



What the UAE Population Thinks of Aging and Aged Care

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Executive Summary

Compared to other highly developed countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, South Korea, Japan, and Germany, the United Arab Emirates' (UAE) population is young, with a median age of 32.6 years in 2020¹. By comparison, Germany's median age was 45.7 years, and Japan's was 48.4 in the same year. Given these age demographics, public policy in the UAE is currently focused on meeting the needs of youth and working-age individuals below the age of 65, who comprise 98.7% of the total population.

Going forward, however, the topic of aged care is becoming a matter of concern. In 2020, only 1.6 people older than 65 were dependent on 100 working-aged people in the UAE. By 2050, however, this number will increase to 18.5, a twelve-fold increase, which will create financial, social, and medical pressures for families and the UAE government. As of 2017, official statistics report that there are approximately only 15,000 Emiratis over the age of 60. Accordingly, provisions for aged care in the UAE remain limited. While some emirates have local entities that offer a range of services to Senior Emiratis², only two residential aged care facilities are exclusively dedicated to the elderly. In the entire country, Senior Emiratis are thus forced to rely on a limited range of services typically provided by local hospitals, with only a few specialized medical staff.

Therefore, the UAE is not yet prepared to cater to the greater number of older people who will exist in the future. In addition to a lack of physical infrastructure, there are also reportedly changing social dynamics, particularly with regard to the decline of the extended family model and the increasing trend toward smaller nuclear families. This will also impact care for the elderly as currently, the majority are cared for at home by their families or with the assistance of housemaids.

The UAE, therefore, needs to explore and plan for the creation of a sustainable and effective aged care system. In light of the current scarcity of senior care facilities and lack of research on aging in the UAE, the Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research has undertaken this study. Its design draws heavily on a study carried out by the Australian Government's Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. That study focused on significant issues with aged care services in Australia, including their quality and person-

centeredness, and how best to deliver such services to a wide range of people.

We have modified the Australian survey to explore the following areas in the UAE: (1) population attitudes towards older people, (2) knowledge and perceptions of aged care, and (3) Emiratis' experiences, expectations, and preferences for older age. This survey was answered by 2,735 individuals, divided between 2,074 Emiratis and 661 non-Emiratis, with 49% of respondents being female and the remaining 51% being male. The findings are discussed below.

Community Attitudes Towards Older People

Unsurprisingly, given Emiratis' respect for family values, local customs, and the elderly, approximately 80% of the surveyed population agreed that society is obliged to care for the elderly. In addition, over 75% agreed that older individuals add value to society, specifically through their knowledge, experiences, and time spent volunteering within their communities. This is a significant difference from the Australian sample, in which over 90% of participants attributed value to older individuals' contributions to society.

Concerning the provision of care for the elderly, nearly 50% of participants in the UAE study believe that family (and friends) are most responsible for financially supporting older people to continue living independently in their own homes, followed by the government. This is also in contrast to the Australian study, in which around 50% of the respondents viewed the government as the entity most responsible for paying for lower-level and higher-level care services.

However, the study also found that around 40% of this study's sample believe that UAE youth are already burdened by high financial costs and may be unable to afford to support the older generation, thus creating concerns over who will need to support the elderly in actuality.

Knowledge and Perceptions of Aged Care

In the UAE, most of the population (62%) knows someone receiving support or aged care in their own home; however, only 32% know someone living in a residential aged care facility or hospital. This is not surprising given that very few people in the UAE reside in an aged care facility. Furthermore, being at home or

¹ Demographic data about the UAE in this executive summary is based on a Statista dossier on the country's demographics, published in 2021

² Senior Emiratis are defined as individuals who are 60 years of age or over according to the Official Portal for the UAE Government

in an aged care facility does not affect the frequency of contacts and visits. 47% of survey respondents said they contact their elderly relatives daily; however, only 35% reported visiting them daily.

Much like the respondents in the Australian study, the UAE population's current perception of life in residential aged care is quite negative. Respondents associate residential aged care with loneliness, unhappiness, and having little control over one's life. Simultaneously, they appreciate that the elderly may have better access to medical care, safety, and comfort in well-maintained accommodation. Interestingly, the 56% of people who had visited a residential aged care facility before reported slightly more positive perceptions than those who had never visited. Some of the most favorable views were held by people who knew someone living in an aged care facility and visited them at least weekly.

There is, however, a concerning lack of knowledge about aged care services and how to find information about aged care. Half of the surveyed adults said they would begin with an internet search or ask their doctor, signaling they are unsure of where to go for information on aged care services.

Emiratis' Experience, Expectations, and Preferences for Older Age

Older Emiratis

The perspectives and experiences of old and young Emiratis also differ in some ways. Overall, older Emiratis living in their own homes have more positive views of their lives. Approximately 77% view themselves as physically and financially independent, capable of making lifestyle choices to stay healthy, and free to undertake leisure activities. In comparison, this is lower than the percentage reported by older Australians, where over 90% view themselves as healthy and capable of caring for themselves. However, only one in five older Emiratis spends time maintaining their health through exercise.

Around half of older Emiratis spend time with family and friends, over 41% are involved in population activities or volunteering, and 30% still participate in the workforce. Those who know other seniors outside of their homes tended to have more positive attitudes and preferred to stay in their homes when asked where they would like to live when they were older.

The support that older Emiratis living at home currently receive is primarily help with cleaning, cooking, shopping, and attending medical appointments. These are most commonly provided by the government and

family/private paid help (housemaids) at 59% and 49%, respectively. When it comes to higher levels of assistance, such as help dressing, eating, going to the bathroom, and nursing, older Emiratis prefer paid help from aged care service providers.

Younger Emiratis

Unlike older Emiratis, younger respondents are divided on whether they will be able to make lifestyle choices that would enable them to be physically independent and free to spend their time however they wish in their older age. This could be attributed to the fact that 63% of younger people believe they will still be in paid employment after 60 years, which is double the percentage of nationals over 60 reported currently being employed in paid work. Nonetheless, many young Emiratis see themselves spending time with family and friends, maintaining their health, exercising, and undertaking recreational activities past 60.

When asked about receiving support in their old age, it was revealed that younger Emiratis favor receiving support from family and friends and are less in favor of obtaining help from private providers. Interestingly, those who knew someone aged 60 or older were more likely to prefer support from a private provider (61% compared to 50%) and less likely to prefer help from family (56% compared to 61%). This could perhaps indicate their awareness of the extent to which additional support is necessary for some instances and the limitations of family support.

Recommendations

In sum, all types of support and care services were considered necessary by the bulk of both younger and older Emiratis. However, the findings indicate that the system is underdeveloped, information is scarce, and surveyed participants are unaware of emerging challenges pertaining to aged care; therefore, making changes is urgent. Our recommendations include establishing population centers to bring youth and senior citizens together and encouraging youth volunteering with the aged; creating a dedicated ministry for aged care to coordinate and oversee the provision of services to the elderly; raising public awareness about issues pertaining to aging through education campaigns; increasing investments in aged care infrastructure and the professionalization of the provision of aged care through specialized training, particularly for private providers such as house help; and finally improving data collection and funding of research related to elderly care.

Introduction

Background

The United Arab Emirates' (UAE) population is young and, in 2020, had an average age of 32.6 years (Statista, 2021). In the future, caring for older people will become a matter of concern. In 2020, only 1.6 people older than 65 were dependent on 100 working-aged people. By 2050, that number will rise to 18.5 (World Bank, 2021), a twelve-fold increase that will create financial, social, and medical pressures on families and the government of the UAE.

The current arrangements for aged care in the UAE are limited to some local authorities at the emirate level and medical services typically provided by local hospitals. Thus, the country is not well prepared to accommodate the greater number of older people who will exist in the future. The lack of physical infrastructure and changing social dynamics, especially concerning the decline of the extended family model and the growing trend of downsizing households, further compounds the issue because most Senior Emiratis are currently cared for at home by their own families or with the help of housemaids.

The Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research (AQF) has undertaken the presented study to gather insights on sustaining an effective support system for the growing older population. It is based on a national survey of Australian adults developed to assist the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety established in response to significant problems with aged care services in Australia (Roy Morgan, 2020).

For our study, the areas of investigation include:

- The quality and extent to which aged care services meet the needs of the UAE population;
- Younger vs. older UAE residents' knowledge and attitudes on aging and aged care services available;
- How best to deliver aged care services to UAE nationals;
- Barriers faced in accessing and receiving high-quality aged care services.

AQF modified the Australian survey to cater to the UAE's context, a unique population mix of Emiratis and expatriates. The survey aimed to cover broad-based information about what the population thinks of seniors (defined as those aged 60 years or over), the current aged care system, and what they would want should they need aged care themselves. It is fundamentally important to understand these views when considering the current aged care system in the UAE and how to reform it to meet the needs of the UAE population in the future.

Current aged care provision

As in other GCC countries, the extended family members of senior citizens usually care for the elderly in the UAE. This is a result of strong family bonds arising from tribal, cultural, and religious contexts. Referring an older family member to an extended care facility carries a social stigma in the region and is considered inappropriate and disrespectful to the elderly. As such, domestic workers and private nurses are also common caretakers of the elderly.

Table 1: Aged care services available for Senior Emiratis per emirate

Services	Responsible Entity	Population Served
Social and Recreational	Ministry of Community Development	All Emirates
	Dubai Community Development Authority	Dubai
	Abu Dhabi Community Development Authority	Abu Dhabi
Medical Services	Ministry of Health and Prevention	All Emirates
	Dubai Health Authority	Dubai
Health, Social and Recreational Services	Sharjah Social Services Department	Sharjah

³ Based on the information provided in a private interview with the Director of Senior's Happiness Center DHA

⁴ For more information, see the Official Portal for the UAE Government

Table 2: Aged care facilities available for Senior Emiratis per emirate

Facility	Responsible Entity	Population Served
Old People's Home	Sharjah Social Services Department	Sharjah
Elderly Nursing Home (Ajman)	Ministry of Community Development	All Emirates
Obaidullah Hospital (Specialized Geriatric Hospital, Ras Al Khaimah)	Ministry of Health and Prevention	All Emirates

As of 2017, official statistics report that there are approximately 15,000 Emiratis over 60 years of age. Consequently, the provision of aged care services and facilities remains limited (see Tables 1 and 2). Only a small number of home care programs are available and are usually offered by hospitals or private service providers. In 2020, only 21 licensed geriatricians were available across the UAE³. Health professionals specialized in elderly care and other health care providers with special training in this field also remain low, and local research on aging and aged care is largely absent. In addition, there are only two residential aged care facilities for the elderly in the entire country. In many cases, these are considered the last resort as admitted senior citizens must meet specific criteria to be eligible for care.

At the federal level in the UAE, the Ministry of Community Development (MOCD) and the Ministry of Health and Prevention (MOHAP) are responsible for aged care services⁴. They cater to all Senior Emiratis regardless of their emirate of residence, with their services spread across the UAE. The MOCD takes care of Senior Emiratis receiving social support and assistance while providing more proactive services, whereas the MOHAP offers medical and healthcare enhancement services for the elderly.

However, a worrying disparity emerges at the emirate level. While Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and Sharjah have local community development authorities which, as part of their roles, provide specialized care and support for Senior Emiratis, the Northern Emirates lack similar entities. The Emirates of Ajman, Fujairah, Ras Al Khaimah, and Um Al Quwain rely solely on the MOCD and the limited care provided by local hospitals supervised by the MOHAP. Thus, Senior Emiratis in the Northern Emirates have significantly lower access to care services than those in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, or Sharjah.

³ According to the MOHAP's Statistics and Research center

⁴ For more information, see the Official Portal for the UAE Government

⁵ Alchemer-Enterprise Online Survey Software & Tools, 2021

Instruments and Sampling

The primary instrument used for this study was an online survey⁵. To obtain a holistic understanding of the needs of younger versus older individuals, the survey was split into two sections: Section 1 was for individuals aged 18-59, and Section 2 was for individuals aged 60 and older. The survey included 63 instruments of various types, including a rating scale, Likert scale, matrix, open-ended questions, demographics, and ranking questions. Conducted in English and Arabic from May 30 to June 30, 2021, participants were invited to participate in the survey through emails and social media platforms. Participants were drawn from a convenience sample of UAE residents aged 18 and older, focusing on UAE nationals.

Demographics

Of the survey's 2,735 participants, 75.8% were UAE nationals, and 24.2% were non-UAE nationals (Table 3). There was an equal representation of females and males, and 44% of the participants were either born or living in the Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah. 25% were from Dubai, and the rest were from other Emirates. Over 95% of participants were under 60, and the majority were from the 25-44 age group. Of UAE nationals surveyed, 61% live with family members, around 77.5% are employed, and 42% have a university degree. Approximately 85% of UAE nationals and 61% of non-UAE nationals knew that aged care facilities existed in the UAE. Additionally, around 68% of UAE nationals have visited an aged care facility in the country compared to only 18% of non-UAE nationals.

Table 3: . Respondent and weighted population demographics

Demographic	Category	Respondents	
		Number	Proportion
Status	UAE nationals	2074	75.8%
	Non-UAE nationals	661	24.2%
Gender	Female	1339	49.0%
	Male	1396	51.0%
Emirate	Abu Dhabi	183	6.7%
	Ajman	312	11.4%
	Dubai	669	24.5%
	Fujairah	46	1.7%
	Ras Al Khaimah	1212	44.3%
	Sharjah	294	10.7%
	Umm Al Quwain	19	0.7%
Age Category (Years)	18-24	352	12.9%
	25-34	978	35.8%
	35-44	843	30.8%
	45-54	324	11.8%
	55-59	105	3.8%
	60+	133	4.9%
Household	With a spouse	796	29.1%
	Alone	195	7.1%
	With family	1568	57.3%
	With others-not family	176	6.4%
Educational Attainment	No formal education	48	1.8%
	Less than high school	284	10.4%
	High school graduate	614	22.4%
	Diploma/Vocational	392	14.3%
	University graduate	1397	51.1%
Total		2735	100.00%

What Did the Survey Ask?

The questionnaire covered a wide range of topics organized across three broad themes:

The questions about attitudes to older people covered:

- Whether the population sees older people as valuable and deserving of care. These questions try to understand whether negative attitudes towards seniors may be part of the problems with the current aged care system.
- Who the UAE population thinks should be responsible for paying for the support or care needed by seniors. These questions were asked to inform the design of aged care funding arrangements.

The questions about people's knowledge and perceptions of aged care covered:

- Whether the respondents knew a senior, someone receiving care, or someone living in an aged care facility, and if they had visited an aged care facility. The people who knew someone receiving aged care were asked how often they contacted or visited. The answers indicate the population's awareness levels of aged care services and what life is like for someone in care.
- How people perceive the quality of residential aged care and the life of residents (e.g., hygiene, food, safety, happiness, and accommodation). This provides a broad-based picture of the population's views beyond how the media or individual submissions represent those views.
- Where people would get information about aged care services is critical aspects of the aged care system, and some knowledge is essential for people to engage effectively. Respondents were also asked the percentage of aged care costs covered by the government to indicate whether the population has some awareness of user contributions.

The questions about people's experience, expectations, and preferences for older age covered:

- How people aged 60 years or more see their own lives, including whether they can do the things they

enjoy and how they spend their time. People under 60 were asked what they expected for themselves in older age. This tells us about the quality of older people's lives and how aware younger people are of what they can expect for their futures.

- People want to provide them with support or care in their older age if they need it and where they would like to live. Respondents already receiving support or care were asked about their current situation and what they would want if their needs increased.
- Which types of aged care services do people think are available in the UAE, and what services do they consider the most important. These questions indicate the types of services people see as appropriate for themselves and others to access.

Reading and Interpreting the Results

The AQF team modified Roy Morgan's national survey questions of Australian adults to fit the UAE context (Morgan, 2020). The team analyzed the data using SPSS Statistics for Mac, Version 27.0. The results presented in this report are rounded to one decimal place or the nearest whole number and are organized using the three main themes. The survey results are estimates based on information from a sample survey. All samples are subject to sampling variability and may differ from results obtained if the survey was repeated with a different sample of people.

Limitations

Some limitations are present in the study, including participants being drawn from a convenience sample and the unequal sample representation of UAE nationals versus non-nationals. As a result, the results cannot be generalized to the population as a whole. The absence of data on the elderly is another limitation. There is currently no system that collects data about the total number and needs of Senior Emiratis in the UAE and per emirate. As a result, the exact number of older UAE residents is unknown. Furthermore, we did not collect qualitative data that would have added more granular details about people's lived experiences.

Community Attitudes Towards Older Adults

- Overall, the UAE population has higher positive than negative attitudes towards seniors.
- Younger UAE nationals are more neutral towards seniors than older UAE nationals.
- Over 52% of the UAE population believes that family or friends are most responsible for paying for seniors' support and care services. Of the remaining respondents, 32% believe the government, and 12% believe the seniors themselves are most responsible.
- Seniors are more likely to see themselves as responsible for their care and support than younger people.
- Those who know a senior citizen or someone receiving care or support in an aged care facility were more likely to believe that family is most responsible for support and care.

BOX 1

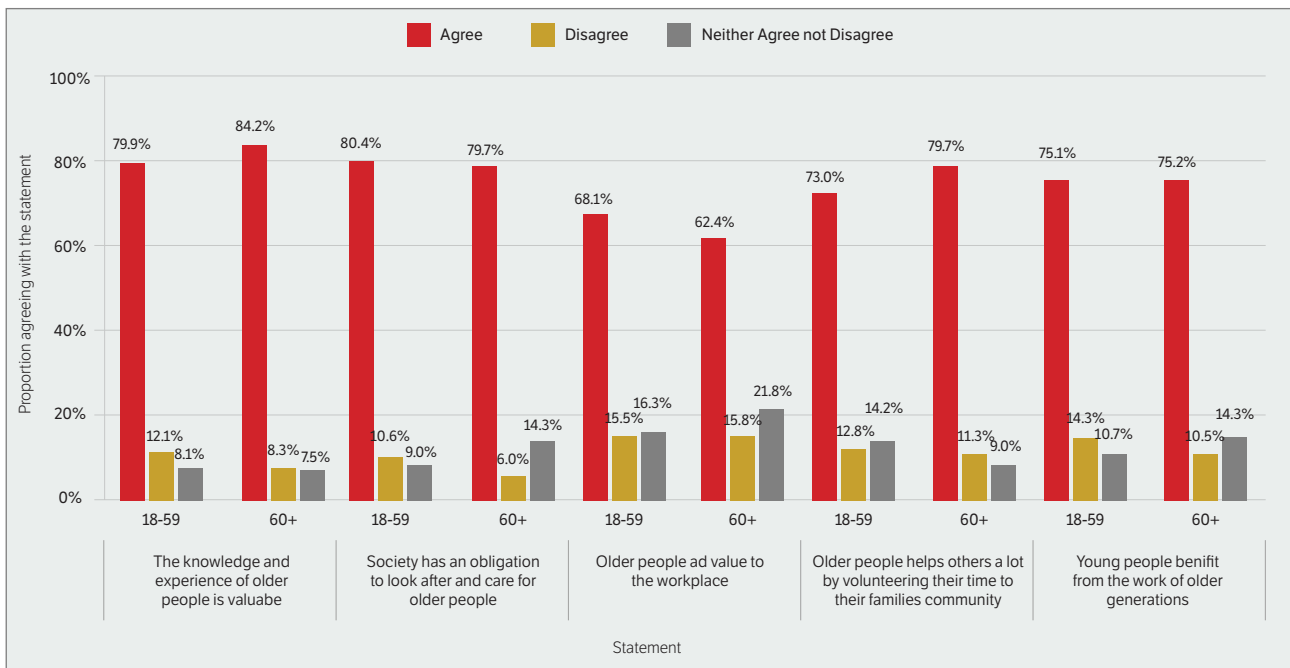
Does the UAE population Value Seniors and Feel an Obligation to Care for Them?

The UAE population's attitude towards seniors was examined by asking respondents to agree or disagree with a series of value-laden statements. Across all ages, most of the UAE population has a positive perspective of seniors (Figure 1). Over 75% agreed that those aged 60 and older have valuable knowledge and experience, help by volunteering their time to their families and communities, and that the younger generations benefit from the work of older generations. However, this is

somewhat lower than the aforementioned Australian study, in which over 90% of participants attributed value to the contributions of older individuals to society. Across all age groups, 80% agreed that society has an obligation to look after older people and care for them.

Moreover, all age groups from the overall population were less inclined to agree that seniors add value to the workplace. This attitude was irrespective of how much personal experience these people had with older people in the workplace or knew an older person. However, those who know an older person were slightly

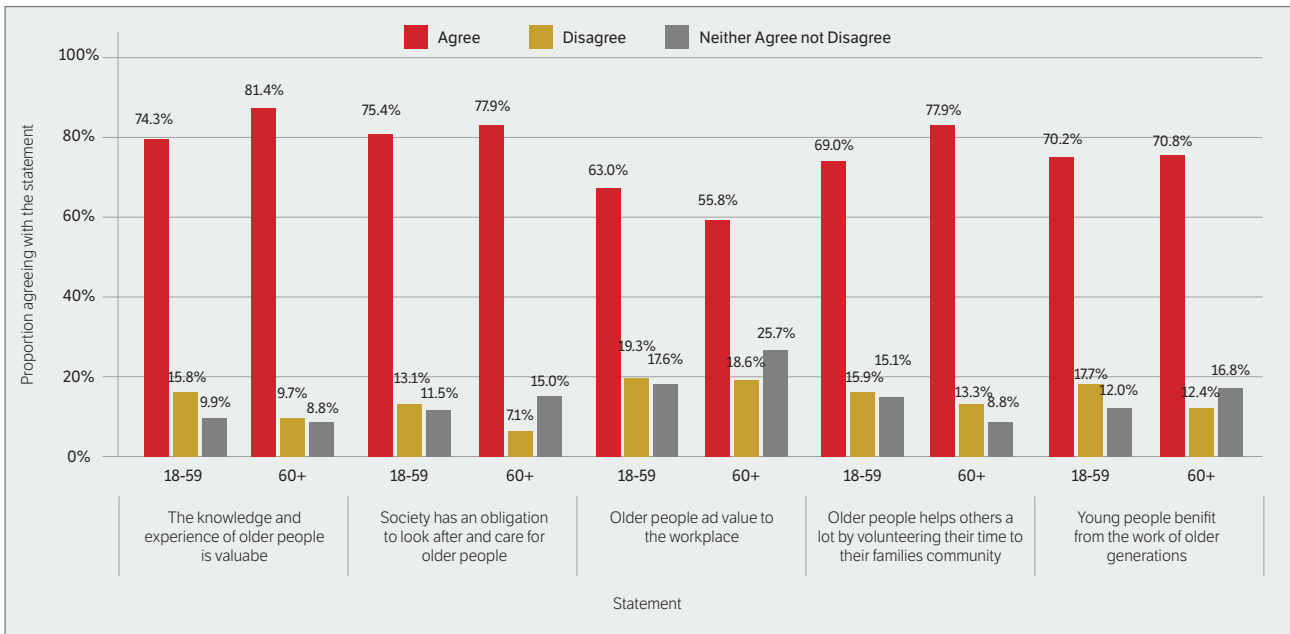
Figure 1: The UAE population's positive attitudes towards older people.



Source: Q16 Below are some statements people have made about older people. By "older people," we mean people aged 60 or older. Do you agree or disagree with that?

Base: The knowledge and experience of older people are valuable/Older people help others a lot by volunteering their time to their families and population/Older people add value to the workplace/Society has an obligation to look after and care for older people/Younger people benefit from the work of older generations. All n=2,735; 18-34 n= 1,330; 35-59 n=1,272; 60+ n= 133; 18-59 n= 2602.

Figure 2: UAE Nationals positive attitudes towards older people



Source: Q16 Below are some statements people have made about older people. By “older people,” we mean people aged 60 or older. Do you agree or disagree with that?

Base: The knowledge and experience of older people are valuable/Older people help others a lot by volunteering their time to their families and population/Older people add value to the workplace/Society has an obligation to look after and care for older people/younger people benefit from the work of older generations. UAE nationals 18-59 n=1,691; UAE nationals 60+ n=113.

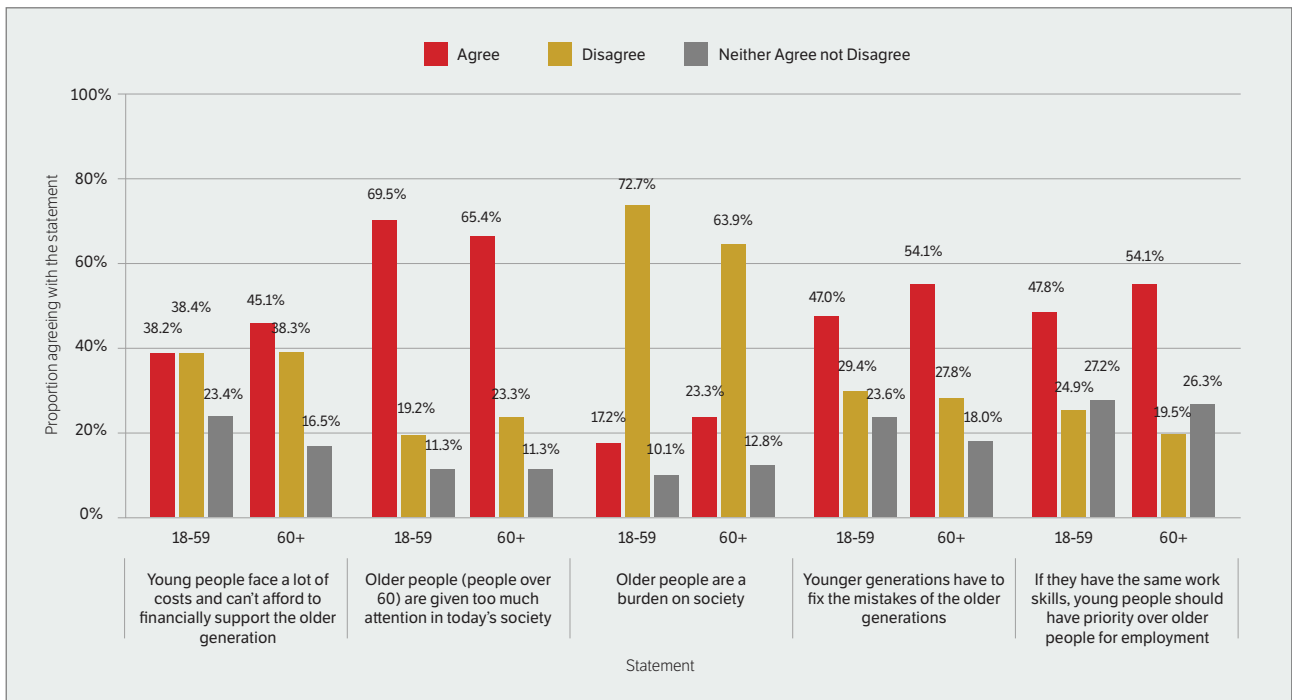
more inclined to agree with the positive statements than those who didn't. Specifically, they were more willing to agree with the statements that society has an obligation to look after and care for seniors (82% compared to 74%) and that seniors help others a lot by volunteering their time with their families and community (75% compared to 65%).

Overall, UAE nationals have slightly lower positive attitudes towards seniors than the overall population, notably those aged 60 and over (Figure 2). The main significant difference observed is when comparing their attitude towards seniors adding value to the workplace. Only 55% of UAE nationals aged 60 and over believe seniors add value to the workplace compared to the overall population. Furthermore, younger UAE nationals were slightly less likely to agree that society should look after and care for seniors than the younger general population (75% compared to 80%), but still a significant majority. Overall, older UAE nationals have slightly more positive attitudes than younger UAE nationals towards seniors (Figure 2).

The older population had slightly more negative attitudes towards seniors than the younger age group (Figure 3). Around 23% of the older UAE population believe that seniors are a burden on society, compared to only 17.2% of the younger population. Remarkably, over 65% of participants from both age groups believe that seniors are given too much attention in today's society. Those who knew someone aged 60 years or older (73% compared to 55%) and those who have visited an aged care facility (74% compared to 62%) were more likely to agree with the statement.

Based on the results, UAE nationals have slightly more negative attitudes towards older people than non-nationals. Around 24% of UAE nationals agree that seniors are a burden on society compared to only 20% of the expatriate population. Senior Emiratis are also somewhat more negative towards the elderly than younger UAE nationals, especially regarding financial and workforce statements. Interestingly, both younger and older UAE nationals overwhelmingly feel that seniors are given too much attention in today's society (Figure 4).

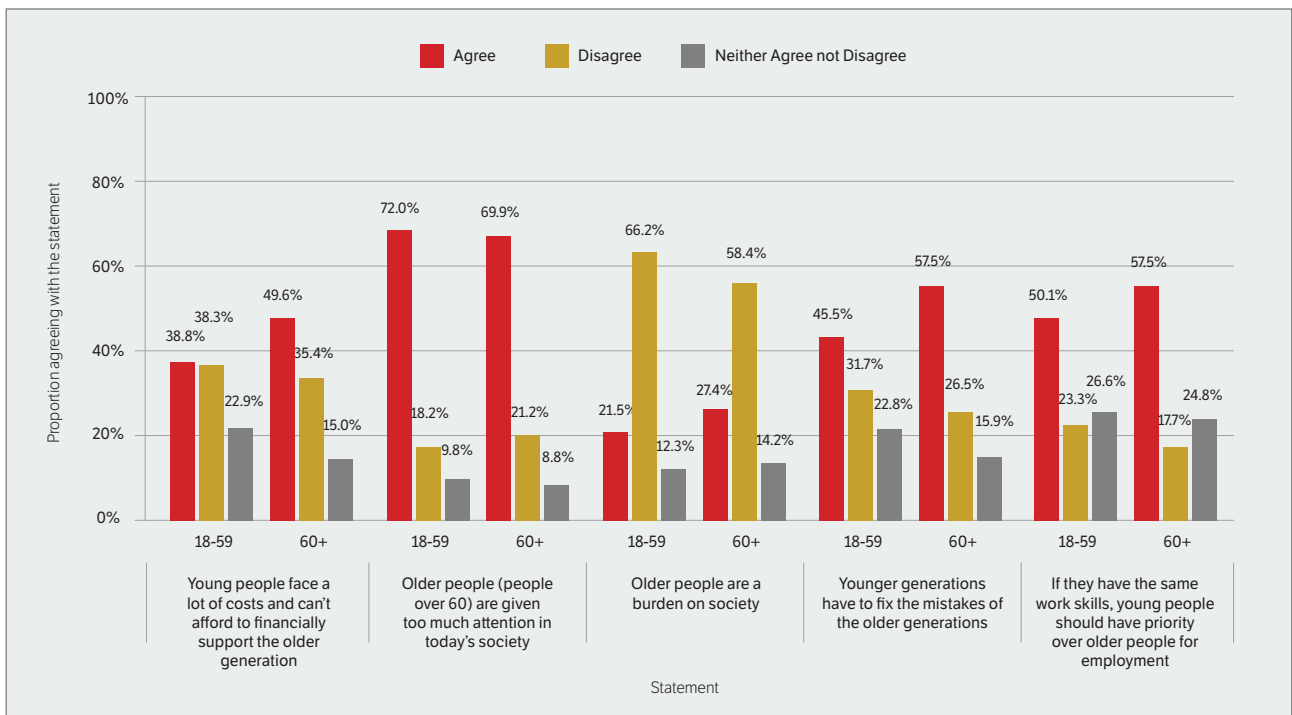
Figure 3: UAE population's negative attitudes towards older people



Source: Q16 Below are some statements people have made about older people. By “older people,” we mean people aged 60 or older. Do you agree or disagree with that? Older people (people over 60) are given too much attention in today's society/Young people face a lot of costs and can't afford to financially support the older generation/Older people are a burden on society/If they have the same work skills, young people should have priority over older people for employment/Younger generations have to fix the mistakes of the older generation.

Base: 18-59 n=2,602; 60+ n=133.

Figure 4: UAE nationals' negative attitudes towards older people



Source: Q16 Below are some statements people have made about older people. By “older people,” we mean people aged 60 or older. Do you agree or disagree with that? Older people (people over 60) are given too much attention in today's society/Young people face a lot of costs and can't afford to financially support the older generation/Older people are a burden on society.

Base: UAE nationals 18-59 n=1,691; UAE nationals 60+ n=113; non-UAE nationals 18-59 n=641; non-UAE nationals 60+ n=20.

Who Should be Responsible for Aged Care?

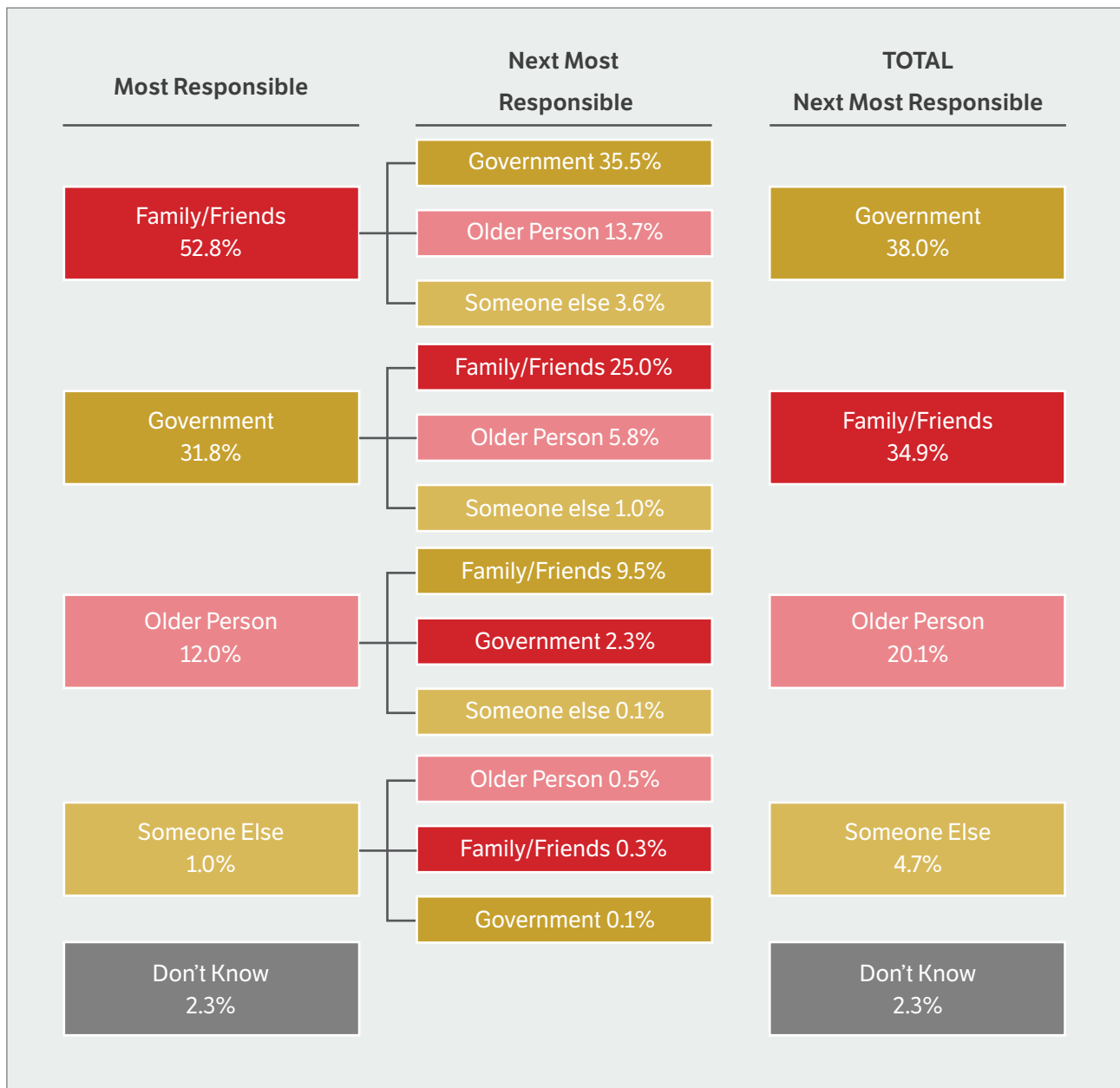
Aged care involves a wide range of services; the survey asked participants to think about aged care services at two levels: lower-level “support” to enable someone to live independently, such as help with shopping, cooking, cleaning, and attending medical appointments; and higher-level “care,” such as daily or almost daily help with dressing, eating, going to the bathroom, and nursing/medical care. These services are usually provided and funded by the individuals themselves or by their family members and friends. However, for UAE nationals, government-funded services are available, as

mentioned previously. Respondents were asked who they believe should be most responsible for paying for these services and who they think should be next most responsible.

Support services

Unlike the respondents in the Australian study, over 52% of the UAE population viewed family or friends as most responsible for paying for the support of older people, followed by the government at 31.8 % (Figure 5). Those who thought that family or friends should be most responsible believe that the government should be the next most responsible, and vice versa. Interestingly, 20% of participants felt that older people themselves should

Figure 5: Who the UAE population thinks should be responsible for paying for support



Source: Q17: as people get older, they may need some additional support to take care of themselves. Who do you think should be MOST RESPONSIBLE for PAYING for help like this? Qs 18-21: Who would be the NEXT MOST responsible?

Base: All respondents n=2,735.

Table 4: Who the UAE population thinks should be responsible for paying for support by age

Who Should be Responsible		Total	Age			
			18-34	35-59	60+	18-59
The Government	Most responsible	31.8%	29.2%	35.5%	21.8%	32.3%
	Next most responsible	38.0%	39.9%	36.0%	38.3%	38.0%
The Older Person's Family or Friends	Most responsible	52.8%	55.7%	50.2%	49.6%	53.0%
	Next most responsible	34.9%	32.8%	37.8%	27.8%	35.2%
The Older Person Themselves	Most responsible	12.0%	12.3%	10.1%	27.1%	11.2%
	Next most responsible	20.1%	19.2%	20.0%	30.1%	19.6%
Someone Else	Most responsible	1.0%	0.6%	1.5%	0.8%	1.0%
	Next most responsible	4.7%	5.9%	3.5%	3.0%	4.8%

be the next most responsible for paying for support after family or friends. No significant difference in opinions was observed amongst UAE nationals compared to the rest of the population. Over 53% of UAE nationals believe that family or friends are most responsible, and the Government is next most responsible.

The share of people seeing the older person's family or friends as most responsible was similar across all age cohorts (Table 4). However, older age cohorts tended to be more likely than younger age cohorts to think the older person themselves should be responsible for the support they need (27% of those aged 60 or more years versus 11% of those aged 18-59). It is critical to highlight that younger age cohorts thought the government should be more responsible than the older cohort.

Results differentiated depending on the educational attainment of the participants (Table 6). The older person's family or friends were viewed as most responsible by all educational attainment levels. Those with little or no education were most likely (60%) to believe family and friends should be responsible and least likely to see the government as responsible. Compared to university graduates, a high percentage of them think that the government is most responsible for paying for older people's support compared to other levels. Yet, university graduates were the least likely

cohort to believe that seniors should be responsible for their own support.

Care services

As in the Australian study, opinions about who should pay for care were similar to views on who should pay for support (Figure 5). Likewise, there is no significant difference in UAE nationals' opinions and the rest of the UAE population on who should be responsible for the care.

In total, 87% of people thought that family or friends were the most responsible or second most responsible for paying for care services. The government was seen as being most or second most responsible by 56% of the UAE population, and the older person themselves was seen as most or second most responsible by 29% of people.

The opinion that the older person's family or friends should be most responsible for care was held by over half of the people in every age cohort, with the view being most resolute among the 18 to 34 age group at 59% (Table 6).

Based on the results, a larger share of people in every educational level thought that family or friends should be most responsible for care than was the case for support services. People with less than high school and no formal education were more likely to see the older person themselves as next most responsible.

Table 5: Who the population thinks should be responsible for paying for support, by educational attainment

Who Should be Responsible		Total	Educational Attainment				
			No formal education	Less than high school	High school graduate	Diploma/Vocational	University graduate
The Government	Most responsible	31.8%	16.7%	27.8%	28.8%	30.9%	34.7%
	Next most responsible	38.0%	31.3%	39.4%	36.2%	32.1%	40.4%
The Older Person's Family or Friends	Most responsible	52.8%	60.4%	57.4%	51.1%	44.6%	54.7%
	Next most responsible	34.9%	22.9%	25.4%	33.2%	44.9%	35.1%
The Older Person Themselves	Most responsible	12.0%	12.5%	12.3%	14.8%	22.4%	7.7%
	Next most responsible	20.1%	37.5%	28.5%	23.3%	18.1%	16.9%
Someone Else	Most responsible	1.0%	2.1%	1.4%	2.3%	0.5%	0.5%
	Next most responsible	4.7%	0.0%	5.6%	4.4%	3.3%	5.2%

Source: Q17 as people get older, they may need some additional support to take care of themselves. They might need help with things like shopping, cooking, cleaning, or attending medical appointments. Who do you think should be MOST RESPONSIBLE for PAYING for help like this? Qs 18~21 Who would be the NEXT MOST responsible?

Base: For "most responsible;" All respondents n=2,735; No formal education n=48 (note: small base); Less than high school n=284; High school graduate n=614; Diploma/vocational n=392; University graduate n=1,397.

Table 6: Who the population thinks should be responsible for paying for care, by age

Who Should be Responsible		Total	Age			
			18-34	35-59	60+	18-59
The Government	Most responsible	21.1%	20.5%	21.9%	18.0%	21.2%
	Next most responsible	35.4%	37.2%	32.9%	42.1%	35.1%
The Older Person's Family or Friends	Most responsible	58.2%	59.9%	56.9%	54.1%	58.5%
	Next most responsible	29.4%	29.2%	30.0%	25.6%	29.6%
The Older Person Themselves	Most responsible	11.9%	12.9%	9.8%	22.6%	11.4%
	Next most responsible	17.8%	17.0%	17.6%	27.8%	17.3%
Someone Else	Most responsible	7.8%	5.9%	10.0%	5.3%	7.9%
	Next most responsible	16.3%	15.8%	18.2%	4.5%	16.9%

Source: Q22 We also know that sometimes older people need MORE CARE, with things like dressing, eating, going to the bathroom, or nursing care. Who do you think should be MOST RESPONSIBLE for PAYING for this type of care? Qs 23~26 Who should be the NEXT MOST responsible?

Base: For "most responsible;" All respondents n=2,735; 18-34 n=1,330; 35-59 n=1,272; 60+ n=133; 18-59 n=2,602.

Figure 6: Who the UAE population thinks should be responsible for paying for care.



Source: Q22 We also know that sometimes older people need MORE CARE. Who do you think should be MOST RESPONSIBLE for PAYING for this type of care? Qs 23–26 Who should be the NEXT MOST responsible?

Base: All respondents n=2,735.

Knowledge and Perceptions of Aged Care

- UAE nationals tend to know more seniors than non-UAE nationals.
- Over 85% of UAE nationals surveyed know someone outside of their household aged 60 years or older, 62% know someone receiving support or care to live at home, 42% know someone living in an aged care facility, and 32% know someone with dementia.
- 47% of the people who knew someone receiving support or care in their home, an aged care facility, or a hospital contact them daily, and around 35% visit that often.
- 56% of participants have visited a residential aged care facility, and over 58% of the population felt that residents in aged care facilities are often lonely and have little control over their lives. However, 78% of participants believe that residents in aged care facilities get good quality food, are safe and respected, and have quick access to medical professionals and health care.
- UAE nationals are less likely to use online search engines to find out about services and more likely to ask a doctor or hospital or contact family and friends than non-UAE nationals.
- Non-UAE nationals are more likely to contact the government about aged care services than UAE nationals.
- Around 50% of UAE nationals believe that the government funds over 50% of the aged care services available for them.

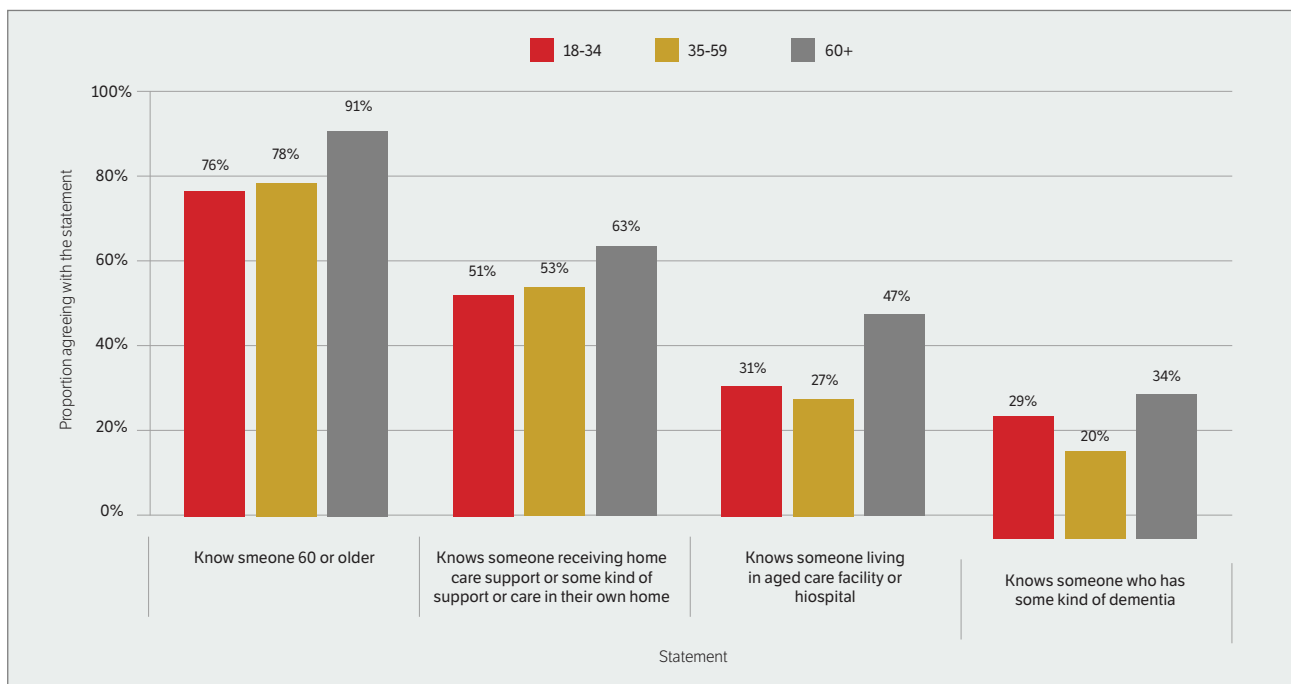
BOX 2

How Many People Know Someone Receiving Aged Care?

To investigate people’s knowledge of aged care, the survey asked participants if they knew someone receiving aged care in their home or living in an aged care facility. Those who knew someone receiving care were then asked how often they contacted and visited the person (or persons). Contact included communication by phone, message, social media, etc.

A large majority of the overall participants (81%) know someone outside of their household aged 60 years or older, 55% know someone receiving support or care to live at home, 35% know someone living in an aged care facility, and 27% know someone with dementia. The likelihood of knowing someone over the age of 60 and receiving aged care services tended to increase with the person’s age (Figure 7).

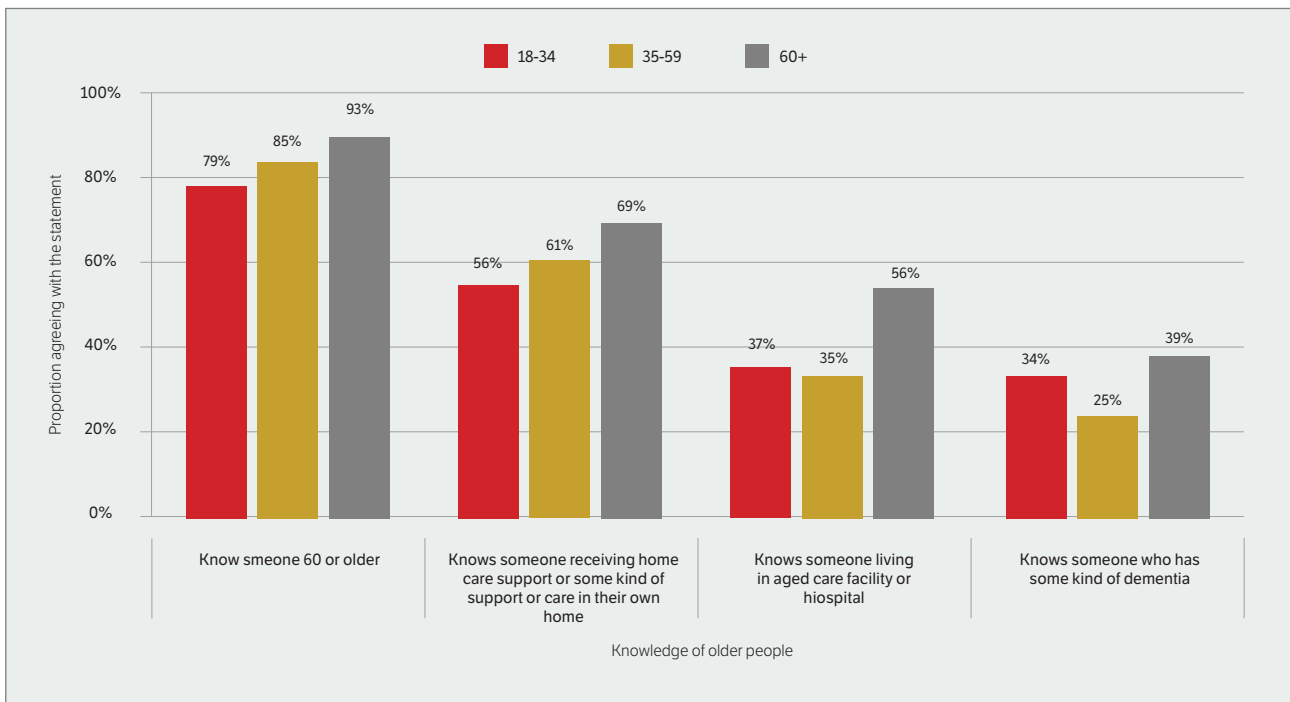
Figure 7: The UAE population’s knowledge of older people, by age



Source: Q51 Apart from anyone you are living within your home, do you know anyone such as a family member or close friend who lives in the UAE and:

Base: All respondents n=2,735; 18-34 n=1,330; 35-59 n=1,272; 60+ n=133.

Figure 8: UAE national's knowledge of older people, by age



Source: Q51 Apart from anyone you are living within your home, do you know anyone such as a family member or close friend who lives in the UAE and:

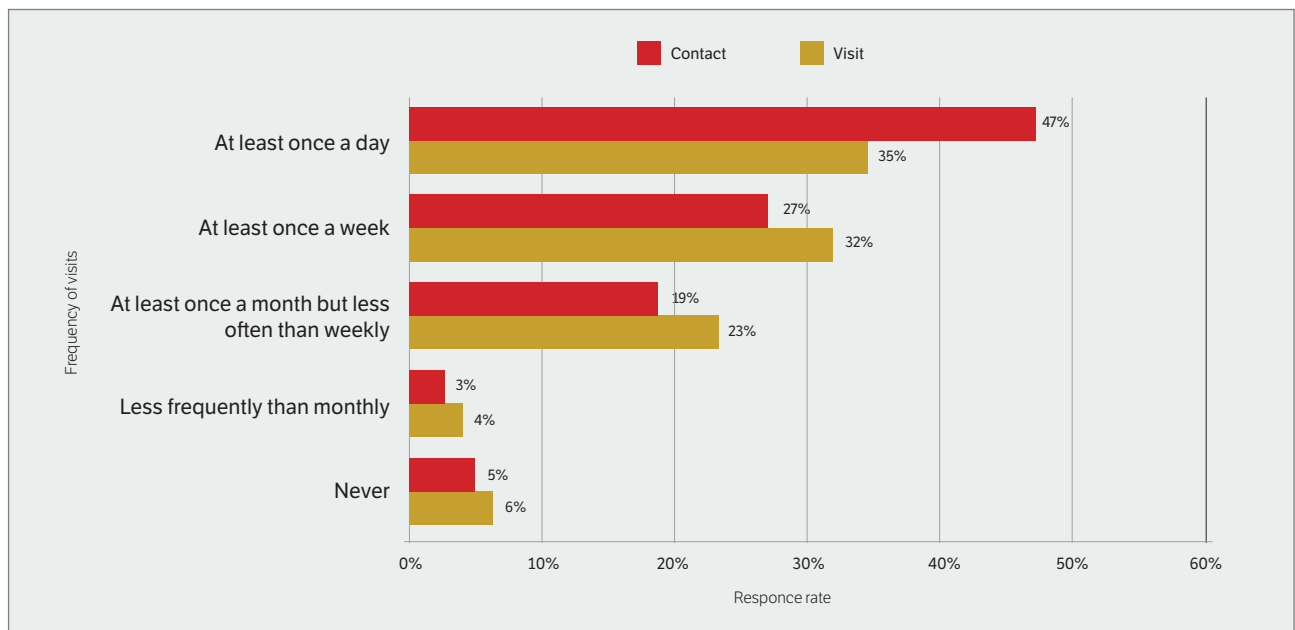
Base: UAE nationals n=2,074; 18-34 n=1,047; 35-59 n=914; 60+ n=113.

How Often Does the UAE Population Contact and Visit People Receiving Aged Care?

Of the people who know someone receiving home support or care, 47% contact them daily, and 27% contact them weekly (Figure 9). The proportion who visit daily is 35%, while the proportion who visit

weekly is 32%. Only 5% of people who know someone receiving care never contact or visit that person. Similar frequencies were observed amongst those who know someone living in an aged care facility. There was no significant difference between UAE nationals and the rest of the UAE population on how often they contact and visit people receiving aged care. There was also

Figure 9: How often do people who know someone receiving home support or care contact or visit that person



* Never includes "I am not in a position to visit them" and "unsure/prefer not to say"

Source: Q52 and Q53. Thinking about the person you are closest to, who received home care or support in their home, how often do you visit them/ contact them? This means by phone, leaving a message, an email, chat or any other way.

Base: People who reported knowing someone who receives home care support (Q51) n=1,446

Table 7: How often do people who know someone receiving home support or care contact or visit that person, by age

	Total	Age		
		18-34	35-59	60+
Contacted				
At least once a day	47.2%	45.7%	47.9%	53.6%
At least once a week	27.0%	24.9%	30.3%	17.9%
At least once a month but less often than weekly	18.6%	21.8%	15.0%	21.4%
Less frequently than monthly	2.6%	2.5%	2.4%	4.8%
Never*	4.6%	5.1%	4.4%	2.4%
Visited				
At least once a day	34.6%	35.7%	33.3%	36.9%
Once a week	31.9%	31.0%	33.0%	29.8%
At least once a month but less often than weekly	23.2%	24.2%	22.5%	20.2%
Less frequently than monthly	4.0%	3.4%	4.1%	8.3%
Never*	6.3%	5.7%	7.1%	4.8%

* "Never" includes "I am not in a position to visit them" and "unsure/prefer not to say"

Source: Q52 and Q53. Thinking about the person you are closest to, who received home care or support in their home, how often do you visit them/ contact them? This means by phone, leaving a message, an email, chat or any other way.

Base: People who reported knowing someone who receives home care support (Q51) n=1,446, 18-34 n=683, 35-59 n=679, 60 and older n=84

no significance between different age groups and how often they contact and visit people receiving aged care (Table 7).

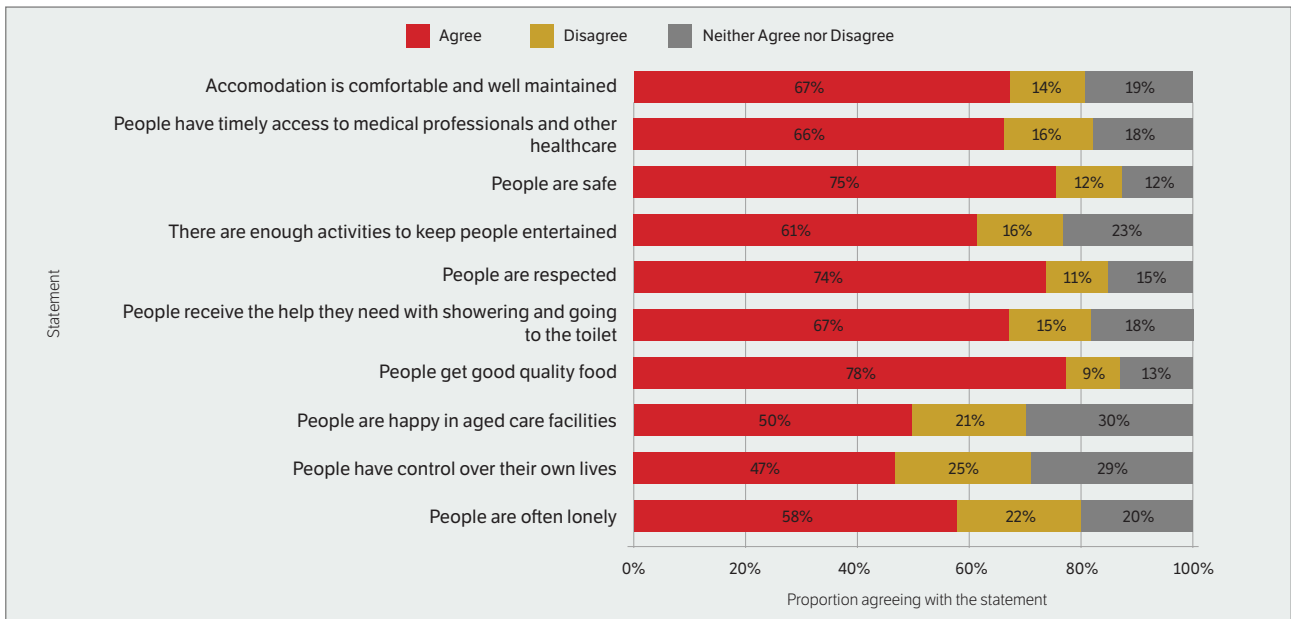
What Does the UAE Population Think of Residential Aged Care Facilities?

Respondents were asked for their perceptions of aged care facilities by agreeing or disagreeing with a series of statements. Overall, the population's perceptions about residents' welfare were reasonably positive (Figure 10). However, similar to the Australian study, over 58% of people felt that residents of these facilities are often lonely. People were also less likely to agree that older people have control over their lives and are happy in an aged care facility. However, there was a perception by over 78% of people that residents get good quality food, and 74% believe people living in these facilities are safe and respected. Moreover, the majority of people thought

that the resident's accommodation was comfortable and well maintained. They also believed that residents have timely access to medical professionals and health care and receive the help they need with showering and going to the toilet.

Perceptions about residential aged care facilities were generally very similar between people of different ages. Around 56% of participants had visited an aged care facility in the UAE. Those who visited tended to have slightly more positive perceptions than those who had never visited. Some of the most favorable views were held by people who knew someone living in an aged care facility and visited them at least weekly (Figure 11). Those who visited an aged care facility weekly were more likely to agree that the accommodation was comfortable and well maintained and that the residents were safe, happy, respected, and given good quality food. However, these visitors also believed that residents are often lonely.

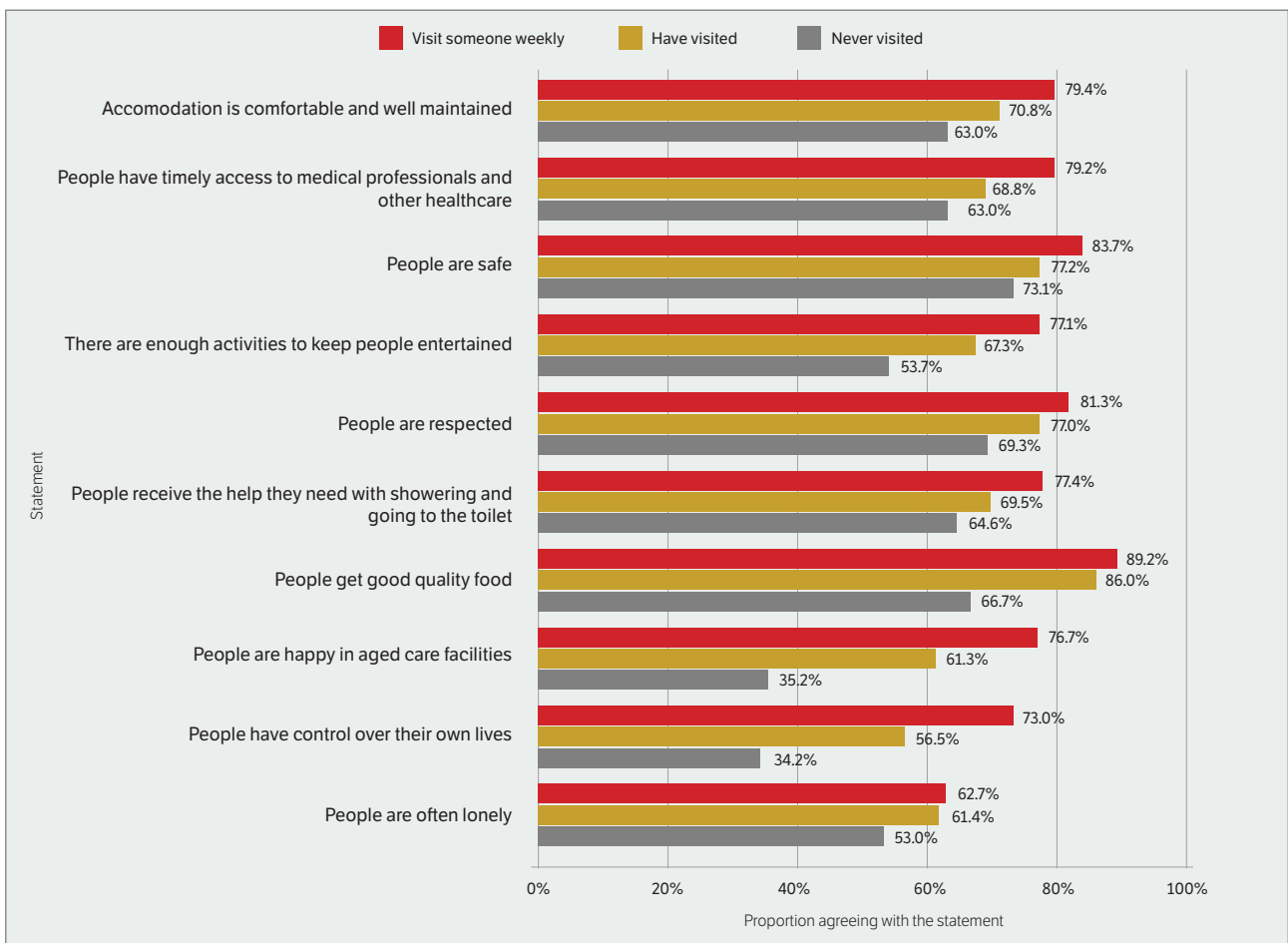
Figure 10: UAE population's perceptions of aged care facilities



Source: Q58 Please tell me your opinion – do you agree or disagree with the following general statements about people in aged care facilities? Even though you may not have visited an age care facility, I am interested in your views. Do you agree or disagree – with the following general statements about people in aged care facilities.

Base: All Respondents n=2,735.

Figure 11: Perceptions of aged care facilities, by visitation



Source: Q58 Please tell me your opinion – do you agree or disagree with the following general statements about people in aged care facilities? Even though you may not have visited an age care facility, I am interested in your views. Do you agree or disagree – with the following general statements about people in aged care facilities??

Base: Those who have visited an aged care facility n=1,533; those who have not visited an aged care facility n=1,202; those who visit someone in an aged care facility weekly n= 563.

Finding Information About Aged Care Services

Arranging aged care services for oneself or someone close to oneself can be a complicated process. All respondents were asked where they would get the information needed. As illustrated in Figure 12, there were a variety of responses.

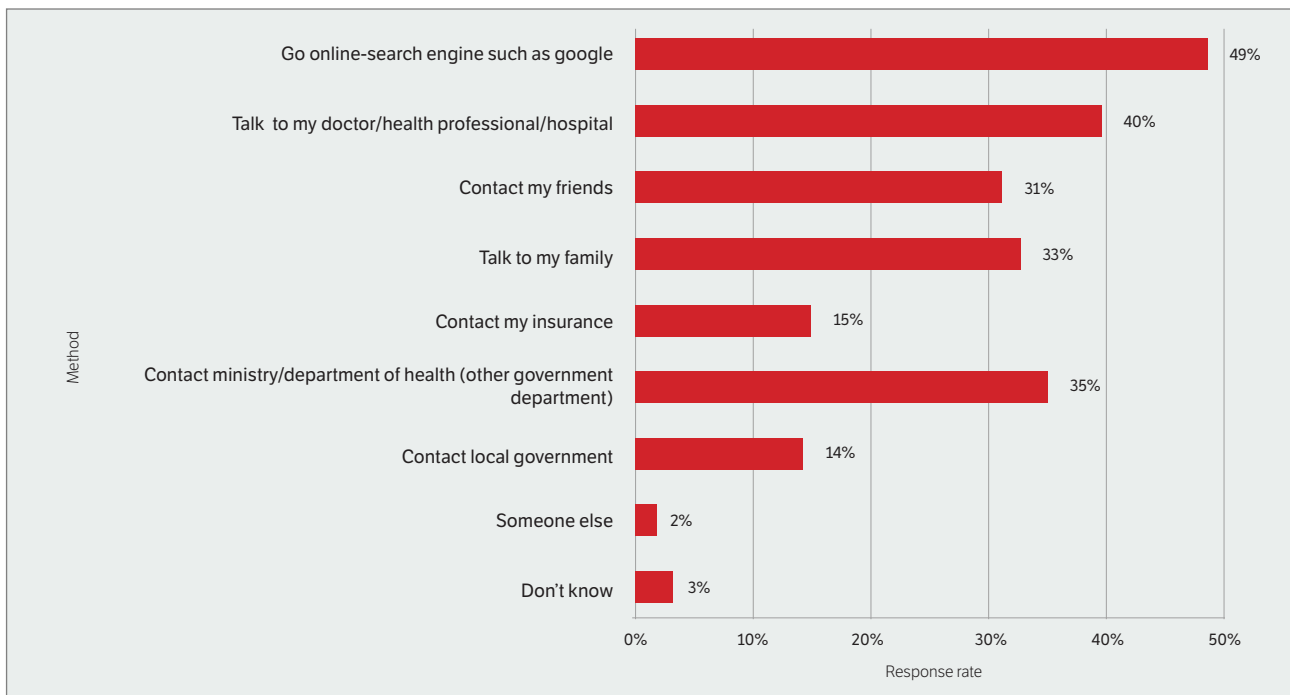
Nearly half of the adults surveyed would begin their journey using a search engine such as Google, indicating they have very little existing knowledge. Depending on the search terms they used, this would usually lead them to an aged care provider or government website. A reasonable share (40%) said they would talk to their doctor and contact an aged care service provider or facility. Similar percentages of people (around 32%) said they would contact family, friends, or government entities. Only 15% of adults identified their insurance or

local government as the starting point on the aged care journey.

Interestingly, the use of an internet search engine is similar across all age cohorts. Older age cohorts are more inclined to talk with their doctor or aged care providers and less prone to contact government entities than other age cohorts. The 35-59 age group are less likely to contact family or friends and more likely to go online than others (Table 8).

UAE nationals are less likely to use online search engines to find out about aged care services than the rest of the population. However, they are more likely to talk to their doctor, health care professional, or hospital. Additionally, they are also more likely to contact family and friends than the rest of the population. Interestingly, non-UAE nationals are more likely to contact government entities or local government than UAE nationals (Figure 13).

Figure 12: How UAE population would find out about aged care services



Source: Q59. If you needed to find out something about aged care service(s) in the UAE, what would you do? who would you contact? (multiple responses allowed)

Base: All Respondents n=2,735.

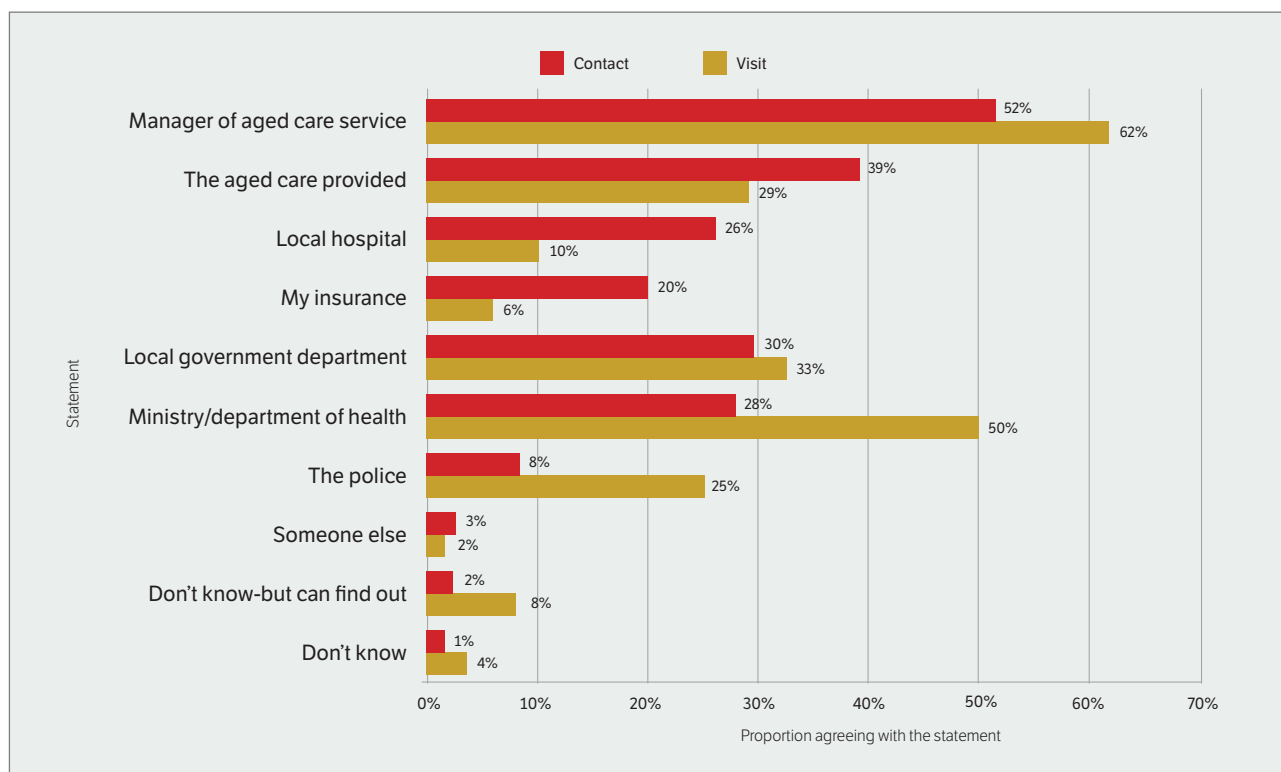
Table 8: How people would find out about aged care services by age

Where to Get Information	Total	Age		
		18-34	35-59	60+
Go online search engine such as Google	48.6%	48.5%	49.5%	41.4%
Talk to my doctor/ health professional/hospital	39.9%	40.6%	38.1%	49.6%
Contact my friends	31.2%	33.7%	28.1%	34.6%
Talk to my family	32.8%	35.6%	29.7%	33.1%
Contact my insurance	14.7%	14.9%	14.3%	17.3%
Contact ministry/department of health (other government department)	35.2%	33.6%	37.4%	29.3%
Contact local government	14.1%	12.9%	15.1%	18.0%
Someone else	1.8%	1.6%	2.3%	0.0%
Don't know	3.1%	1.9%	4.3%	3.0%

Source: Q59. What would you do if you needed to find out something about aged care service(s) in the UAE? which would you contact? (multiple responses allowed)

Base: All Total n=2,735, 18-34 n=1,330, 35-59 n=1,272, 60 and older n=133

Figure 13: How UAE national's vs non-nationals would find out about aged care services



Source: Q60. If you knew about a problem with an aged care service, who would you report it to? (multiple responses allowed)

Base: UAE nationals n=2,074; Non-UAE nationals n=661.

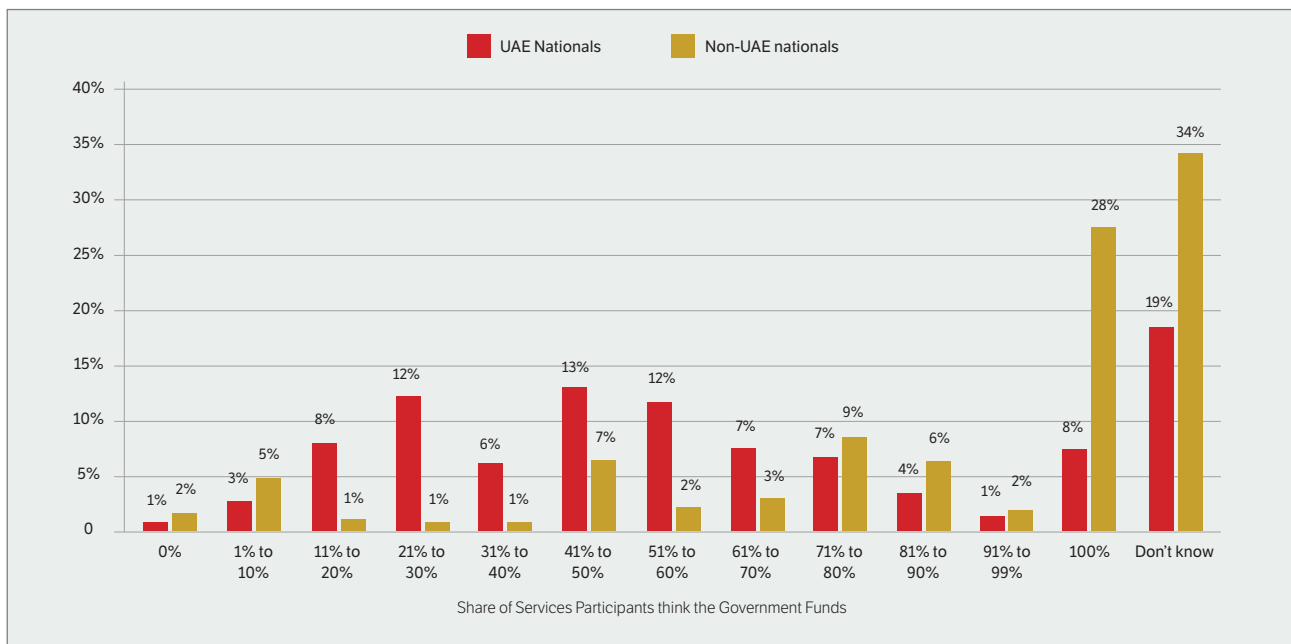
Awareness of Aged Care Funding Arrangements

In the UAE, government aged care services and facilities are free for UAE nationals. Non-UAE nationals are required to pay for any aged care services they need. To provide a broad indication of public awareness around aged care funding arrangements, respondents were asked what percentage of aged care services they think are funded by the Government. The results are shown in Figure 14.

The majority of participants stated they did not know the share the Government pays for aged care services

for UAE nationals and the rest of the population. Over 50% of UAE nationals believe that the government funds more than 50% of their services. Interestingly, only 8% of UAE nationals think that the government fully funds aged care services for them (Figure 15). Around 84% of non-UAE nationals believe that the government funds more than 50% of aged care services for UAE nationals. There was no significant difference in the estimates between different age cohorts except that younger people were more inclined to say they did not know rather than provide an estimate.

Figure 14: The share of aged care services that the UAE population thinks the government funds for UAE nationals



Source: Q61. What percentage of aged care services do you think is funded by the government in the UAE for UAE citizens? 62. What percentage of aged care services do you think is funded by the government in the UAE for UAE residents?

Base: UAE nationals n=2,074; non-UAE nationals n=661.

Emiratis' Experience, Expectations, and Preferences for Older Age

- The large majority of older UAE nationals consider themselves healthy, physically able to do what they like, and make choices to stay that way. Younger UAE nationals tend to have quite pessimistic outlooks on later life.
- Around 70% of younger UAE nationals expect to have the freedom to spend their time as they like and live on a Government pension.
- Only one in five older UAE nationals maintain their health and exercise, but around half spend time with family and friends. However, 78% of younger UAE nationals see themselves spending time with family and friends, maintaining health, exercising, and in recreation, leisure, hobbies, or sport when they reach 60.
- 63% of younger people believe they will still be in paid employment when they reach 60, more than double the rate of what seniors have reported.
- The most common current source of support received by older UAE nationals was paid help delivered by Government providers used by 59% of those receiving support. Senior Emiratis who did not receive support had a significantly stronger preference to receive support, should they need it in the future, from family members.
- There is a strong preference (around 65%) among older and younger UAE nationals for family to provide care. Younger UAE nationals favor receiving support from family and friends and are less in favor of paid help from private providers.
- Older UAE nationals also strongly prefer to stay in their own home should they ever need support. If they needed care, they would like to live in an aged care facility or hospital.
- Approximately 45% of younger UAE nationals are more inclined to want to live near family or friends and stay in their current home if they need care or support.
- Services related to health, hygiene, and cleanliness are seen as the most important by older and younger ages. Older people prioritize help cleaning the home, showering, dressing, and going to the toilet more than younger people.
- The overall UAE population thinks there is a wide range of aged care services available in the UAE; however, they don't know enough about such services and/or the extent to which they exist.

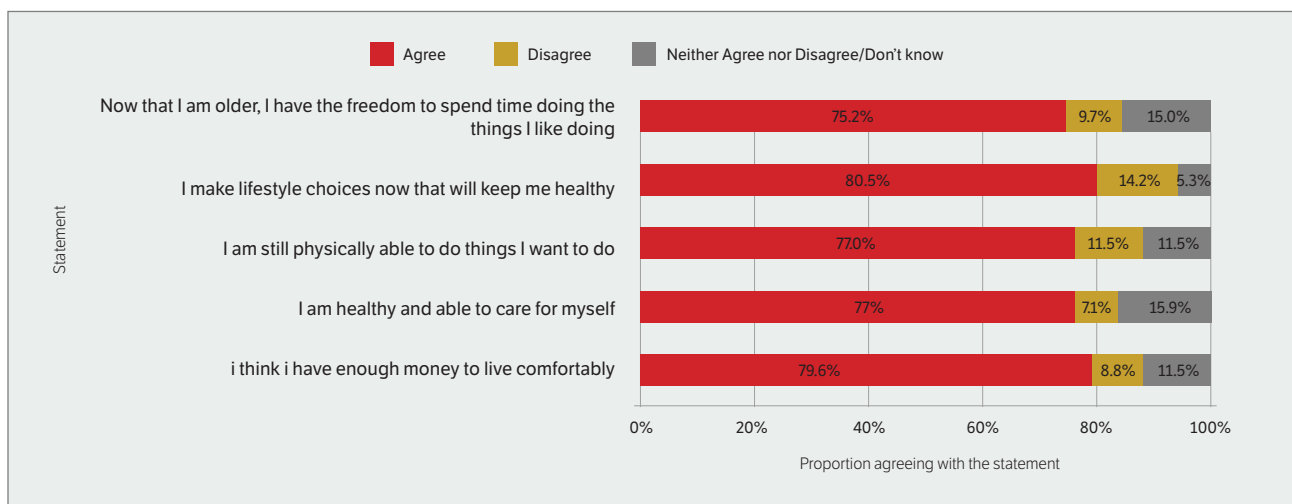
BOX 3

Life as a Senior Emirati

Older UAE nationals were asked how they see their lives using five questions about their physical and financial ability to live as they wish. They were then asked about

how they spend their time. Younger UAE nationals were also asked how they expect their life to be and how they expect to spend their time when they reach 60. In many ways, their expectations differed from reality.

Figure 15: How older UAE nationals see their lives



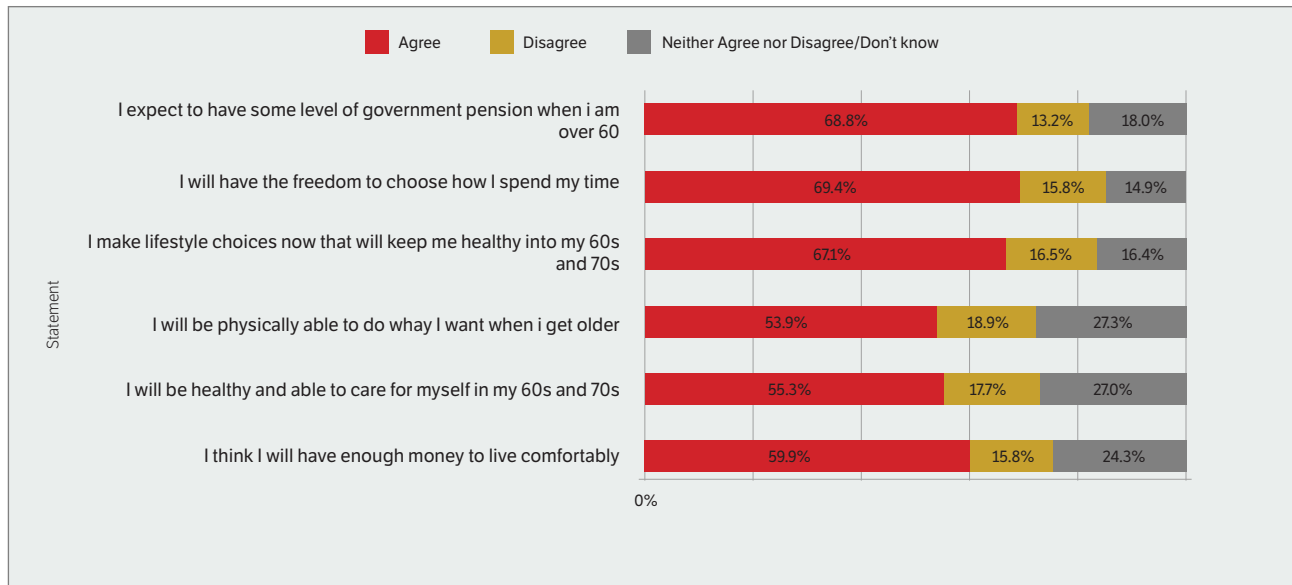
Source: Do you agree or disagree with the statement ...?

Base: UAE nationals aged 60 years and older, n=113

Senior Emiratis generally had a positive view of their lives (Figure 15). Over 77% see themselves as healthy and able to take care of themselves. They feel that they are still physically able to do the things in life they like to do and have the freedom to spend time doing those things. Over 80% said they make lifestyle choices to keep themselves healthy and have enough money to live comfortably. On the other hand, younger UAE nationals have a slightly more pessimistic outlook on older age (Figure 16), with only around 70% expecting to have the

freedom to spend their time as they like and be living on a Government pension. About 55% expect to be healthy, taking care of themselves, and physically able to do what they want. Younger UAE nationals are also less likely than older people to be making healthy lifestyle choices, and only 60% expect to have enough money to live comfortably. Interestingly, around one-quarter of younger UAE nationals do not seem to have thought about life at an older age. They were uncertain about agreeing or disagreeing with the statements mentioned above.

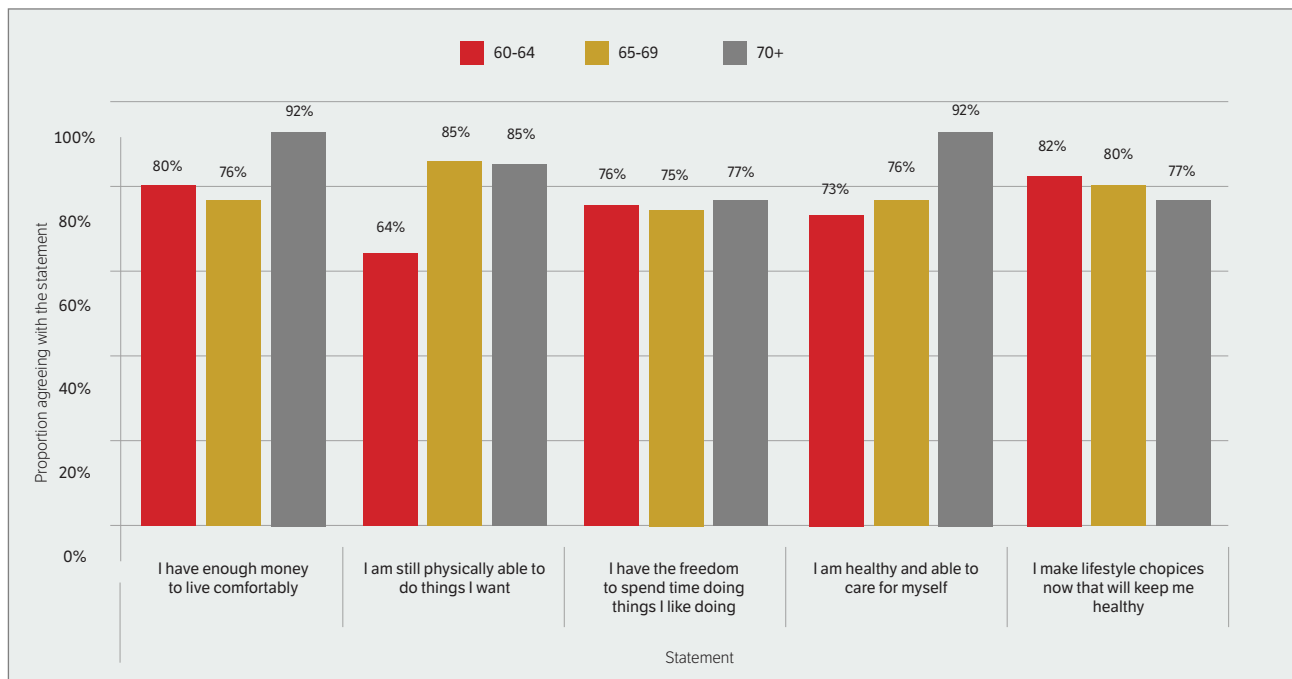
Figure 16: How younger UAE nationals see their lives



Source: Q48. Do you agree or disagree with the statement ...?

Base: UAE nationals 18-59, n=1,961; 18-34 n=1,047; 35-59 n=914.

Figure 17: Older UAE nationals' expectations of life after 60 years, by age



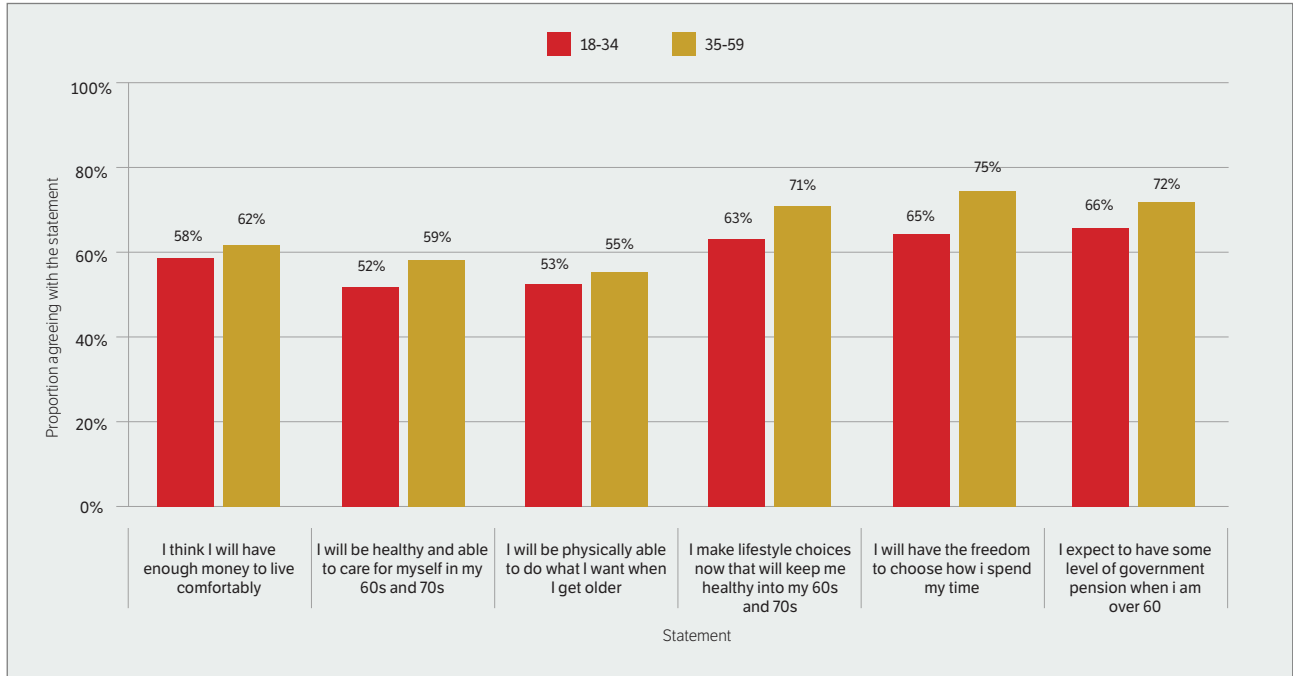
Source: Q48. Do you agree or disagree with the statement...?

Base: UAE nationals 60+, n=113; 60-64 n=45; 65-69 n=55; 70+ n=13 (note: small base).

The responses of senior Emiratis who were currently receiving support or care were more positive than others. Around 75% of older UAE nationals currently receiving support see themselves as healthy and able to look after themselves, and 86% have enough money to

live comfortably. Younger UAE nationals who currently receive support for their daily activities (help shopping, cooking, or cleaning) from family or domestic workers have even lower expectations about their lives in their 60s and beyond than those who don't receive support.

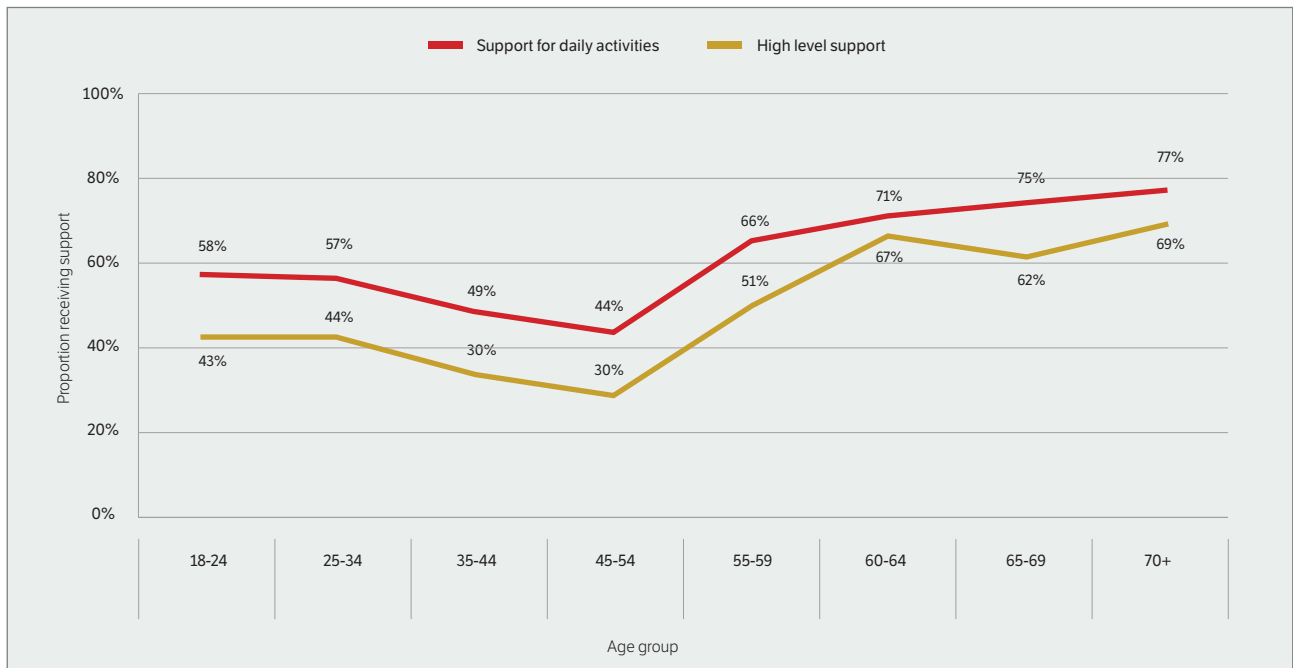
Figure 18: Younger UAE nationals' expectations of life after 60 years, by age



Source: Q46. The following statements are about your expectations of what life will be like when you are over 60. Do you agree or disagree that...?

Base: UAE nationals 18-59, n=1,961; 18-34 n=1,047; 35-59 n=914.

Figure 19: Share of UAE nationals receiving support and care in their own home, by age



Source: Q27. Do you receive any support for your daily activities, such as help with shopping, cooking, cleaning, or attending medical appointments? Q29 Do you receive support to assist you with dressing or eating, or going to the bathroom, or nursing care (nursing care includes things like pain, management and wound dressing)?

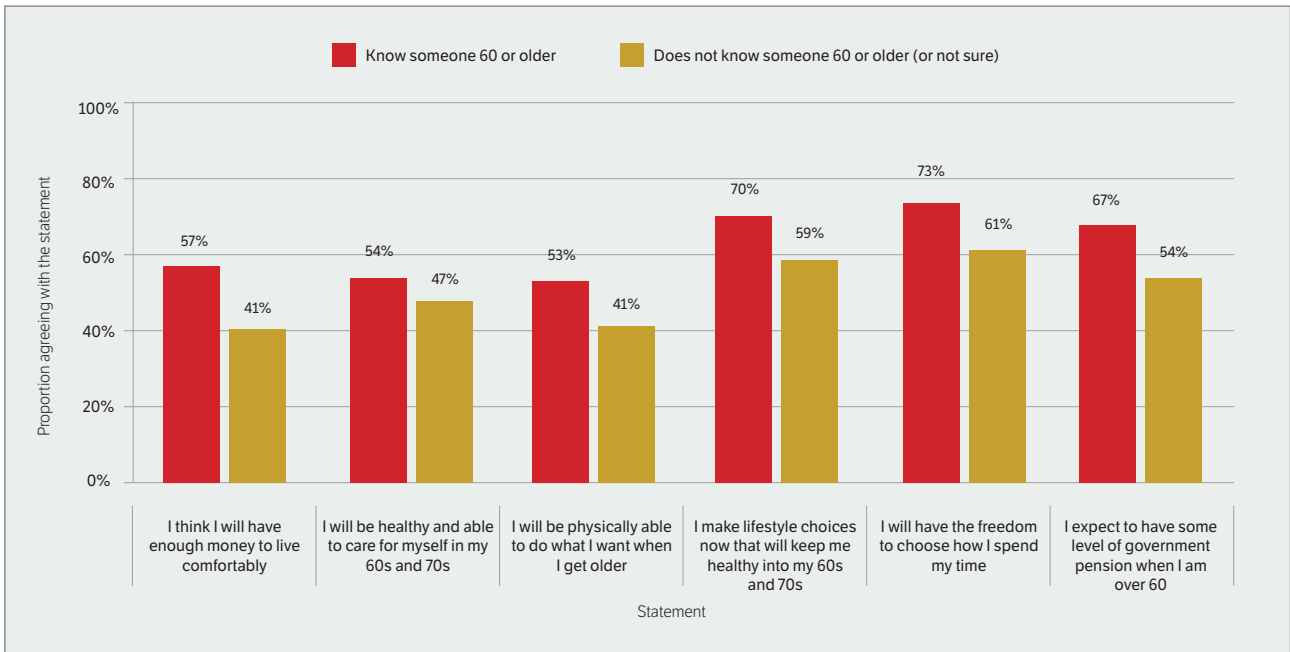
Base: UAE nationals, n=2,074; 18-24 n=311; 25-34 n=736; 35-44 n=600; 45-54 n=227; 55-59 n=87 60-64 n=45; 65-69 n=55; 70+ n=13 (note small base).

Figure 20 shows that younger people's outlook on their own older age tended to be more positive and in line with older people's experience if they knew someone aged 60 or older. In particular, they were more likely to make lifestyle choices to keep themselves healthy into their sixties and seventies (70% compared to 59%) and think they would have enough money to live comfortably (57% compared to 41%).

Consequently, older people were more optimistic about their lives if they knew another older person outside their

home (Figure 21). Only 10% of older UAE nationals who participated in the survey did not know anyone aged 60 years or older. These people were much less likely to think they had enough money to live comfortably (76% compared to 42%), be physically able to do the things they wanted (80% compared to 58%), and have the freedom to spend time doing the things they like doing (76% compared to 50%).

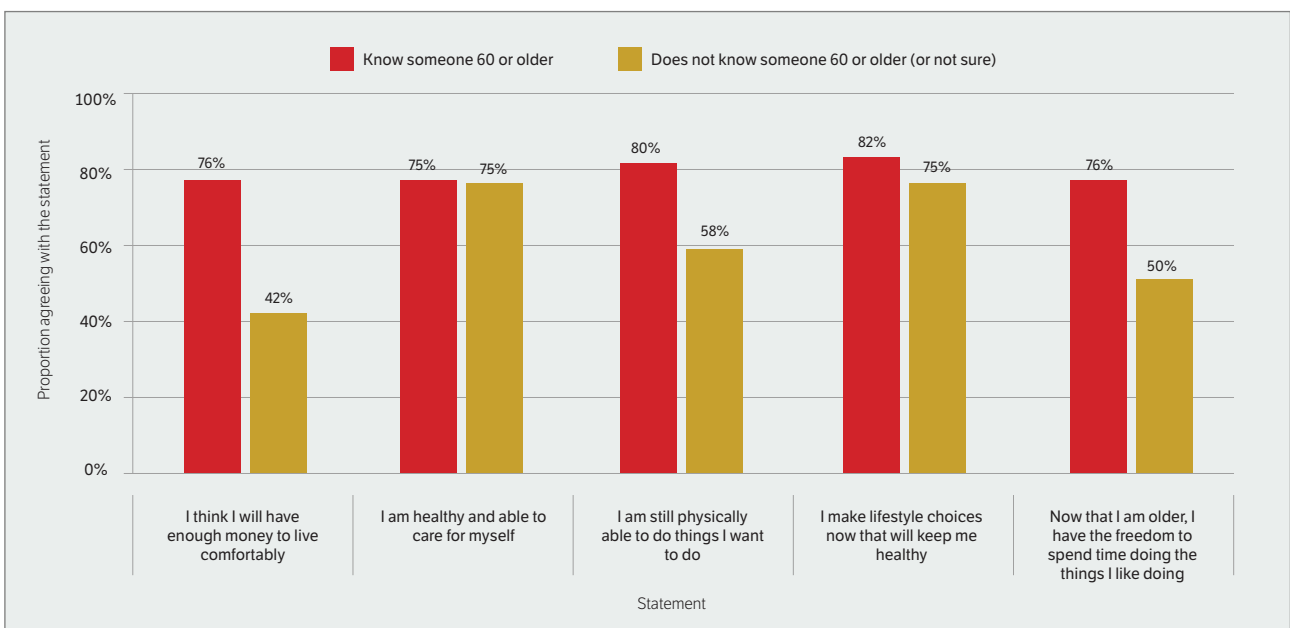
Figure 20: Younger people's expectations of life after 60 years, by whether they knew an older person



Source: Q46. The following statements are about your expectations of what life will be like when you are over 60. Do you agree or disagree that...?

Base: UAE nationals aged 18-59, n=1,961 Knows someone aged 60 or older n=1,600 Does not know someone aged 60 or older n=361

Figure 21: How older UAE nationals see their lives, by whether they knew another older person



Source: Q48. Do you agree or disagree with the statement ...?

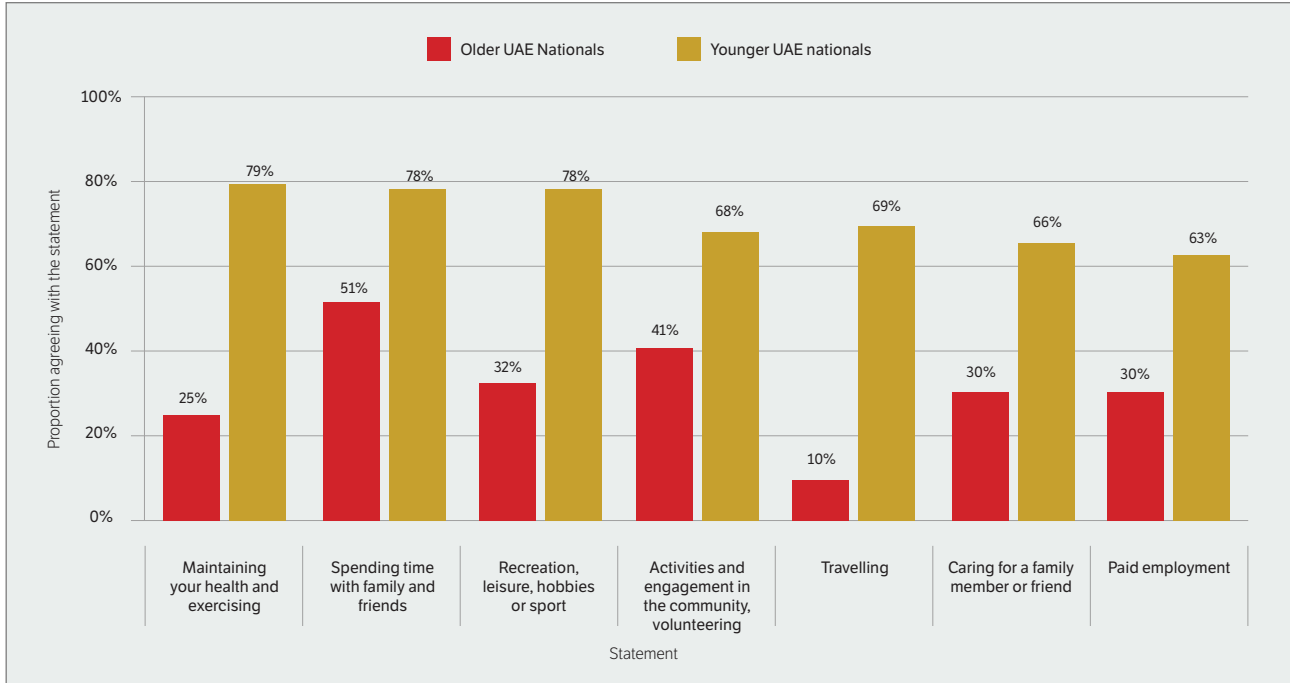
Base: UAE nationals 60+, n=113; Knows others outside their home aged 60 or older n=105; Does not know (or not sure) others outside their home aged 60 or older n=8 (note: small base).

How Senior Emiratis Spend Their Time

Older UAE nationals generally lead physically and socially active lives, but not to the same extent that younger UAE nationals anticipate for themselves once they reach 60

(Figure 22). Only one in five Senior Emiratis maintain their health and exercise, and around half spend time with family and friends. Over 30% spend their time caring for family or friends and participate in recreation, leisure, hobbies, or sport. Over 41% are involved in community

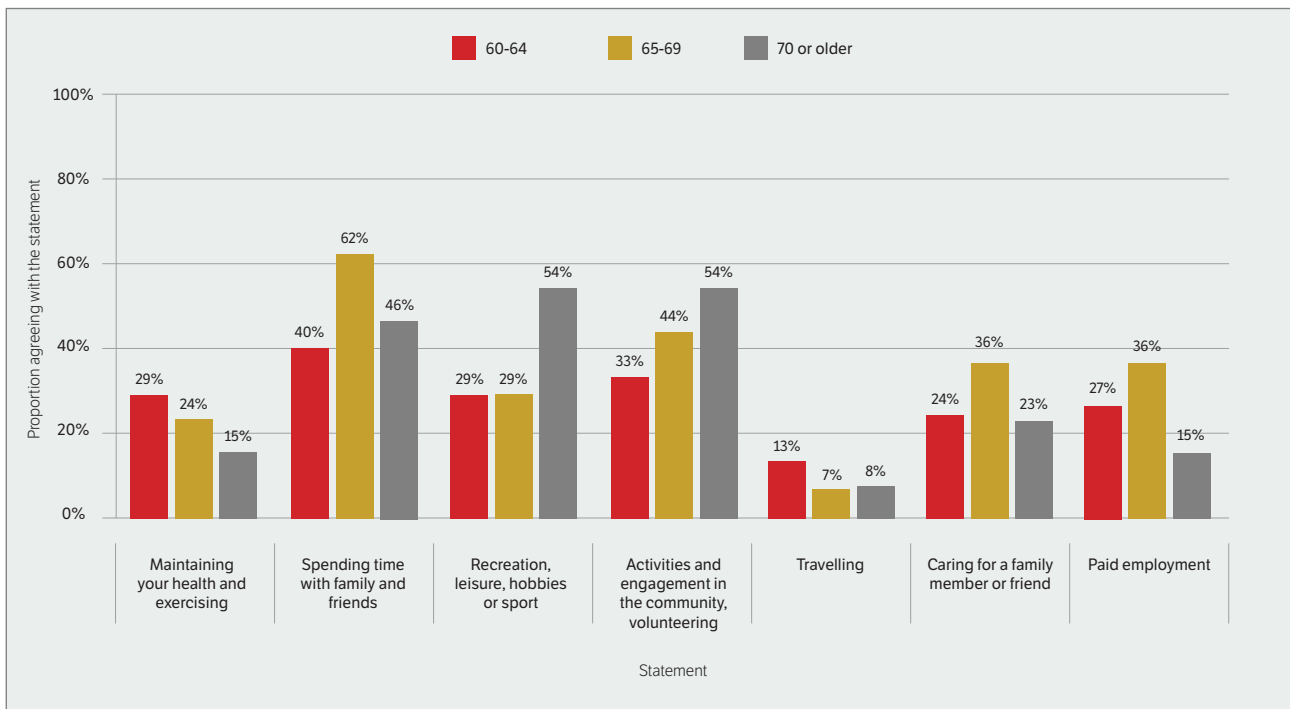
Figure 22: How older UAE nationals spend their time versus how younger UAE nationals expect to spend their time when they are over 60 years



Source: Q35. I want you to think about when you are 60 or older. How do you think you will be using your time once you are over 60? In other words, what activities, tasks do you think you will be engaged in? Q47. How do you spend your time these days? In other words, what activities or tasks are you engaged in?

Base: UAE nationals 18-59 n=1,961; UAE nationals 60+ n=113.

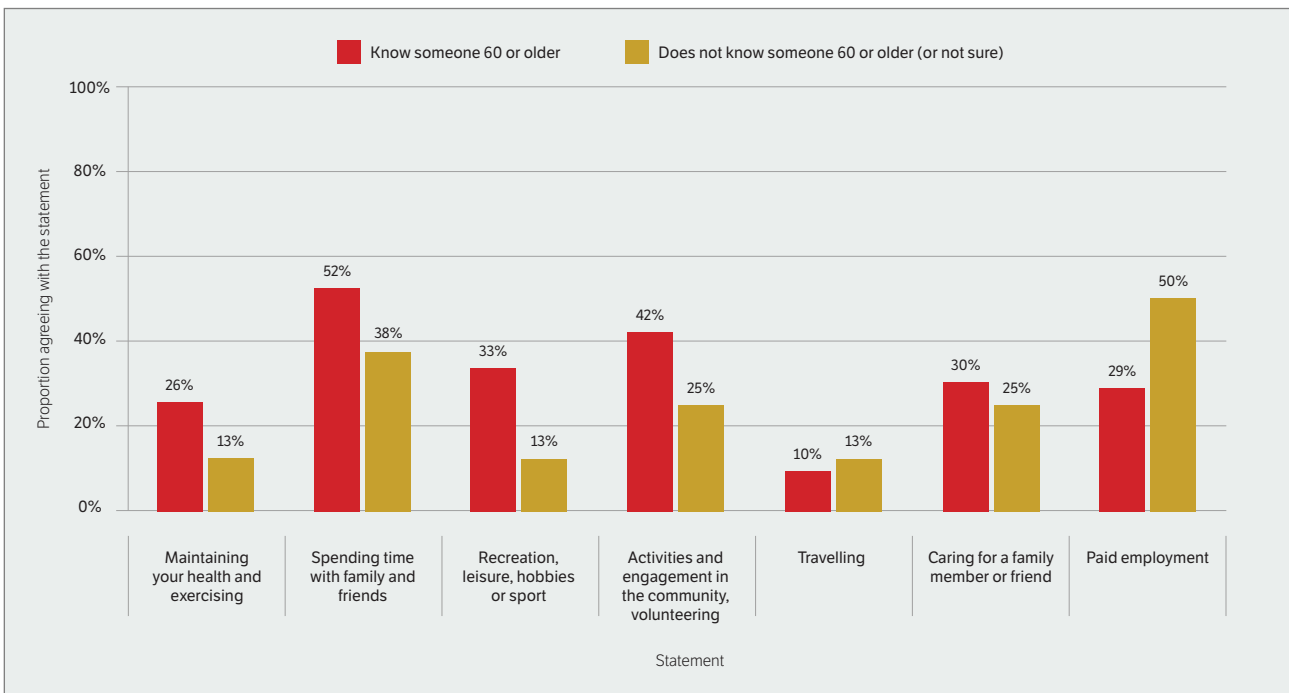
Figure 23: How older UAE nationals spend their time, by age



Source: Q34. If you need this type of CARE on an almost daily basis, where would you like to be living? Would it be...

Base: Older UAE nationals who DO NOT currently receive a higher-level care: Total n=40; 60-64 n= 15; 65-69 n=21; 70+ n= 4 (note: small base).

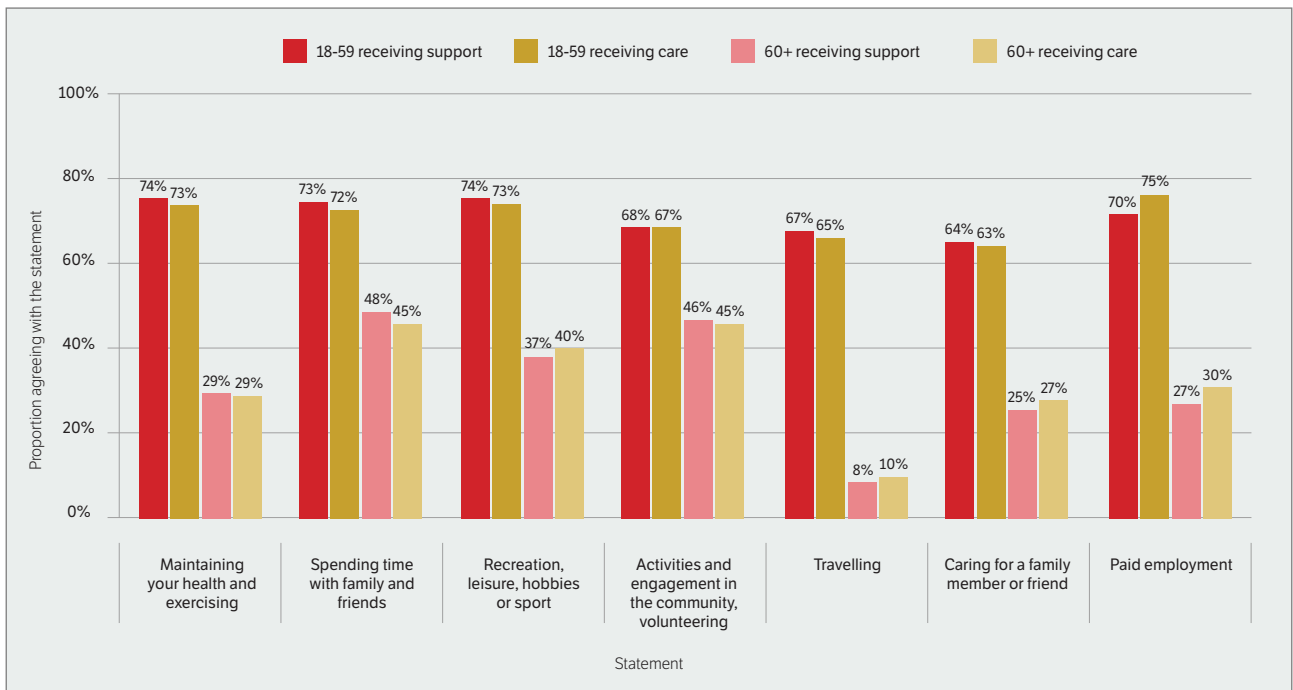
Figure 24: How older UAE nationals spend their time, by whether they knew another older person



Source: Q47. How do you spend your time these days? In other words, what activities, tasks are you engaged in?

Base: UAE nationals 60+ n=113; Knows others outside their home 60+ n=105; Does not know (or not sure) others outside their home 60+ n=8 (note: small base).

Figure 25: How UAE nationals receiving support or care spend time (or expect to) in older age



Source: Q35. I want you to think about when you are 60 or older. How do you think you will be using your time once you are over 60? In other words, what activities, tasks do you think you will be engaged in? Will you be... Q47. How do you spend your time these days? In other words, what activities, tasks are you engaged in?

Base: UAE nationals 18-59 receiving support for daily activities n=1,051; UAE nationals 18-59 receiving care n=778; UAE nationals 60+ receiving support n=83; UAE nationals 60+ receiving care n=73.

activities or volunteering, 10% travel, and 30% are still in the workforce. In contrast, around 78% of younger UAE nationals see themselves spending time with family and friends, maintaining health, exercising, and in recreation when they reach 60. Approximately 66% see themselves caring for a family member or friend, and about 68% expect to spend time in community engagement and travel. Interestingly, 63% of younger people believe they will still be in paid employment when they reach 60, more than double the rate of older nationals currently reported in paid work. Participation in these activities progressively falls with age. The decline is relatively gradual, with some exceptions amongst those over 60 (Figure 23). Those aged 70 and older spend more of their time with family and friends, in recreation, leisure, hobbies, or involved in activities and engagement in the community than those aged 65-69. The 60-64 age group is the most likely to spend their time maintaining their health, exercising, and traveling.

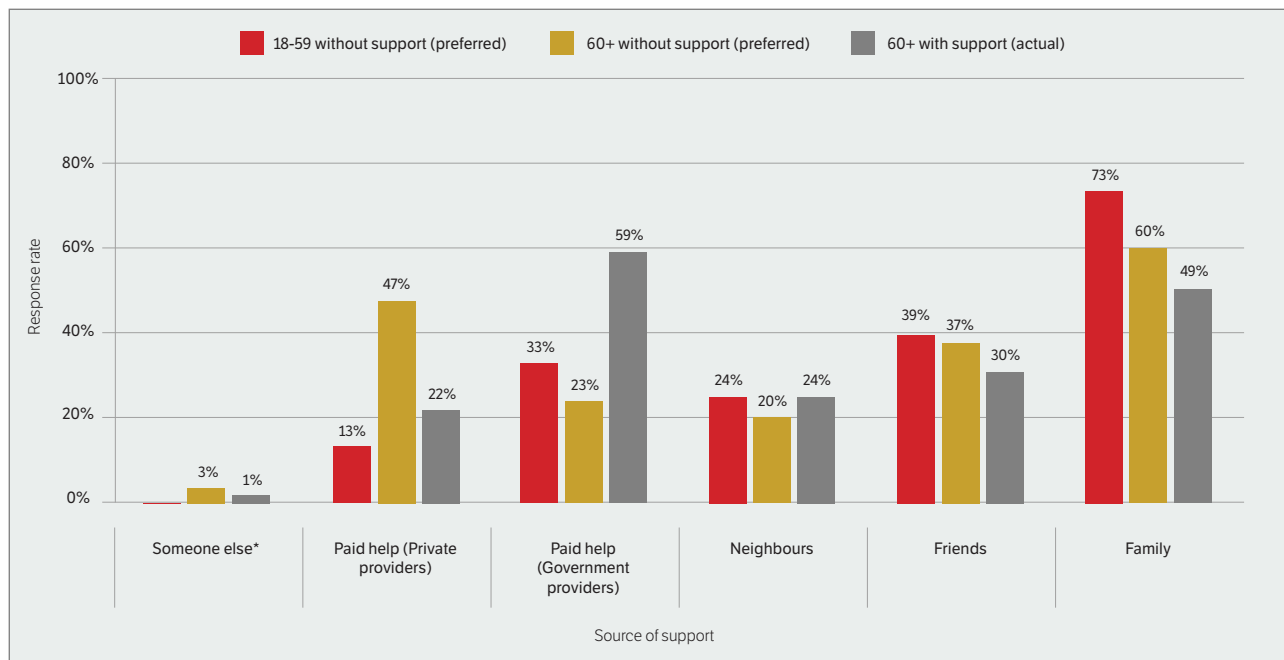
Older UAE nationals tend to perceive their lifestyle is better if they know others aged 60 or older outside their household. They also have higher participation rates in different activities (Figure 24), such as recreational activities, engagement in community activities, and

spending time with family and friends. Those who didn't know another older person have greater expectations of traveling and working when they are older. Similar expectations were observed amongst younger UAE nationals based on whether they knew someone over 60. Younger UAE nationals currently receiving support are more optimistic about their quality of life in their older age than older UAE nationals presently receiving support and care (Figure 25).

From Whom do UAE Nationals Want to Receive Support and Care?

Over 60% of Senior Emiratis surveyed receive assistance with everyday activities from informal sources (domestic workers, family, friends, and relatives) and formal services provided by for-profit businesses or the government. Survey participants were asked whether they currently receive support or care, and those receiving support or care were then asked from whom they receive it. Those not receiving support or care were asked where they would prefer to be living should they need it and who they would like to be providing that help if they saw themselves living independently. Multiple selections were allowed for these questions; therefore, responses to individual categories can sum above 100%.

Figure 26: Preferred and actual sources of support



Source: Q28. Who do you receive this support (for daily activities) from ... Q31. If you need SOME support for your daily activities such as help with shopping, cooking, cleaning, going out, or attending medical appointments, who would you LIKE to do this for you? Would it be... Qs 37-39. You mentioned that you see yourself living either "in your current house" or "near to family or friends" or "somewhere smaller than your current house" if you needed SOME support when you are 60 or older. Who would you like to provide this support? Would it be...? (Multiple responses allowed)

Base: 60+ UAE nationals who currently receive support for daily activities n=83; 60+ UAE nationals who DO NOT currently receive support for daily activities n=30; 18-50 UAE national who previously answered that if they needed SOME support when aged 60 or older, they would like to live either in their current house, somewhere smaller than their current house, or near family/friends n= 1,760.

Support services

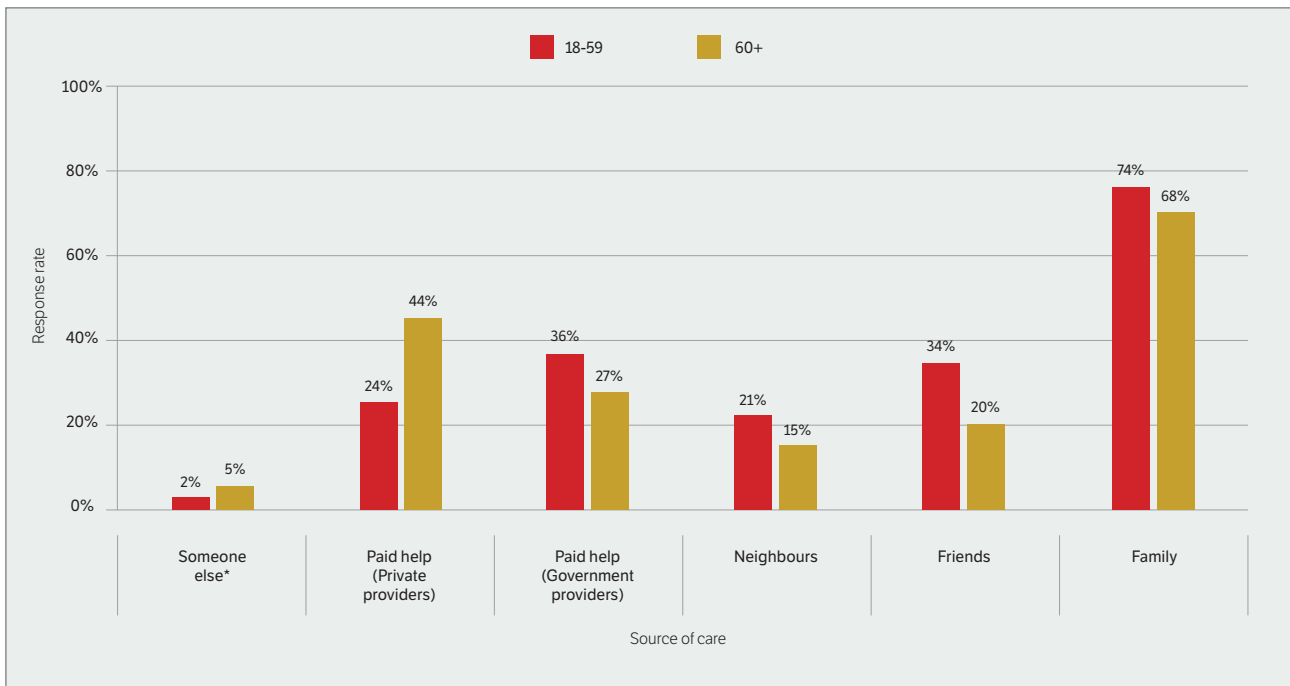
The most common current source of support received by older UAE nationals was paid help delivered by government providers at 59% (Figure 26). The next most common source was family (49%), followed by privately paid help (22%). Senior Emiratis who did not receive support with their daily activities had a much stronger tendency to receive support, should they need it in the future, from informal sources with help from family the preferred choice at 60%. These seniors also indicated that they would want paid help from private providers twice as much as they would want from government providers, which is the opposite of those who currently receive support. On the other hand, younger UAE nationals favored receiving support from family and friends but indicated they were less in favor of paid help from private providers, with preferences swinging towards formal support. Those who knew someone aged 60 or older were more likely to prefer support from a paid provider (61% compared to 50%) and less likely to prefer help from family (56% compared to 61%).

Slight differences were observed as UAE nationals aged. Those in the 60-64 age group preferred family and friends even though private and government providers provided their actual support. Fascinatingly, older UAE nationals over 70 preferred paid help from private providers (domestic caregiver or private nurse) and did not want support from their families. However, this was not the case if they currently received most of their support from paid help and family (Figure 26).

Care services

When it comes to receiving care services, such as help with dressing, eating, going to the bathroom, or nursing care, there is a strong preference (about 65%) among both older and younger UAE nationals for receiving care from their families (Figure 27). Also, over half of Senior Emiratis would like care from paid private help. Very few would like help from friends or neighbors or paid government help. Younger UAE nationals tend to be more open to care services provided by paid government providers and friends (36%). Only 24% of younger UAE nationals would want care from privately paid help.

Figure 27: Who UAE nationals want to care for them in older age



Source: Q33. If you needed CARE on an almost daily basis to assist you with things like dressing, eating, going to the bathroom, or nursing care, who would you like to do this for you? Qs41–43. You mentioned that you see yourself living either “in your current house” or “near to family or friends” or “somewhere smaller than your current house” if you needed MORE CARE when you are 60 or older. Who would you like to provide this support? Would it be...?

Base: Older people who DO NOT currently receive higher-level care and who previously answered that if they needed MORE CARE, they would like to live either in their current house, somewhere smaller than their current house, or near family/friends: n=41 (note: small base) Respondents aged 18-69, who previously answered that if they needed MORE CARE when aged 60 or older, they would like to live either in their current house, somewhere smaller than their current house, or near family/friends: Total n=2,107.

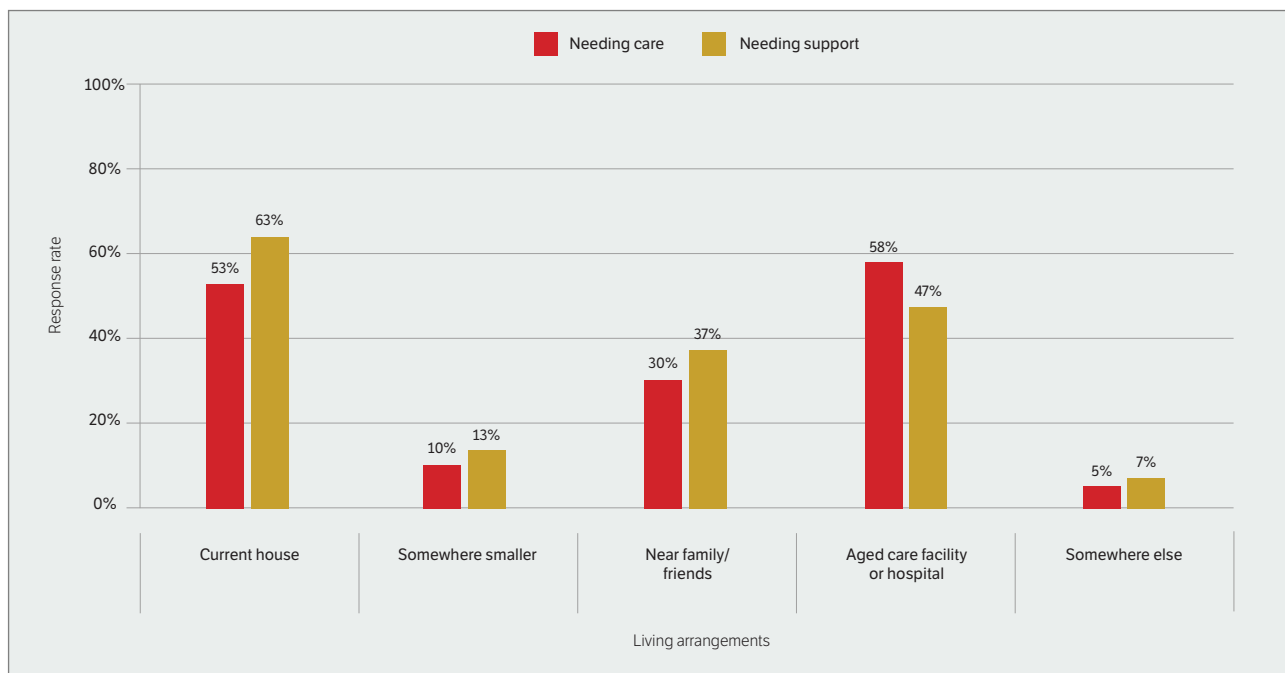
As is the case for support, people aged 18 to 34 are the most likely to want care from friends and the least likely to want care from paid help. Younger UAE nationals who knew an older person were much more likely to want care from family than those who did not know someone (72% compared to 53%) and less likely to want paid care from private providers (25% compared to 17%).

Where Do UAE Nationals Want to Live if They Need Support or Care?

Like older Australians, older UAE nationals strongly prefer to stay in their own home if they need support

(Figure 28). However, unlike older Australians, 58% of Senior Emiratis would agree to live in an aged care facility or hospital if they needed care. Around 35% indicated that they wanted to move nearer to family or friends, which is likely a way to improve their access to informal support and care. When considering if they needed support in older age, younger UAE nationals were more inclined to live near family or friends (49%) and stay in their current home (45%). A slightly higher number wanted to live in an aged care facility or hospital if they needed care (Figure 29).

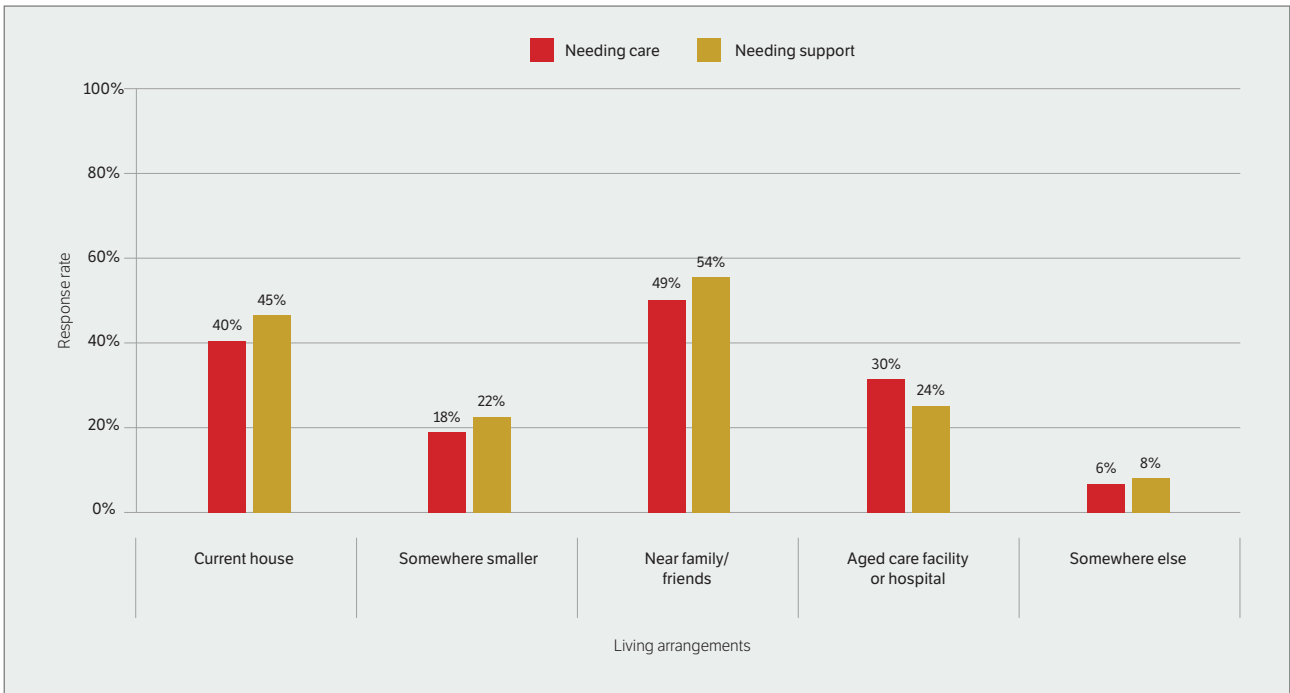
Figure 28: Where older UAE nationals want to live if they need support or care



Source: Q32. If you needed SOME support for your daily activities, where would you like to be living? Would it be ... Q34. If you need this type of CARE on an almost daily basis, where would you like to be living? Would it be... (Multiple responses allowed)

Base: 60+ UAE nationals who DO NOT currently receive support for daily activities n=30; 60+ UAE nationals who DO NOT currently receive a higher-level care n=40 (note: small base).

Figure 29: Where younger UAE nationals want to live if they need support or care



Source: Q36. When you are 60 or older, where would you LIKE to be living if you needed SOME support for things like shopping, cooking, cleaning, going out, or attending medical appointments? Q40. Where would you like to live if you needed MORE CARE on an almost daily basis for things like dressing, eating, going to the bathroom, or nursing care? Would you like to be living ...? (Multiple responses allowed)

Base: UAE nationals aged 18-69: Total (18-69) n= 1961

Which Types of Aged Care Services are Important?

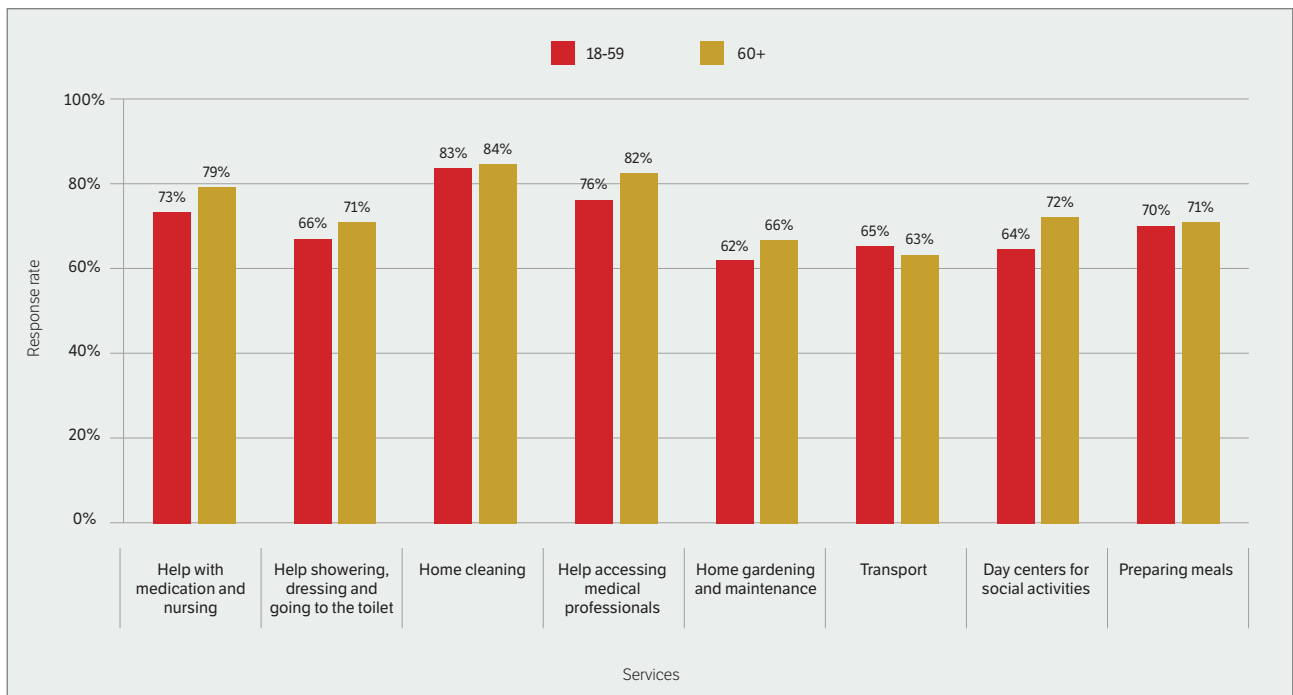
Respondents were asked whether they thought it was important to have particular support and care services available to them if they needed those services in the future and which services they consider most important. As shown in Figure 30, all services were considered somewhat important by most UAE nationals.

Senior Emiratis tended to place more importance on services related to health, hygiene, and cleanliness. They identified home cleaning (84%), accessing medical professionals (82%), and medication and

nursing care (79%) as most important, followed by help with showering, dressing, and going to the toilet. Equal importance was given to preparing meals and day centers for social activities. Older UAE nationals viewed all services as more important than did younger nationals. The services least likely to be seen as necessary by both younger and older UAE nationals were transport, gardening, and maintenance.

When asked to nominate the most critical service, younger UAE nationals emphasized help with medication and nursing (Figure 31), followed by showering, dressing, or going to the toilet (24%) at second place.

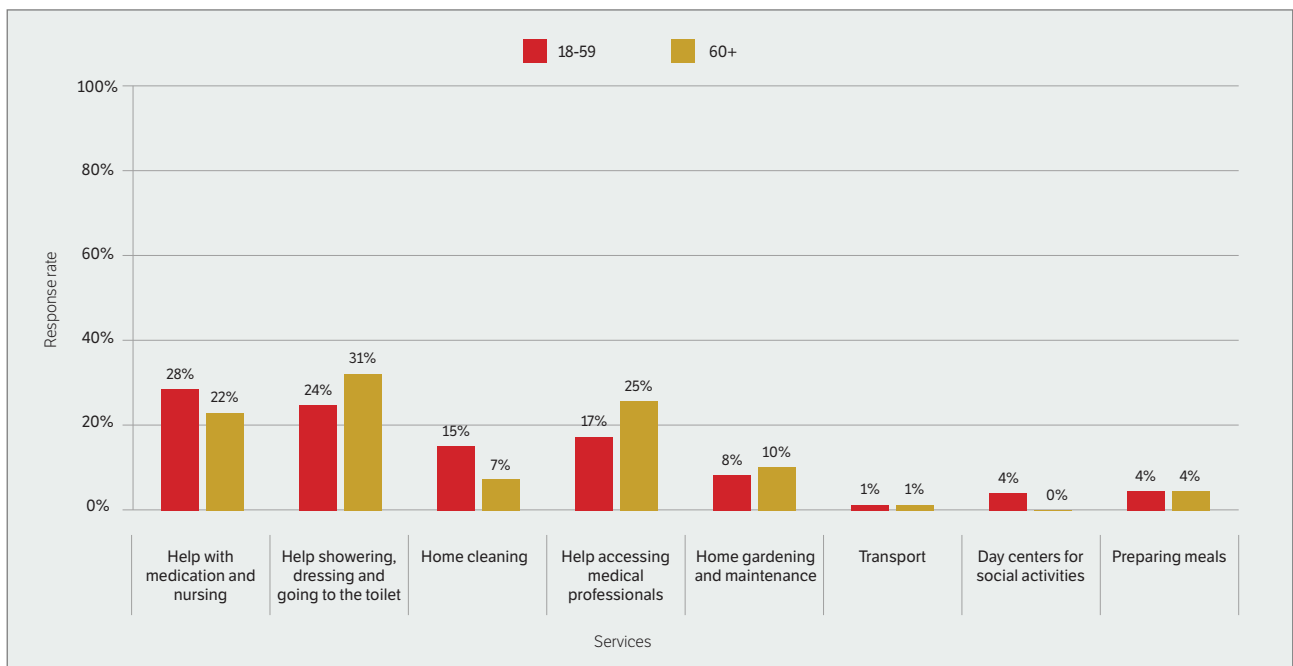
Figure 30: Which aged care services are important



Source: Q44. Still thinking about when you are 60 or older, how important are the following types of aged care services? Q49. Would you say it is important or unimportant that the following services are available if you need them?

Base: UAE nationals 18-59 n=1,961; UAE nationals 60+, n=113.

Figure 31: What is the most important aged care service



Source: Q44. Still thinking about when you are 60 or older, how important are the following types of aged care services? Q45. You've rated more than one type of care service as important; of these, which one do you think is most important to have available to you? Would it be...? Q49. Would you say it is important or unimportant that the following services are available if you need them? Q50. You've rated more than one type of care service as important; of these, which one do you think is most important.

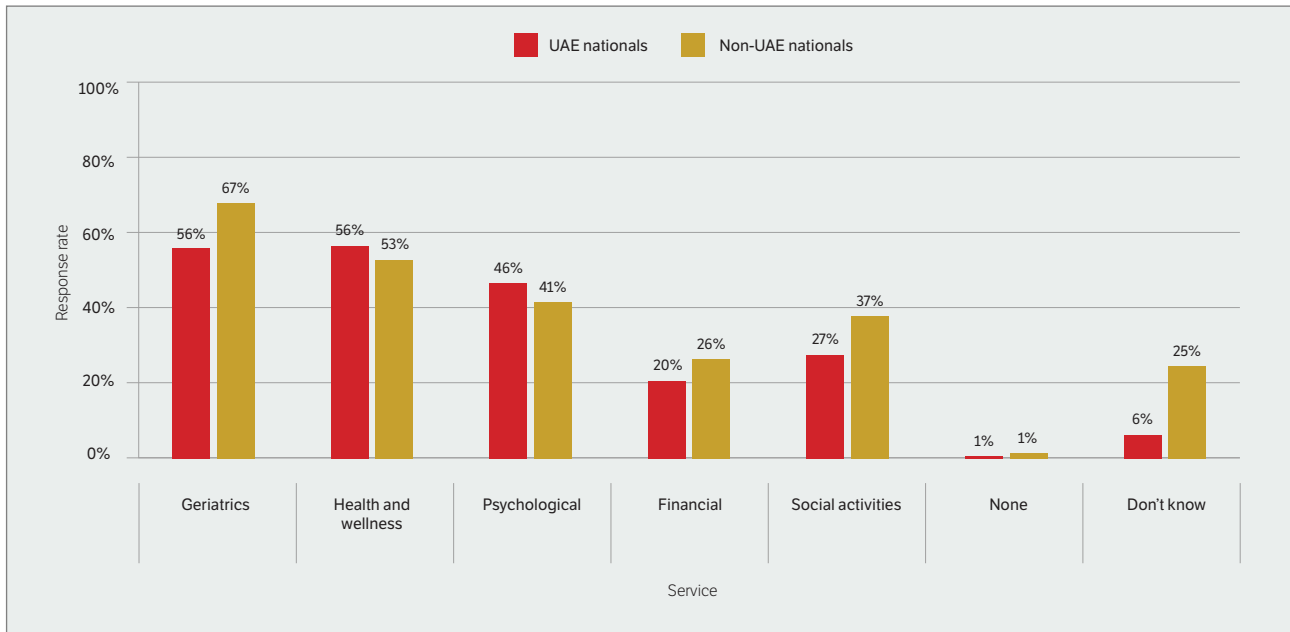
Base: UAE nationals 18-59 n=1,961; UAE nationals 60+ n=113.

Which Types of Aged Care Services are Available in the UAE?

To determine if the UAE population is aware of the aged care services available, respondents were asked which types of aged care services they think are accessible in the UAE. Generally, the UAE population thinks a wide range of aged care services are available in the UAE, with over half believing that geriatric, health and wellness, and psychological services are available.

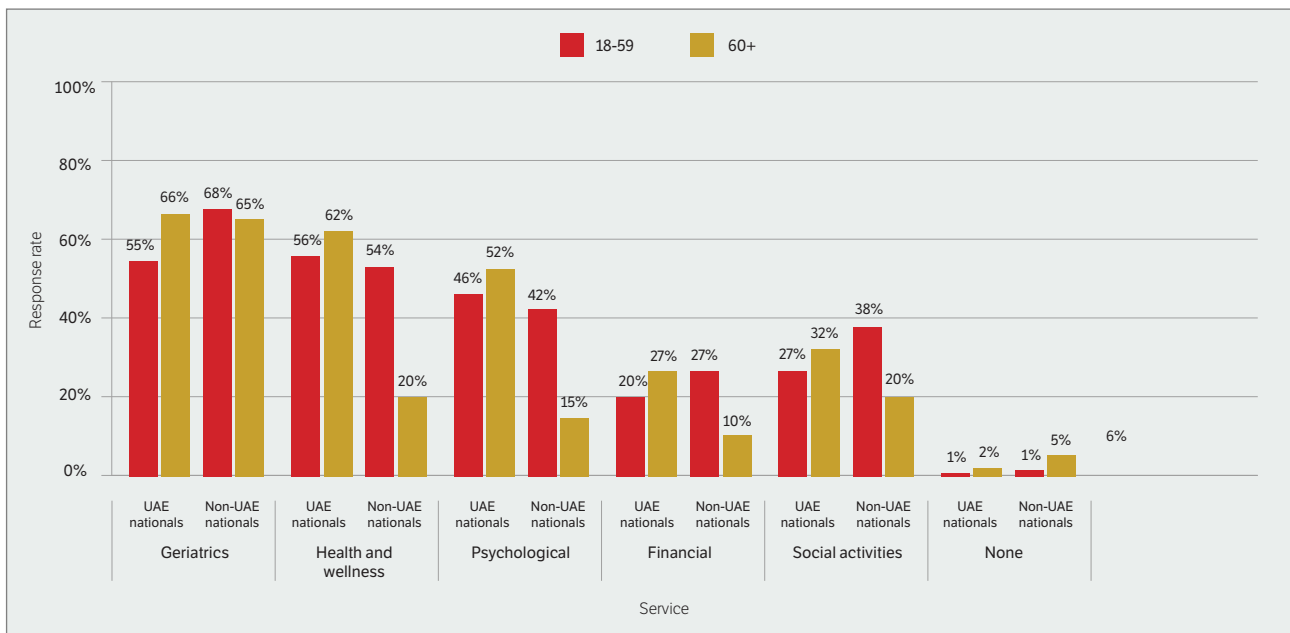
and psychological services are available. No significant difference was observed amongst the different age groups; however, older UAE nationals were most likely to believe that a wide range of services is available (Figure 32). Interestingly, younger non-UAE nationals think there are more services available than younger UAE nationals. Those who knew someone over the age of 60 and those who have visited an aged care facility were more likely to believe more aged care services were available (Figure 33).

Figure 32: What type of aged care service does the UAE population think is available in the UAE



Base: UAE nationals n=2,074; Non-UAE nationals n=661.

Figure 33: What type of aged care service does the older and younger UAE population think is available in the UAE



Source: Q63. What type of aged care services do you know or think are available in the UAE? (multiple responses allowed)

Base: All UAE nationals n=2,074; UAE nationals 18-59 n=1,961; UAE nationals 60+ n=113; All Non-UAE nationals n=661; Non-UAE nationals 18-59 n=641; Non-UAE nationals 60+ n=20 (note: small base).

Conclusion

This report explored the future of aging and aged care in the UAE based on a survey of Emiratis and expatriates. The findings show that all kinds of support and care services are considered necessary by both younger and older UAE nationals. They also suggest that the current care system is underdeveloped, information is scarce, and respondents are unaware of the emerging challenges in aged care. It is also clear that UAE nationals lack awareness about the country's increasingly aging population. Worryingly, younger people are also unaware of the consequences of aging, and Senior Emiratis do not have enough knowledge about maintaining healthy lifestyles, active ways to spend their time, and the demand for care and support required by the elderly. The country's shifting demographics, changes in the patterns of disease and dependency, older peoples' expectations, and shifting family structure will create pressure on the demand for aged care in the future. Thus, public stakeholders must recognize the urgency and start building it now to create an effective aged care system. Below we outline seven recommendations that could assist policymakers across the UAE.

Recommendations

We have identified seven recommendations where action can begin to adjust the care system best to meet the future needs of the aging population.

1. Establish mixed community centers for youth and the elderly.

In these places, both groups come together under one roof for social events, educational classes, and recreational activities, giving older people the opportunity to be connected to young people and young people to learn from the elderly.

2. Launch a Ministry for Aging and Aged care.

The UAE government could consider creating a ministry to promote healthy aging and prepare Emiratis for old age while supporting and providing services to older people.

3. Increase public awareness and provide greater visibility for older people.

The UAE government could launch an awareness campaign that increases public knowledge of the aging process to ensure the population is prepared to age while also growing their information on current care services and how to access them promptly.

4. Encourage youth to volunteer with the elderly.

Responsible government entities should encourage youth volunteers to help older people in many ways, including escorting and transporting frail older persons to health care services and visiting homebound elderly to help ensure their well-being through regular social contact.

5. Upgrade investments in aged care infrastructure.

The UAE's federal government could consider investing more strategically in the health care infrastructure to address the most pressing needs that exist today. Investments could include training more aged care specialists and constructing state-of-the-art, dedicated aged care facilities, and buildings across the UAE.

6. Professionalize family caregivers and domestic workers through targeted training.

It is essential to provide specialized training that supports the capacity development of family caregivers and domestic workers who care for the elderly population offered by professional healthcare providers.

7. Improve data collection and research related to elderly care.

UAE government entities need to expand their data infrastructures to monitor, track, and report on the elderly population at federal and emirate levels. Research into aging and aged care issues in the UAE also needs to be incentivized through targeted funding.

Glossary

Older people: People aged 60 years or older

Younger people: People aged between 18 and 59 years

UAE Population: UAE nationals and non-UAE nationals aged 18 years or older

UAE nationals: UAE citizens and Comorian citizens

Non-UAE nationals: UAE residents

Aged Care Facility: Aged care home, nursing home, hospital, or residential medical ward for older people who can no longer live at home and need ongoing help with everyday tasks or medical care.

Support: Help with daily activities such as shopping, cooking, cleaning, and attending medical appointments.

Care: Assistance provided daily or almost daily with things like dressing, eating, going to the bathroom and nursing/medical care.

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