What does the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging tell us about the health and well-being of Canada’s aging population?


| General Health | • Almost 90% of CLSA participants aged 45-85 rated their general health as good, very good or excellent.  
|               | • CLSA data provides insights related to: self-rated physical and psychological health, musculoskeletal conditions, respiratory conditions, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, neurological conditions, psychiatric disorders, gastrointestinal disorders, kidney disease, hyperthyroidism, cancer and vision. |
| Caregiving & Receiving | • 44% of CLSA participants reported being caregivers; 14% reported being care receivers.  
|               | • 38% of participants reported only providing care, 8% reported only receiving care, and 6% were both caregivers/receivers.  
|               | • Caregiving rates were highest - at 49% - among those aged 55-64 years. |
| Loneliness, Social Isolation & Social Engagement | • More women than men of all ages in the CLSA reported being lonely at least some of the time.  
|               | • Individuals who reported being lonely at least some of the time reported lower life satisfaction than those stating that they were rarely or never lonely.  
|               | • There was a positive correlation between self-reported loneliness and depressive symptoms. |
| Physical Function, Disability & Falls | • Approximately 5% of CLSA participants aged 45-85 experienced an injury due to a fall in the previous 12 months. Women were more likely to experience an injury due to a fall than men.  
|               | • The percentage of Canadians using at least one mobility-related assistive device (i.e. a cane, walking stick, wheelchair, motorized scooter or walker) was estimated at 10% overall, with canes and walking sticks used most frequently (9%). |
| Psychological Health & Well-Being | • 95% of CLSA participants aged 45-85 rated their own mental health as excellent, very good or good; the remaining 5% reported fair or poor mental health, and this proportion declined with age.  
|               | • The youngest CLSA participants (aged 45-54) reported the greatest concerns with mental health.  
|               | • Women tended to report more depressive symptoms and psychological distress than men. |
Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual (LGB) Aging

- 2% of CLSA participants self-identified as lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB). LGB participants tended to report high self-rated general and mental health and consider their own healthy aging experience to be either very good or excellent.

- LGB participants were more likely than heterosexual participants to report feeling lonely at least some of the time.

- LGB participants were active participants in their communities, yet approximately half of LGB participants also reported a desire to participate in more social, recreational, and group activities.

Lifestyle & Behaviour

- Only 25% of CLSA participants aged 45-85 reported reaching the recommended amounts of aerobic and resistance-based physical activity.

- The most frequently-cited nutritional risk factors were: skipping meals, eating alone, and weight loss.

- Data show that physical and mental health could exacerbate chronic conditions by leading to the adoption of inappropriate lifestyle habits (i.e. food habits, sleep habits, exercise, alcohol consumption and social activities).

Retirement

- About a quarter of all retirees in the CLSA cited health as a factor in their decision to retire.

- An estimated 20% of women retirees and 30% of men retirees “unretired” for some period, with unretirement employment primarily being part-time.

Transportation & Mobility

- Driving a motor vehicle was the most common form of transportation used by older Canadians, regardless of age, sex, geographic location, health and functional status.

- Specialized accessible transit was seldom identified as a means of transportation, even among persons with poor health and limitations to activities of daily living.

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