

Your own longevity strategy

At My Longevity we are building an online program so you can develop your own longevity strategy.

We are also be pushing for better strategies from governments so people to take more control over their lives as they age. The recent changes to Australian Age Pension entitlements showed that governments still take a piecemeal approach, leaving individuals less able to plan effectively.

Governments have spent heavily on improving financial literacy in the community. This will mainly benefit younger people to improve their personal financial management to prepare for a significantly longer lifespan than their predecessors.

We need to match this with greater efforts in boosting longevity awareness in the older community. From age 50 onward, people typically start to acknowledge their own mortality – either from personal experiences or from those of their parents, many of whom are still alive and face the realities of an unexpected longer lifespan.

What are some key things to understand?

We are living longer because of what our society has achieved. Evolution has played no part in the increase in the average lifespan of a baby (in Australia) from 35 to 82 over the past two centuries. This big change reflects how our society has been able to implement what we have learnt about survival. Think of health care systems, infrastructure (energy, sewers, roads) education (what we learnt about looking after ourselves). Further progress in all of these depends on political leadership. Right now we are bogged down being politically correct rather than establishing a social strategy which adapts to changing longevity issues.

The big increase in personal longevity shows that we each have the opportunity to make a significant difference to our own longevity. This can also improve our quality of life and reduce costs to the community and ourselves.

Governments and individuals have different and important roles to play. Neither are well enough prepared to take full advantage of what is already known about longevity.

The longer we live the longer we're likely to live. A baby born today will on average live to about 82, whereas a 65 year old averages close to 90 (males a bit less, females a bit more). A 90 year old today will on average live to 95 years (little gender difference by this age).

This means that we just can't set and forget. We each have to keep adapting to changing circumstances. To do this we need to know more about longevity. We also need our financial and health advisers in particular to be more longevity aware and able to help manage our changing personal goals better.

Averages aren't much help to individuals. The longer we live, the more different we become from each other. We need to understand why, and what we each can do to make the most of our remaining time. Our SHAPE Analyser shows what can affect our outlook – Surroundings (places and people), Health (physical and mental), Attitude, Parents (their survival and experiences), Eating and our education and personal wealth (our socioeconomic status).

None of these key things is too difficult to respond to. Soon our website will show how to build your own longevity strategy. We will also push governments and your health and financial advisers to help you plan better for your longevity. Looks like a busy year.