COTA NT 2019 Survey: Results

Published by COTA NT, June 2020

Disclaimer: The results shown in this report are based on responses from senior Territorians to a hardcopy survey conducted by COTA NT from May through August 2019.

Results are shown as a percentage of valid responses to each question. The data in this report should not be considered to be a statistically sound representation, rather an indication of the circumstances and views of senior Territorians that submitted survey responses.

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COTA NORTHERN TERRITORY
for senior Territorians

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1. Introduction

COTA NT's advocacy for senior Territorians aims to effect positive social change. It helps ensure that seniors' voices are heard on issues important to them.

COTA NT aims to defend and safeguard seniors' rights and ensure their views are genuinely considered, especially when decisions are being made about their lives.

COTA NT has over 50 years of history in advocating for senior Territorians and ensuring their voice has a say in the development of public policy and legislation. We work towards making change through networks, through connections, and by lobbying and contacting governments, political parties, public services, the media and the public in general.

Our research, surveys and reports, are published on our website, www.cotant.org.au/about-us/cota-advocacy/our-research.

2. Data source

The information is this report is based on the COTA NT 2019 Seniors Survey, a survey filled out by senior Territorians aged 50 and over.

- The survey was conducted from May through August 2019.
- The primary purpose of this survey is to attain responses from seniors attending the 2019 Seniors Expo and from regional areas such as Katherine and Alice Springs.
- These results will also be used as a comparison to previous surveys and research.
- Hard copy forms were used to conduct the survey.
- This information should not be considered definitive or scientific research.

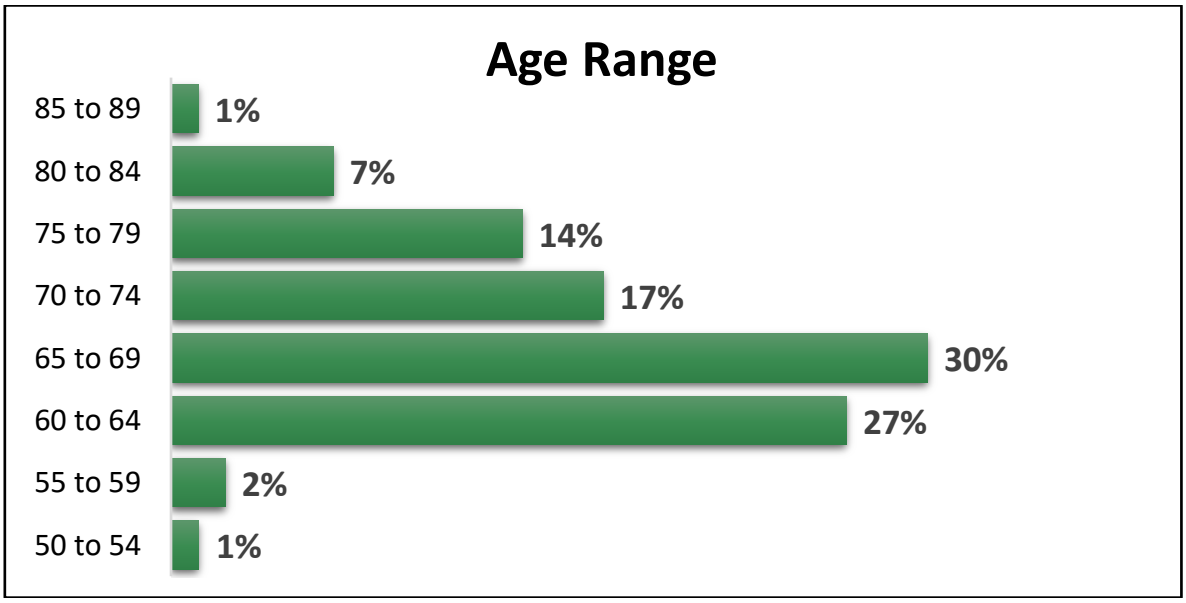
See Appendix A: COTA NT 2019 Seniors Survey

The 2019 COTA NT survey was distributed and filled out in paper form by 95 respondents. The survey was based around the following topics:

- Demographics
- Residency in the Northern Territory
- Crime and security
- Financial security
- Physical and mental well-being
- Quality of life and concerns.

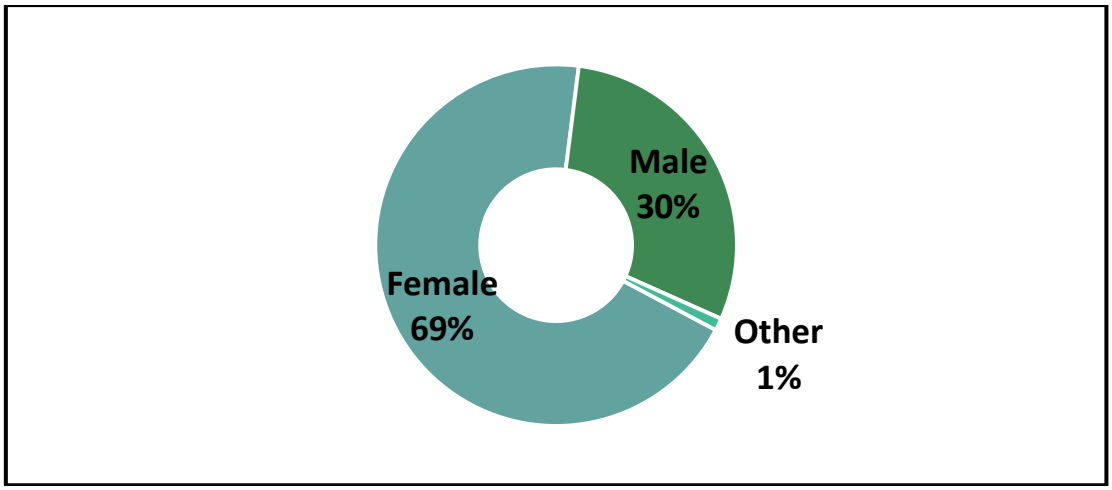
3. Demographics

Age distribution of respondents



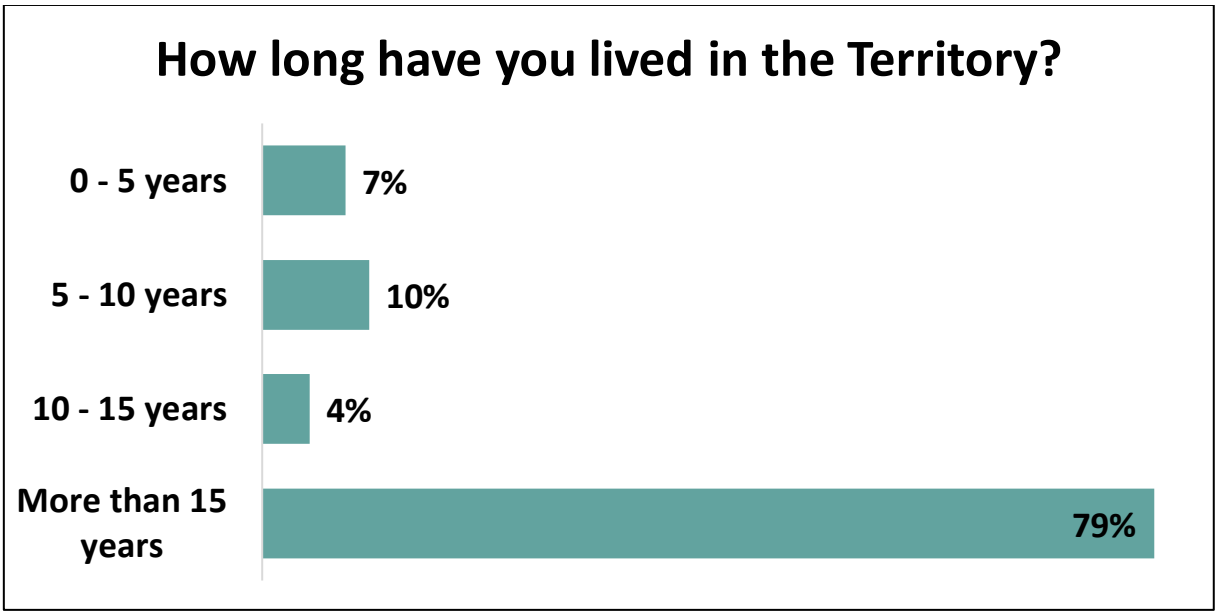
- Three people did not respond to this question and there were no respondents in the 90 - 94 years, 95 - 99 years or 100+ years age groups.
- The results showed that respondents were aged between 50 and 89 years with most of the respondents (57%) aged between 60 and 69 years of age.
- *The age range may be reflective of the locations and events where the survey was conducted (i.e. Seniors Expo, Katherine Seniors Citizens Club, Yeperenye Wellness Day).*

Gender distribution of respondents

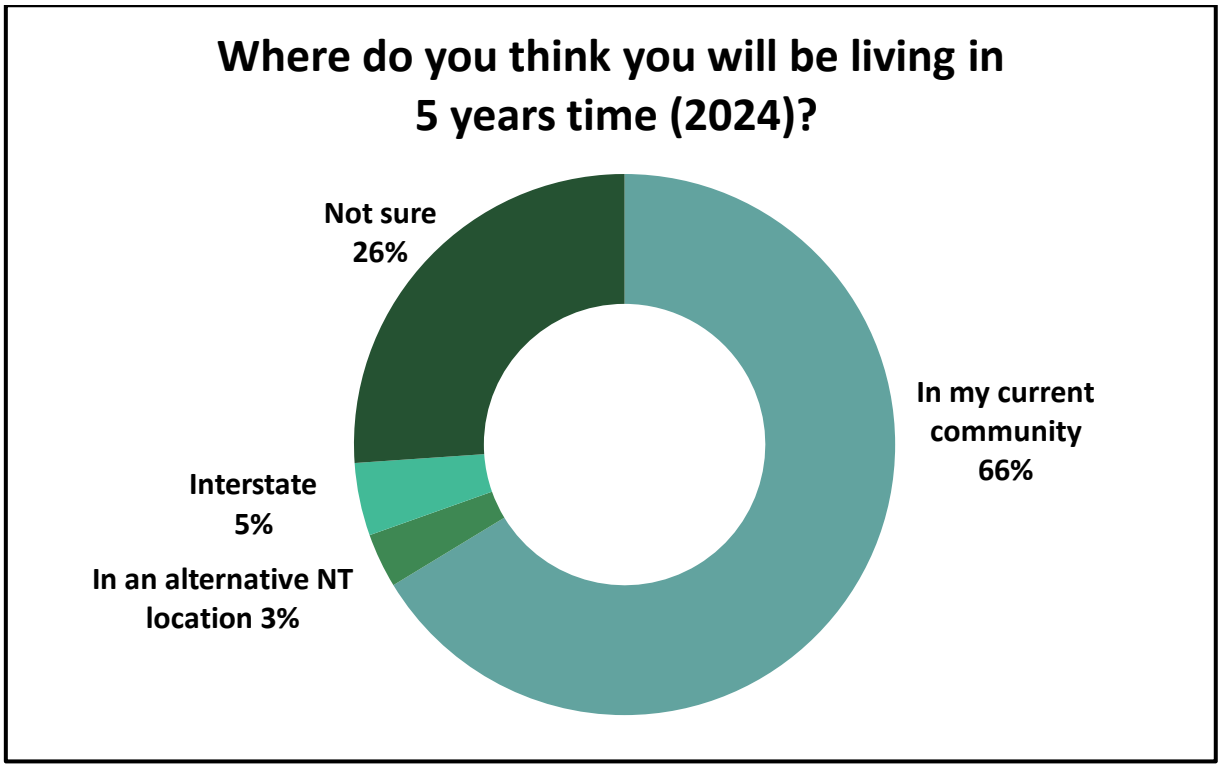


- The gender indicated by the respondents showed that a majority of the respondents (69%) were females. Four people did not respond to this question.

4. Residency in the Northern Territory



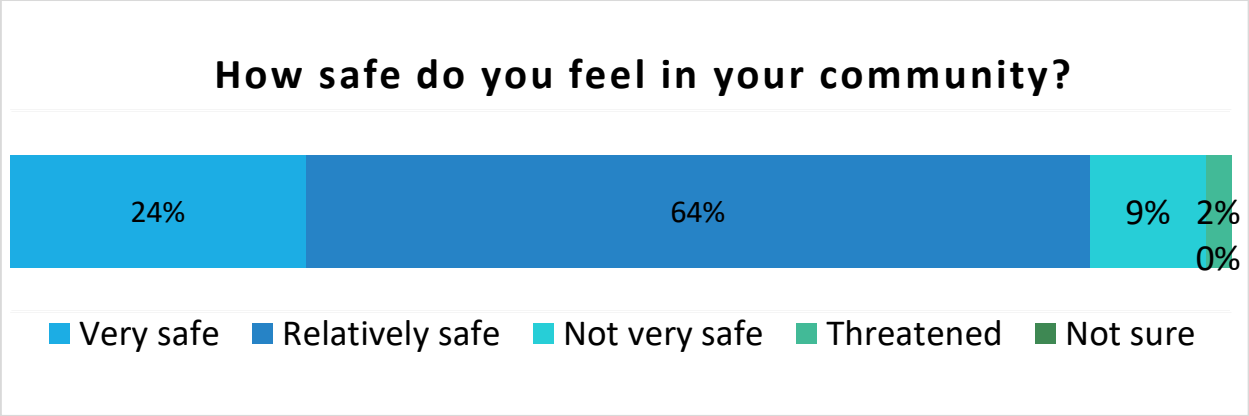
- 79% of the respondents indicated that they had lived in the Territory for more than 15 years.



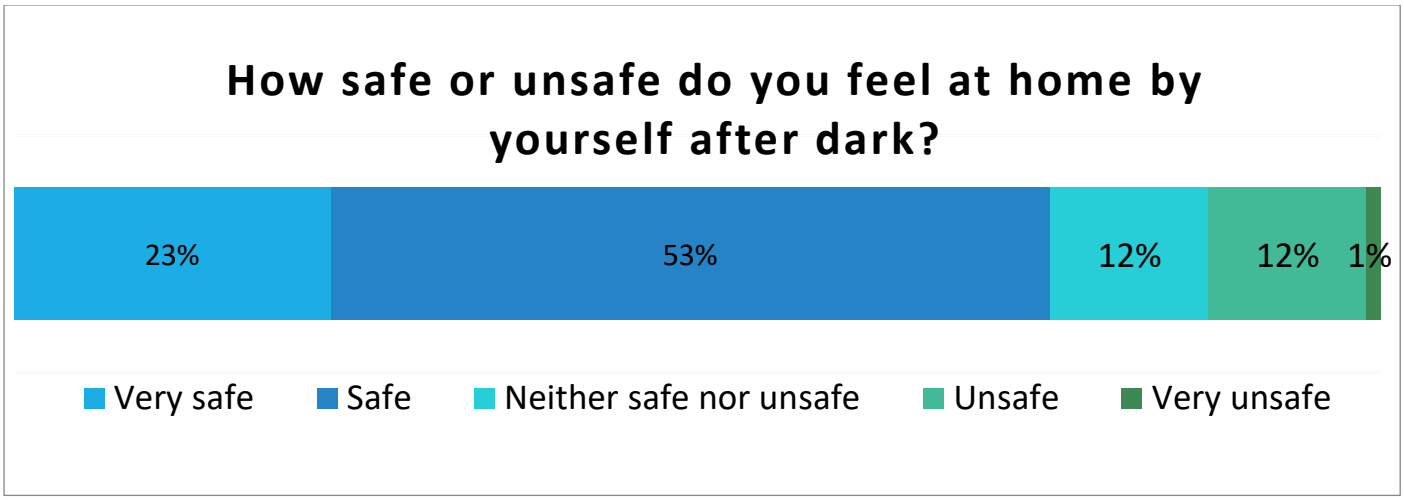
- 69% thought they would continue to live in the Territory for the next five years till 2024 and 26% of the respondents were not sure where they would be living.
- Three respondents choose more than one option hence they were not included in the results.

5. Crime and security

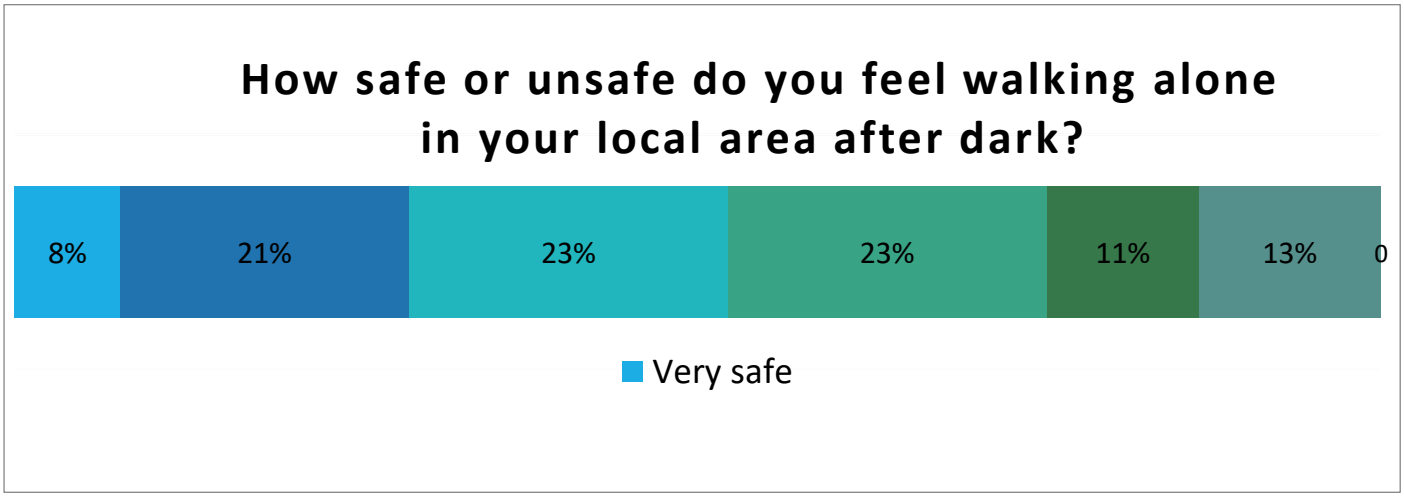
The questions in this section are modelled on the Australian Bureau of Statistics General Social Survey which will allow comparison between the feelings of seniors in the Northern Territory compared to other Australians.



- 64% of respondents felt relatively safe in their communities and 24% felt very safe.
- 11% felt not very safe or threatened in their communities.



- 53% of respondents felt safe at home by themselves at night and 23% felt very safe by themselves.
- 13% felt unsafe or very unsafe at home by themselves at night.



- 21% of respondents felt safe walking alone in their local area at night and 8% felt very safe by themselves.
- 34% felt unsafe or very unsafe walking alone in their local area at night and 13% indicated that they never walk alone after dark.
- Five people did not respond to this question.

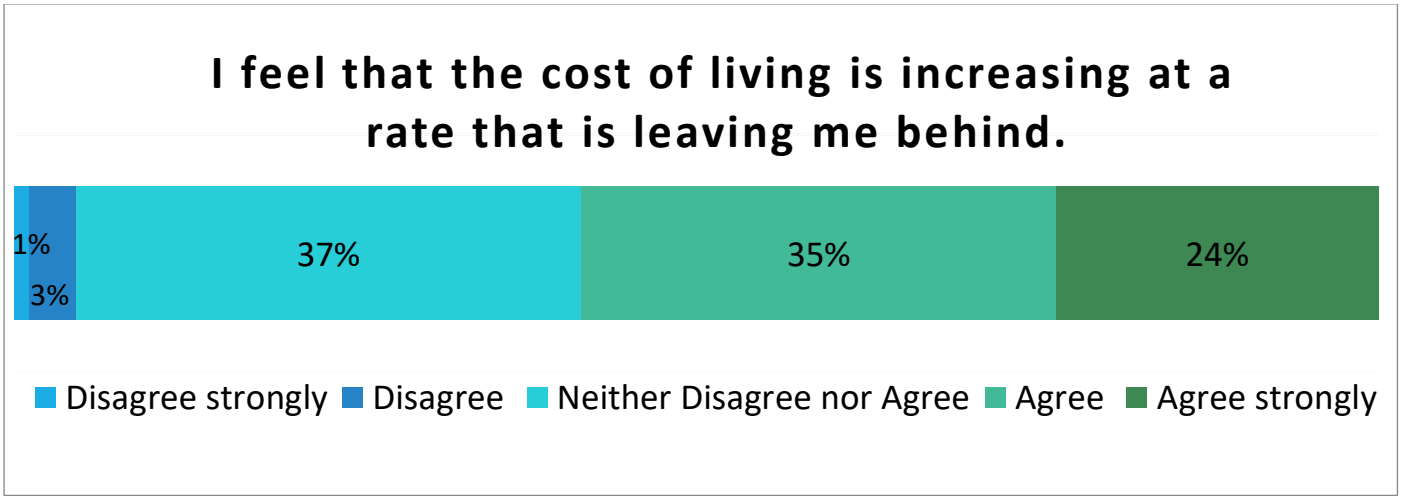
Anti-social behaviour

Thinking about the last 12 months, have you considered any of the following to be a problem in your local area. Respondents could choose all that applied.

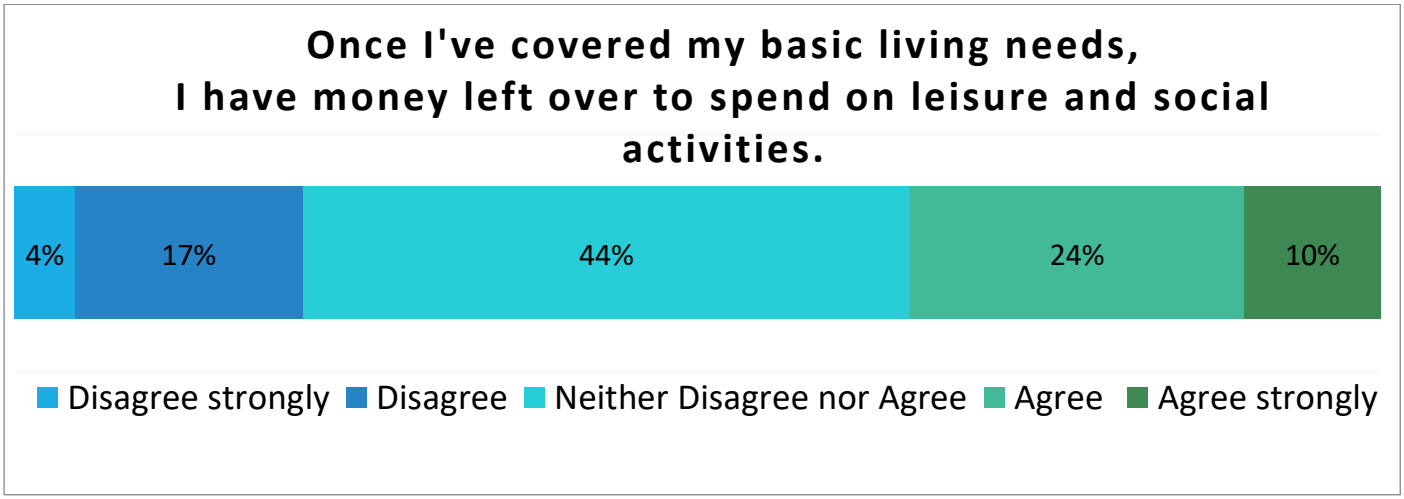
Offensive language or behaviour	35	37%
People hanging around in groups	32	34%
Public drunkenness	30	32%
People being insulted, pestered or intimidated in the street	29	31%
Rowdy behaviour	29	31%
Dangerous driving	27	28%
Noisy driving	26	27%
Intentional damage to property other than graffiti	19	20%
Noisy neighbours	19	20%
People using or dealing drugs	7	7%
Graffiti	4	4%

Several people responded to 'Any other problems' and answers included: break-ins, youth crime and barking dogs.

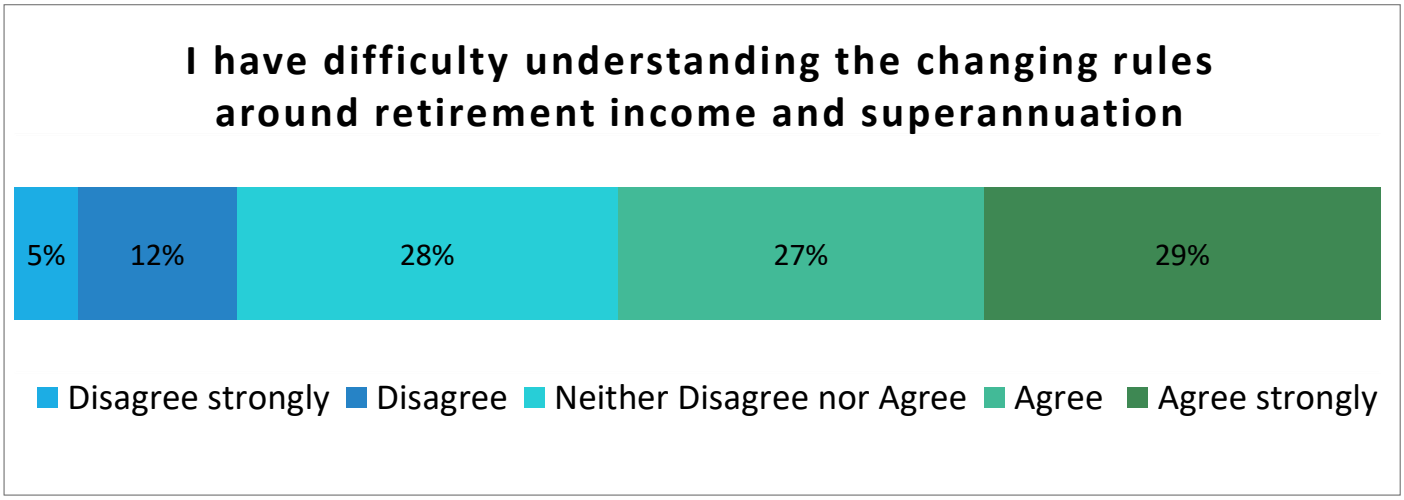
6. Financial security



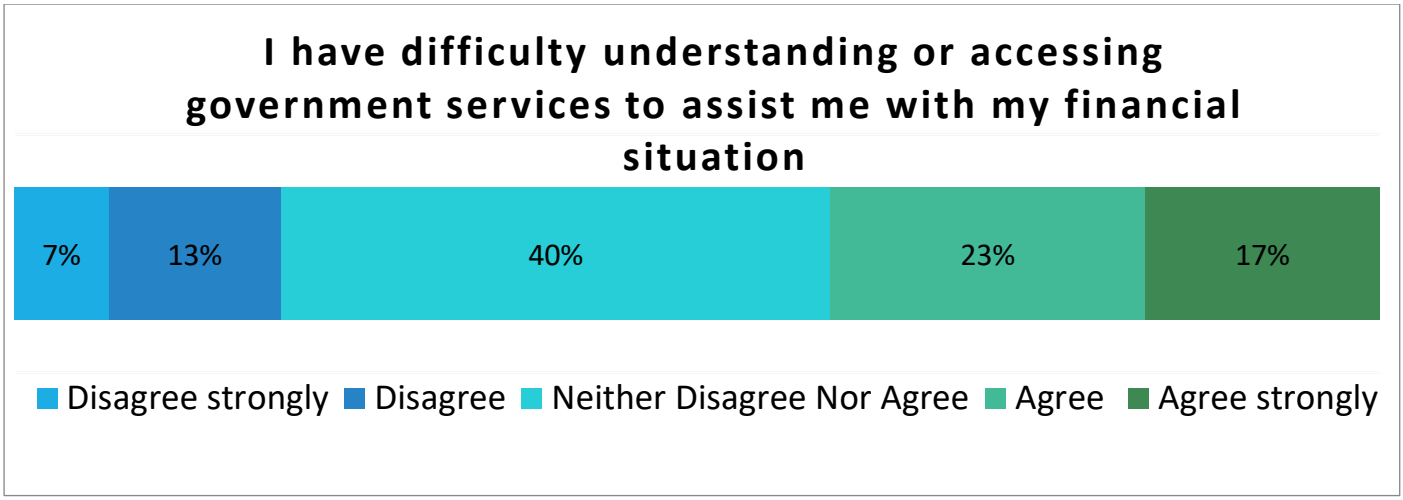
- 4% disagreed or disagreed strongly that cost of living increases is not leaving them behind
- 59% agreed or strongly agreed that cost living increasing is leaving them behind and 37% are neutral about the cost living increasing.
- Six people did not respond to this question.



- 21% disagreed or disagreed strongly that they don't have enough money left over to spend on leisure and social activities once their basic need is covered.
- 34% agree or strongly agree that they have extra money to spend on leisure and social activities.
- Most of the respondents, about 44% neither agreed nor disagreed that they have extra money to spend on leisure and social activities.
- Five people did not respond to this question.



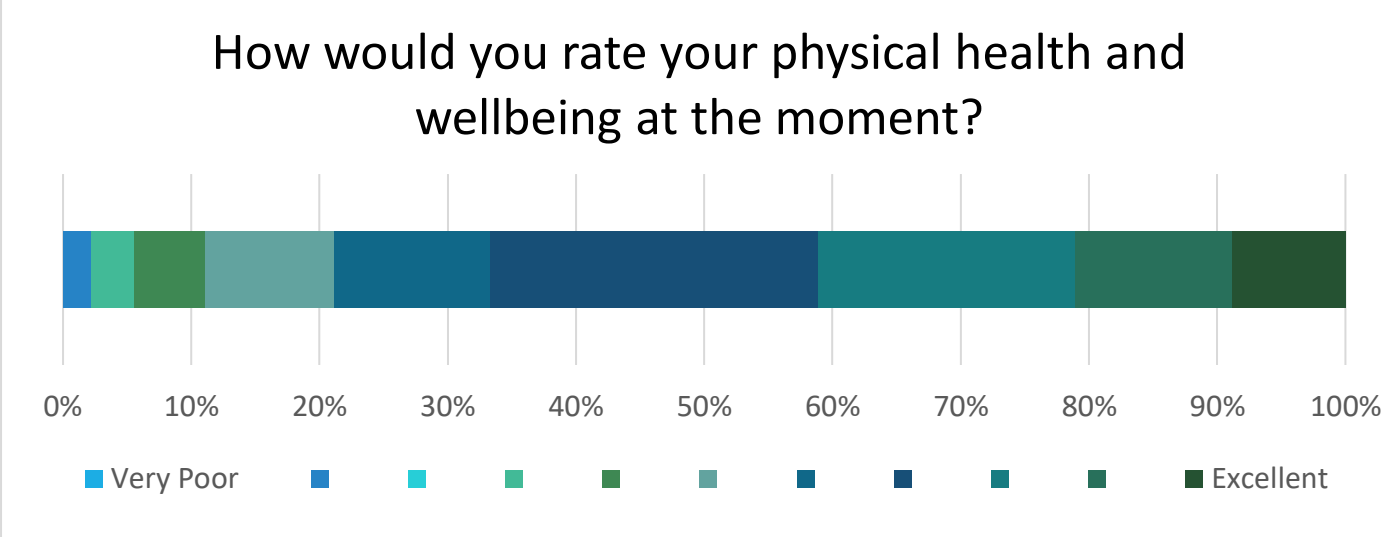
- 56% agree or strongly agree that they have difficulties in understanding the changing rules around retirement income and superannuation.
- 28% are neutral whether they follow the changing regulations, but 17% disagree or disagree strongly that they have difficulties in understanding the changing rules.
- Nine people did not respond to this question.



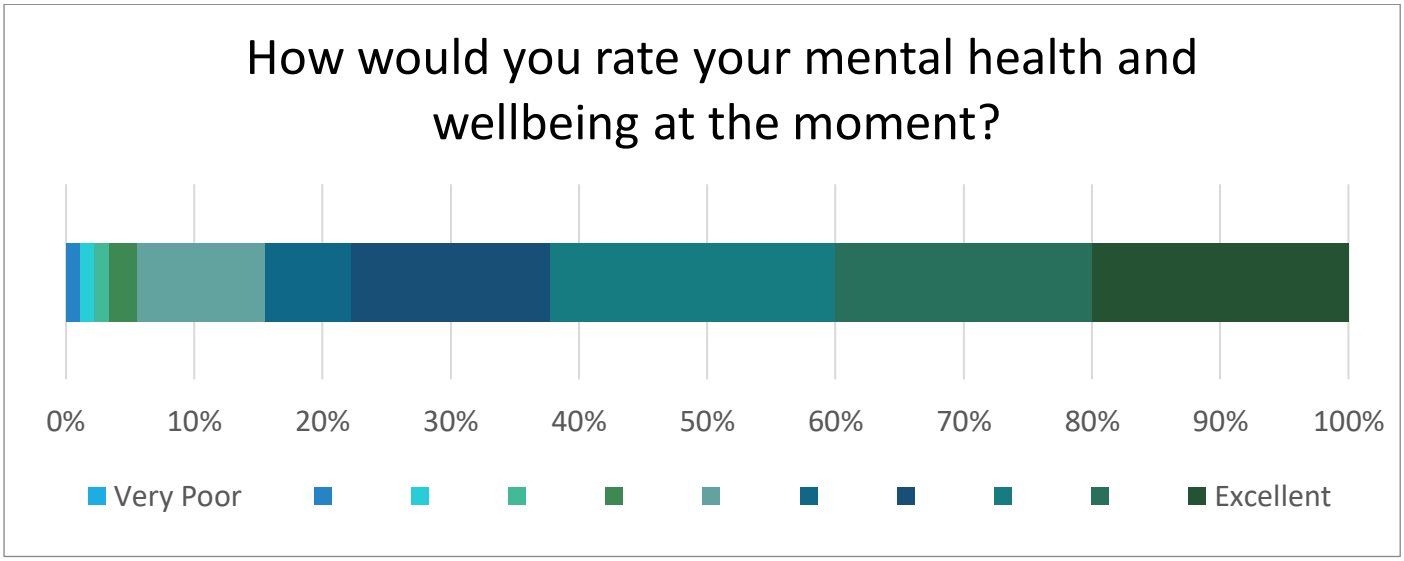
- 40% agree or strongly agree that they have difficulties in understanding or accessing government services.
- In comparison, 20% disagree or disagree strongly that difficulty in understanding or accessing government services.
- Most of the respondents (40%) neither disagreed or agreed about having difficulties understanding or accessing the government services to assisting them with their financial condition.
- Eight people did not respond to this question.

7. Quality of life and concerns

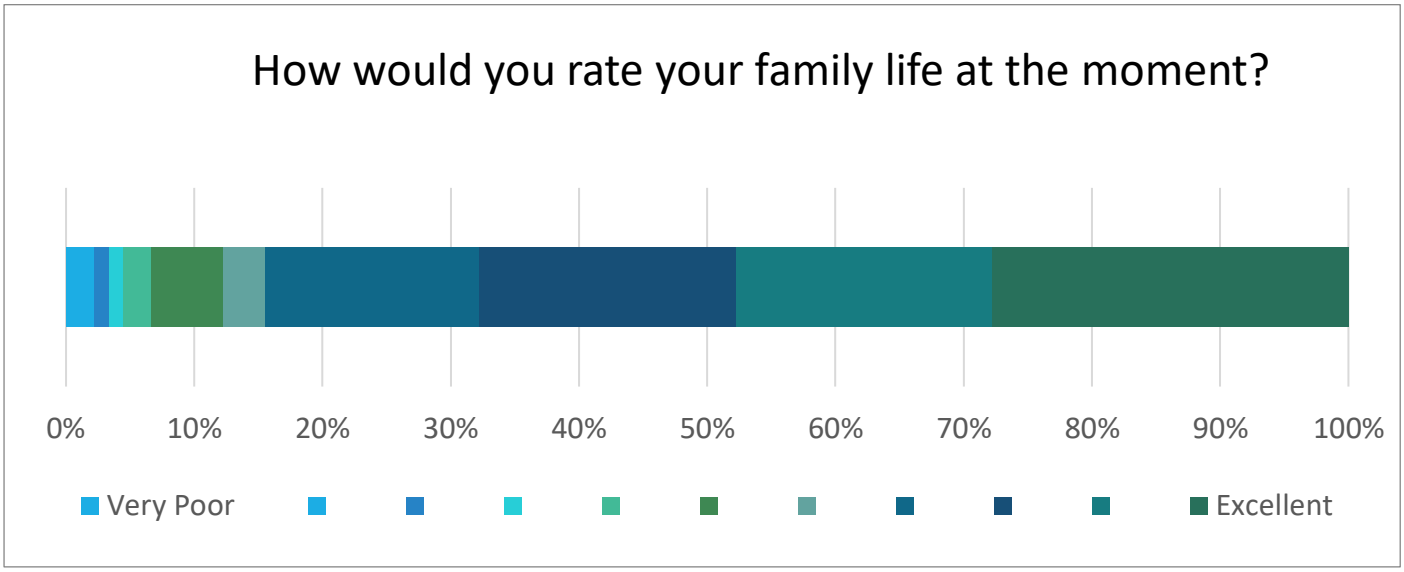
The questions in this section have been modelled on the questions asked in the COTA A 2018 National Survey "*State of the Older Nation*" and the COTA NT 2018 Seniors Survey, as this will enable comparison to these surveys in the future.



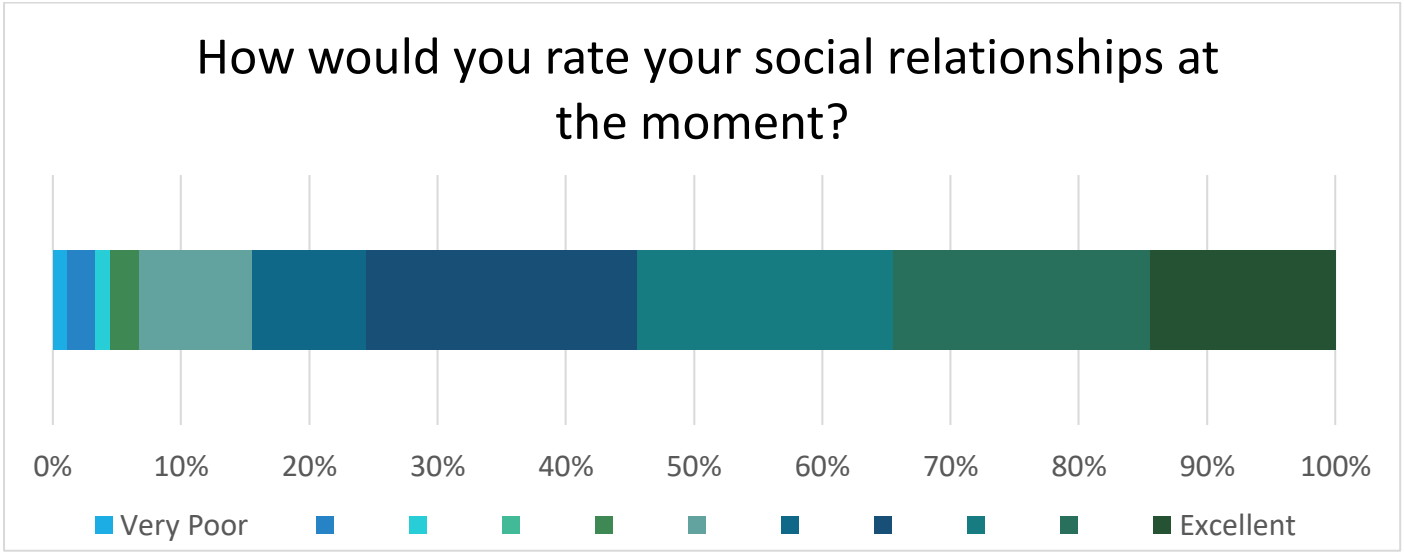
- 9% rated that they had excellent physical health and wellbeing.
- 58% of the respondents rated that they have good or very good physical health and wellbeing.
- 2% of the respondents rated that they have very poor to poor physical health and wellbeing.
- Five people did not respond to this question.



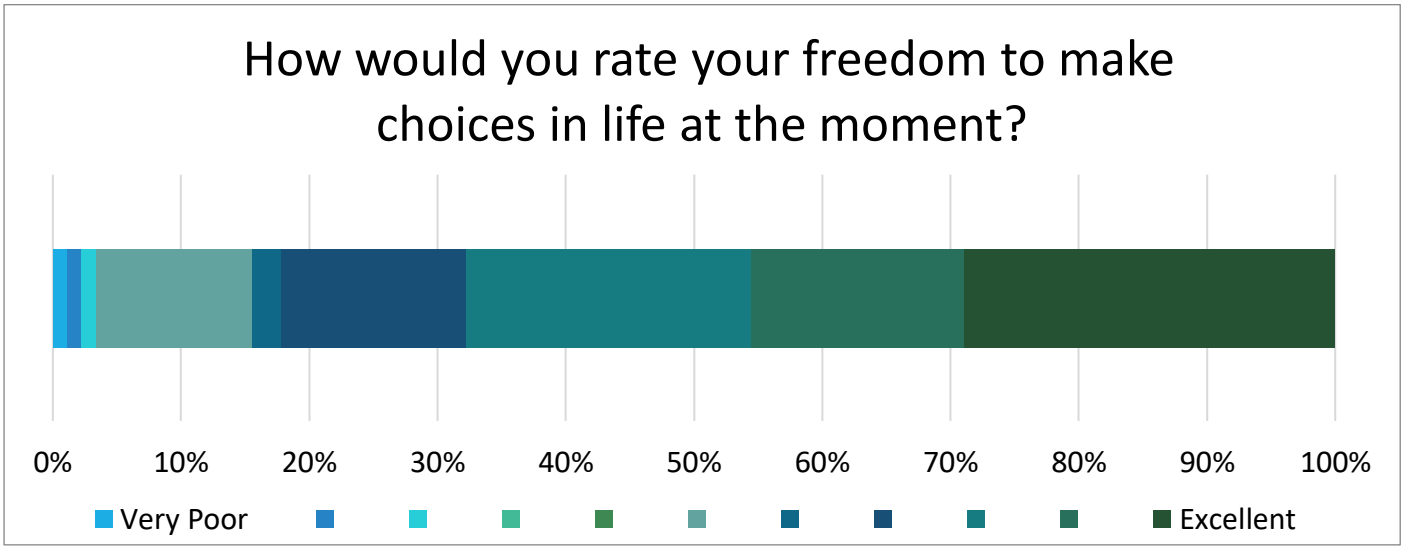
- 20% of the respondents rated that they have excellent mental health and 58% rated that they have good or very good mental health and wellbeing.
- 3% rated that they have very poor to poor mental health and wellbeing.
- Five people did not respond to this question.



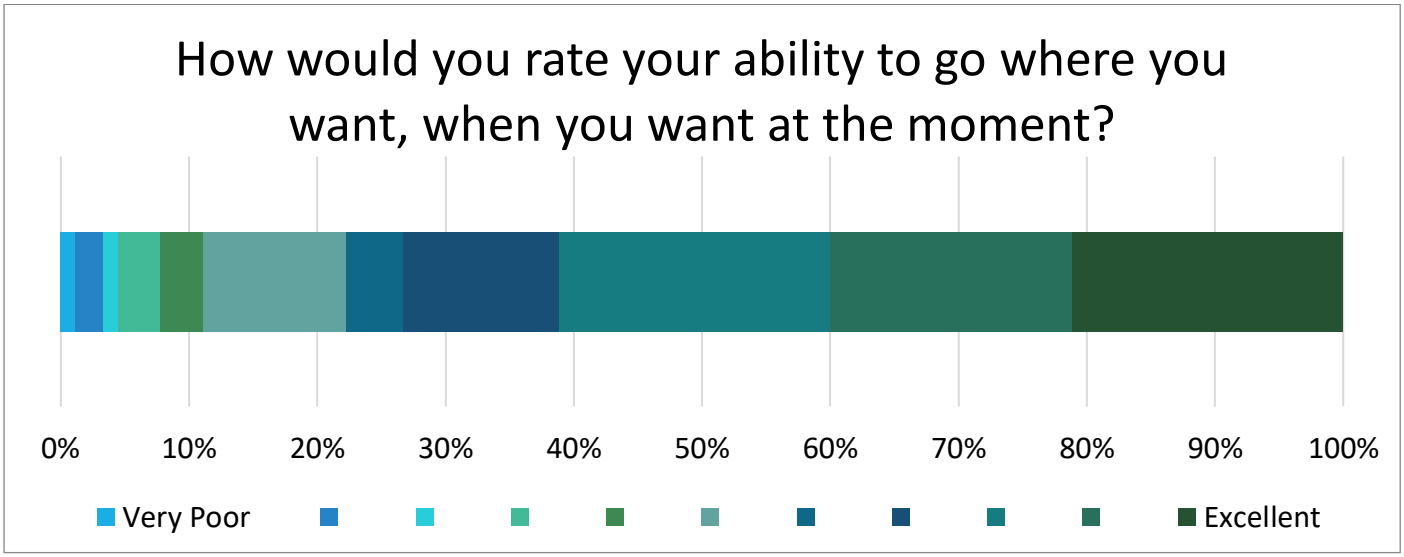
- 28% of the respondents rated their family life as excellent and 57% rated their family life as good or very good.
- 2% rated their family life as poor.
- Five people did not respond to this question.



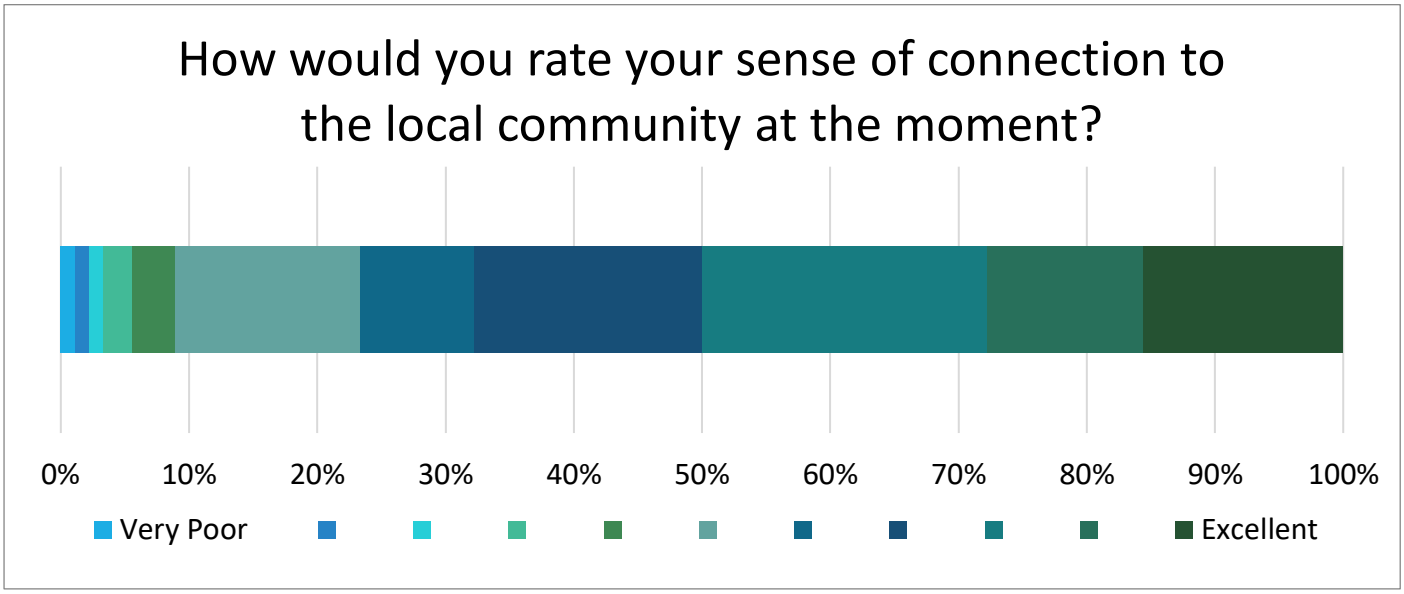
- 14% rated their social relationships as excellent. 61% rated their social relationships as good, or very good.
- 4% rated their social relationships as poor or very poor.
- Five people did not respond to this question.



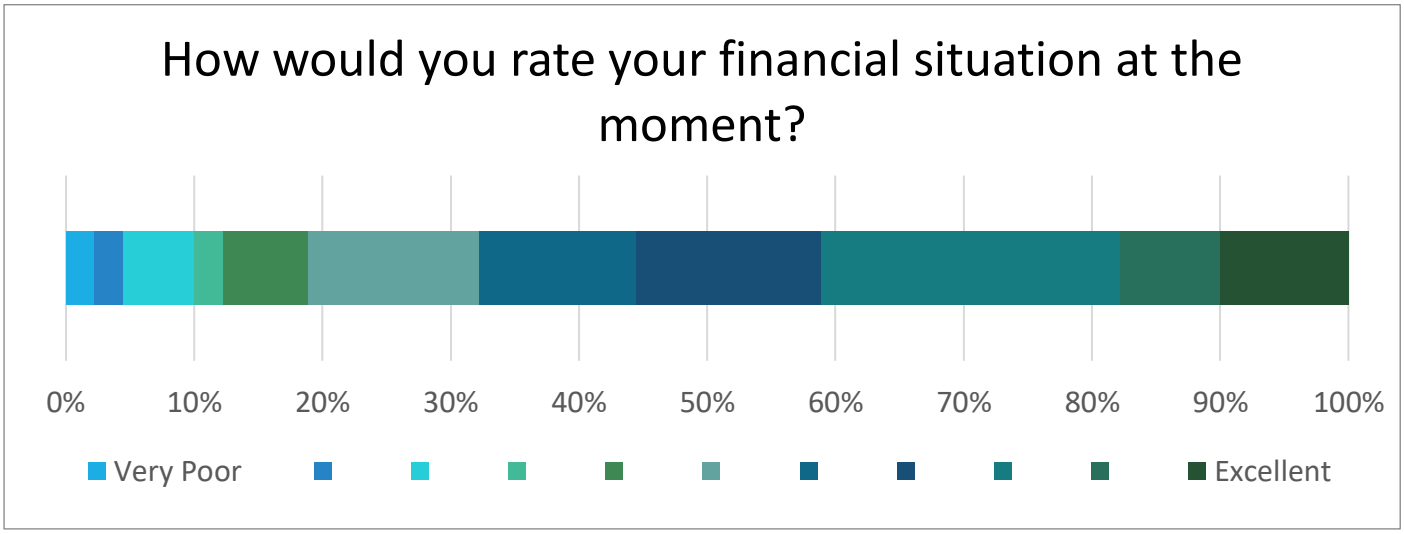
- A majority of respondents rated their freedom to make choices in life good or excellent, 29% rated that they had excellent freedom, and 53% rated that they had good or very good freedom to make choices in their life.
- 3% rated that they had poor or very poor freedom to make choices in their life.
- Five people did not respond to this question.



- 21% rated their ability to go where and when they want as excellent, 52% rated that they have good enough ability to go where and when they want.
- 3% rated that they have poor or very poor ability to go where and when they want.
- Five people did not respond to this question.



- 16% rated their sense of connection to their local community as excellent, and 52% of the respondents rated that they had a good or very good sense of connection to their local community.
- 3% rated their sense of connection to their community as very poor or poor.
- Five people did not respond to this question.



- 10% of respondents rated their financial situation as excellent.
- Most respondents, 45% rated their financial situation as good or very good.
- 10% rated that they had very poor or poor financial situation.
- Five people did not respond to this question.

8. Conclusion

This survey was conducted and compiled by COTA NT to determine trends and patterns in the lives of the senior Territorians and to collect data on some of the issues faced by senior Territorians.

The survey helped reveal some essential details about senior Territorians including demographics, residency status, and where they are planning to live in the future. It also shows concerns about crime and security and self-rated financial security; physical and mental wellbeing and quality of life.

The results of the survey broken down by the topics explored are as follows:

- **Demographics**: Most respondents (57%) were within the 60 to 69 age group and most were females (69%).

- **Residency in the Northern Territory**: Most had lived in NT for more than 15 years (79%) and would continue to live in the Territory beyond the next five years (69%).

- **Crime and security**: Most of the respondents felt very safe or relatively safe in their communities (88%) and staying at home by themselves after dark (76%), but only (29%) of respondents felt very safe or safe to walk in their local area after dark.

- **Financial security**: Most of the respondents (59%) agree or agree strongly that the cost of living is increasing at a rate that is leaving them behind. However, most of the respondents (44%) neither disagree nor agree about whether they had extra money left over to spend on leisure or social activities after covering their basic living needs. The survey identified that most of the respondents (56%) agree or agree strongly that they have difficulties in understanding the changing rules around retirement income and superannuation, and respondents (40%) indicated that they have difficulty understanding or accessing government services to assist with their financial situation. A considerable amount (40%) of the respondents felt that they have difficulties in understanding or accessing government services to assist them with their financial situation.

- **Quality of life and concerns**: Most respondents rated their physical health (67%) and their mental health (78%) as good to excellent. 85% of respondents rated their family life as good to excellent and 75% of respondents rated their social relationships as good to excellent. 82% rated their freedom to make choices as good to excellent. Most of the respondents (82%) rated their freedom in life to make choices as good to excellent and 73% rated their ability to go where they want, when they want as good to excellent. 68% rated good to excellent their sense of connection to their community and 55% rated their financial situation as good to excellent.

Appendix A: COTA NT 2019 Survey

COTA NORTHERN TERRITORY
for senior Territorians

Council on the Ageing NT 2019 Survey

A survey of senior Territorians

5. **Email address or phone number**

   _____

6. **What is your postcode?** _____
7. **What was your postcode 5 years ago?** _____
8. **How long have you lived in the Territory?**
   - ❑ 0 - 5 years
   - ❑ 10-15 years
   - ❑ 5-10 years
   - ❑ More than 15 years
9. **Where do you think you will be living in 5 years time (2024)?**
   - ❑ In my current community
   - ❑ In an alternative NT location
   - ❑ Interstate
   - ❑ Overseas
   - ❑ Not sure
10. **If you plan to move in the next five years. What would be the main reason?**
    - ❑ To be closer to family and friends
    - ❑ Cost of living
    - ❑ Climate
    - ❑ To pursue hobbies and leisure interests
    - ❑ Access to health services
    - ❑ Other _____
11. **Please choose your age range**
    - ❑ 50 to 54
    - ❑ 55 to 59
    - ❑ 60 to 64
    - ❑ 65 to 69
    - ❑ 70 to 74
    - ❑ 75 to 79
    - ❑ 80 to 84
    - ❑ 85 to 89
    - ❑ 90 to 94
    - ❑ 95 to 99
    - ❑ 100 +
12. **Please indicate your gender**
    - ❑ Female
    - ❑ Male
    - ❑ Prefer not to say
    - ❑ Other

Crime and Security

1. **How safe do you feel in your community?**
   - ❑ Very safe
   - ❑ Relatively safe
   - ❑ Not very safe
   - ❑ Threatened
   - ❑ Not sure
2. **How safe or unsafe do you feel at home by yourself after dark?**
   - ❑ Very safe
   - ❑ Safe
   - ❑ Neither safe or unsafe
   - ❑ Unsafe
   - ❑ Very unsafe
   - ❑ Never home alone after dark
3. **How safe or unsafe do you feel walking alone in your local area after dark?**
   - ❑ Very safe
   - ❑ Safe
   - ❑ Neither safe or unsafe
   - ❑ Unsafe
   - ❑ Very unsafe
   - ❑ Never walk alone after dark
4. **Thinking about the last 12 months, have you considered any of the following to be a problem in your local area?**
   - ❑ Noisy driving
   - ❑ Dangerous driving
   - ❑ People being insulted, pestered or intimidated in the street
   - ❑ Public drunkenness
   - ❑ Rowdy behaviour
   - ❑ Offensive language or behaviour
   - ❑ People hanging around in groups
   - ❑ Noisy neighbours
   - ❑ People using or dealing drugs
   - ❑ Graffiti
   - ❑ Intentional damage to property other than graffiti
   - ❑ Any other problems _____

     _____
   - ❑ No problems reported

Financial security

13. I feel that the cost of living is increasing at a rate that is leaving me behind.

1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3 ❑ 4 ❑ 5 ❑

Disagree Strongly — *Agree Strongly*

14. Once I've covered my basic living needs, I have money left over to spend on leisure and social activities.

1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3 ❑ 4 ❑ 5 ❑

Disagree Strongly — *Agree Strongly*

15. I have difficulty understanding the changing rules around retirement income and superannuation.

1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3 ❑ 4 ❑ 5 ❑

Disagree Strongly — *Agree Strongly*

16. I have difficulty understanding or accessing government services to assist me with my financial situation

1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3 ❑ 4 ❑ 5 ❑

Disagree Strongly — *Agree Strongly*

17. Thinking about what is most important to you, what changes would you like COTA NT to lobby the government for in order to achieve better outcomes for older Territorians.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Quality of life and concerns

How would you rate each the following at the moment?

18. Your physical health and wellbeing

0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3 ❑ 4 ❑ 5 ❑ 6 ❑ 7 ❑ 8 ❑ 9 ❑ 10 ❑

Very poor — *Excellent*

19. Your mental health and wellbeing

0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3 ❑ 4 ❑ 5 ❑ 6 ❑ 7 ❑ 8 ❑ 9 ❑ 10 ❑

Very poor — *Excellent*

20. Your family life

0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3 ❑ 4 ❑ 5 ❑ 6 ❑ 7 ❑ 8 ❑ 9 ❑ 10 ❑

Very poor — *Excellent*

21. Your social relationships

0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3 ❑ 4 ❑ 5 ❑ 6 ❑ 7 ❑ 8 ❑ 9 ❑ 10 ❑

Very poor — *Excellent*

22. Your freedom to make choices in life

0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3 ❑ 4 ❑ 5 ❑ 6 ❑ 7 ❑ 8 ❑ 9 ❑ 10 ❑

Very poor — *Excellent*

23. Your ability to go where you want, when you want

0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3 ❑ 4 ❑ 5 ❑ 6 ❑ 7 ❑ 8 ❑ 9 ❑ 10 ❑

Very poor — *Excellent*

24. Your sense of connection to your local community

0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3 ❑ 4 ❑ 5 ❑ 6 ❑ 7 ❑ 8 ❑ 9 ❑ 10 ❑

Very poor — *Excellent*

25. Your financial situation

0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3 ❑ 4 ❑ 5 ❑ 6 ❑ 7 ❑ 8 ❑ 9 ❑ 10 ❑

Very poor — *Excellent*

Return your survey

Drop in to COTA NT: Spillett House, 65 Smith Street, Darwin
Post to COTA NT: PO Box 852, Darwin NT 0801

Scan and email: admin@cotant.org.au

Phone: 8941 1004 Web: www.cotant.org.au

Thank you for participating in our survey.