



# The New Zealand Seniors Series: The Third Act Report

AUGUST 2020





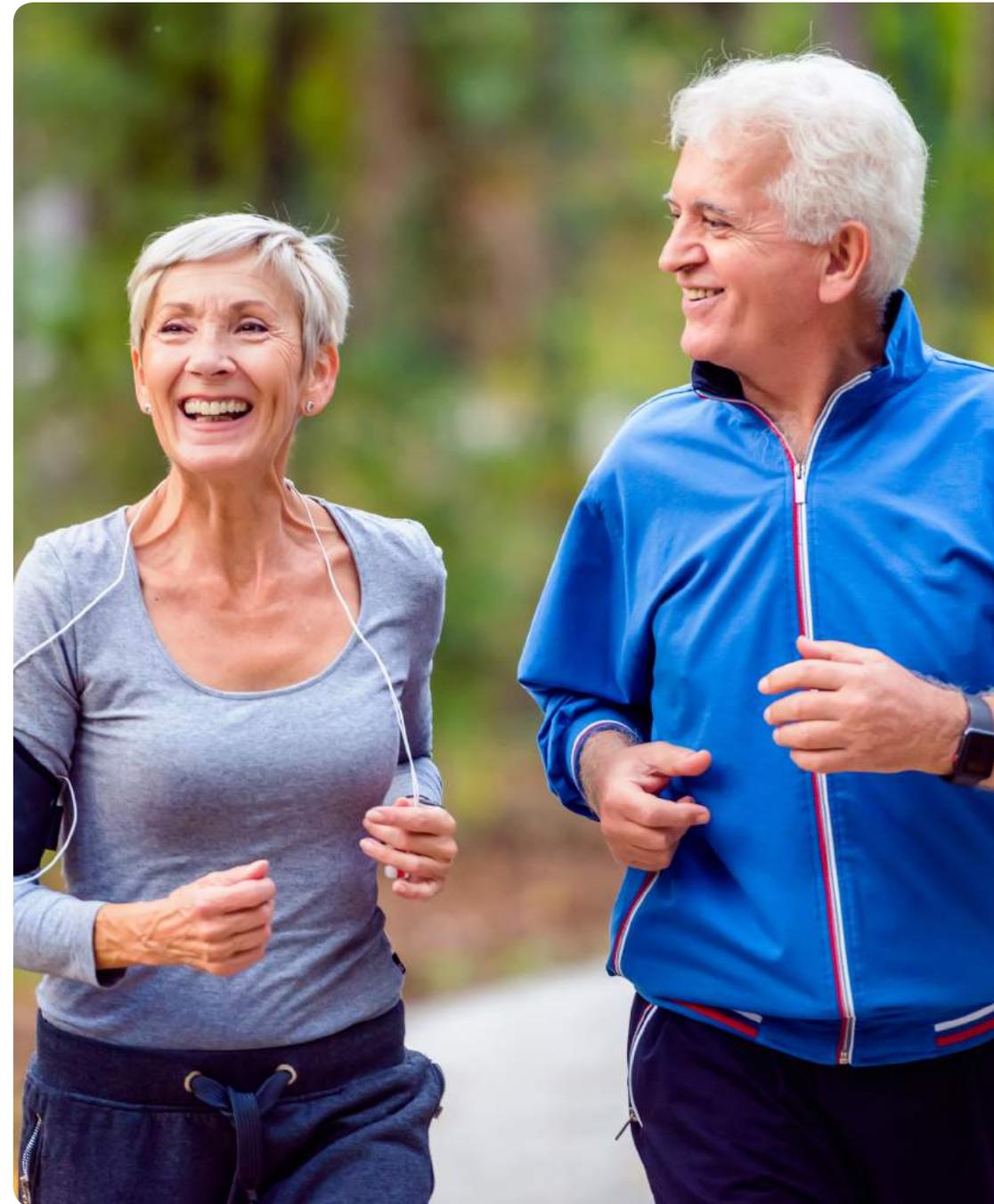
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## About the report

In order to understand the opinions, thoughts and behaviours of New Zealand's over 50s, we launched the New Zealand Seniors Series, a research project conducted for seniors.

The Third Act Report delves into the increasing life expectancy of New Zealanders and what this means for society as a whole, as well as the individual. Covering off on the big issues of infrastructure, ageism, lifestyle, health, societal and government support as well as contentment, this research reveals how New Zealand's over 50s really feel about an ageing population and whether or not the nation is equipped to deal with the complexities of this.



# About the report

The report is compiled based on research commissioned by New Zealand Seniors and conducted by CoreData in August 2019 via a quantitative online survey targeting 500 New Zealanders aged 50+. The sample is representative of the general population of New Zealanders aged 50+ in terms of age group, gender, wealth and region.

Gender	
Female	52.2%
Male	47.8%

Age generation	
Generation X (50-53 years old)	13.2%
Baby Boomers (54-73 years old)	72.1%
Pre-Boomers (74 years old and above)	14.7%

Wealth segment	
Mass market	56.5%
Mass affluent	25.2%
Core affluent	7.5%
HNW	10.8%

Region	
1 Auckland	32.7%
2 Bay of Plenty	6.1%
3 Canterbury	15.7%
4 Gisborne	1.0%
5 Hawke's Bay	4.2%
6 Manawatu-Wanganui	6.2%
7 Marlborough	0.9%
8 Nelson	1.0%
9 Northland	3.5%
10 Otago	4.6%
11 Southland	2.0%
12 Taranaki	2.1%
13 Tasman	0.7%
14 Waikato	8.9%
15 Wellington	9.4%
16 West Coast	1.1%





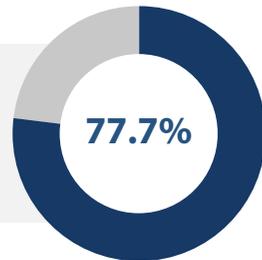
## What does getting 'older' really mean?

- Older means wiser and having more time
- The top 'secrets' to living longer
- The rise of the 'three-quarter life crisis'

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# Older means wiser and having more time

According to New Zealand's over 50s, being older means being wiser, with the large majority (77.7%) of respondents holding this view.



Getting older also provides the opportunity to reassess, when asked what they wanted to be or do when they 'grow up', our over 50s said:



To be **healthy**



To be **happy**



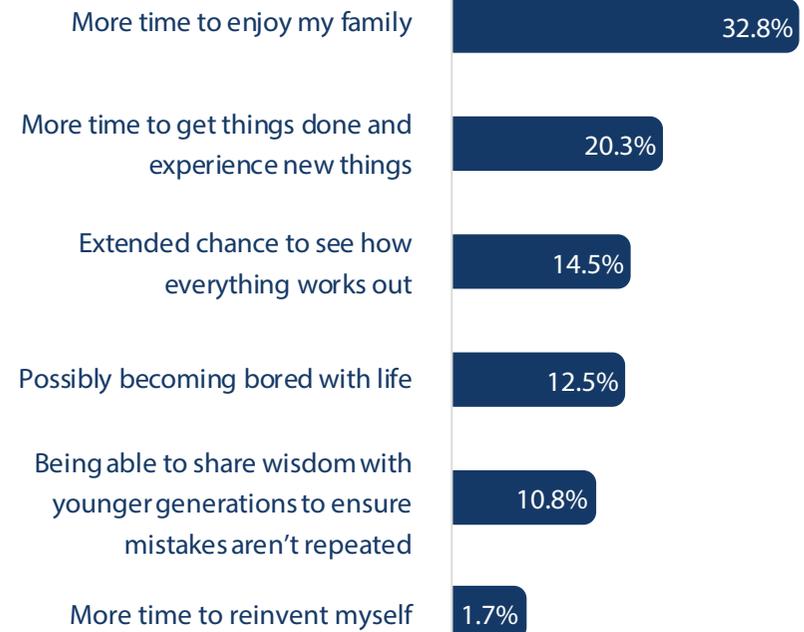
To **travel more**

*"Happy and healthy able to do what I want in life, follow my interest in accounts, figures, and crossword puzzles to my heart's content."*

(79 year old female from Auckland)

For many, the prospect of living to 100 and beyond is seen as a positive, as it means more time to enjoy family (32.8%) and more time to get things done and experience new things (20.3%).

## What would living to 100 years old mean to you?



*"Working for myself rather than someone else, having the freedom and financial resources to make decisions that suit my lifestyle and enrich my enjoyment of my latter years without compromises."*

(54 year old male from Wellington)

# The top 'secrets' to living longer

According to New Zealand's over 50s, the top 'secrets' to living longer are:



They have also shared some sage advice that they would give to their younger selves, and perhaps, to other younger New Zealanders. Their top tips are:

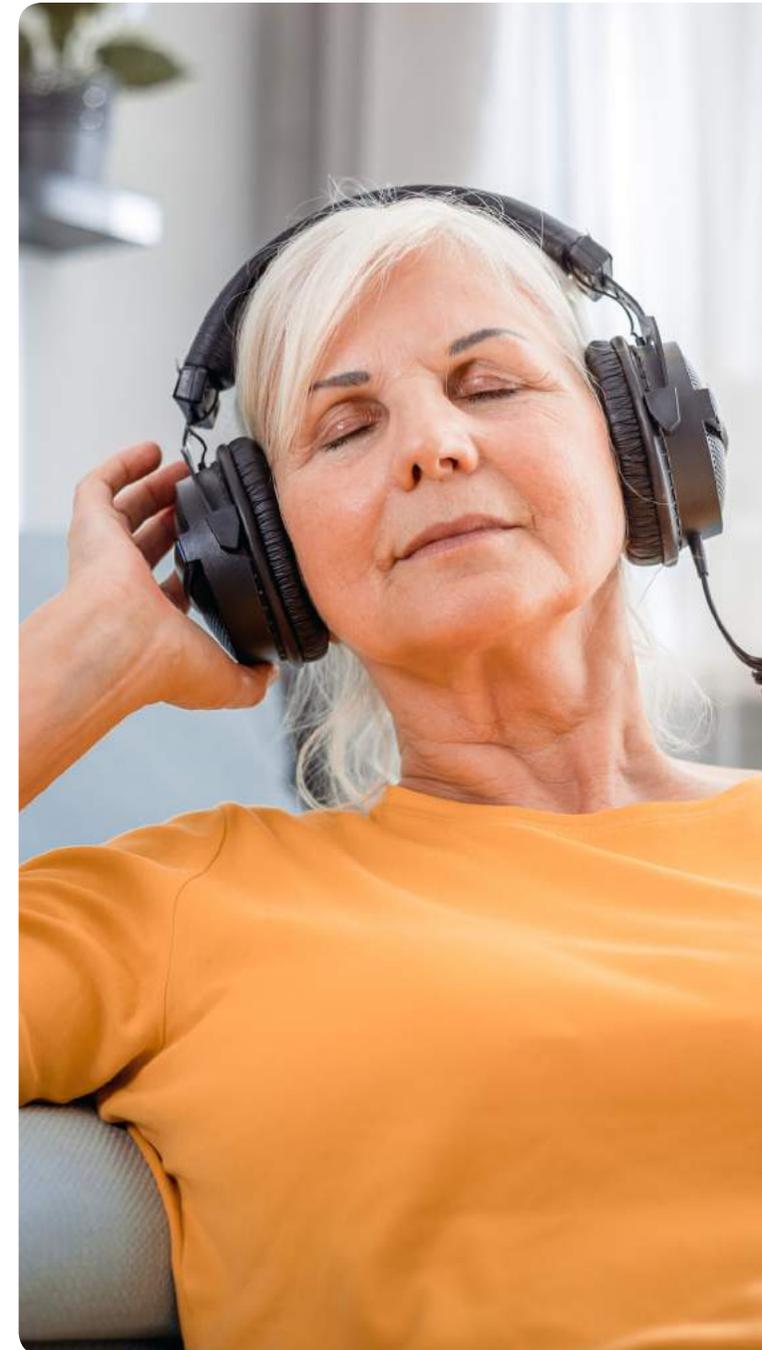


*"Be more relaxed about life. Grab opportunities & make the best of them. Express love more freely - spoken, time together. Have a happy balance between work & play. Be the best of yourself that you can be & accept yourself - don't worry about what others think of you."*

(60 year old female from Waikato)

*"Enjoy the young years while you can, before you know it retirement is staring you in the face. Do what you can today & you will feel that you are moving forward in life through your hard work & accomplishments."*

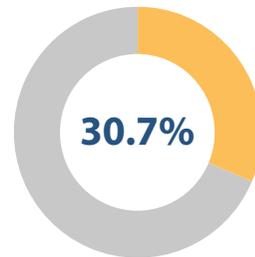
(58 year old male from Hawke's Bay)



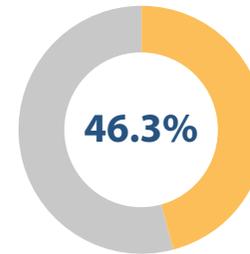


## The rise of the ‘three-quarter life crisis’

The ‘three-quarter life crisis’ (i.e. major life reassessment) is a very real thing. The research suggests that:



Almost one in three have experienced a ‘three-quarter life crisis’

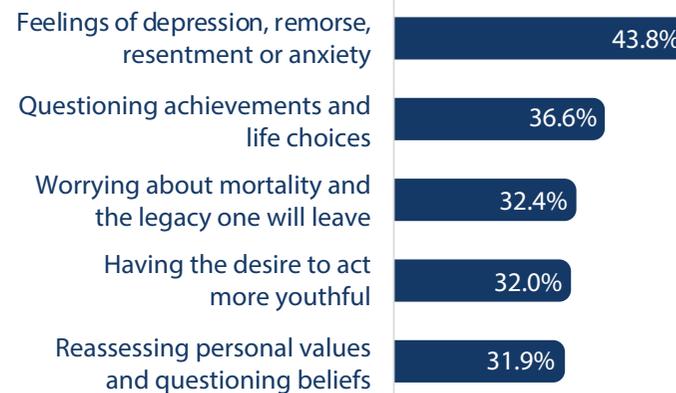


Almost one in two have seen others go through a ‘three-quarter life crisis’

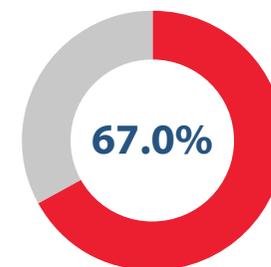


More than one in two believe the ‘mid-life crisis’ is being increasingly replaced by the ‘three-quarter life crisis’

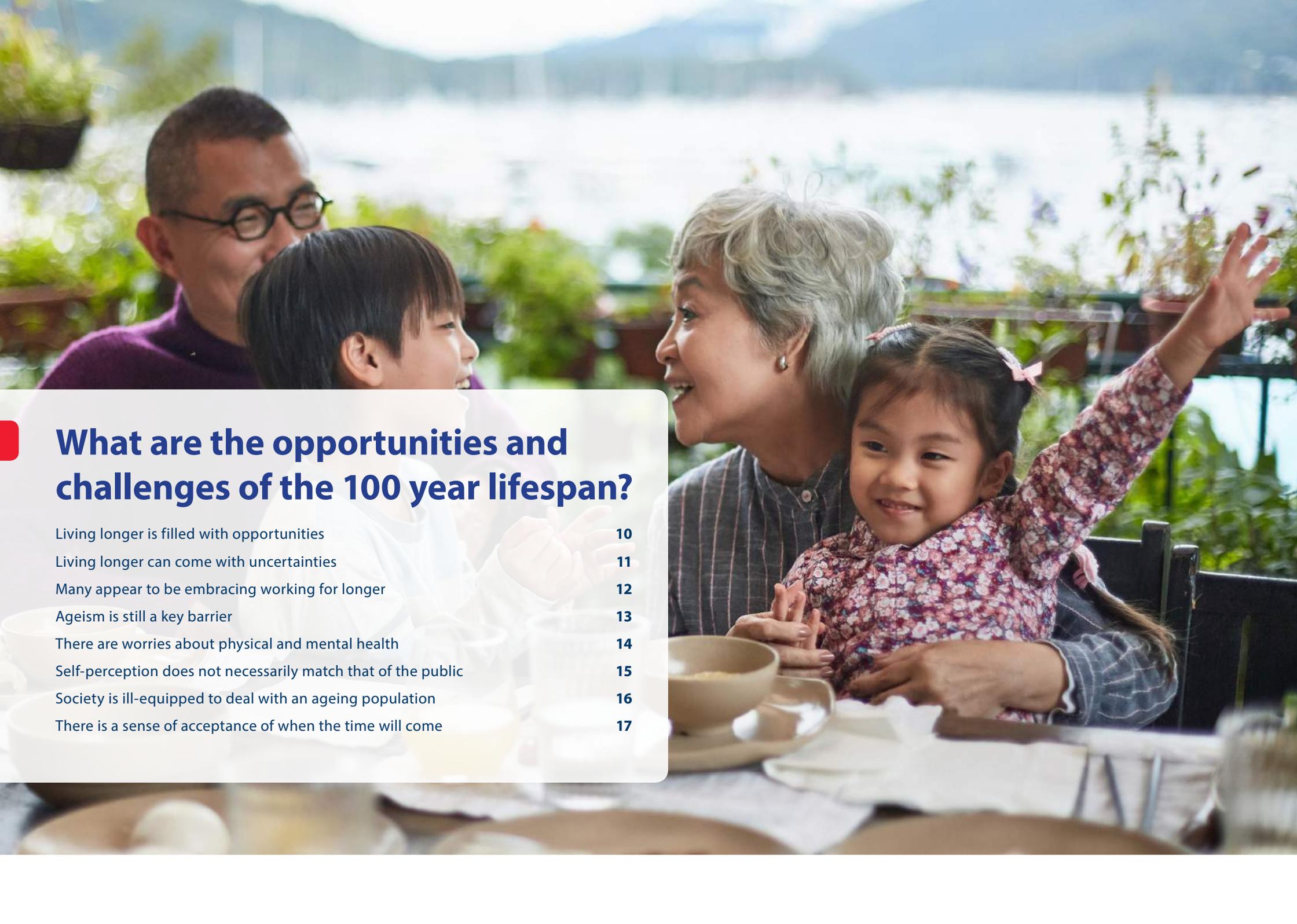
The classic reported signs of a ‘three-quarter life crisis’ are:



Despite these sentiments, two in three (67.0%) believe a ‘three-quarter life crisis’ is ultimately a healthy process to work through as one gets older.



*\*Multiple answers allowed*



## What are the opportunities and challenges of the 100 year lifespan?

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# Living longer is filled with opportunities

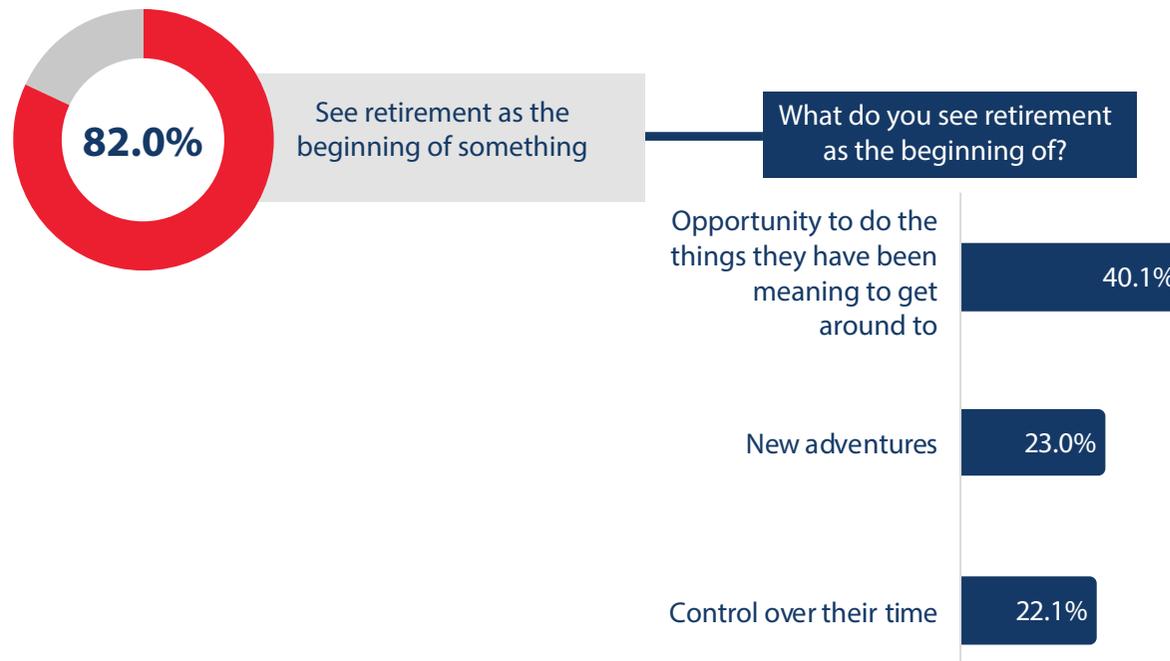
With life expectancy projected to continue rising, both opportunities and challenges present themselves.

For a start, the large majority do not feel that retirement is necessarily a necessity, with over four in five (81.1%) respondents seeing it as more of a transition rather than an event in their life, and more than one in two (53.7%) believing that the term 'retired' should be retired.



Supporting this sentiment is the fact more than four in five (82%) see retirement as the beginning of something as opposed to the ending of something. Specifically, retirement is most commonly seen as the beginning of:

- An opportunity to do the things they have been meaning to get around to
- New adventures
- Control over their time



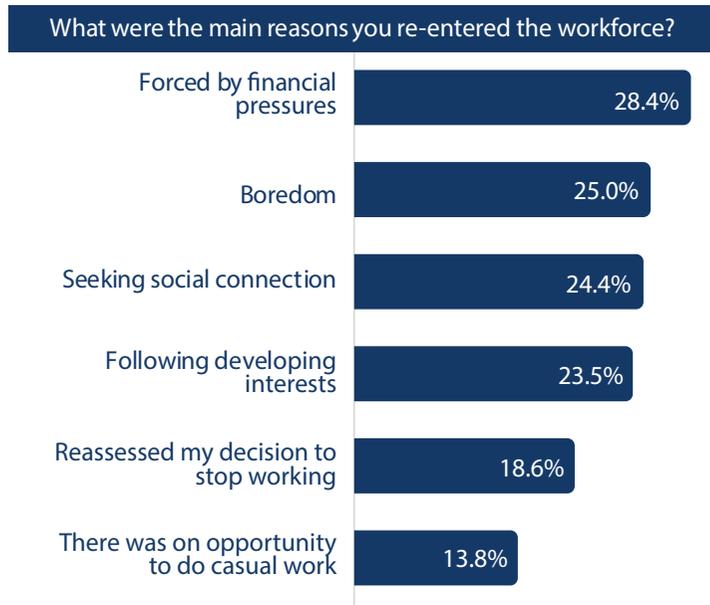
# Living longer can come with uncertainties

While living longer is filled with opportunities, it may also mean working for longer before retiring (or even going back to work after retirement), with more than two in three (68.3%) believing living longer requires extended time in the workforce

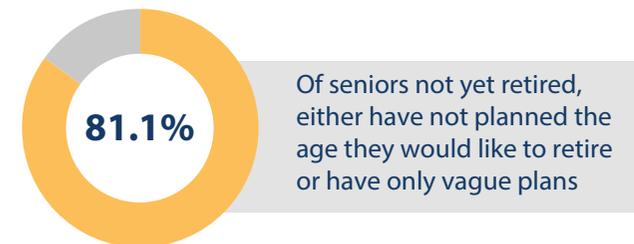
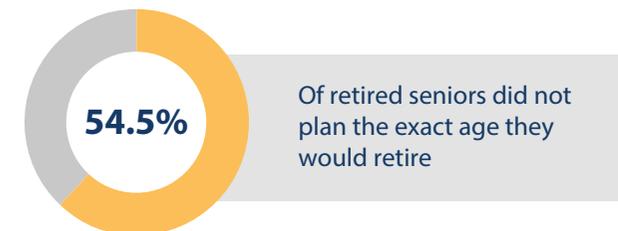


Indeed, more than one in five (21.2%) of those who are already retired say they have actually re-entered the workforce after retiring, with almost three in 10 (28.4%) admitting that they were forced to do so due to financial pressures. Furthermore, amongst those who are not yet retired, one in three (33.1%) feel that they are likely to re-enter the workforce or return to studying after retirement.

In turn, working for longer creates uncertainties on when they can actually retire once and for all. More than half (54.5%) of those who are already retired admit that they did not plan the exact age they would retire. Moreover, among those who are not yet retired, the vast majority (81.1%) have not planned the age they would like to retire or have only vague plans.

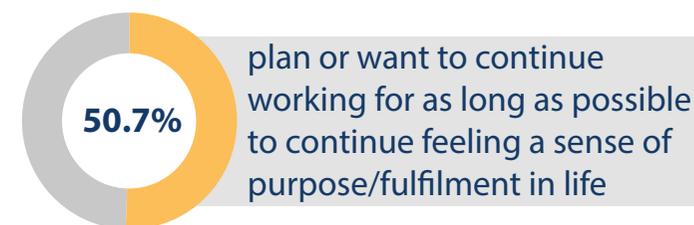


\*Multiple answers allowed



## Many appear to be embracing working for longer

Despite the uncertainties, many appear to be embracing working for longer and are putting off retirement. Indeed, more than three in five (61.7%) think their careers define them or have done so in the past, and half (50.7%) are planning to or want to continue working for as long as possible to continue feeling a sense of purpose/fulfilment in life.



More than one in two (53.7%) think the next big thing for New Zealand's over 50s is continuing to work later in life on a part-time or casual basis.

### What do you think will be the next big thing for New Zealand seniors?

53.7%

Continuing to work later part time/casual



26.2%

Living together in like-minded senior communities



8.6%

Living in inner city serviced apartments ('vertical' retirement communities)



4.4%

Moving overseas to luxury aged care facilities (i.e. Malaysia)



## Ageism is still a key barrier

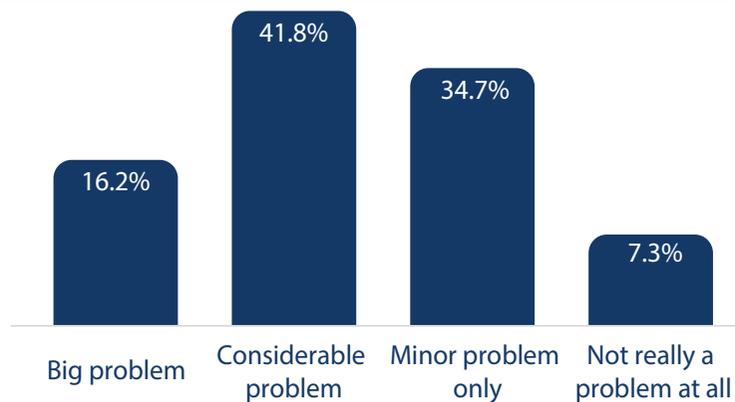
It is clear that many see a need to stay in the workforce longer or re-enter the workforce after retirement given the rising life expectancy.

Unfortunately, there are a number of barriers that present themselves. The research suggests that:



It's not just confined to the workplace. 57.9 per cent feel that ageism is perpetuated by society at large and is at least a 'considerable' problem for retired seniors.

How great a problem for retired seniors is ageism perpetuated by society at large?



# There are worries about physical and mental health

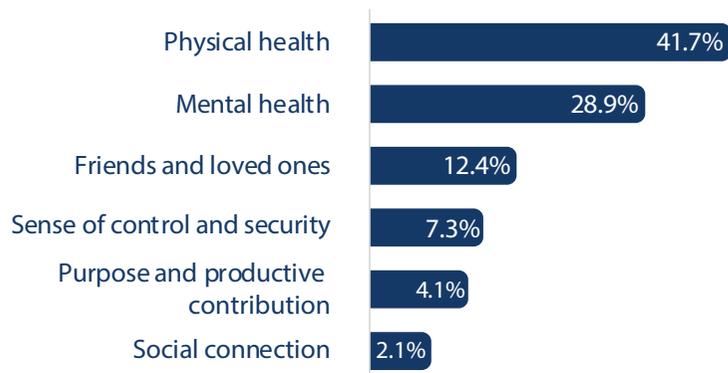
Ageist views can lead to poorer physical and mental health and society at large could be adding to the fears that come with ageing. The research suggests that on average, 91 is the age that respondents would ideally like to live to if health problems or mental decline were not an issue.



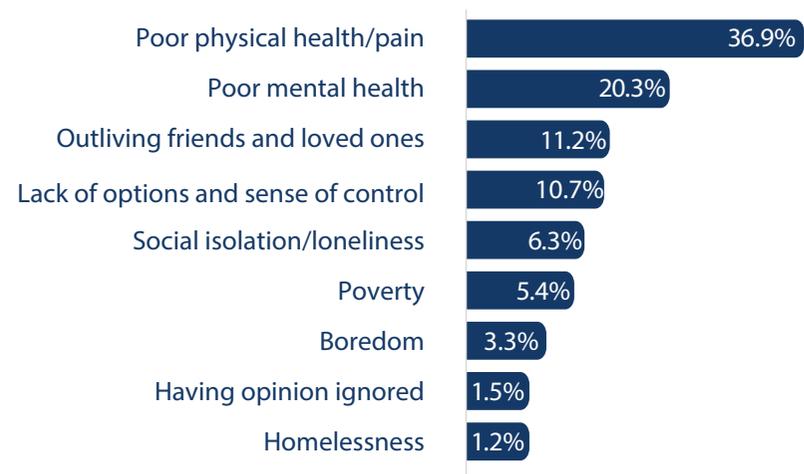
The reality however, is that many are grappling with worries, more than two in five (41.7%) fear losing their physical health as they get older, while almost three in ten (28.9%) fear losing their mental health as they get older.

They have the same fears about the prospect of living to 100 and beyond, 36.9 per cent worry about poor physical health and one in five (20.3%) worry about mental decline.

What do you fear losing most as you get older?

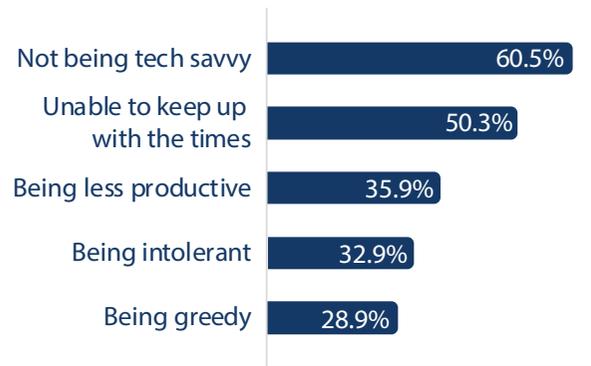


What do you fear most about living to 100?



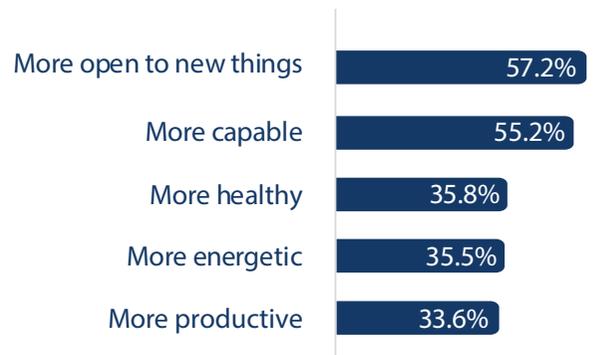
## Self-perception does not necessarily match that of the public

New Zealand's over 50s are frustrated with their portrayal, with the majority feeling they are mis-represented in the media and by the general public. Specifically, with regards to:



*\*Multiple answers allowed*

Compared to the stereotypical image of a senior, this cohort most commonly believe that they are actually:



*\*Multiple answers allowed*



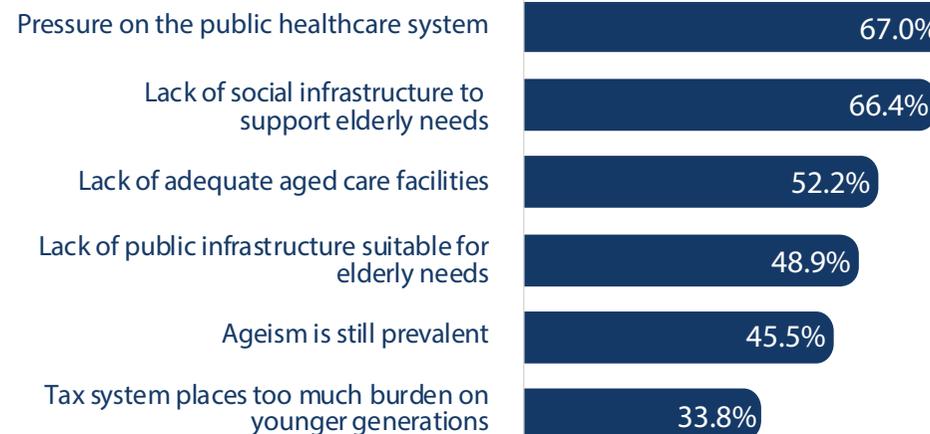
# Society is ill-equipped to deal with an ageing population

The fears that come with ageing could also be exacerbated by the widely held view that society at large is not well-equipped to deal with an ageing population, with the majority of respondents feeling this way and a slightly higher number thinking society is ill-equipped to deal with the average life expectancy rising to 100 (64.0% and 73.6% respectively).



Those who feel society is ill-equipped to deal with the rising life expectancy most commonly cite the pressure on the public healthcare system (67.0%) and the lack of adequate aged care facilities (52.2%). Others cite the lack of social (66.4%) or public (48.9%) infrastructure to support elderly needs, while some point to ageism still being prevalent in society (45.5%) and the tax system placing too much burden on younger generations (33.8%).

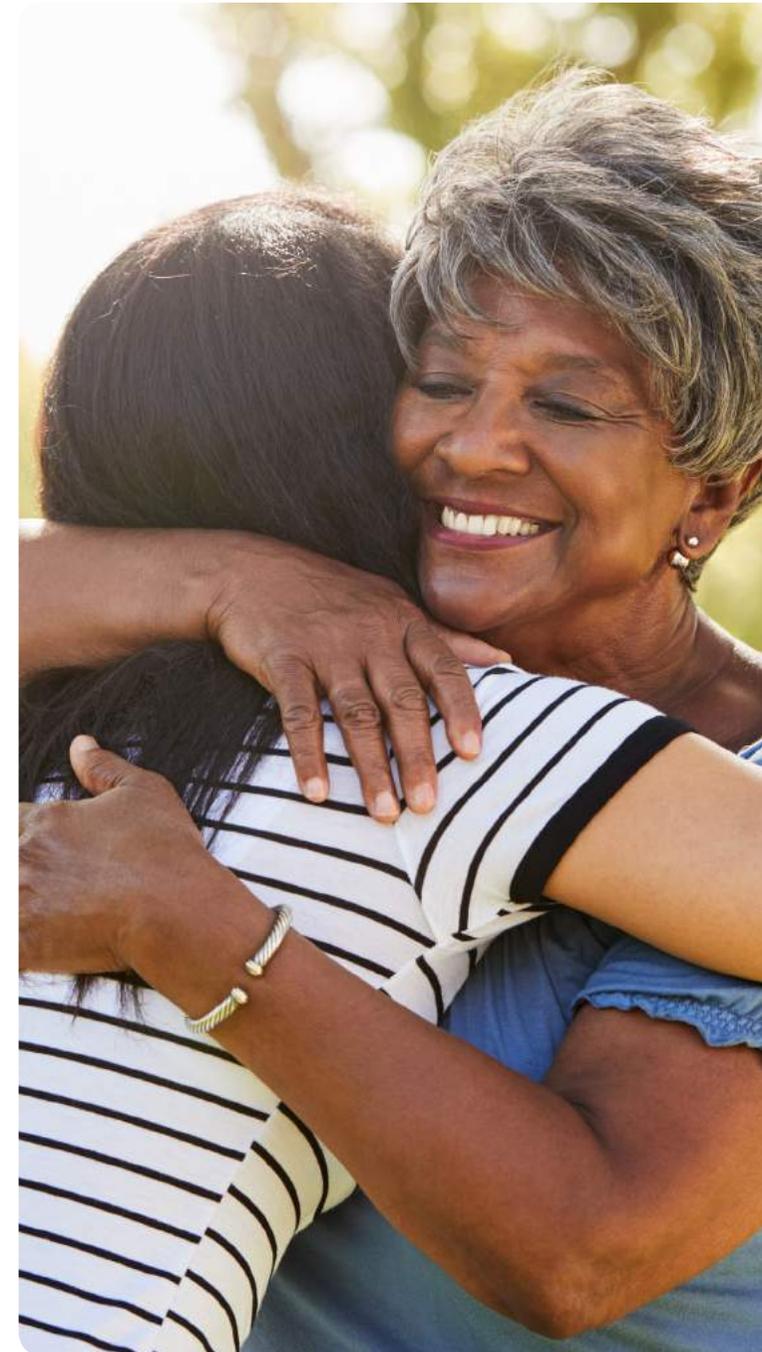
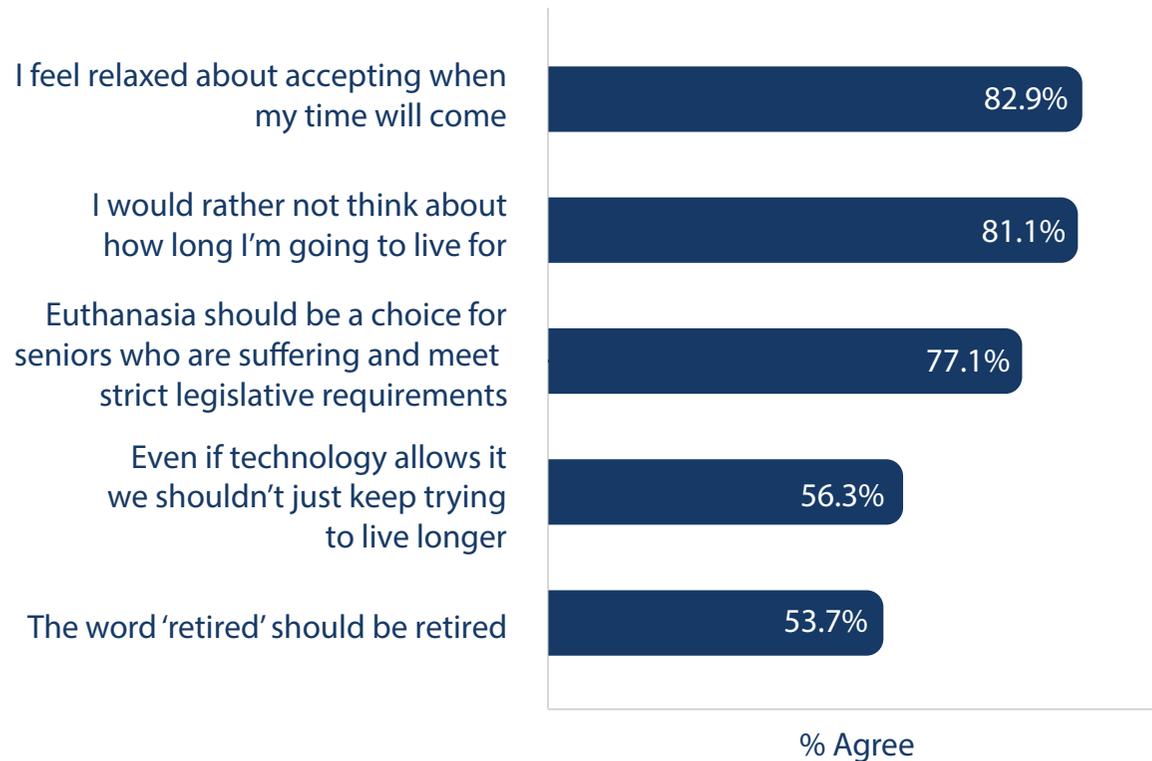
## Why do you think that society is not well equipped to deal with a rising life expectancy to 100 years old?



*\*Multiple answers allowed*

## There is a sense of acceptance of when the time will come

However, despite these health fears and worries about whether society is well-equipped to deal with an ageing population, the vast majority (81.1%) of respondents would rather not think about how long they are going to live for. A similar proportion (82.9%) also feel relaxed about accepting when their time will come.





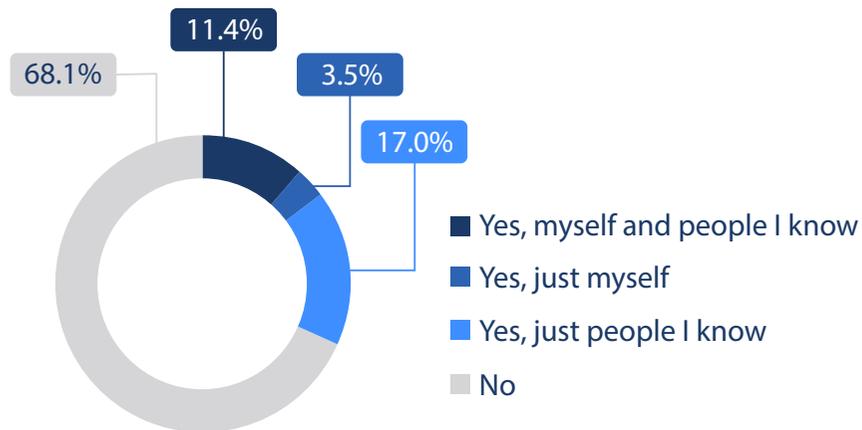
## What could the future look like?

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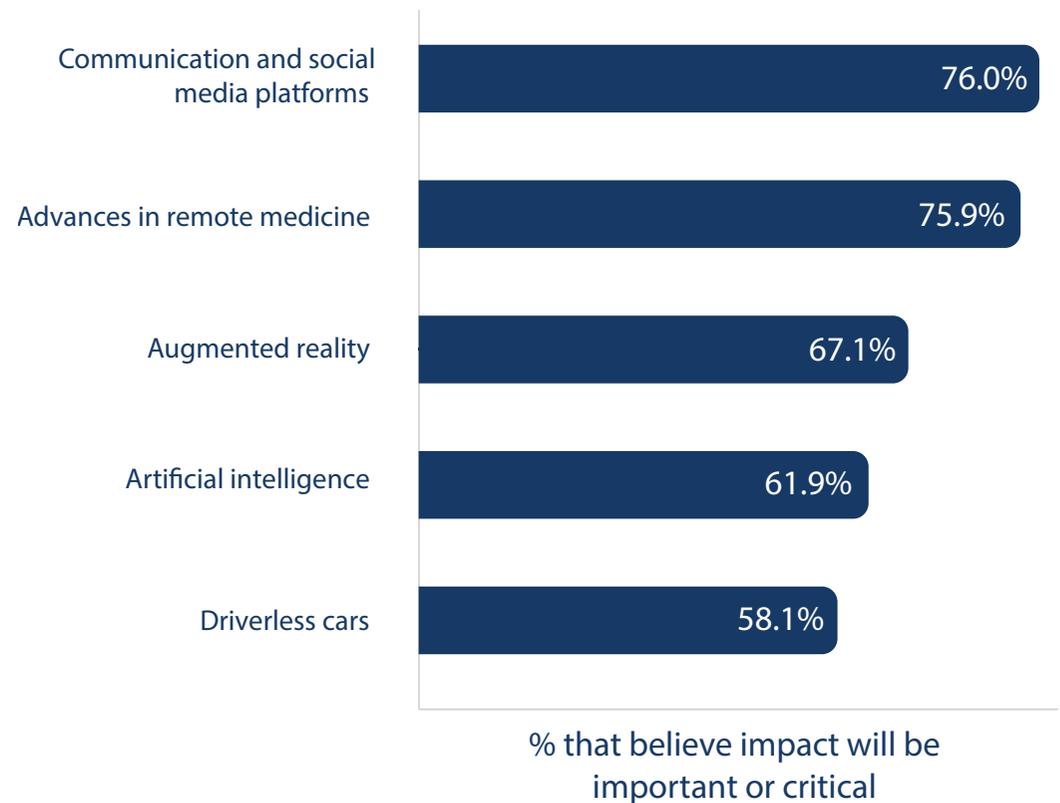
# Technology is set to play a key role in the health of New Zealanders

New Zealand's over 50s believe that technology will have an impact on how long they live and the quality of that life, with almost one in three (31.9%) having personally experienced or known someone that has benefited from a medical breakthrough that extended or improved their quality of life.

Have you personally experienced or known someone that has benefited from a medical breakthrough that extended or improved quality of life?



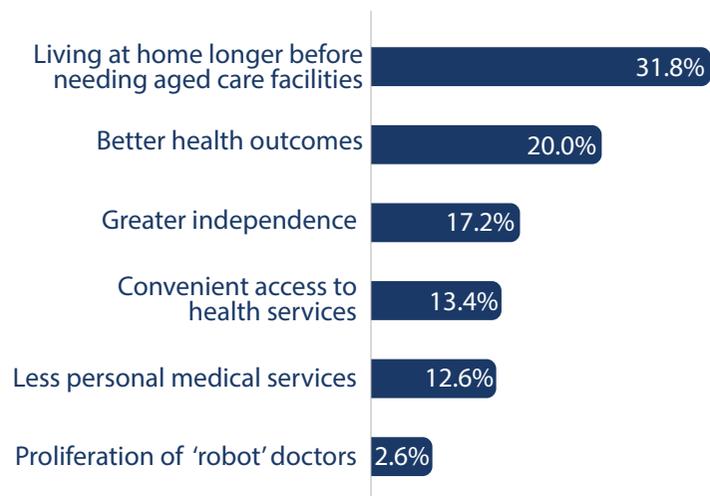
Advances that are believed will have the greatest impact on seniors in the future:



## How technology will be of benefit

Almost a third (31.8%) think advances in remote medicine will allow seniors to live at home longer before needing aged care facilities, while one in five (20.0%) cite better health outcomes and over one in six (17.2%) cite greater independence.

What role do you think advances in 'remote medicine' will make for seniors in the future?



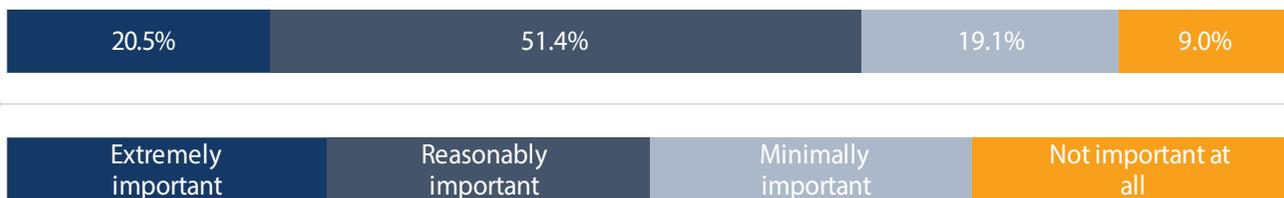
Advancements in communications, social media, artificial intelligence, augmented reality and driverless cars are also expected to play a role in keeping older New Zealanders connected and independent for longer.



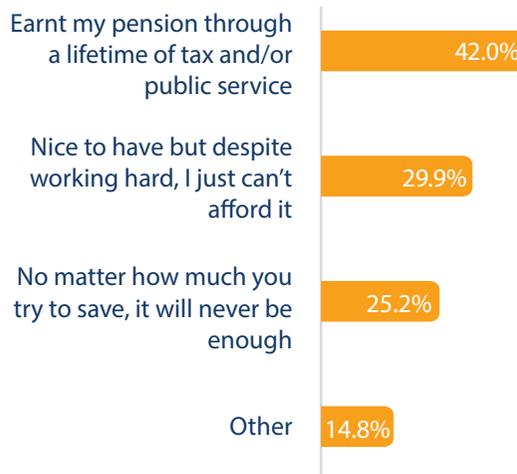
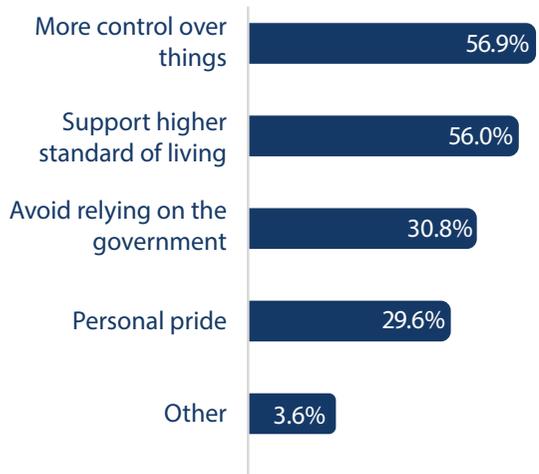
# There is a strong desire for financial independence

The overwhelming majority (91.0%) of respondents feel it is important for them to fund their own retirement as much as possible, most commonly citing having more control over things as well as supporting a higher standard of living as the primary reasons for doing so (56.9% and 56.0% respectively). Other reasons for this include to avoid relying on the government (30.8%) and personal pride (29.6%).

How important is it to you to be a self-funded retiree as far as possible?



*"I just want to be happy, healthy and financially comfortable in my senior years so starting when I was first employed, I would put money into a superannuation fund so that I would be self-sufficient in my senior years."*  
 (76 year old female from Marlborough)



*"To be able to generate a passive and regular income online (again in my case), as a internet affiliate marketer in various online avenues (e.g. Auction selling/SEO/Blogging, etc.)."*  
 (57 year old male from Auckland)

\*Multiple answers allowed

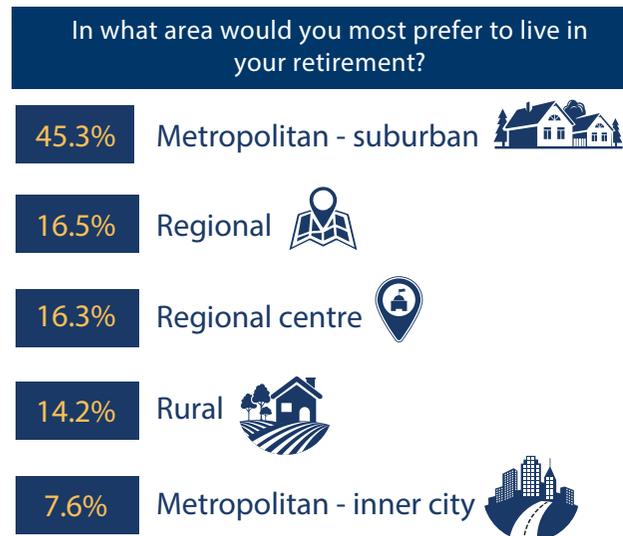
\*Multiple answers allowed

# The most desirable areas for retirement living

The top considerations for New Zealand's over 50s when deciding what type of area to settle down in for retirement are:

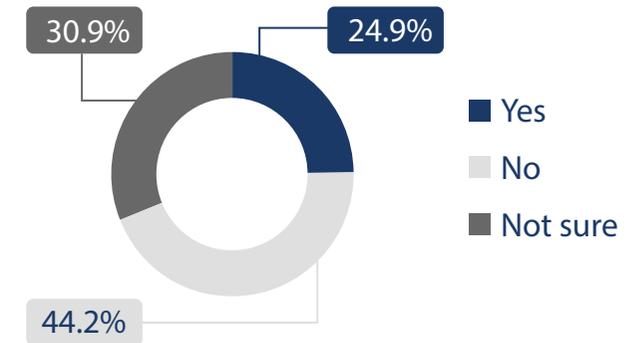


Reflecting these considerations, a metropolitan suburban area is by far the most preferred area to retire in, with close to half (45.3%) of respondents citing this as their preference. Similar proportions would most prefer to live in a regional centre or a regional location (16.3% and 16.5% respectively). Only a very small minority (7.6%) would prefer to live in the inner city.



However, almost one in four (24.9%) are open to a 'C Change', a move to a more metropolitan area i.e. from a regional town to suburban area or from a suburban area to the inner city.

Would you ever consider moving from a rural/regional area to a suburban area or a suburban area to an inner city area as part of a 'C Change'?



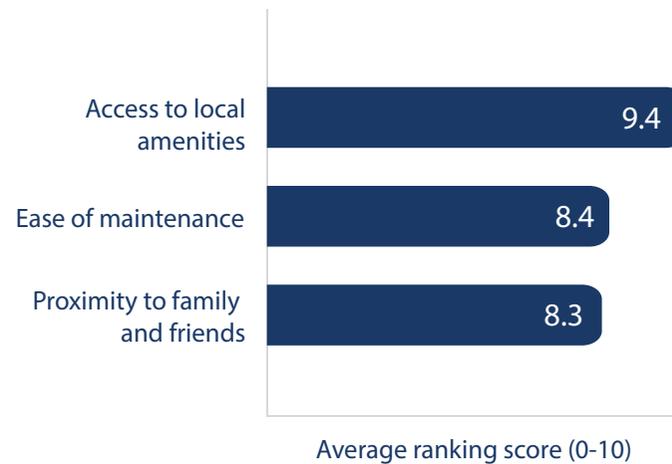
C Change refers to:





## The most desirable aspects of retirement living

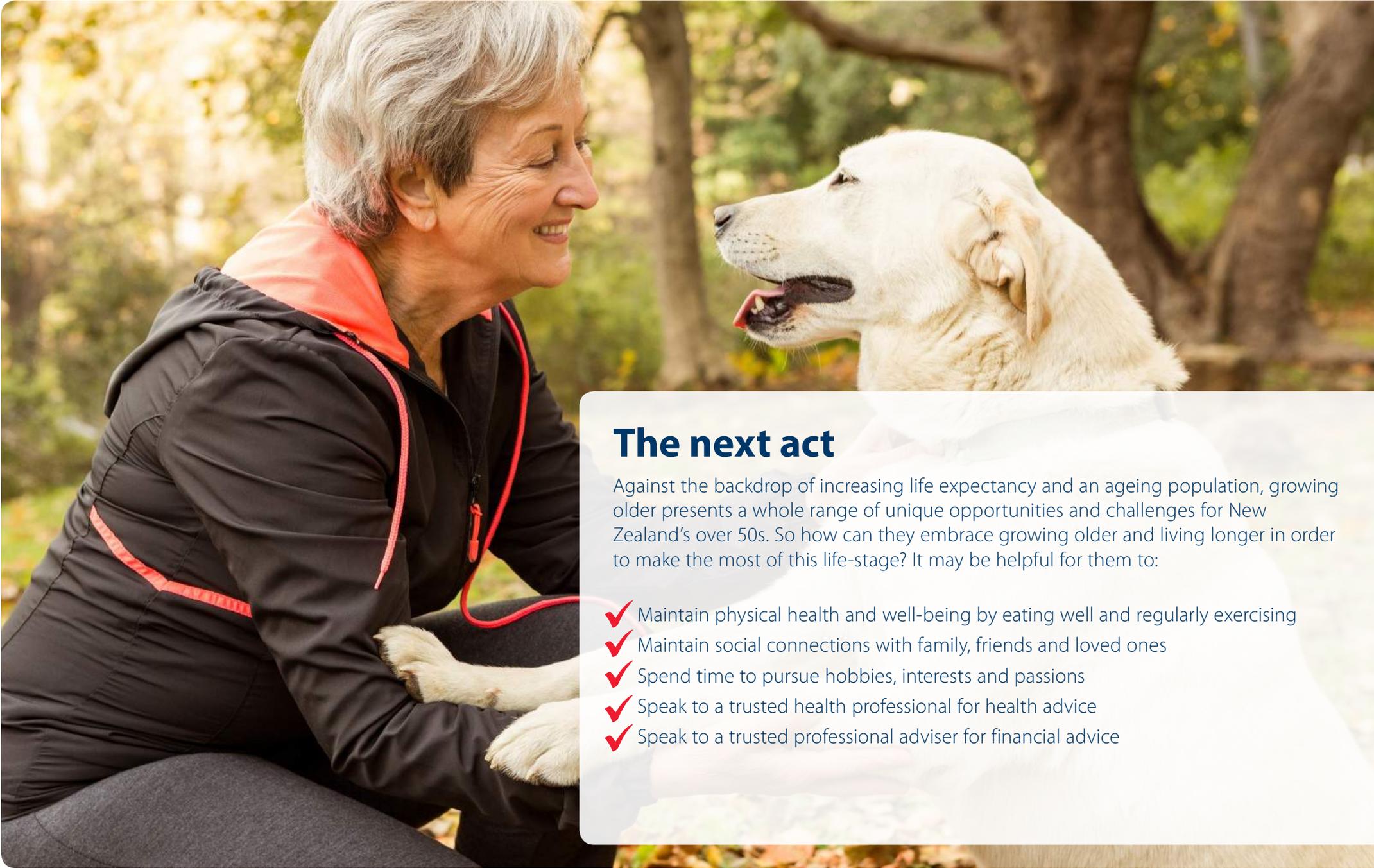
The top considerations when deciding what type of property to settle down in for retirement are:



Retirement living may often be associated with retirement villages, but the reality is likely to be quite different given the property type preferences among this cohort. Close to three in four (72.9%) would most prefer to live in a free standing house, while almost one in 10 (9.5%) would most prefer to live in an apartment. Less than one in 10 (9.3%) would most prefer to live in a retirement village.

### In what type of property would you most prefer to live in your retirement?





## The next act

Against the backdrop of increasing life expectancy and an ageing population, growing older presents a whole range of unique opportunities and challenges for New Zealand's over 50s. So how can they embrace growing older and living longer in order to make the most of this life-stage? It may be helpful for them to:

- ✓ Maintain physical health and well-being by eating well and regularly exercising
- ✓ Maintain social connections with family, friends and loved ones
- ✓ Spend time to pursue hobbies, interests and passions
- ✓ Speak to a trusted health professional for health advice
- ✓ Speak to a trusted professional adviser for financial advice



### **About New Zealand Seniors**

New Zealand Seniors offers cost-effective financial products that help people protect what's most important to them. We place our customers at the heart of everything we do by providing trusted products that are simple to use and understand.

We are committed to identifying and developing services and products we believe protect and improve the wellbeing of all senior New Zealanders.