

1 in 5 Minn. Seniors living on Social Security not enough

ST. CLOUD (KNSI) - A new tool to gauge the economic well-being of Minnesota Seniors is showing those whose income is limited to Social Security are most likely to face a financial crunch.

Program Director Pam Johnson with the Minnesota Community Action Partnership says seniors want to live independently and with dignity. But financial burden seniors face are the same for anyone, but seniors have few options to increase their income

"I think we'd all agree that people in their golden years shouldn't have to choose between turning on the heat or taking their medication. And, that's really the choice that a lot of seniors are faced with these days." Johnson said.

Johnson calls the **Elder Economic Security Initiative Index** a good tool to define what is needed to live independently and with dignity.

Social Security is the only source of income for one out of five retired elders. The benefit for elders is \$13,059 per year for an individual in Minnesota.

Seniors living on their own in a house with no mortgage in St. Cloud has about 16,400 in expenses including food, utilities, transportation, healthcare along with miscellaneous items.