

Canadian Seniors Re-evaluating Aging Priorities In Light Of Pandemic

By **Pamela Vanmeer** - March 16, 2021



KAWARTHA LAKES-As we cross the one year mark of COVID-19 lockdowns, and as vaccine rollout ramps up, many are considering how life will be different post-pandemic. New research from Home Instead, Inc. found that Canadian seniors – the demographic hardest-hit by the pandemic – are re-evaluating what’s important as they age.

Approximately two-thirds (69 per cent) of Canadian seniors surveyed say the pandemic has made them more committed to staying in their homes as they get older, and 68 per cent say the pandemic has made them apprehensive about living in a long-term care home. The Coronavirus’ impact on the desire to age at home is even more prevalent in Canada than among U.S. seniors (69 per cent in Canada vs. 57 per cent in the U.S.), as are pandemic-induced concerns about long-term care homes (68 per cent in Canada vs. 56 per cent in the U.S.).

“The pandemic has been absolutely devastating for our senior populations, but if there’s a silver lining, it’s that we’ve been given an opportunity to reimagine how we care for seniors in the future,” said Dr. Lakelyn Hogan, PhD, gerontologist and caregiver advocate for Home Instead. “As we rebuild, it’s clear we need to work harder to provide safe, viable opportunities for seniors to age how they wish to age – where ever they call home.”

According to Home Instead’s research, the pandemic hasn’t just changed how seniors plan to age, it’s changed how they connect to the world around them. More than half (52 per cent) of Canadian seniors are more comfortable using technology since the start of the pandemic, and 35 per cent are more comfortable using technology to help with their care at home moving forward. This comfort with technology is critical for ensuring families and care providers can design care plans that enable a senior to age safely in the place they call home.

Technology is also critical to help ensure seniors stay connected to their loved ones. Just under half (46 per cent) of Canadian seniors are using video calling more or for the first time since the