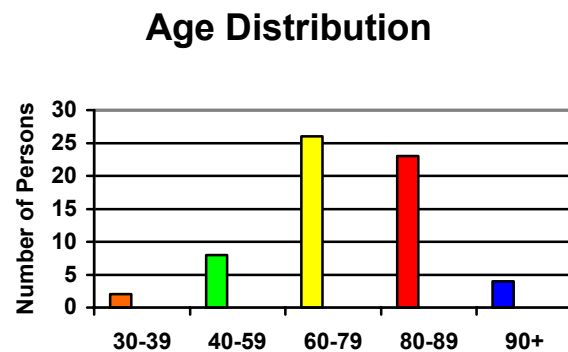
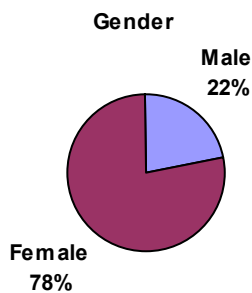


# MARIN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES DIVISION OF AGING

## Project Independence Program Outcomes

Project Independence was funded by a California Department of Aging Long Term Care Innovation Grant. This program bridges the gap to independence at home for adults discharged from local hospitals who are isolated, lack family support or find it difficult to manage their discharge plan. Specially trained Volunteer Advocates, under the supervision of a geriatric public health nurse, are matched with adults at discharge. Thirty-two volunteers were trained over an eight-month period and matched with 63 participants.

- Between September 2001 and April 2002, Project Independence served 63 adults.
- Most participants were female; the average age was 74.
- The youngest participant was 34 years old and the oldest was 95.
- 65% of participants lived alone.
- The average length of time participants stayed in the program was 64 days, or 9 weeks.
- Project Independence is very cost effective. Serving each participant cost \$2500.



As far as we are concerned, Project Independence flew in on angel wings.

*Hospital Discharge Planner*

## Top 5 Diagnoses at Discharge

- Heart/Lung Disease
- Cancer
- Falls/Trauma
- Stroke
- Gastrointestinal, including liver transplant and dialysis

## Top 5 Services Provided to Participants in the Program

- Care coordination
- Home safety assessment
- Therapeutic companionship
- Errands and shopping
- Transportation to medical appointments

## Successful Outcomes

- 46 have been discharged from the program to date.
- 4 participants died at home.
- The rest continue to successfully remain in their homes.
- None of the participants were placed in a nursing home.

It was such a relief to learn about Project Independence. In today's world, with family members often spread out far and wide, the services provided by Project Independence staff and volunteers were vital for my aunt.

*Family Member*

## Hospital Readmission Rate

The readmission rate within 30 days of discharge for Medicare fee-for-service enrollees ages 65-114 years in the U.S. was 154 per 1,000 in 1996.<sup>1</sup> Among the 63 Project Independence participants, there were eight readmissions to the hospital, which translates to a readmission rate of 128 per 1,000 persons. Seven of these returned home with assistance from Volunteer Advocates.

## Consumer Satisfaction

Overall, participants rated Project Independence 4.8 on a scale of 1 to 5. Participants found the following services most helpful:

- Connection to services
- One-on-one emotional support
- Transportation

The volunteers and staff of Project Independence have enabled our clients to return to their homes by providing a "bridge" of services in coordination with what our programs are able to do for them. These clients are now stable and can remain in their own homes.

*Linkages Case Manager*

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<sup>1</sup> *Medicare Quality of Care Report of Surveillance Measures*, Health Care Financing Administration, October 1998.