

Fostering Discussion on the Health of the Ageing Population



On 5th May 2017, CREA hosted its first roundtable discussion on Health. CREA has evolved to the point where we want to broaden our research questions to address the complexities of a fast-ageing Singapore population.

The gathering at SMU brought together health providers, non-profit organisations and government agencies. Thanks to your commitment and monthly participation to the SLP, our researchers shared some of our newest findings. This included the impact of ageing on health and how it, in turn, affects one's finances, employment and well-being.

The 40 participants had an informative and lively discussion based on the analysis of data coming out of the SLP. It was also interesting to gather the different perspectives of our panelists who study health and ageing.

A notable suggestion that surfaced from the Roundtable was for CREA to determine the factors that help respondents age well and thus reduce their healthcare spending. It was suggested that there are many unexplored economic opportunities which can flow from healthy ageing.

This year, CREA is also actively engaging community organisations. CREA spent an evening at the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO) - the national coordinating council of 56 women's organisations in Singapore. About 30 of their members were present and some were accompanied by their spouses. We shared some of our research findings with their members - this time with a focus on women.

A main concern of SCWO is the social and economic protection of ageing women in Singapore. On average, an elderly female has a higher life expectancy than her male counterpart. Higher medical costs and lower retirement savings make them more vulnerable to poverty.

During the lively discussion which followed, one participant highlighted that when her ageing mother fell ill, she couldn't, with a clear conscience, remain overseas and not lend a hand with caregiving.

A male participant in his 70s, who used to be a teacher, encouraged participants not to worry unnecessarily about finances. He has been retired for more than 15 years, lives within his means and is financially independent. His words of advice were: "Don't worry, be happy!"

After the health roundtable, CREA was interviewed by many media outlets including Lianhe Zaobao and Channel NewsAsia just to name a few, to share our newest analysis on health.

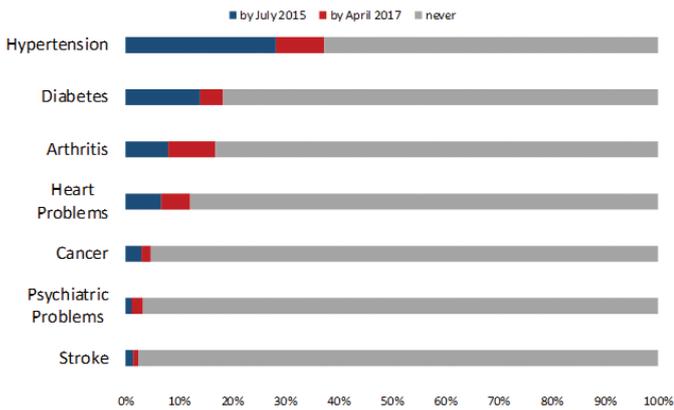
The next roundtable is on "Financial Literacy & Retirement Preparedness". This will take place on 14th July. We'll update you on it in our next newsletter.

Snapshot of Data Analysis:

Here are some of the facts and figures we shared at the Roundtable and Outreach Event.

Chart – Chronic Conditions:

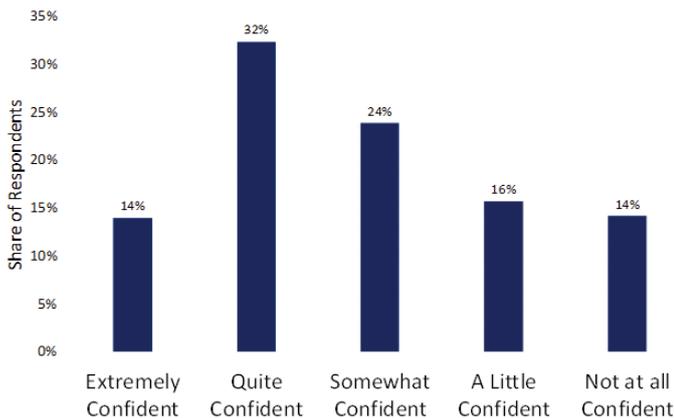
Percentage of Respondents who have Experienced a Chronic Condition



- Half of respondents had no chronic conditions in July 2015 (heart disease, cancer, stroke, hypertension, arthritis, diabetes, psychiatric problems).
- 1 in 4 respondents has acquired a new chronic condition since July 2015.

Chart – Confidence with Medical Forms

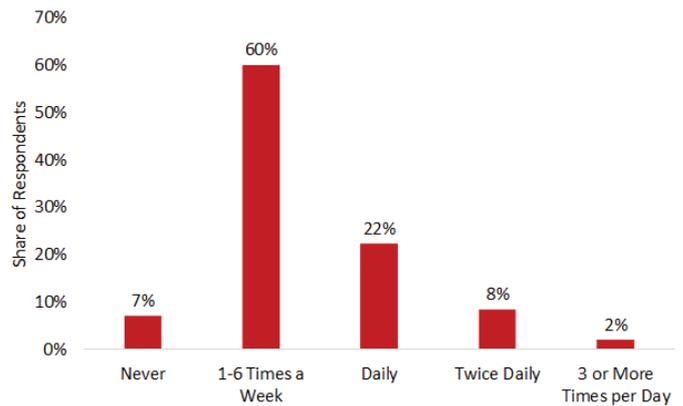
How confident are you filling out medical forms by yourself?



- Respondents who find it hard to navigate the health system suffer lower health in general and recover more slowly from a health scare.
- This suggests that improving some Singaporeans' ability to navigate the health system could result in better outcomes.

Chart – Eating Behaviour

How often do you Eat at a Hawker Centre?



- 9 in 10 respondents eat at a hawker centre at least once a week; 1 in 4 at Western-style fast food restaurants.
- Married female respondents who work are 1.7 times as likely to eat at hawker centres than those who don't work.

Confidentiality and Your Privacy

We treat the information you provide us with the strictest confidence and in full compliance with the Personal Data Protection Act 2012 (PDPA), under the legislation of the Personal Data Protection Commission of Singapore.



Dates of Surveys

- **July Survey: 1 - 23 July 2017**
- **August Survey: 1 - 20 August 2017**
- **September Survey: 1 - 24 September 2017**

Contact Us

If you have changed your address or telephone number, if you need any form of assistance in completing the survey, or if you have any questions or feedback, please contact us on our Centre Hotline at **6808 7910** (9am to 5pm, Mondays to Fridays) or by email at slp@smu.edu.sg. We are always happy to hear from you.