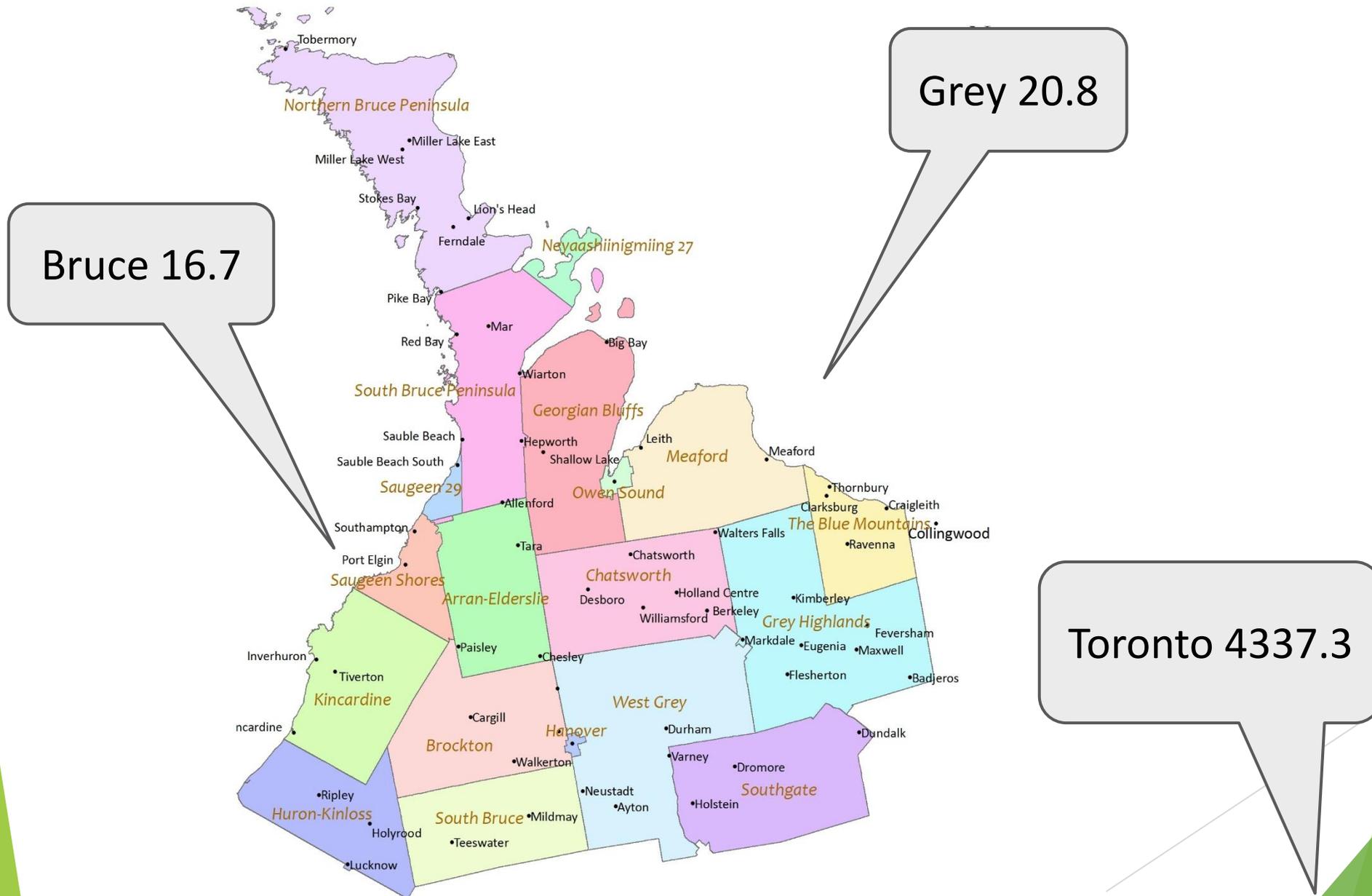


# Fall Prevention and the rural context

Emily Powell, Grey Bruce Health Unit



# Population Density



# Demographic Profile of Grey Bruce

## Population

- 161,977 live in Grey Bruce
- Low growth (2.1% in Grey Bruce vs. 4.6% in Ontario)

## Age Structure

- Older on average: 45.1 in Grey Bruce (ON 41.0)
- More seniors 65+: 23.9% of population (ON 16.7%)
- Fewer children 0 to 14: 15.2% of population (ON 16.4%)



# Older Adults in Grey Bruce

- ▶ Grey County is home to over **22,000** older adults and Bruce county is home to over **16,000**, which comprises 23.9% of the population (provincial avg. 16.7%)
- ▶ Places with highest number of older adults include Owen Sound, Meaford, Saugeen Shores, and Hanover
- ▶ Highest percentages:
  - ▶ Northern Bruce Peninsula 39%
  - ▶ Hanover 34.1%
  - ▶ The Blue Mountains 33.4%

# 2016 Census Highlights



## **Families and households**

36% of older adults live alone  
10.4% widowed



## **Income**

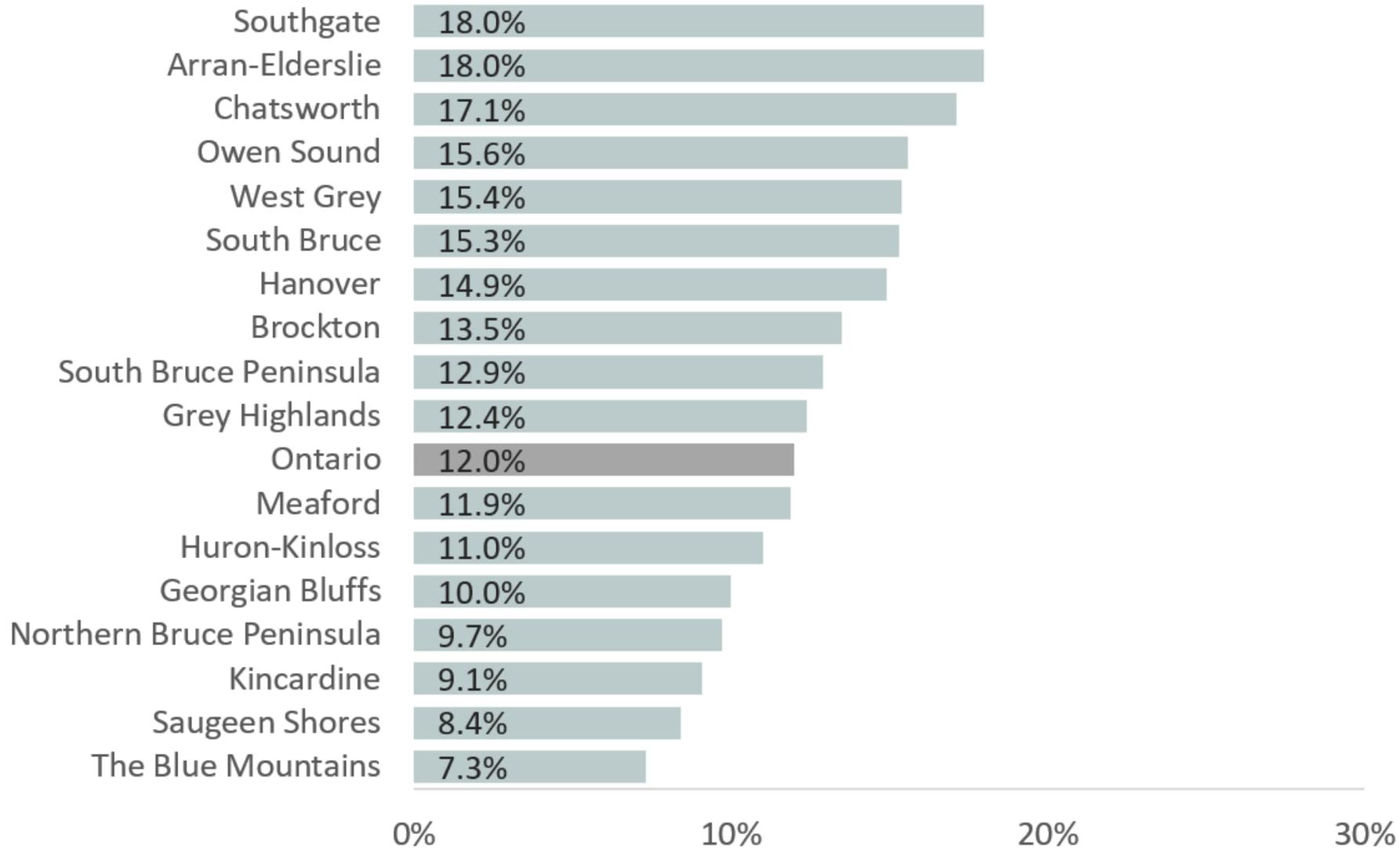
14.6% of those aged 65+ have low income  
Range of 7.3% (Blue Mountains) to 18% (Southgate and Arran-Elderslie)



## **Unaffordable cost of housing**

12% of owner households  
60 % of tenant households  
36.7% of dwellings constructed prior to 1960

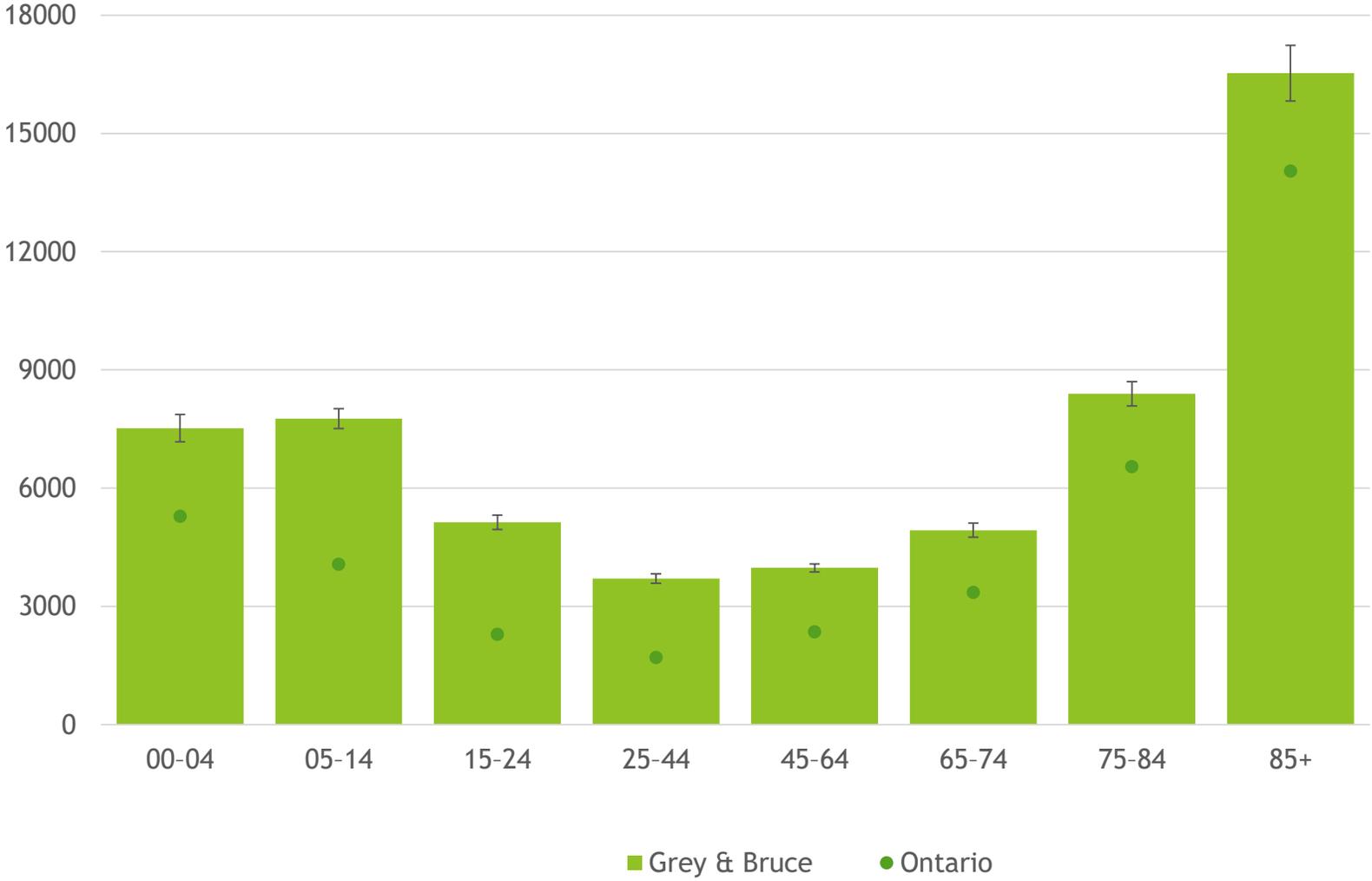
# Low income range



# Falls

- ▶ Risk factors for falls are numerous, multifactorial and complex
- ▶ 24 people visit emergency EVERY DAY for a fall in Grey-Bruce
- ▶ Emergency department visits **significantly higher**
- ▶ Higher hospitalization rates
- ▶ Between 2 and 3 people die every month from fall related causes

# Falls in Grey Bruce



Higher fall-related ED visits across ALL age groups  
Ranging from **17%** higher among those aged 85+ to as much as **124%** higher among youth

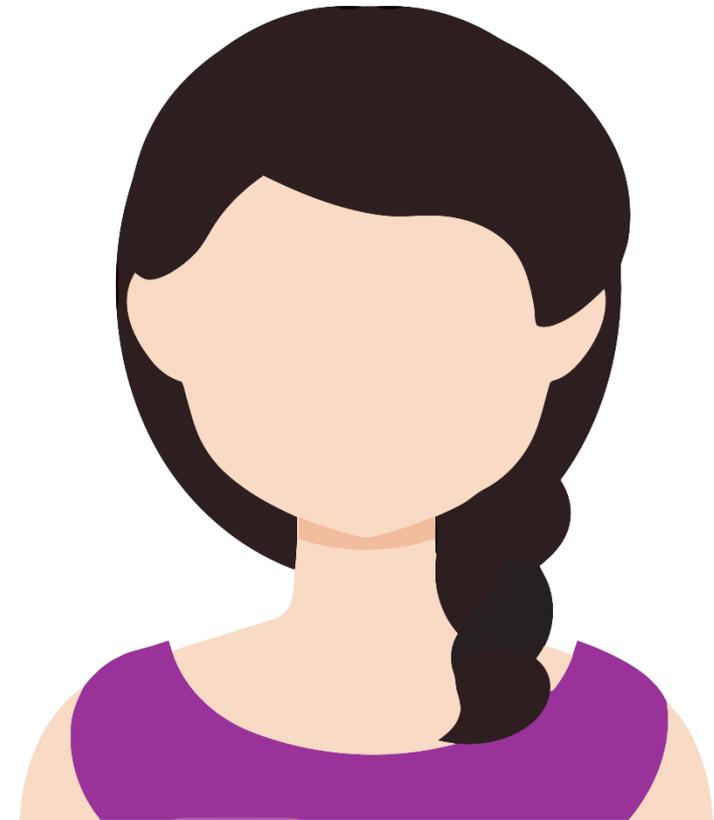
# The Rural Context

- ▶ Living in a rural environment poses unique challenges with different social, economic and built environment conditions
- ▶ Working in Grey Bruce
  - ▶ Higher proportion of agricultural, forestry, fishing and hunting industries (7.3% vs 1.5%); construction (9% vs 6.3%)
  - ▶ Similar time to commute to work, but with fewer opportunities to walk



# Social Determinants of Health and Injury

- ▶ **Housing** in need of major repair (Grey Bruce, 7.9% of dwellings)
- ▶ Limited **income**
- ▶ Unable to take time off work if injured
- ▶ No **benefits** for medications, physical aids etc.
  
- ▶ What can we do as a community?
  - ▶ Optimal physical environments
  - ▶ Safe parks and playgrounds
  - ▶ Age-Friendly Communities
  - ▶ Safe housing
  - ▶ Social connectedness



# Strategies for Action

- ✓ Age friendly communities
- ✓ Effective fall prevention initiatives
- ✓ Health equity
- ✓ Surveillance and data
- ✓ Physical environment
- ✓ Housing
- ✓ Lifetime physical activity
- ✓ Risk taking, development and healthy aging
- ✓ Alcohol and medication
- ✓ Education and awareness



For more information or fall prevention resources  
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