

## Grand Junction Senior Care Means Freedom for You

The [U.S. Census Bureau](#) released two reports this month confirming what FirstLight has long known: the senior population is explosive. Why? Because the baby boomer generation (those born between 1946 and mid-1964) is growing older.

It will be changing the face of our political structure, families, pocketbooks, healthcare systems, and social cohesion. How?

- **Increased longevity.** The average life expectancy at age 65 in 1972 was 15.2 years and increased to 19.1 years in 2010, which is a gain of 3.9 years. Even the life span for over 85 is increasing. In 1972, it was 5.5 years. By 2010 it increased by an additional year.
- **Lowered Birth Rates.** The world's total birth rate fell from 5 children per women in 1950 to roughly 2.5 today, and is projected to drop further to about 2.2 by 2050. This will have an impact on the workforce. Fewer workers may mean more tax increases for those who do work.
- **Stressed Medicare and Medicaid Programs.** The government will spend more on acute and long-term healthcare services. Medicare and Medicaid expenditures on nursing home care were \$9 billion in 1980, more than doubling to \$25 billion by 1990, and [207.9 billion by 2010](#).
- **Senior Housing.** As the population ages, there will be additional long-term care housing needs including more retirement communities and skilled nursing facilities.
- **Retirement age.** As people live longer and are in better health, the retirement age will continue to increase.

## Who Will Provide Caregiving?

Another dramatic impact will be a shortage of caregivers and home health aides. According to the Department of Health & Human Services, over three-quarters (78%) of adults needing long-term care depend on family and friends as their only source of help. Many caregivers of older people are themselves growing too old to take care of others. 30% of family caregivers caring for seniors are themselves aged 65 or over; another 15% are between the ages of 45 to 54.

Another cause for alarm is a study by [Curran, McLanahan, and Knab](#) stating that children of divorced parents may be less inclined to care for their aging parents. If you've never been divorced, you have a 71% chance of receiving emotional support from your children; only 56% if you're divorced. With the divorce rate at 50%, these results could have startling repercussions.

So what are the elderly supposed to do?

## FirstLight HomeCare The Western Slope To The Rescue

That's where home healthcare agencies can play a major role in our future. For a home care agency like FirstLight HomeCare The Western Slope, caregiving is not a job, but a passion. Many of us went into this business because as owners, we know we will need long-term care as well. Our compassionate caregivers may someday be taking care of us!

That's why we are so selective about our caregivers. We ideally match them to our client's needs based on lifestyles and interests. For some seniors we provide 24/7 home care; for others, it's a couple of hours/week. We pinch hit for family members or loved ones who can't be there all the time. Our home care services include:

- Alzheimer's care
- Companion care

- Dementia care
- Hourly, short term or long-term care
- Maternity and post-partum care
- Personal care
- Rehabilitative care (surgery, stroke, heart attack)
- Respite care
- Veteran's care

If you're like the 95% of seniors who want to remain in their home and "age in place," FirstLight Home Care The Western Slope can provide the help you need, enabling independence, peace of mind, and freedom as long as possible!