



## **Renowned Gerontologist Ken Dychtwald Challenges Myths That May Mislead People Into Making Wrong Decisions About Best Options in Senior Living**

By Vi/PR Newswire  
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Ken Dychtwald, Ph.D., today challenged five "prevailing myths and misperceptions" about the senior living concept known as the continuing care retirement community, or CCRC. Dychtwald, psychologist, gerontologist, best-selling author, and CEO of Age Wave, expressed his comments in a new report presented today at Vi at Silverstone, a Vi and Plaza Companies Community.

"There are prevailing myths and misperceptions about CCRCs which do not match today's realities, and which can sometimes complicate or mislead decision-making," according to Dychtwald. "As a result, people planning for retirement may be missing out on one of the better options available in senior living today."

Dychtwald said, "It is the reasons for and psychology behind these myths that can be the most revealing. Some of these myths arise from memories and images of old-fashioned retirement homes our parents or grandparents may have lived in. Others are grounded in deeper concerns we may have regarding how to best optimize our health and independence in later life."

Titled "Five Myths and Realities of Continuing Care Retirement Communities," Age Wave's report and supporting research were commissioned by Vi, a developer, owner and operator of older adult living communities. The document is available in its entirety at [www.ViLiving.com](http://www.ViLiving.com).

Meg Ostrom, Vi's senior vice president and project director, said the purpose behind the research that went into the report is to help those looking at retirement choices to better understand the psychology that is often behind the misperceptions, and the reality, of today's CCRC offerings.

"Today, deciding to move to a CCRC is typically a pro-active decision to have an active, fulfilling lifestyle while – at the same time – preparing for future care needs," Ostrom said. "This is not a reactive move triggered or forced by poor health or other event."

According to Dychtwald, the research uncovered five major myths:

- Myth No. 1: "My current home will be the best possible place to live in my post-retirement years."
- Myth No. 2: "My current home is the best option to continue an active social life and to stay connected with friends in the years ahead."

- Myth No. 3: "It's less expensive and more financially secure for me to stay in my current home."
- Myth No. 4: "It would be easy to get any care I might need at home."
- Myth No. 5: "CCRCs are filled with old people who are sick and dying."

"With each myth, we've challenged the conventional but often misguided wisdom that has supported it and we've explained today's new reality," Dychtwald said.

For example, with Myth No. 2, that your current home is the best option to stay connected with friends in the years ahead, Dychtwald said that during retirement it is not uncommon for people's friends and family to move away, and many can feel increasingly lonely or isolated in their current home.

"Studies show that having low social interaction is as bad for your health as smoking fifteen cigarettes a day, is as dangerous as being an alcoholic, is as harmful as never exercising, and is twice as dangerous as obesity," said Dychtwald. "For many of CCRC residents we interviewed, the stimulating social environment and opportunity to develop new friendships were some of the top benefits of living in a CCRC. Most expressed that they wish they had not waited so long to move."

With Myth No. 4 regarding the issue of at-home care, the Age Wave report comments that for many care at home can become difficult and costly or could wind up putting the burden on other family members, while CCRCs offer a seamless solution for most care needs that may arise in later life, like Alzheimer's care and skilled nursing care.

"For those who have devoted little planning to their potential future care needs, their first response is often, 'I can always get the care I need at home,'" he said.

The fact is, Dychtwald said, "almost two-thirds of people will need some type of long-term care after they reach age 65. Yet, just a third believe they might need long-term care. As a result, many have no plan in place to protect themselves and their families from the financial and emotional burdens if this care is ever needed. In contrast, depending on the type of CCRC you choose, your future care costs are more predictable and many require only nominal additional charges."

Dychtwald said Myth No. 5, that CCRCs are filled with old people who are sick and dying, is driven by images people have of visits years ago with grandparents and relatives living in an old-style nursing home, "which at that time were often institutional, highly medical, and lacking in privacy."

The reality of living in a CCRC today is quite different, he said. "CCRCs offer opportunities to engage in activities ranging from lectures, art workshops, exercise classes, to event clubs. As a result, living at a CCRC can offer far more mental stimulation and social engagement than staying in your current home."

Vi's Ostrom said, "We've found from the first-hand experiences of our own residents that choosing the best home and community can help make retirement years a fulfilling and exciting new chapter in life."

### **About Vi**

Vi, formerly Classic Residence by Hyatt, was founded in 1987 as a developer, owner and operator of older adult living communities. The company is dedicated to enriching the lives of older adults by providing high quality environments, services and care. Vi currently operates ten continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs) and nine rental communities under a family of brands nationwide. For more information about Vi communities, visit [www.ViLiving.com](http://www.ViLiving.com).

### **About Age Wave**

Founded in 1986, Age Wave is the nation's foremost thought leader on population aging and its business, social, healthcare, financial, workforce and cultural implications. Under the leadership of Founder/CEO Dr. Ken Dychtwald, Age Wave has developed a unique understanding of the body, mind, hopes and demands of new generations of maturing consumers and workers and their expectations, attitudes, hopes, and fears regarding retirement.

### **About Plaza Companies**

Plaza Companies, based in Peoria, Arizona, is an award-winning leader in the development and management of medical office properties, technology and bioscience facilities, and senior housing communities. Founded in 1982, Plaza Companies is a full-service firm with a portfolio of more than 5.5 million square feet valued at more than \$1 billion. For more information about Plaza Companies, visit [www.theplazaco.com](http://www.theplazaco.com).

*This article can be found at <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/renowned-gerontologist-ken-dychtwald-challenges-myths-that-may-mislead-people-into-making-wrong-decisions-about-best-options-in-senior-living-135253058.html>.*