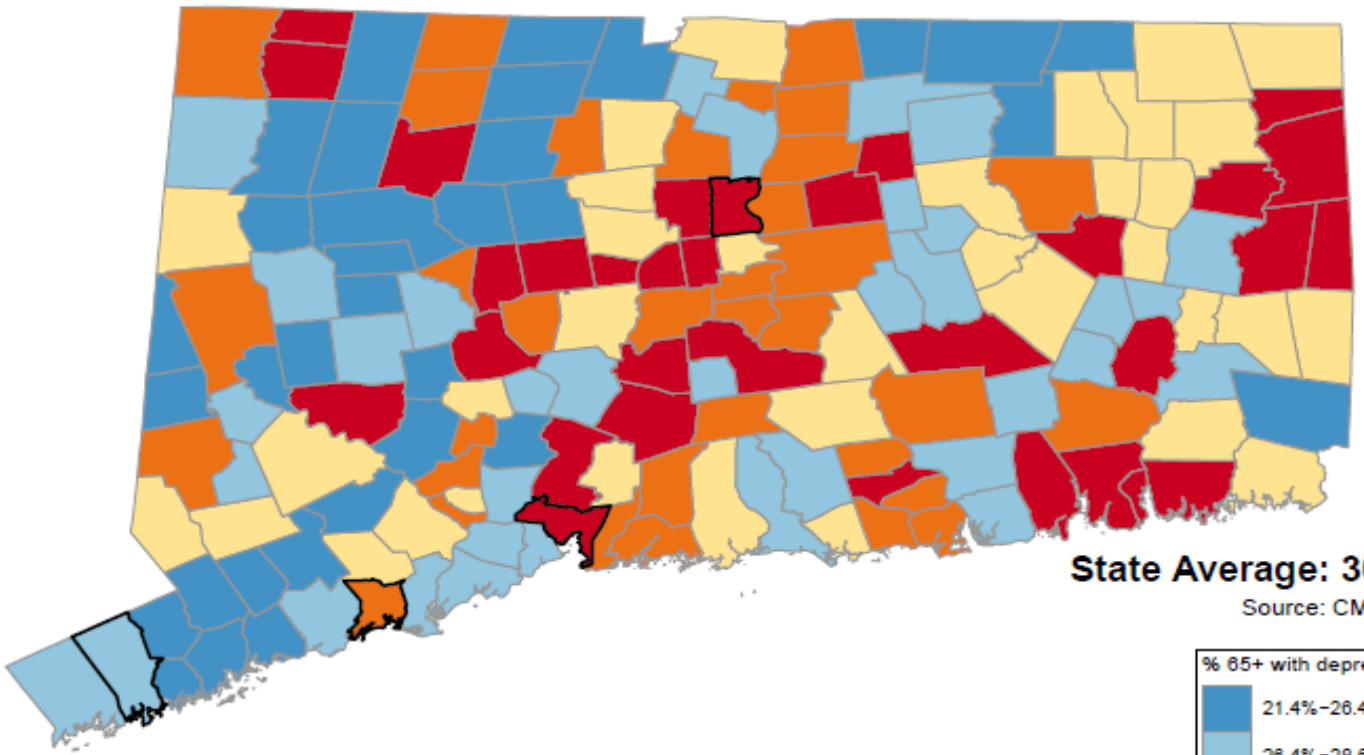
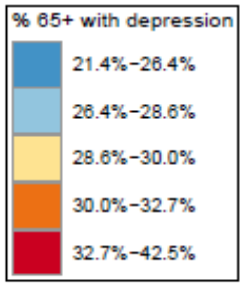
Map 104

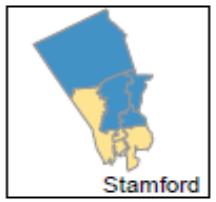
Percentage of Medicare Beneficiaries Age 65+ Years with Depression

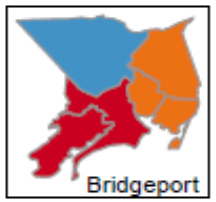


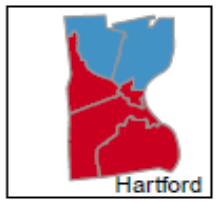
State Average: 30.3%

Source: CMS 2017









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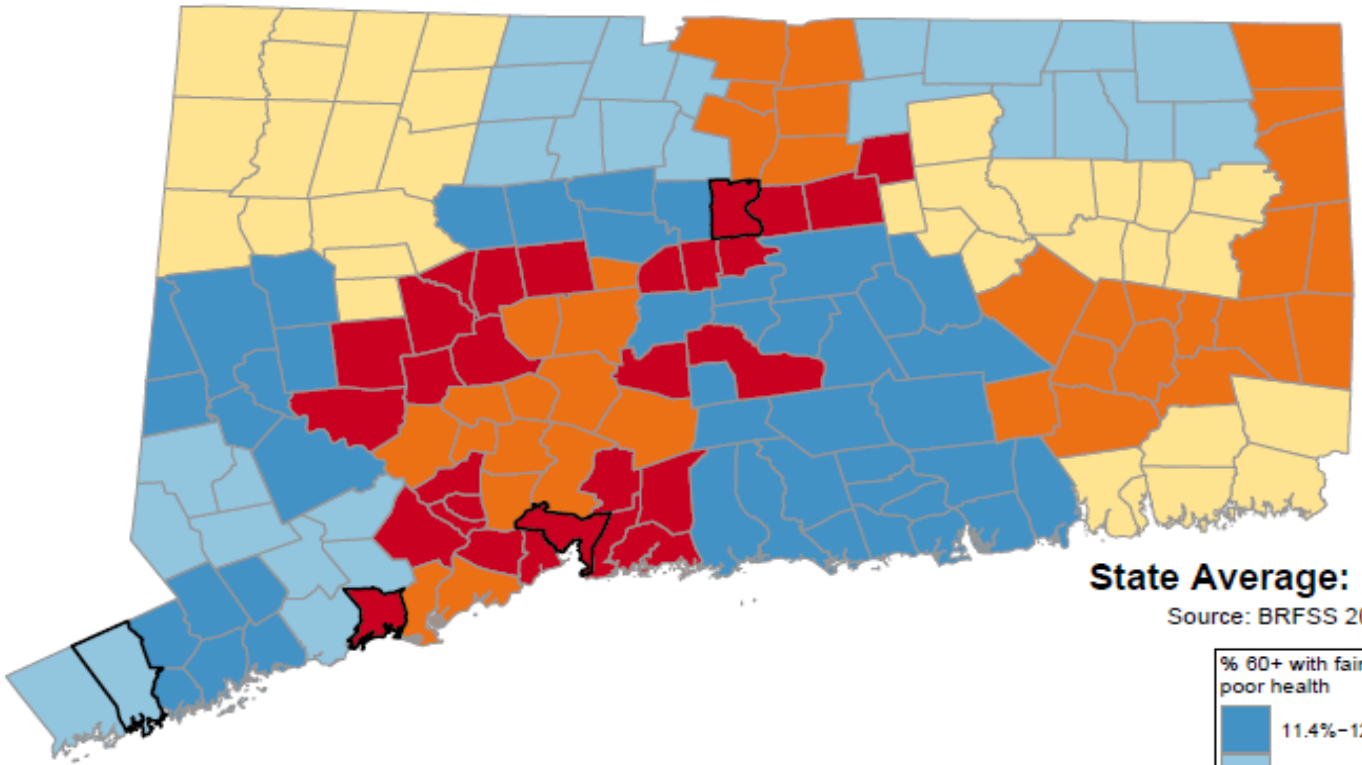
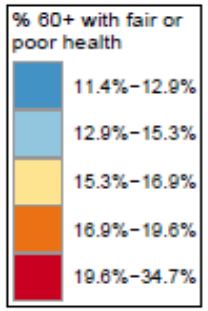
Map 35

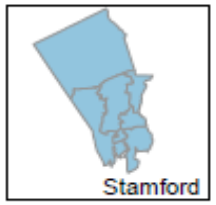
Percentage of Persons Age 60+ Years with Self-Reported Fair or Poor Health

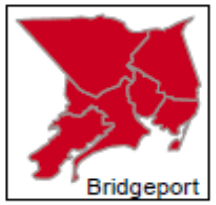


State Average: 17.6%

Source: BRFSS 2016-2018







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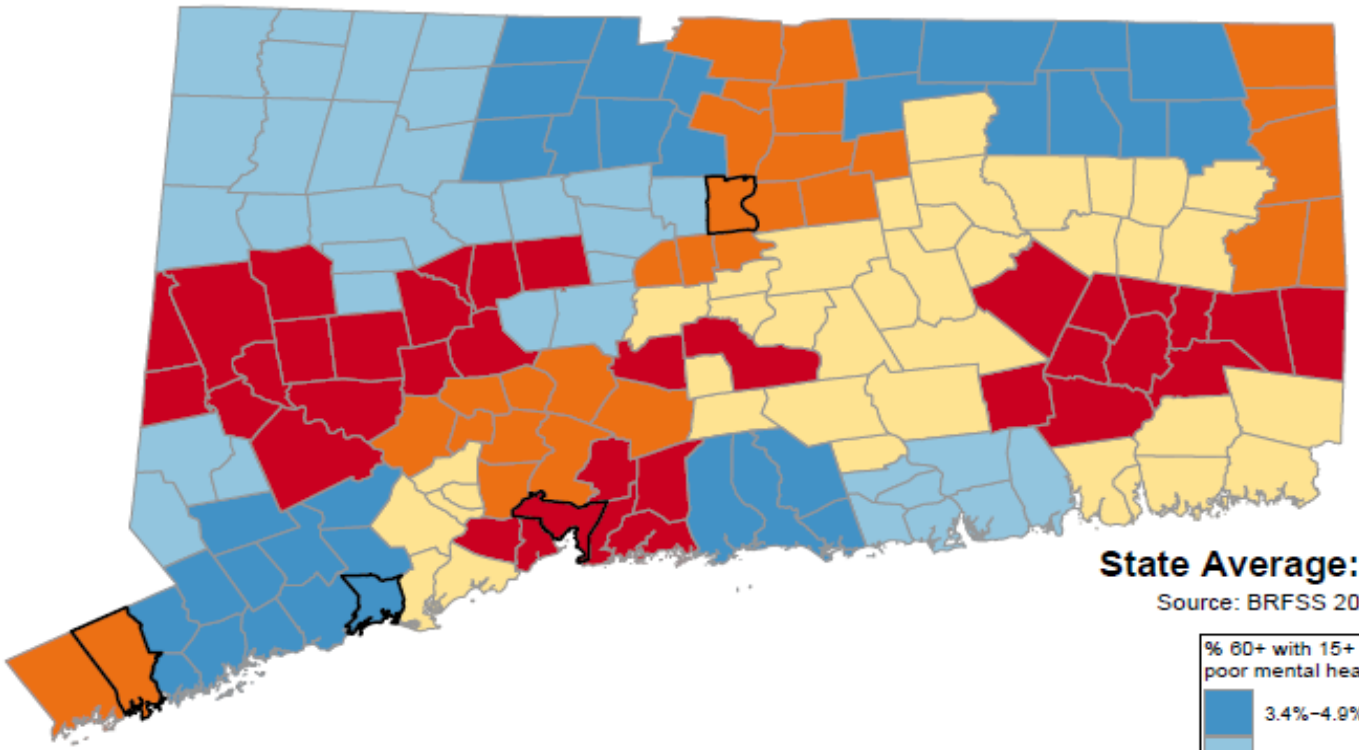
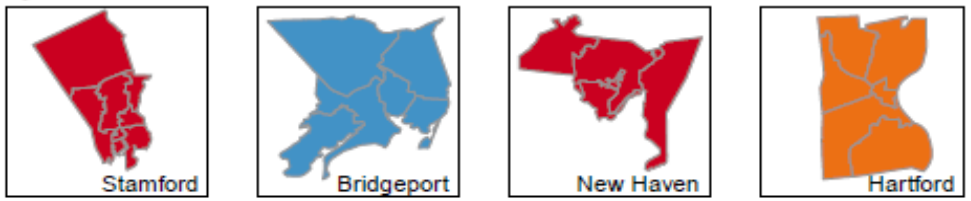
Map 103

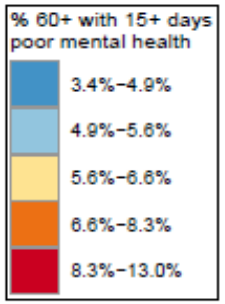
Percentage of Persons Age 60+ Years who Had 15+ Days with Poor Mental Health Last Month



State Average: 6.9%

Source: BRFSS 2016–2018





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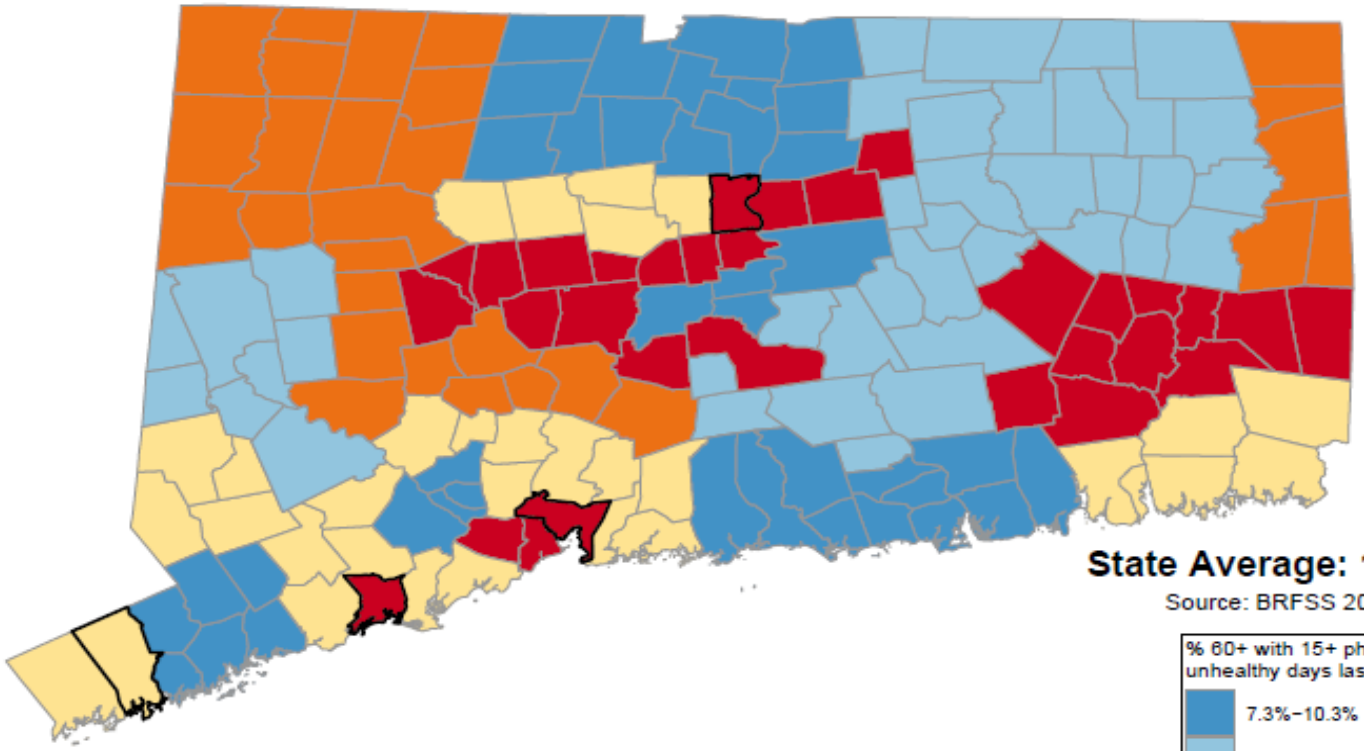
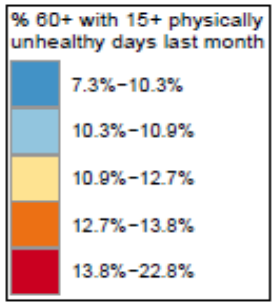
Map 36

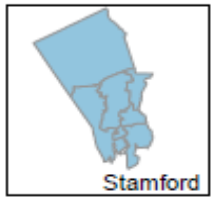
Percentage of Persons Age 60+ Years with 15+ Physically Unhealthy Days Last Month

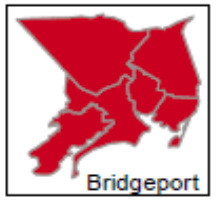


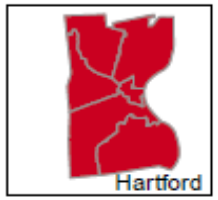
State Average: 12.4%

Source: BRFSS 2016–2018









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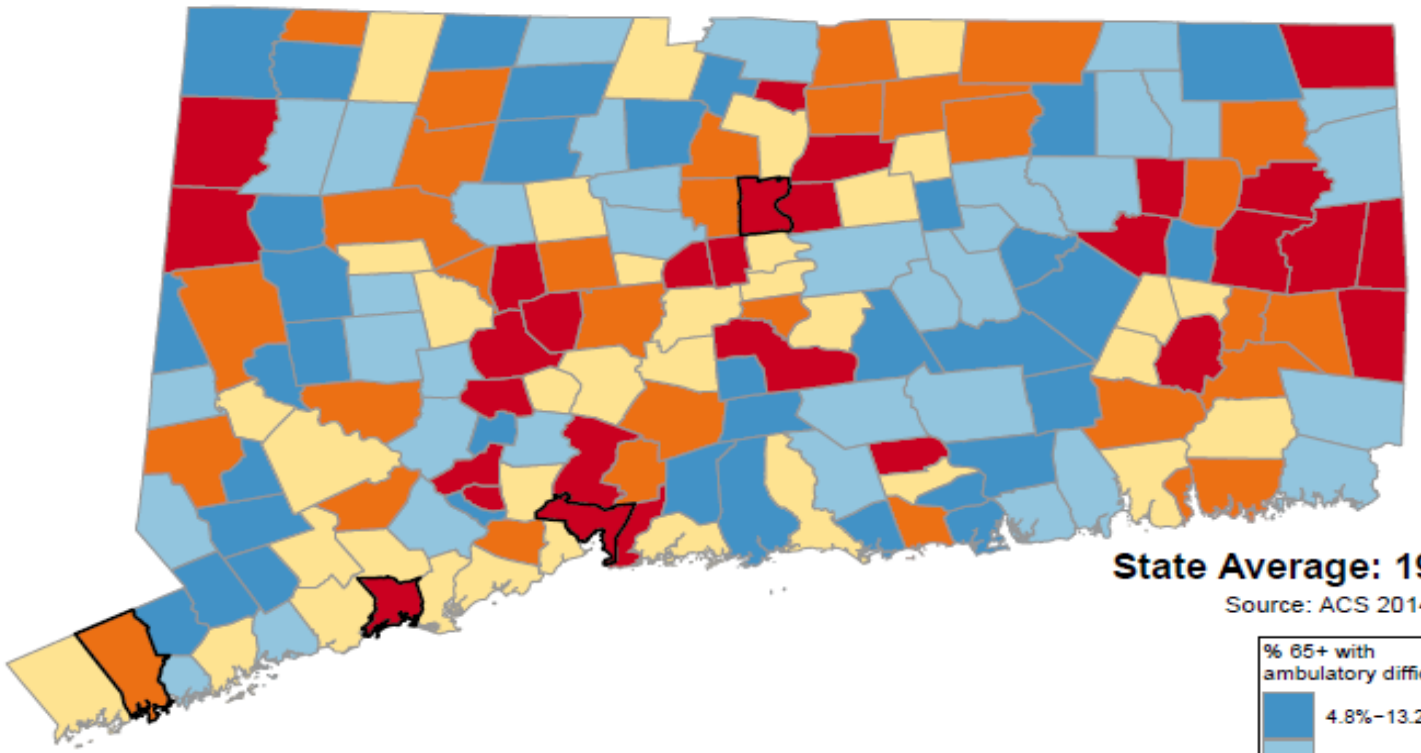
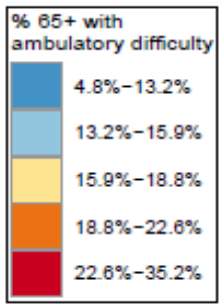
Map 115

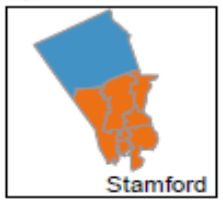
Percentage of Population Age 65+ Years with Self-Reported Ambulatory Difficulty

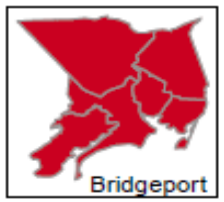


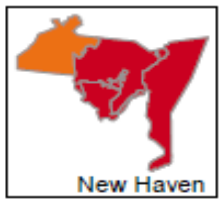
State Average: 19.1%

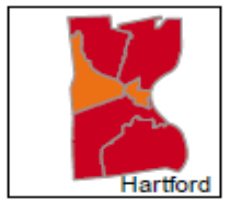
Source: ACS 2014-2018











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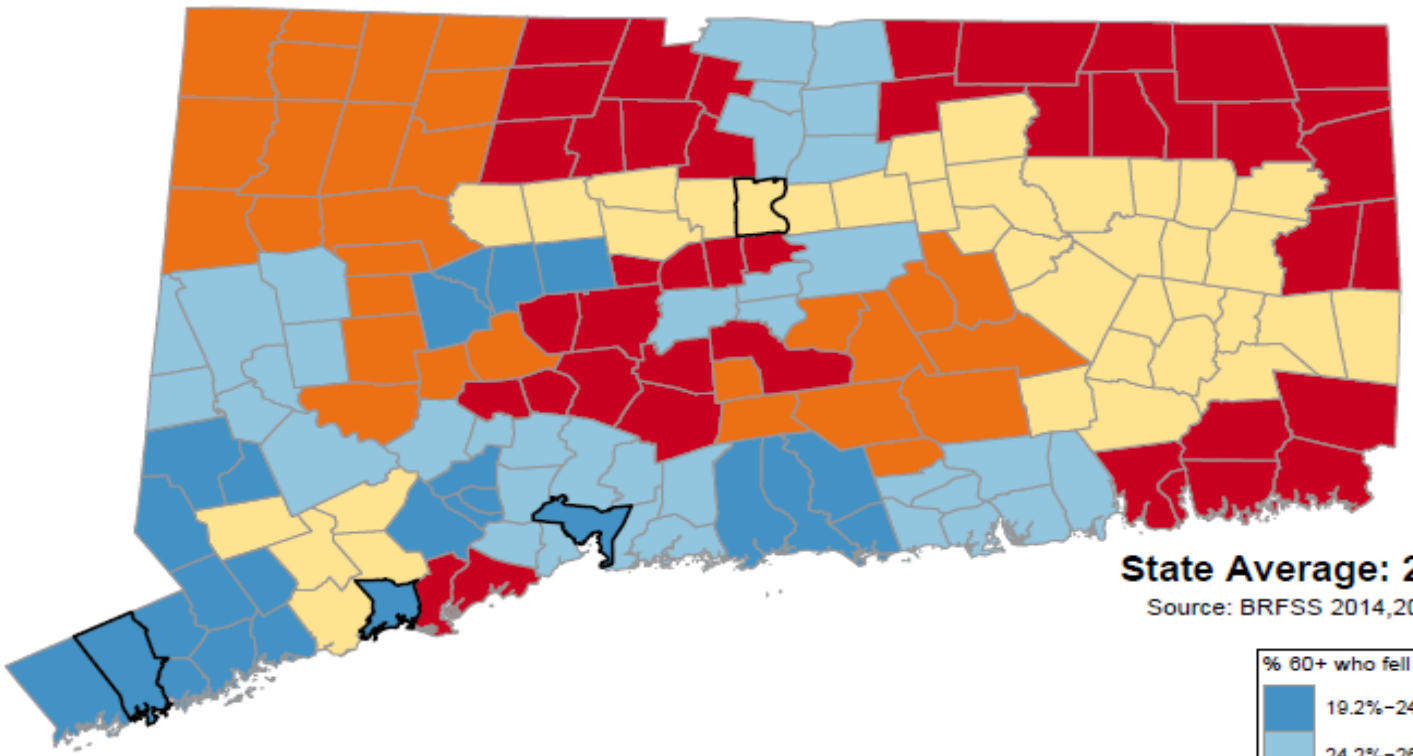
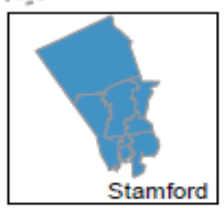
Map 37

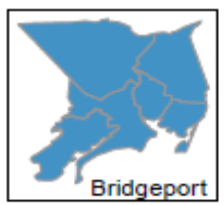
Percentage of Persons Age 60+ Years who Fell Within Last 12 Months

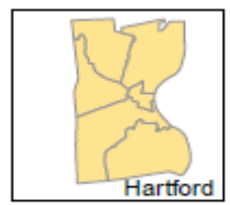


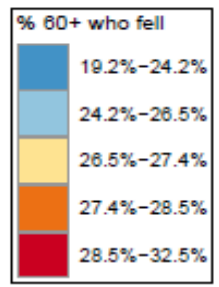
State Average: 26.3%

Source: BRFSS 2014,2016,2018









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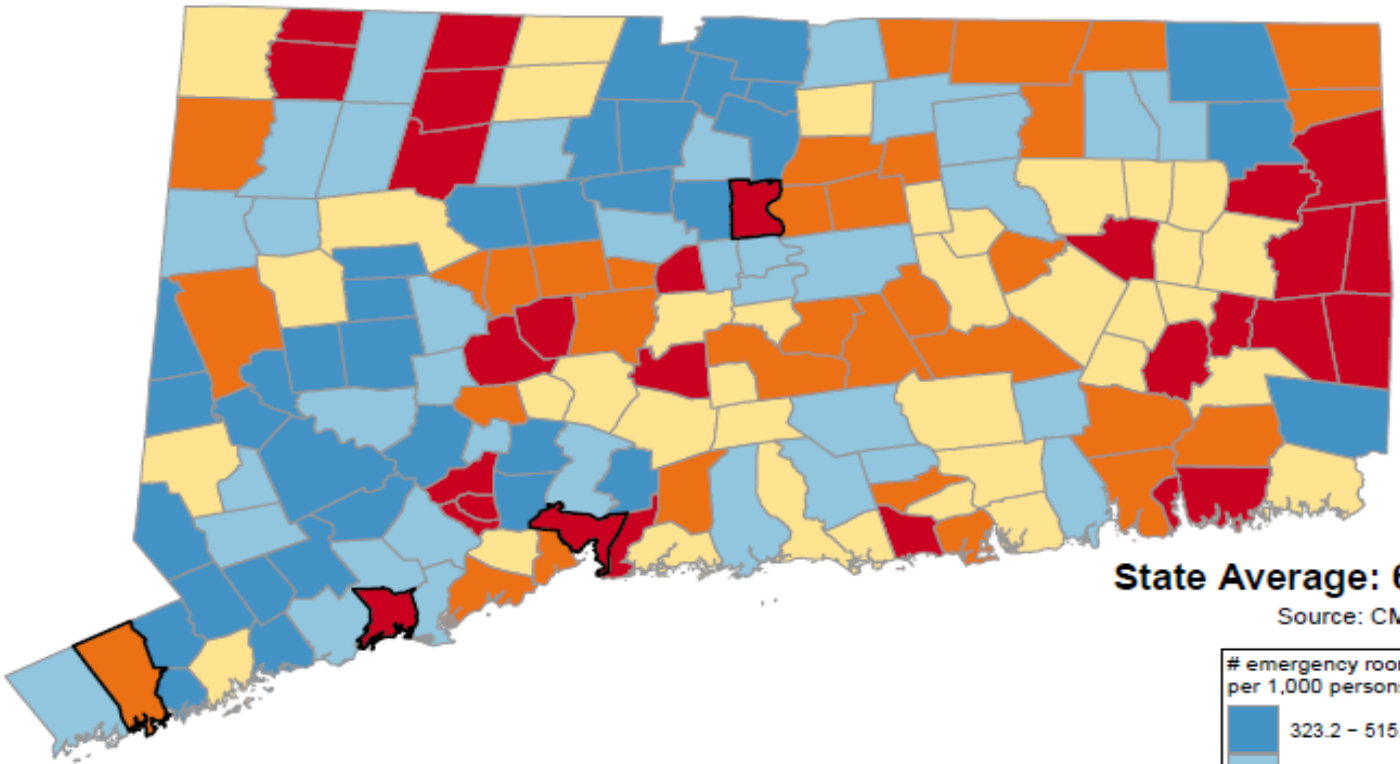
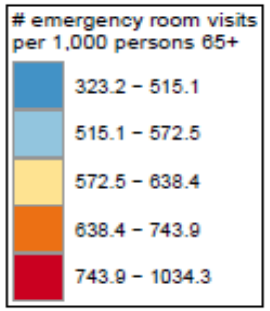
Map 136

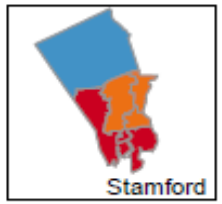
Annual Emergency Room Visits per 1,000 Medicare Beneficiaries Age 65+ Years

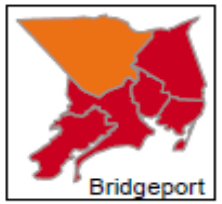


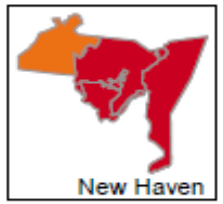
State Average: 636.7

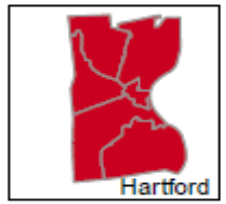
Source: CMS 2017











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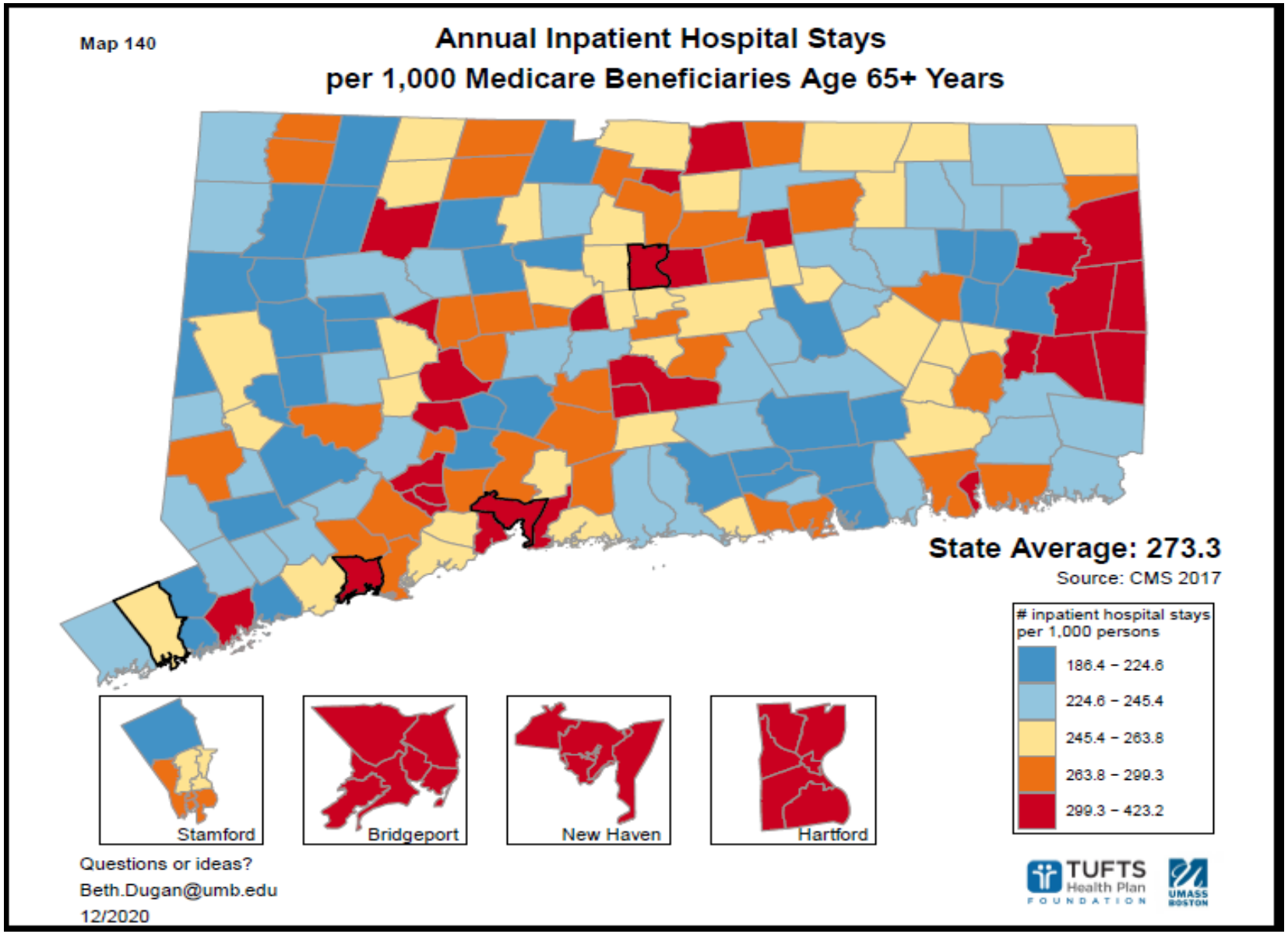

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Take Home Messages

- Throughout Connecticut for the older population, most economic circumstance indicators track closely to most health-related indicators.
- In parts of the state where economic conditions for older adults are poorer, health and well-being indicators also tend to be poorer.
- Areas of the state most likely to show poorer economic and poorer health-related indicators include Hartford, New Haven, Bridgeport, the rural northeast region, and for several indicators the Naugatuck Valley westward to the New York state line.
- These urban and rural areas are high-risk for poor health outcomes associated with poorer economic conditions among older adults.