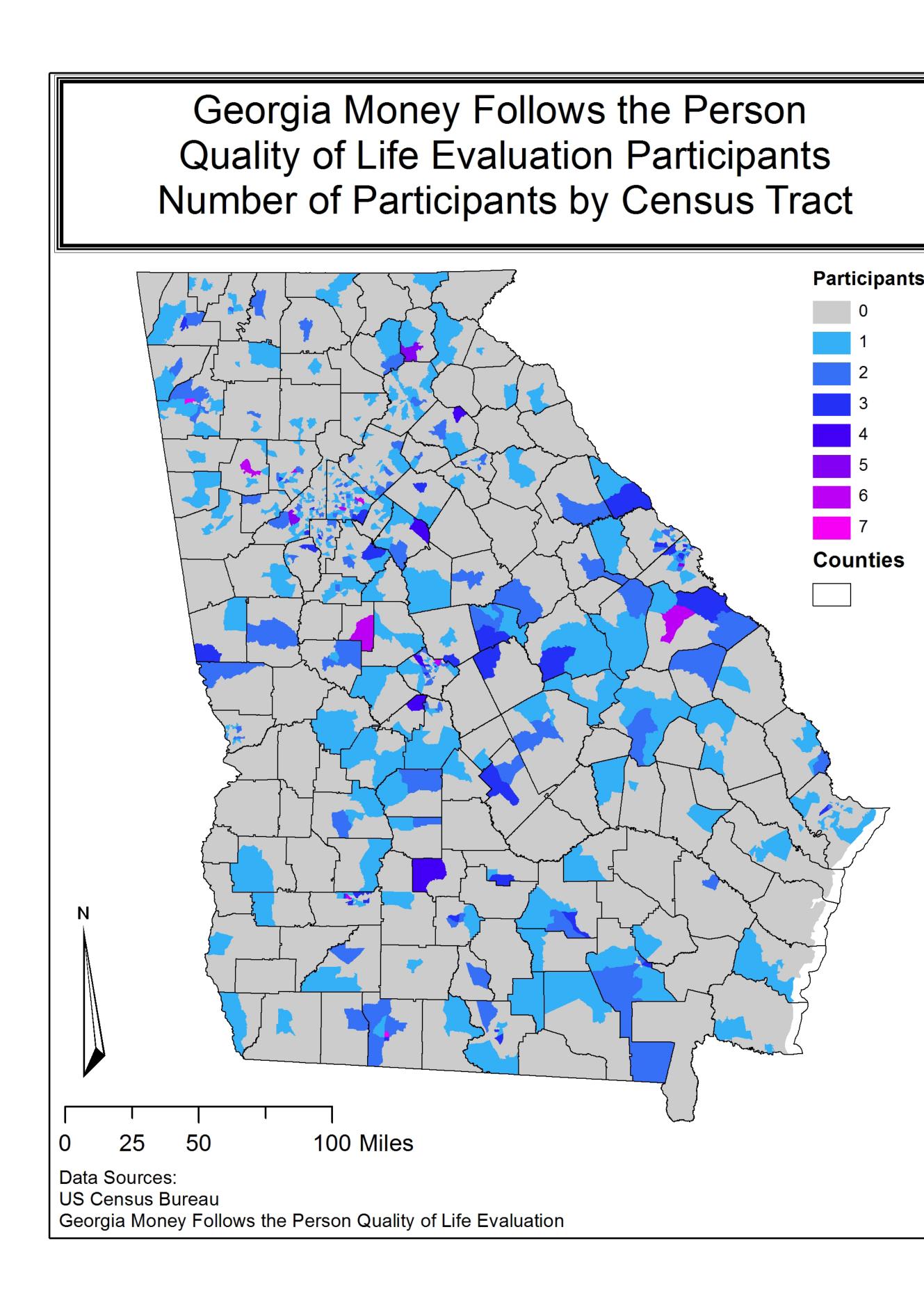# Putting the 'Home' in 'Home and Community Based Services'

Michelle Rushing, M.P.H.; Glenn Landers, Sc.D.; Kristi Fuller, M.S.W.; Chandrika Derricho, L.M.S.W.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research was to investigate if there are housing and community characteristics which seem to support community transitions and quality of life, including:

- We anticipated that Money Follows the Person (MFP) participants would have a greater likelihood of moving to places with lower housing costs and greater availability of rental housing.
- Since housing costs are associated with socio-demographic factors, we also predicted an association with certain factors.
- In addition, we specifically examined associations of residency and satisfaction with proximity to low income housing tax credit developments, which Georgia was marketing to MFP participants.
- Finally, we examined whether housing and community characteristics of interest appeared to have any connection to MFP participants' choice over where they lived or their satisfaction with living there.

Georgia Money Follows the Person
Quality of Life Evaluation Participants
Number of Participants by Census Tract

Participants
- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7

Counties

N

0   25   50   100 Miles

Data Sources:
US Census Bureau
Georgia Money Follows the Person Quality of Life Evaluation

METHODS

The MFP Quality of Life survey is a 42-item instrument developed by the program's national evaluator, Mathematica Policy Research. The survey is currently used in all MFP demonstration states. Participants were Medicaid beneficiaries who were living in nursing homes for 90 days or more at baseline survey who met eligibility criteria and were transitioned to the community under MFP program between 2008 and 2015.

Variables selected from the survey included:
- A. Do you like where you live?
- B. Did you help pick (this/that) place to live?
- C. Do you feel safe living (here/there)?
- D. Taking everything into consideration, over the past week would you say that you have been happy or unhappy with the way you live your life?

Each interview recorded the individual's address at the time it was administered. For the purpose of this analysis, their address at T1 was geocoded in ESRI ArcMap 10.3 on a secure server, using a local version of ESRI StreetMap. Housing, socioeconomic, and demographic data by Census tract were downloaded from the 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (ACS). These data are based on a sample of the general population.

Correlation between number of participants in the Census tract was calculated against the selected housing, socioeconomic, and demographic factors. Significance was tested using Spearman's ρ due to nonparametric qualities of participant distribution.

RESULTS

The number of MFP QOL evaluation participants matched baseline to T1 (the sample) was 783. There are 1969 Census tracts in Georgia. Of the sample participants, there were 326 tracts with 1 participant; 120 with 2; 40 with 3; 5 with 4; 3 with 5; 8 with 6; 2 with 7 participants residing there. Figure 1 depicts the geographic distribution of participants around the state, by number of participants per Census tract. Table 1 displays correlations between number of participants in the Census tract and selected characteristics.

Table 1: Correlation between number of participants and community variables

Tract Data	Correlation (ρ)	p Value
% of housing units that are multifamily (2+)	.095	.000
% that are single family	-.052	.010
% that are mobile homes	.053	.009
% of households in poverty	.189	.000
% of households earning under $10k	.171	.000
% of population non-Hispanic White	-.187	.000
% of homes that are rented	.138	.000
% of homes that are vacant	.104	.000
Median rent	-.174	.000
Number of Housing Choice Vouchers	.107	.001
% of Housing Choice Vouchers	.033	.172
Number of LIHTC units	.035	.207
% of LIHTC units	-.042	.163

Of the sample participants, 6.5% (51) lived within one tenth mile of a LIHTC property, and 22.0% lived within a half mile of one. There were 1,069 LIHTC properties in the dataset which range from single buildings to multi-block complexes.

There were significant correlations found between indicators of satisfaction with where they live, and with the housing and community characteristics. Participants were more likely to like where they lived in areas with higher rent, and lower concentrations of poverty, extremely low income households, and vacant housing. Similarly, participants felt safer and were more likely to have picked a place to live in areas with lower concentration of renters (higher rates of homeownership) and lower concentrations of apartments. Greater happiness was correlated with lower concentrations of poverty, extremely low income households, renters, and vacant housing. Further analysis is needed in order to identify any confounding or enabling factors, especially in relation to LIHTC property locations. Table 2 reports only the statistically significant associations that were found.

Table 2: Correlation between QoL responses and community variables

Participant Response	Housing/Community Factor	Correlation (ρ)	p Value
Who liked where they lived	Median rent	.078	.019
	% of households in poverty	-.072	.028
	% of households earning under $10k	-.081	.015
	% of homes that are vacant	-.085	.011
Who felt safe living there	% of homes that are rented	-.059	.049
	% of housing units that are multifamily (2+)	-.065	.034
Who had picked that place to live	% of homes that are rented	-.090	.006
	% of housing units that are multifamily (2+)	-.080	.013
Who were happy with their life	% of homes that are rented	-.074	.024
	% of households in poverty	-.065	.040
	% of households earning under $10k	-.091	.007
	% of homes that are vacant	-.064	.043
	Distance from LIHTC	.064	.045

DISCUSSION

The availability and cost of rental housing seems to factor into transition housing options. This is important, because most jurisdictions restrict the construction of apartments and attached housing. Like the rest of the U.S., Georgia is experiencing an affordable housing challenge which is especially severe for renters and affects both rural and urban areas. Restrictions on housing development and other assets can also exacerbate the geographic variation in overall investment across different areas, which can cause some areas to become disinvested – which seemed to be associated with lower satisfaction with participants home and quality of life.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY OR PRACTICE

Changes to zoning, subdivision, and building code policy could facilitate the opportunity for many more institutionalized individuals to return to a community setting. State support for accessible housing that is available and affordable to transitioning residents may be important, especially where it creates a wider choice of housing options in higher-amenity areas and areas that currently lack such choice. This includes housing tax credits, other housing finance programs, and housing vouchers.

For more information, please contact the Georgia Health Policy Center
at 404.413.0314 or visit us online at www.ghpc.gsu.edu

Georgia Health Policy Center

Georgia State University | Andrew Young School OF POLICY STUDIES