

POLL SHOWS HEALTH AMONG TOP CONCERNS FOR LATER LIFE AS 60 ORGANISATIONS COMMIT TO PROMOTING HEALTHY AGEING

- **Over 60 leading public and voluntary sector organisations commit to landmark ‘consensus statement’ setting out shared vision for healthy ageing.**
- **Health, care and housing bodies join major charities in endorsing five key principles to make England the best place in the world to grow old by prioritising prevention, narrowing inequalities and fostering inclusive homes, workplaces and communities.**
- **Initiative comes as a new survey shows having good mental and physical health are among top priorities for quality of later life among 40-60-year-olds.**
- **Many worry their own physical health will prevent them being financially secure, staying physically active or living where they want when they are over the age of 65.**

High profile organisations in the UK’s health, housing, employment, research and voluntary sectors have today launched a landmark shared vision on healthy ageing. Brought together by the Centre for Ageing Better and Public Health England (PHE), more than 60 organisations – including the Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England and other health, housing and employment bodies – will work together to make England the best country in the world to grow old.

Signatories commit to five key principles: prioritising prevention and public health; creating opportunities for people to contribute to society as they age; fostering accessible and inclusive homes and neighbourhoods so everyone can live where they want; narrowing inequalities in healthy ageing; and challenging ageist language, culture and practices.

The shared vision is published alongside the results of a new online YouGov survey of over 2,000 people aged 40-60, commissioned by Ageing Better and Independent Age, looking into hopes, fears and expectations about health in later life.

Many of those surveyed worry their physical health will affect their ability to do things like be as financially secure as they’d like (62%), be as physically active as they want (55%), or live in the kind of home they want (43%) at 65 or older. Two in three (67%) think ageism or being treated differently based on age negatively affects the physical health of over-65s.

When asked what will be most important to them when they are over 65, four in five (81%) rated having good mental health as “very important”. People also listed being financially secure (74%), having good physical health (72%) and being able to see family and friends face to face (60%) as very important. When they are over 65, 71% plan to be physically active at recommended levels and 74% plan to eat a healthy balanced diet.

Respondents say improving homes (69%) and neighbourhoods (68%) to meet the needs of older people, for example by providing home adaptations at reduced cost or providing more public transport options which are accessible for disabled people, should be prioritised in the UK for ensuring that people over the age of 65 have a good quality of life. Other priorities include preventing people from being treated differently due to their age (63%) and supporting people to stay in work for as long as they want (58%).

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By endorsing this shared vision, signatories add their voice to calls to tackle these issues and provide everyone with the opportunities and support they need to have a good later life.

Across the UK, much work is being done to promote healthy ageing. In phase 2 of the consensus statement, PHE will engage with national public health teams and partners in devolved administrations so that the best of these actions can be shared and promoted. The team will work together to develop and promote good practice, as well as inspiring others so everyone can look forward to being healthy and happy in later life.

Dr Anna Dixon, Chief Executive at the Centre for Ageing Better commented:

“Many of us are living longer, in part due to advances in medicine and public health. While many people can look forward to being healthy when they reach later life, most of us will find ourselves managing long-term health conditions or disabilities at some point, in a society that too often treats us as past our sell by date.

“Our health should not dictate how we live our lives or prevent us from doing the things we want to do. That’s why it’s so important to help people to stay healthy for as long as possible, build homes and communities that enable us to stay active and connected, and stamp out the ageist attitudes that have an impact on our health.

Eustace De Sousa, National Lead for Health Inequalities and the Life Course at PHE, said:

“While growing older can come with some challenges, it can present many opportunities such as a rewarding job, enjoying new pursuits and spending more time with friends and family.

“We are working with partners to ensure everyone can live happier and healthier for longer – it’s never too late to improve our health.”

Phil Mawhinney, Policy Manager at Independent Age, added:

“As we grow older, we all want to live life on our own terms, and this research has found that most people aged 40-60 think having good physical and mental health will be very important when they are older.

“While it’s no surprise that people value being financially secure, able to live independently at home and see friends and family, with more people living longer, it’s vital that we do more to tackle ageism, poor health, poverty and loneliness among people in later life.”

Ends

Notes to Editors are provided overleaf

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For more information, please email media@ageing-better.org.uk or call **Matt Dolman** on 020 3862 9185 (out of hours 07795 620 698).

This press release, the consensus statement, a full list of signatories, key statistics from the YouGov survey, and a series of infographics can be [downloaded here](#).

- The **Centre for Ageing Better** is a charity, funded by an endowment from The National Lottery Community Fund, working to create a society where everyone enjoys a good later life. We want more people to be in fulfilling work, in good health, living in safe, accessible homes and connected communities. By focusing on those approaching later life and at risk of missing out, we will create lasting change in society. We are bold and innovative in our approach to improving later lives. We work in partnership with a diverse range of organisations. As a part of the What Works network, we are grounded in evidence. Visit us at ageing-better.org.uk or follow us on Twitter [@Ageing_Better](https://twitter.com/Ageing_Better).
- **Public Health England** (PHE) exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. It does this through world-class science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and the delivery of specialist public health services. PHE is an operationally autonomous executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care. Web: www.gov.uk/phe. Twitter: [@PHE_uk](https://twitter.com/PHE_uk). Facebook: www.facebook.com/PublicHealthEngland.
- **Independent Age** offers offer regular friendly contact, a strong campaigning voice and free, impartial advice on the issues that matter to older people: care and support, money and benefits, health and mobility. A charity founded over 150 years ago, we are independent so older people can be too. For more information, visit our website independentage.org. Arrange to speak to one of our advisers for free and confidential advice and information. Freephone 0800 319 6789 or email advice@independentage.org. To make a donation or find out more about how you can support the work of Independent Age and help older people stay independent, please visit independentage.org/support-us.
- The consensus statement will be launched on 16 October. The statement was drafted jointly by the Centre for Ageing Better and Public Health England, in collaboration with a number of other organisations. Over 60 organisations have signed, spanning a wide range of sectors and specialist interest areas (see [full list here](#)), with more expected to follow.
- All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Sample size was 6362 adults, of which 2153 are aged 40-60. Fieldwork was undertaken between 22-28 August 2019. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+). The survey was commissioned by Independent Age and the Centre for Ageing Better.
- The Centre for Ageing Better and Public Health England will co-host a webinar to discuss the principles of the consensus statement and to provide a discussion on how we can translate these into practice. This will take place on 16th October 2019, 15:00 to 16:00pm. Speakers include Dr Allison Giles, Associate Director Healthy Ageing, PHE and Centre for Ageing Better; Professor Martin J Vernon, National Clinical Director for Older People, NHS England; Dame Carol Black, Chair, Centre for Ageing Better; and Professor Yvonne Doyle, Director for Health Protection and Medical Director, PHE. To register for the event, please follow the [Eventbrite link](#).