

USA Today: For Today's Retirees, There's No Place Like Home

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By John Morgan

American retirees these days are gravitating toward the notion of staying put and "aging in place" rather than moving to sunnier climes, new data show.

USA Today reported an AARP study found the overwhelming majority of people 50 years of age and over want to remain in their home and community "for as long as possible."

Separately, a **Merrill Lynch/Age Wave survey** concluded 65 percent of retirees say they are living in the best homes of their lives right where they are.

"There is something deeply nourishing about our homes, and people become increasingly appreciative of that emotional connection as they get older," says gerontologist Ken Dychtwald, CEO of Age Wave. "It's a rich emotional nest."

Many retirees want to remain in their home "because they are most comfortable with what is most familiar," psychologist Mary Languirand, co-author of *How to Age in Place*, told USA Today. "People are going to do whatever they can to maintain that sense of comfort. That is the ideal place in a lot of people's minds."

The Merrill Lynch/Age Wave survey concluded a majority – 58 percent – are interested in new technologies such as cleaning robots, 80 percent are interested in tech-enabled efficiencies such as smart thermostats and 76 percent are interested in technologies to maintain their health, such as sensors, alerts and air purification devices.

Dychtwald says 52 percent of people over the age of 75 live alone.

"Technology can help people keep an eye on mom or dad," he said. "The good news is that all of these breakthroughs are on the drawing board or already available, but they are waiting for the market to take more full advantage of them."

USA Today noted AARP **offers a guide** aimed at helping consumers stay in their homes as long as possible.

The guide offers tips and suggestions ranging from simple do-it-yourself fixes to more expensive improvements, and also includes worksheets.

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