



Older Aucklanders: a quality of life summary report | August 2022



Research and
Evaluation Unit

RIMU





Te Whakataki | Introduction: The 2022 survey of older Aucklanders' wellbeing

Quality of Life is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as 'individuals' perceptions of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns'. There are many aspects which can contribute to an individual's quality of life including, relationships, mental and physical health, safety, and sense of belonging in a community.

Tāmaki Makaurau Tauawhi Kaumātua – Age-Friendly Auckland Action Plan 2022-2027

Tāmaki Makaurau Tauawhi Kaumātua, Age-friendly Auckland Action Plan (the Plan) was adopted in late 2021 with the intention of enabling better quality of life for Auckland's older people. The Plan is based on the WHO Age-Friendly Cities and Communities Framework and Te Whare Tapa Whā, a Māori wellbeing framework adapted by Sir Mason Durie. The Plan identifies relevant actions for the council and other government agencies, organisations, individuals, and communities, to take to address 10 domains of wellbeing for older Aucklanders.

Older Aucklanders Quality of Life Study 2022 and 2017

A baseline Older Aucklanders quality of life study was undertaken in 2016-17, and indicators and measures were developed. The study was based on data collected from a survey of Aucklanders aged 65 and older, and secondary sources.

This 2022 study builds on the baseline study to monitor changes over time. Indicators and measures were revised to align with the 10 ngā rohe/domains of Tāmaki Makaurau Tauawhi Kaumātua. Data was collected in a survey of older Aucklanders, and from secondary sources. The Electoral Roll and the People's Panel were used to invite participation, with 1403 survey responses. This report summarises the main findings from *Older Aucklanders: a quality of life status report*.

A full copy of the report titled, *Older Aucklanders: a quality of life status report (2022)*, can be found on the Knowledge Auckland website.

An additional qualitative research study was undertaken to explore the quality of life for older Māori, to support the kaumātua domain of the Plan and provide deeper insight into the wellbeing of older mana whenua (iwi and hapū with historic and territorial rights in Tāmaki Makaurau), and mataawaka (urban Māori). This research on the quality of life of older Māori Aucklanders was led by Māori researchers, and guided by a Rōpū Kaumātua. The *Quality of Life of Older Māori in Auckland* report can be found on the *Knowledge Auckland website*.

Ngā Kitenga Matua | Key Findings

Eight in ten older Aucklanders reported a 'good' quality of life.

This was similar to 2016. Higher quality of life was more common in those aged 75-84, Pākehā/NZ European, and those living in North Auckland. The data reveals inequalities between older Aucklanders from Central and North Auckland, and those living in West, South and East Auckland. In this report, the 20 per cent of Aucklanders who do not report a good quality of life, are likely to face comparatively poor outcomes across the 10 ngā rohe/domains of the Tāmaki Makaurau Tauawhi Kaumātua – the Age-friendly Auckland Action Plan .

For older people in Tāmaki Makaurau, having a positive quality of life was driven by family relationships, enjoying life, good health, and having enough to meet their needs. A negative quality of life was driven by poor financial wellbeing, poor health, and losing independence.

COVID-19 had negative impacts on wellbeing

COVID-19 and associated restrictions on movement negatively affected older Aucklanders' mental health, and ability to maintain relationships. On the other hand, large proportions of older Aucklanders told us that COVID-19 restrictions had no impact on their physical health (51%), financial situations (57%) and job security (72%).

Quality of life varied across different areas of Tāmaki Makaurau

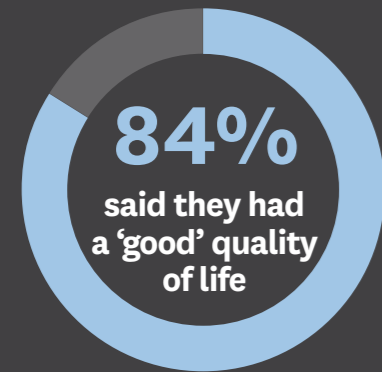
Older people living in the central and northern areas of Auckland were generally more positive about the different domains contributing to quality of life. Residents in the eastern, southern, and western parts of Auckland reported more negative experiences than those in northern and central Auckland. These experiences centred on: housing affordability; economic living standards; and perceptions of safety at home and in their local neighbourhoods.

The following page highlights key differences in the wellbeing of older Aucklanders across Tāmaki Makaurau. The remaining pages contain a summary of findings for the 10 domains.



Older Aucklanders experienced varying quality of life depending on where they lived

North Auckland



More likely to



Be more satisfied with green spaces, but also more likely to view water pollution as a problem

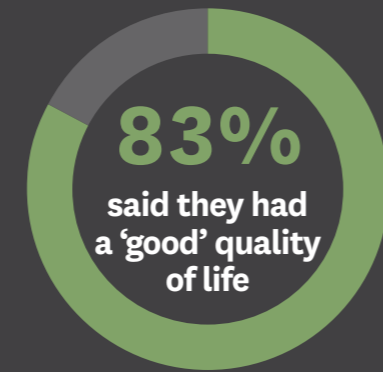


Feel safe at home, in their local neighbourhoods and in their town centres



Be more confident using the Internet

Central Auckland



More likely to



Have high cultural participation



Be satisfied with green spaces



Agree housing is affordable

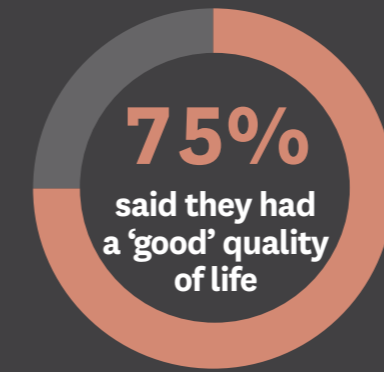


Have more positive perceptions, and higher usage, of public transport



Have enough income to meet everyday needs

South/East Auckland



More likely to



Be dissatisfied with green spaces



Have low trust in others and feel unsafe



Not have enough income to meet needs

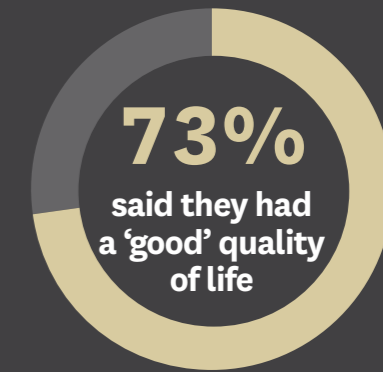


Have more negative perceptions, and low usage, of public transport



Have low access to, and low confidence in, using the Internet

West Auckland



More likely to



Feel unsafe at home and in their local area



Say they have poor/fair physical health

Less likely to



Feel a sense of community



Agree that housing costs are affordable



Older Māori had similar quality of life outcomes to non-Māori older Aucklanders



Most older Māori (82%) said they had a good quality of life.

But like all older Aucklanders, COVID-19 negatively impacted them (especially their mental health and social ties).



Older Māori tended to have negative experiences with public transport, especially with safety and accessibility.

47% felt that it was safe while waiting for public transport (compared to 58% of the total sample) and 46% thought public transport was accessible (compared to 58% of all older Aucklanders).



Overall, many reported having good health.

However, fewer (66%) said they had good physical health, compared to all older Aucklanders (72%).



More older Māori (28%) were dissatisfied with how clean their green spaces were, compared to all older Aucklanders (20%).



They were also less likely to agree they could afford to heat their homes in winter (66%), compared to 76% of all older Aucklanders.



More older Māori had no access to the Internet (11%) compared to all older Aucklanders (5%).



Older Māori were well connected.

They participated in different social networks and groups, especially professional and parent/grandparent networks. However, they had less trust in others (62%), compared to older Aucklanders in general (78%).



A high proportion (71%) felt they had opportunities to play a valued role as an elder in their whānau and communities.



They were also less likely to agree they could afford to heat their homes in winter (66%), compared to 76% of all older Aucklanders.



Older Aucklanders are growing in ethnic diversity

Proportion of combined Māori, Pacific, and Asian ethnic groups continue to rise*



Around three in every five older Aucklanders told us they feel accepted and valued in their community.

Those who felt this way were more likely to be central Aucklanders.



Three-quarters felt that council services treated them with kindness and communicated in their preferred language.

A lower proportion thought that council services met their cultural (56%) or accessibility (58%) needs.



Three in every four told us they felt comfortable dressing in a way that expressed their identity in public.

Asian older Aucklanders, plus those living in Central Auckland, were especially positive.



Two-thirds said they feel safe and supported.

However, those less likely to feel supported tended to be 65-74 years old, with a bigger proportion living in West Auckland.



Two in every three felt they could participate in activities and events of their own culture.

This has improved substantially since 2016.

*Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census of Population and Dwelling. People could identify with more than one ethnicity so these groups are not mutually exclusive.



The natural and built environments are of concern to older Aucklanders



In general, older Aucklanders were satisfied with the quality and cleanliness of green spaces around them.

There were clear differences by area and ethnic group. Satisfaction was higher among Asians and those living in North or Central Auckland, but was lower among Māori, Pacific and south/east Aucklanders.



Older Aucklanders were concerned about noise and water pollution.

Females were more concerned than males about pollution, as were Pacific and Pākehā/NZ European older Aucklanders.



Close to half of older Aucklanders said they were worried about climate change.

Pacific older Aucklanders were most likely out of all ethnic groups to say they did not know enough about climate change.



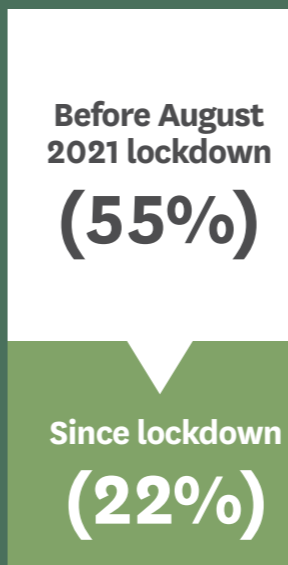
Three in every five older Aucklanders told us they made sustainable consumption choices in their daily lives.

This was more common among females, and less common among males, Pacific older Aucklanders, and those aged 85 years and over.

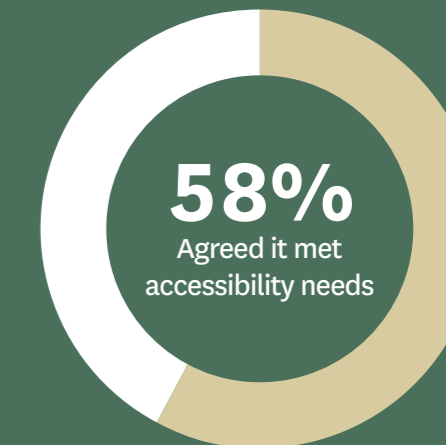
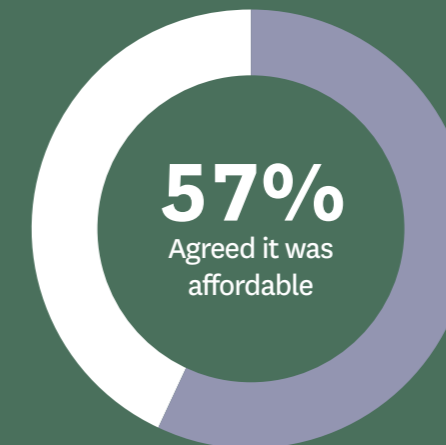
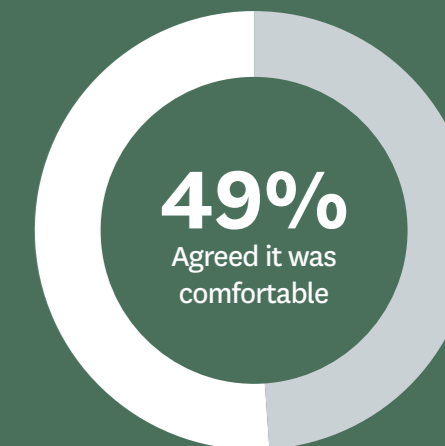
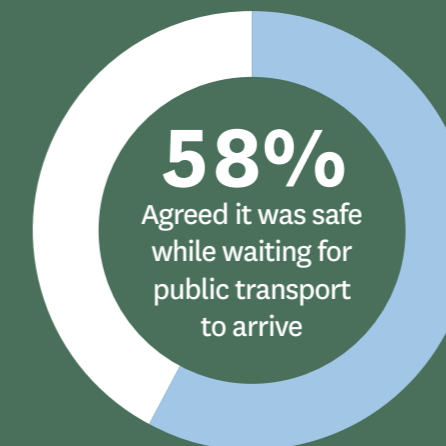


There is a need for accessible footpaths, tracks and public transport

Use of public transport



Older Aucklanders' perceptions of public transport



More positive perceptions among Central Auckland residents and less positive perceptions among South/East Auckland residents.



Fewer than half of the respondents were satisfied with the quality of footpaths and accessible tracks in their neighbourhood. Those who were satisfied were more likely to be Asian, and less likely to be Pākehā/NZ European or Pacific.



Forty per cent of older Aucklanders disagree that their housing costs are affordable



Two in every three older Aucklanders lived in a standalone home.

Most older Aucklanders said they owned their own home.



More than half of all respondents lived with just one other person.

This was more common among males, Pākehā/NZ European, and those living in North Auckland.



Older Aucklanders felt safer at home during the day than at home after dark.

Feeling safe was more common among North Auckland residents, and less common among West Auckland residents.



Only three in every five agreed their housing costs were affordable.

Clear differences by age, area, and ethnic group included lower perceptions of affordability among Pacific (45%) and Asian (50%) older Aucklanders, as well as those aged 65-74 (55%).



Three in every four agreed they could afford to heat their homes in winter.

Māori (66%) and Pacific (56%) older Aucklanders were less likely to agree.



Most older Aucklanders (87%) agreed their house suited their household's needs.

Pacific older Aucklanders were more likely to disagree that their house met their household's needs, compared to other ethnic groups (14% versus 6%).



Older Aucklanders are well connected to family and friends



Older Aucklanders' connections to family and friends have increased.

Around 84% agreed they were visited by friends and whānau as often as they wanted, up from 77% in 2016.



Over three-quarters participated in some type of social network or group.

Older Asian and west Aucklanders were more likely to not be part of any network or group.



Two-thirds of our participants said they never or rarely felt lonely or isolated in the last 12 months.

They were more likely to be male, but were less likely to be female and 85 years and over.



Older Aucklanders feel less safe in their local neighbourhoods and town centres after dark, compared to during the day.

This was more pronounced for South/East and West Auckland residents.



Almost two in every three agreed they feel a sense of community with others in their local area.

This was lower among West Auckland residents.



Almost 80% said they trusted others.

This was lower among younger participants (those aged 65-74), as well as south/east Aucklanders and Māori.



Older Aucklanders experience discrimination



Older Aucklanders make a valued contribution, but some are struggling to have needs met



Almost one in five said they experienced age-based discrimination.

People saying they had experienced this were more likely to be born in New Zealand than overseas.



Almost one in every ten older New Zealanders have reported experiencing elder abuse*.

However, this is likely under-reported. Global data indicates elder abuse has been on the rise since the onset of the pandemic.



Almost one in ten had experienced ethnic-based discrimination.

They were more likely to be residents of South/East Auckland.



Only 4% of Aucklanders aged 65+ reported being victims of crime.**

The most common type of crime committed against them was theft.

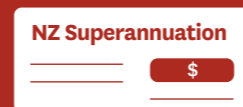
*Source: New Zealand Longitudinal Study of Ageing

**Source: New Zealand Police



Older Aucklanders have high turnout in local (58%) and central government (84%) elections.

This is higher than other age groups (35% of all enrolled Aucklanders voted in the local election and 79% voted in the central government election)*.



Most older Aucklanders (85%) received New Zealand Superannuation as their main source of income.

Pacific and Asian older Aucklanders were less likely to receive this income type.

*Source: Auckland Council data



Two-thirds of older Aucklanders report having opportunities to play a valued role as an elder in their families and communities.

Those aged 85+ years reported fewer opportunities.



About eight in ten older Aucklanders did unpaid work.

Two-thirds of these older Aucklanders were aged 65-74 years old.



More Aucklanders aged 65-74 years are remaining in the labour workforce over time, meaning they are retiring later in life.



Almost three in every five older Aucklanders said they had enough or more than enough money to meet their everyday needs.

Those less likely to have enough money to meet their daily needs were Pacific, Asian, and South/East Auckland residents.



Older Aucklanders have increasing access to, and confidence using, the Internet



88% can now access and use the Internet, up from 74% in 2016.

Around one in every ten older Aucklanders have no access to or do not use the Internet.

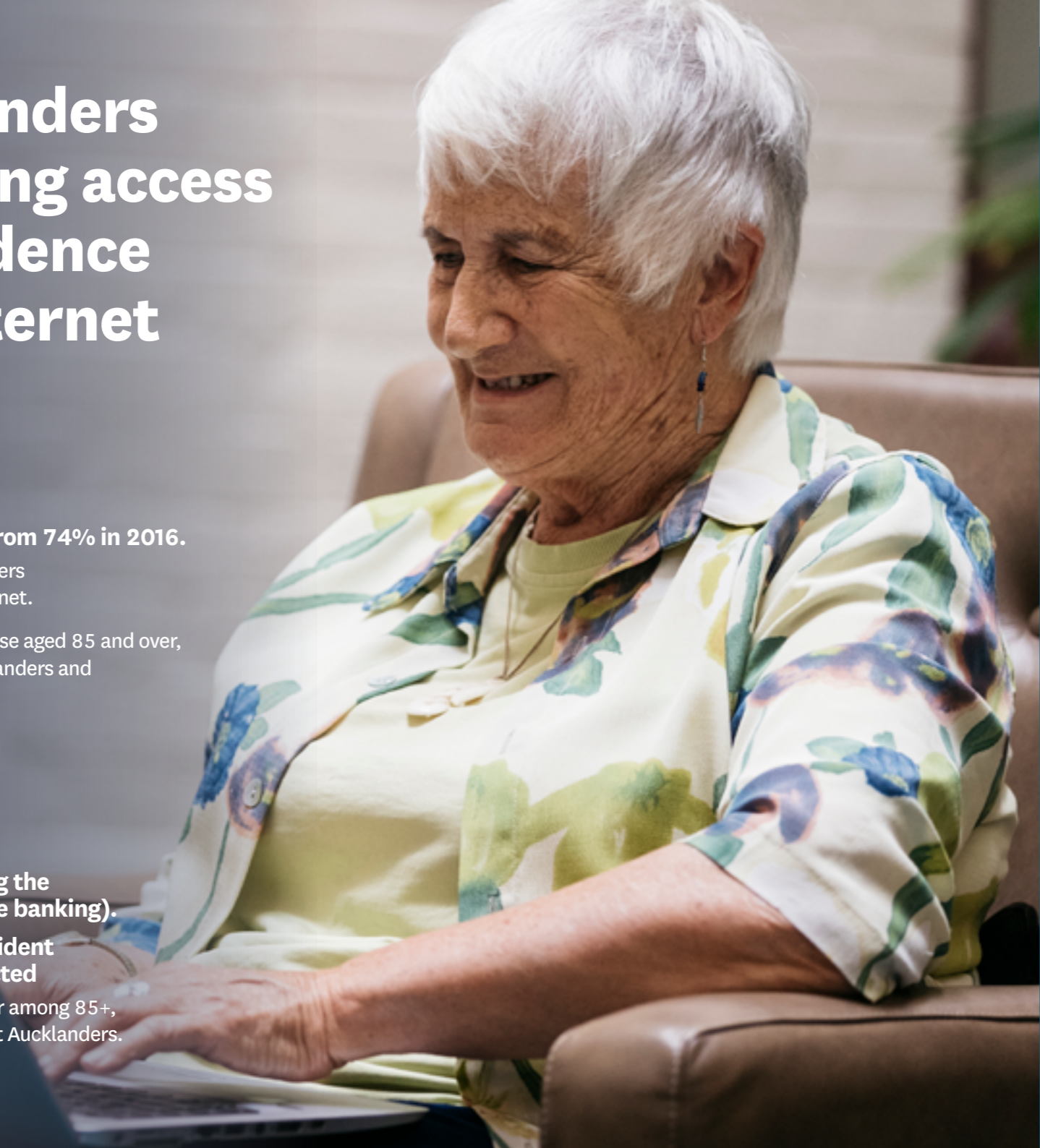
Lack of access to technology was much higher among those aged 85 and over, as well as among Pacific and Māori older Aucklanders and residents of South/East Auckland.



Three-quarters feel confident using the Internet to make transactions (e.g. online banking).

Eight in ten feel confident using the Internet to keep connected

Confidence to use the Internet was generally lower among 85+, Pacific and Asian peoples, and south/east and west Aucklanders.



High levels of health reported by many older Aucklanders



A high level of older Aucklanders rated their health in general (79%) and their physical health (72%) as good.

Those rating their general health as good were more likely to be Pākehā/NZ European (84%), but less likely to be 85+ (72%), Asian (66%), and west Aucklanders (74%).



Nine in every ten told us their family and relationship health was good.

This was slightly lower for west Aucklanders.



Most respondents (95%) had visited a GP in the last 12 months. Older Aucklanders could generally access primary care.



Fewer than half never or rarely experienced serious stress with a negative effect.



A high level (75%) of older Aucklanders had good mental wellbeing, as shown by their high mental and emotional health ratings.



Most older Aucklanders (over 90%) said they did some type of physical activity in the last week.

Of the small number that said they did no or very little activity, this group was more likely to be 85 years and over (19%), Pacific (21%), or Asian (14%).



Whakairo Mutunga | Final Thoughts

Some older Aucklanders are faring better than others

This report updates evidence about the quality of life of older Aucklanders since the baseline study. Auckland has faced multifaceted changes to its social, cultural, environmental and economic landscape in recent years, particularly with COVID-19. The broader demographic context of an ageing, ethnically diverse population and the expected acceleration of ageing in coming decades also poses unique challenges and opportunities for Auckland to navigate.

Despite some of the challenges facing Auckland, such as housing unaffordability, the cost of living, and climate change, older Aucklanders as a broad group continue to report good quality of life. This picture varies for different groups of older people across the city. Our data showed clear differences by geographic area, with more positive outcomes enjoyed by older residents in the central and northern parts of Auckland. Meanwhile, residents in the eastern, southern, and western parts of Auckland perceived there was room for greater improvements in the domains contributing to their wellbeing.

There are opportunities to plan and deliver our services in ways that meet the needs of our ever-evolving population of older people. Auckland Council will continue to work with its stakeholders – including central government, organisations, groups, and local communities – to understand and respond to these challenges and opportunities.

Older Aucklanders: a quality of life status report (2022), can be found on the *Knowledge Auckland website*.

For more details visit the *Age-Friendly Auckland website*.



Find out more:

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