

## Aging at home versus making the move



**Matt Del Vecchio**  
Seniors and Aging

As the population ages, couples and individuals start considering their living options. Most homeowners would like to stay in their homes for as long as they can. The pandemic has only reinforced our desire to age in place for as long as we can.

### Why move?

The short answer is do not move if you do not have to. Most homeowners are not considering a move these days. Should there be a move on the horizon, many are waiting until they have been vaccinated. However, there are many situations that make the decision to stay at home a little more challenging.

After working with hundreds of families in similar situations, it is always best to be proactive rather than reactive. Here are some of the most popular reasons why some people are choosing to move instead of aging in place:

### Cashing in

The real estate market has been on fire the last couple of years. Some are concerned that there will be a cooling off period and a correction that could see a reduction in prices. Others are simply fed up with maintaining a

home.

We are seeing a trend of homeowners cashing in on their investment (usually mortgage free) and downsizing to a senior living community where they will now eliminate the burden of owning a home. They are investing the revenue generated from the sale to help subsidize their new way of living.

### Increasing care requirements

Mobility challenges begin to increase as we age. Stairs become difficult to navigate. Getting in and out of the bathtub becomes dangerous. The risk of slips and falls usually increase as we age. Others start to experience cognitive challenges such as early stages of dementia. Over time, cognitive abilities begin to decline, and it becomes more difficult to manage day-to-day living in a house.

### Caregiver stress

Couples age differently. Inevitably, one spouse starts to require more care than the other. Before you know it, you have become one of the 8 million Canadians that are considered unpaid caregivers. The role of caregiver can be stressful and exhausting, especially in a home environment that is not conducive to the greater demands of proper care.

### Loneliness and isolation

The pandemic has taken a toll on our men-



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tal health resulting in excessive feelings of loneliness and isolation, especially for those living alone in their homes. Most of us desire social interaction and a sense of community. As a result, many choose to make the move to a retirement home where you can live autonomously while taking advantage of the many amenities of a senior living community.

We are starting to see signs of hope. Vaccinations are picking up. All residents in CHSLDs have had their first dose. Most people living in retirement homes (RPAs) are either already vaccinated or they are expected to receive their first dose within the next 2-3 weeks.

Early results are extremely encouraging. New COVID-19 cases in seniors' residences have decreased dramatically – a sign the vaccinations are doing their job. So the timing may be right to explore your senior living options in a competitive industry that is offering more and more services, amenities, food options and increased care levels.

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