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The Relationship Between Psychological Strengths and Health of People over 65 Years Living in the Community With Minimal Community Support Services.

The potential for spiraling health care costs of the ageing baby boomer cohort has provided impetus for research into all aspects of this group. Previous studies from other countries have shown a positive association between a number of psychological strengths and health; however limited Australian research exists in this area. This triangulated 2 Phase study investigates the psychological strengths that older adults use in maintaining their health and quality of life. This methodology was chosen to provide a deeper insight into the concepts and cross validation of results. The qualitative analysis of the interviews of 10 older adults in Phase 1 found that a adaptability, a positive outlook, social connectedness, and spirituality, in addition to receipt of support services are important factors to maintaining health, quality of life and the ability for those over 65 to remain independent in their own home in the community. The quantitative Phase 2 of this study investigated of the degree of the relationship between resilience, optimism and health and surveyed 620 older adults by mail. Preliminary data analysis using multiple regression has found a strong positive relationship between optimism and resilience, and self-reported health which is consistent with previous studies. Previous research also indicates that a number of these strengths are able to be enhanced with minimal intervention, and their positive relationship with health status, the potential for flow on financial savings in the promotion of health and satisfaction is huge.