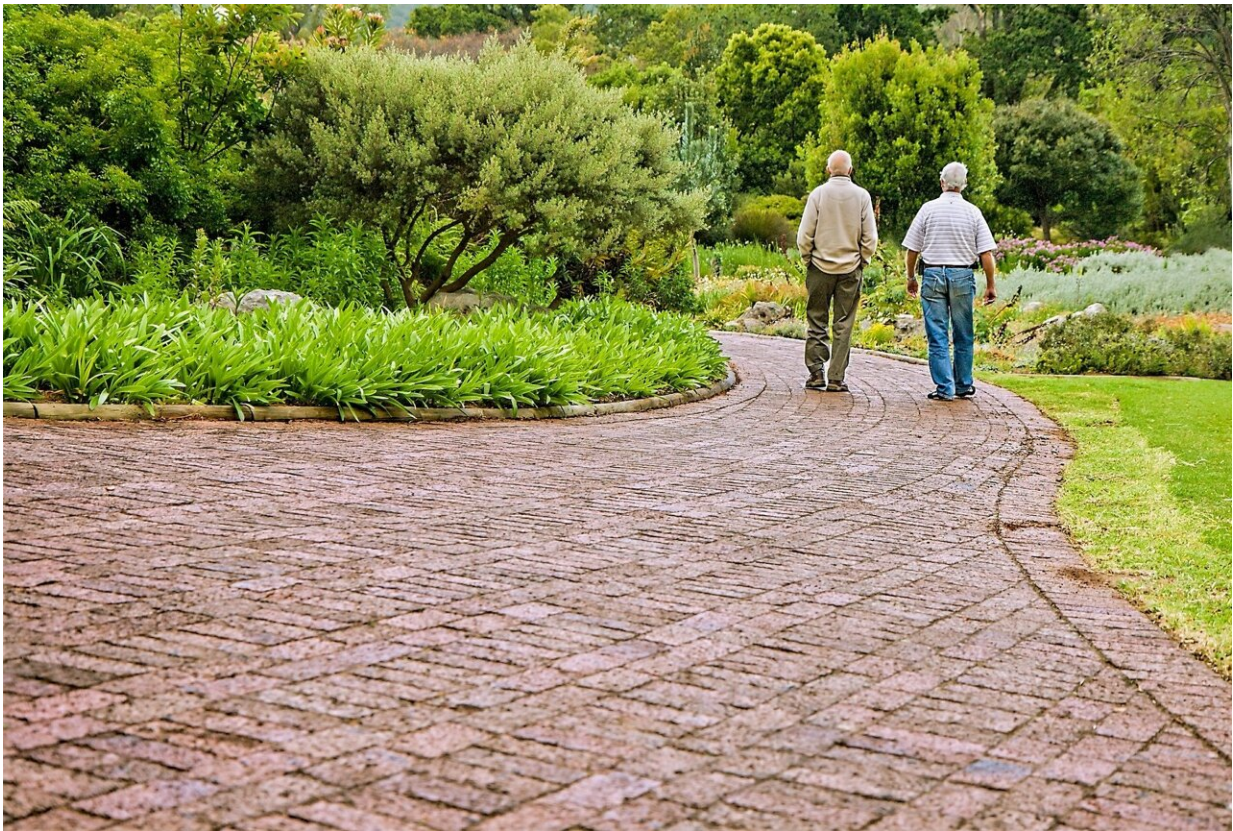


Increased movement leads to better outcomes for aged care residents

July 11 2022, by Lee Gaskin



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University of Adelaide researchers have found that aged care residents who move more and interact with their environment are more likely to live longer, have fewer falls and have a higher quality of life.

"While it might be a common misconception that [older people](#) living in [residential aged care](#) are room-bound, our research found that at least half of the residents moved out of their wing daily, and over a quarter ventured outside the care home at least weekly," said Dr. Agathe Daria Jadczyk, the primary author on the research and a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Center of Research Excellence Frailty and Health Aging at the University of Adelaide's Adelaide Medical School.

"Conditions such as frailty, loss of muscle mass and malnutrition were found to have a negative impact on residents' movement, however, there is evidence to suggest that these conditions can be managed through promoting [physical activity](#) and adequate nutrition.

"The physical and social environment of the residential care home plays an important role in promoting movement, which can assist residents to maintain their functional ability and encourages healthy aging.

"We found that increased movement was associated with improved [health outcomes](#) such as lower mortality rate, lower falls rate, and improved quality of life."

The study of 556 residents across 12 South Australian residential aged care homes operated by Resthaven was conducted between March and October in 2019, and followed up 12 months later in 2020.

The research emphasizes the importance of aged care residents being encouraged to move within the care home and interact with their environment so that they maintain their health and quality of life.

This research on residents' movement was conducted before the COVID-19 pandemic where restrictions were imposed on residential [aged care residents](#) and visitors.

The mean age of the residents surveyed was 87.7 years of age, while 73% of the residents were women.

Professor Renuka Visvanathan (National Health and Medical Research Council Center of Research Excellence Frailty and Health Aging, Adelaide Medical School, University of Adelaide) and Suzanne Edwards (Adelaide Health Technology Assessment, University of Adelaide) also contributed to this research, which was conducted in collaboration with Resthaven.

The research has been published in the *Journal of the American Medical Directors Association*

More information: Agathe Daria Jadczyk et al, Life-Space Mobility in Aged Care Residents: Frailty In Residential Sector over Time (FIRST) Study Findings, *Journal of the American Medical Directors Association* (2022). [DOI: 10.1016/j.jamda.2022.04.013](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jamda.2022.04.013)

Provided by University of Adelaide

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