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Singapore residents seek purpose, not just rest, but many unprepared for the journey: AIA Live Better Study

AIA Live Better Study highlights a critical gap between retirement aspirations and readiness, with social connections emerging as an unsung hero for a fulfilling later life.

SINGAPORE, 17 September 2025 — AIA Singapore today announced findings from the eighth edition of the AIA Live Better Study, which reflects the evolution of mindsets where retirement in Singapore is being perceived as a new chapter of reinvention and purpose. This aligns with the government's ongoing emphasis on active ageing and empowering Singaporeans to lead fulfilling lives well into their golden years, as recently highlighted in the National Day Rally 2025¹.

However, a significant disconnect exists between these evolving aspirations and the practical steps Singapore residents are taking to prepare, according to the latest findings. The study reveals a slight dip in overall holistic wellness (from 61.5% to 60.3%) compared to last year, highlighting persistent challenges for Singapore residents across mental, social, financial, and physical well-being. This gap underscores the urgent need for greater support and education, a sentiment that resonates with Singapore's broader efforts to strengthen social safety nets and enhance community resilience.

Conducted in May 2025, the AIA Live Better Study² continues to investigate the current state of wellness and goal-setting behaviours across physical, financial, mental, social, and spiritual aspects of Singapore residents. This is set against the backdrop of significant uncertainties in the global economy in 2025³ as consumers navigate these challenging times.

The traditional view of retirement as a period of passive rest is rapidly evolving, aligning with the national call for seniors to remain engaged and contribute meaningfully," said Irma Hadikusuma, Chief Marketing and Healthcare Officer, AIA Singapore. "Singapore residents are increasingly envisioning a purposeful and active post-career life, yet our study reveals many are not adequately preparing for this new reality. This highlights critical areas where more support and education are needed – particularly around financial readiness, physical health, and crucially, the often-overlooked power of social connections – all vital pillars for the holistic well-being the government also champions."

Retirement in Singapore: Purpose over leisure

While consumers envision retirement as a period to enjoy, only 1 in 2 (47%) feel optimistic about achieving their desired lifestyles. A striking insight is the motivation for post-retirement work:

- 1 in 2 (55%) Singapore residents plan to work upon retirement (part-time, full-time, or starting a business).
- Less than 3 in 10 (28%) are doing it purely for financial reasons.
- 27% seek a sense of purpose, 26% aim to cure boredom, and 18% desire to try something new.

¹ National Day Rally 2025' (Aug 17, 2025) Prime Minister's Office. Available at: <https://www.pmo.gov.sg/Newsroom/National-Day-Rally-2025>

² The eight wave of the AIA Live Better Study is an independent study that was conducted from 22 May to 13 June 2025 with a sample size of 1,000 representing Singapore's general population.

³ 'Singapore upgrades 2025 GDP growth forecast to 1.5%-2.5%; economy grew 4.4% in Q2' (Aug 12, 2025) CNA. Available at: <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/singapore/singapore-economy-gdp-forecast-mti-5289471>



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This signals that retirement is increasingly being seen as a phase for personal growth and continued contribution, echoing the government's vision of an active and contributing senior population, and not just a cessation of work.

Financial and physical health are the cornerstones of a happy retirement

Unsurprisingly, financial concerns remain a major pain point:

- Only 1 in 2 (50%) Singapore residents claim to be financially stable, with those in their 40s expressing the most negativity towards retirement (29% negative outlook).
- Key worries include managing cost of living (62%) and healthcare expenses (54%).
- Physical wellness is also paramount, with 46% ranking it as the #1 factor for a happy retirement - a finding that underscores the government's focus on preventative health and robust healthcare infrastructure for an ageing population.
- However, 2 in 5 (40%) foresee spending time managing healthcare conditions, particularly among young seniors⁴ (45%).

These findings reinforce the importance of the government's enhancements⁵ early this year to healthcare and long-term care schemes such as MediSave and CHAS to address the needs of the ageing population and to ensure accessible, affordable healthcare for all.

Social wellness: The unsung hero of a fulfilling retirement

Beyond financial and physical health, the study illuminates the critical, yet often unaddressed, role of social wellness:

- A happy retirement is strongly linked to spending time with family (61%) and friends (41%).
- However, only 2 in 5 (37%) have thought about social wellness and taking steps to prepare for it
- Marital status plays a significant role: More married individuals (53%) have a positive outlook towards retirement than their single counterparts (36%), suggesting the inherent support families provide.
- Single individuals face unique challenges, expressing greater worry about lack of caregiving arrangements (34% vs. 23% married), becoming isolated (29% vs. 20% married), and cognitive decline (44% vs. 35% married). This leads them to plan more actively for part-time work, social activities, and community engagement in their retirement years to maintain independence and connection.

The findings highlight that social connections are a fundamental pillar of a fulfilling retirement, echoing the government's recent unveiling of Age Well Neighbourhoods⁶ and continued emphasis on community and social infrastructure as key components of holistic well-being for seniors. This is a powerful insight for individuals, families, and companies to consider as we develop holistic solutions for the future, ensuring our offerings align with the evolving needs of an ageing society.

More support needed for transition period to retirement

While majority (2 in 3 (70%)) of Singapore residents have started planning for various aspects of retirement, a significant portion remains unprepared across crucial areas:

⁴ Aged 50-64.

⁵ 'Keeping Healthcare Affordable and Sustainable for All' (Mar 7, 2025) Ministry of Health. Available at: <https://www.moh.gov.sg/newsroom/keeping-healthcare-affordable-and-sustainable-for-all>

⁶ 'NDR 2025: Expect more activity centres, home services and healthcare in Age Well Neighbourhoods' (Aug 17, 2025) The Straits Times. Available at: <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/politics/ndr-2025-more-activity-centres-home-services-and-healthcare-3-things-to-expect-in-age-well>



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- 21% have not thought about how to maintain social wellness during retirement years.
- 20% have not considered the possibility of being by themselves (without spouse and children).
- 17% have not thought about long-term care.
- 14% have not considered insurance coverage for retirement.

The study highlights the urgent need for more education and support to help Singapore residents transition into this new phase of life, especially for single individuals and those aged 40-49, who show the most negative outlook and financial vulnerability. These insights indicate the critical need for robust community support networks and social infrastructure, aligning with the government's emphasis on fostering a more caring and inclusive society.

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About AIA

AIA Group Limited and its subsidiaries (collectively “AIA” or the “Group”) comprise the largest independent publicly listed pan-Asian life insurance group. It has a presence in 18 markets – wholly-owned branches and subsidiaries in Mainland China, Hong Kong SAR⁷, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, New Zealand, the Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Taiwan (China), Vietnam, Brunei and Macau SAR⁸, and a 49 per cent joint venture in India. In addition, AIA has a 24.99 per cent shareholding in China Post Life Insurance Co., Ltd.

The business that is now AIA was first established in Shanghai more than a century ago in 1919. It is a market leader in Asia (ex-Japan) based on life insurance premiums and holds leading positions across the majority of its markets. It had total assets of US\$328 billion as of 30 June 2025.

AIA meets the long-term savings and protection needs of individuals by offering a range of products and services including life insurance, accident and health insurance and savings plans. The Group also provides employee benefits, credit life and pension services to corporate clients. Through an extensive network of agents, partners and employees across Asia, AIA serves the holders of more than 43 million individual policies and over 16 million participating members of group insurance schemes.

AIA Group Limited is listed on the Main Board of The Stock Exchange of Hong Kong Limited under the stock codes “1299” for HKD counter and “81299” for RMB counter with American Depositary Receipts (Level 1) traded on the over-the-counter market under the ticker symbol “AAGIY”.

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⁷ Hong Kong SAR refers to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

⁸ Macau SAR refers to the Macau Special Administrative Region.