

New Research Shows Ageism is Widespread and Tolerated in Canada

Six-in-ten seniors report being treated unfairly and more than one third of Canadians confess to ageist attitudes: Revera Report on Ageism

TORONTO, Canada, November 2, 2012 –Despite an aging population, ageism is the most tolerated form of social discrimination in Canada, new research from Revera Inc., a Canadian leader in seniors' accommodation, care and services, reveals. According to [The Revera Report on Ageism](#), six-in-ten (63 per cent) seniors ages 66 and older say they've been treated unfairly or differently because of their age and half (51 per cent) of all Canadians agree ageism is the most tolerated social prejudice, versus gender- or race-based discrimination. Eight-in ten Canadians agree that older seniors (75+) are seen as less important and are more often ignored than younger generations; one third (35 per cent) of Canadians admit they've treated someone differently because of their age.

Today at the Empire Club in Toronto, Jeff Lozon, President and CEO of Revera, will unveil the Revera Report on Ageism, developed in partnership with the International Federation on Ageing (IFA). The Revera Report sheds new light on a serious problem that will have a dramatic and long lasting impact on society, given the number of seniors in Canada is expected to double by 2036, and by 2051, an estimated one in four Canadians will be 65 and older.ⁱ

"It's troubling that ageism is so pervasive, in a time when society needs to evolve to meet the needs of an aging population," said Lozon. "Canada's baby boomers are growing older. Building an age-inclusive society must be a top priority for all of us as our demographics change. We can't allow misconceptions and prejudices to get in the way of excellence in service to older people nor recognizing their social and economic contributions."

Canadians are not alone; global research indicates ageism is an emerging social issue around the world. Recent data from the European Social Survey showed 46 per cent of respondents from across 28 European countries said they had experienced age-related prejudice.ⁱⁱ

"This is an emerging global trend that requires addressing with the same vigor that we've addressed other significant social issues," said Dr. Jane Barratt, Secretary General of the IFA. "As a society, there should be no tolerance for ageism, and we must actively work together to end it."

According to the Revera Report, the three most common forms of age discrimination faced by Canadian seniors are: being ignored or treated as though they are invisible (41 per cent); being treated like they have nothing to contribute (38 per cent); and the assumption that seniors are incompetent (27 per cent).

While seniors over the age of 66 report that this discrimination primarily comes from people younger than them (56 per cent), one-in-four (27 per cent) say they've experienced age discrimination from government and one-third (34 per cent) from the health care professionals and the health care system.

Challenging Assumptions About Aging

While the vast majority of Canadians (89 per cent) associate aging with negative outcomes such as being alone and losing independence, older Canadians are more likely than all other generations to say "you never stop living life to the fullest," and "age is just a number." Furthermore, 40 per cent of those 66 years of age and older say the "best is yet to come."

"The fact that older Canadians are far more positive about the aging process than younger generations underscores the pressing need to challenge ageist attitudes," said Dr. Barratt. "Canadians of all ages need to hear and embrace the reality that there are many ways people lead fulfilling lives well into their later years."

In recognition of this reality, Lozon will introduce Revera's AGE IS MORE initiative in partnership with the IFA, which aims to challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes faced by seniors, promote an age inclusive society and celebrate the ageless spirit of older people.

AgeisMore.com is a unique online destination where Canadians of all ages are encouraged to learn more about ageism and its impact, take the "Are You Age Aware" self-assessment test and get tips from the experts on how to be more age inclusive.

Jack Hyatt, a resident at Revera's Windermere on the Mount Retirement Residence in London, Ontario, is featured on AgeisMore.com and personifies living life to the fullest at any age. At the age of 78, this active former professor and military veteran continues to nurture his childhood love of cycling, heading out to ride daily and joining the London cycling club for 50 – 85 km rides each Sunday.

"Age is a state of mind as much as anything," says Mr. Hyatt. "I don't think the way I do things has changed just because I'm 78 years old. I'm just not going to let it change."

To read other stories of older people who are living their lives to the fullest, Canadians are encouraged to visit AgeisMore.com.

"Boomers are the next wave of seniors and we know they have different expectations of aging, so let's start the conversation now," said Lozon. "We need to challenge our assumptions about aging because based on their history of demanding social change boomers won't sit back and accept being treated differently because of their age."



Working together to overcome ageism. Visit AgeisMore.com



About Revera Inc.

Revera is a leading provider of seniors' accommodation, care and services; built on a 50-year history of helping seniors live life to the fullest. Our nearly 30,000 dedicated employees continually strive to serve a diverse group of clients and to offer choices to meet their individual preferences. With more than 250 sites across Canada and parts of the U.S., we work to enhance lives in our retirement communities, long term care homes, U.S. nursing and rehab centres and through the provision of home health services. Canadian-owned and operated, Revera serves approximately 30,000 clients every day, with the core values of respect, integrity, compassion and excellence at the heart of our business. Find out more about Revera at www.reveraliving.com or find us on Facebook and Twitter.

About the International Federation on Ageing

The International Federation on Ageing (IFA) is an international, non-governmental organization and point of global connection to experts and expertise in the field of aging. We believe in generating positive change for older people through helping to shape and influence effective age-related and senior policies and practice. For more information about the IFA visit www.ifa-fiv.org.

About the Revera Report on Ageism

Revera, in partnership with Leger Marketing, surveyed online Canadians aged 18-32 (Gen Y's), 33-45 (Gen X's), 46-65 (Boomers), 66-74 (Younger Seniors) and 75+ (Older Seniors) to better understand their attitudes on aging. The survey was completed online from August 24th to September 4th, 2012 using Leger Marketing's online panel, *LegerWeb*, with a sample of 1,501 Canadians. A probability sample of the same size would yield a margin of error of 2.5%, 19 times out of 20. The Revera Report on Ageism is one in a series of reports that will be issued by Revera exploring different topics relevant to the aging experience of Canadian seniors.

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ⁱ <http://www4.hrsdc.gc.ca/.3ndic.1t.4r@-eng.jsp?iid=33>, accessed Oct 4.

ⁱⁱ National Academy on an Aging Society, *Public Policy & Aging Report*, Summer 2012, Vol. 22 No 3, pg. 5



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