Mortality Projections for Social Security Programs in the United States

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Presented at the Living to 100 and Beyond Symposium

Orlando, Fla.

January 7-9, 2008

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Abstract

Worldwide, the 20th century brought tremendous reductions in mortality at all ages for both males and females. The reductions in mortality, combined with the aging of the baby boomers and lower fertility rates, are projected to increase the proportion of the U.S. population that is above age 65 in the coming decades. This paper examines past mortality trends and discusses how these trends may change over the next 75 years, thus influencing the growth of the elderly population. In addition, this paper describes the methods and assumptions used to project future mortality rates and presents results, including assumed annual rates of mortality reduction and projected life expectancies. As well, this paper discusses stochastic time-series methods that are used to help quantify the variability in the mortality rate projections.