

# *The Singapore perspective*

Adults who have a sense of purpose in life age better, and enjoy better health. That is what Singapore researchers found in a recent study.

Their paper on Purpose in Life in Older Adults was published in May in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and*

*Public Health*.

The study was conducted by researchers from three institutes: National University of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University and Institute of Mental Health.

The researchers defined purpose in life or PIL as a psychological

construct that reflects one's life goals and the desire or determination to pursue them.

"While development of PIL is a lifelong process, studies evidenced that PIL tends to drop with old age," they said in their paper.

Retirement, chronic illnesses and widowhood are associated

with a decline in PIL, the researchers found.

They also found evidence to suggest that having a purpose in life protects older adults against cognitive decline, Alzheimer's disease, disability, cardiovascular complications and death.

Linked to that is the finding that

older adults who have a sense of purpose pay attention to their diet, exercise and physical health.

The researchers concluded that "helping older adults to develop or maintain a purpose in life is imperative given the rapidly ageing population across the globe".

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