Americans Aging At Home

Many Americans facing retirement prefer to remain in their homes and stay active in the community rather than retiring to assisted living. In fact, surveys report that “aging in place” is the overwhelming preference of seniors in America.

While the preference for aging Americans is to remain at home, financing for in-home aging care isn’t available to everyone. However, there are resources that can help make living at home possible for a greater number of individuals. Cities have developed programs to help seniors engage with communities and provide transportation to and from community events. With the help of these programs and others, seniors are able to live at home with added checkups from community health organizations. One of the main focuses of helping seniors age well at home is to maintain a system whereby individuals can get acquainted with the changing world around them. Family support can also be a key factor in helping loved ones age well at home and it is important to consider this aspect when planning.

A poll taken by the Associated Press indicated that 52 percent of baby boomers say they will most likely spend their retirement at the home in which they currently live. The percentage was even higher in 2005, when the AARP reported that 85 percent of seniors felt they would age in their homes. Misconceptions of living in a nursing home have increased anxiety in seniors and there is a general lack of information about living options. Nonprofit organizations can arrange programs and services from home healthcare to transportation to assistance.

While apprehension exists, seniors can stay connected and improve their overall aging progress. Retiring in a “village-like” setting is more possible as seniors plan for retirement and wish to live in close proximity to their lifelong friends and neighbors. One of the biggest obstacles facing seniors is the structural challenges of existing buildings. Having stairs or wooden floors can be potentially hazardous. Making living environments safer by having reachable cabinets and handle rails against slippery surfaces can help movement around the house. Thinking smart and making daily routines can make it more convenient to live at home with limited aid. Seniors also fear that the loss of energy and health can limit them from being social. However, seniors who plan accordingly can still enjoy many activities.

The common barrier to moving into a retirement home is the high cost. Many seniors find that moving into an apartment or townhouse setting can be a better choice. The ongoing debate over investing in community programs and promoting good health rather than nursing homes has been set aside due to the budgeting situations of many states. Some individuals foster the idea that seniors can do it themselves. However, it takes a community and help from all organizations to improve living conditions to make it possible. It is not hard to start the process of helping seniors, but it is hard to maintain a good line of communication between all fields. Promoting such ideas will not be enough but it is a good start for future growth.