

Retirement in Sight

Monthly news and information for current and future retirees

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When Baby Boomers Become Elders, Will Their Kids Provide Care?

Right now, millions of baby boomers provide informal, unpaid eldercare to parents in their eighties and nineties. This obligation has led some boomers to retire earlier. The Center for Retirement Research at Boston College says that men who play these caregiving roles are 2.4% less likely to stay in the workforce than their peers. Women are more likely to leave the office under such stress, and the CRR estimates that those who do balance a career and eldercare work 3-10 hours less a week and earn an average of 3% less than other working women.

Fewer middle-aged adults may be available to care for baby boomers who become elders. Divorce and geographic separation of families may worsen this dilemma. Additionally, nearly all baby boomers will be age 70 or older by 2033 – the date when the Social Security Trust Fund is projected to run dry, and a 20% reduction in Social Security benefits has been mentioned as a possible consequence. Rising nursing home costs and the financial strain of caregiving may eventually lead federal agencies and the private sector to a collaborative response to meet a pressing need for economical eldercare.¹

Consider All That Traveling Could Do for You

Some domestic and foreign trips may provide an education, a chance to make a difference, even opportunities to save money. For that matter, living abroad for months or years may allow you to retire on less, and renting out (or selling) a home stateside could pad your retirement savings.

Staying several weeks in another city or country is not necessarily expensive – witness a service like Home Exchange, which permits you and other members to swap homes across the country or world for free (there is a \$100 signup cost). Volunteering can take you into a new region or nation – you can use your legal, medical, engineering, or English skills to further social benefit, and an international volunteer organization can often place you with a host family. Websites such as HelpX.net catalogue lodges, ranches, and ships that invite volunteers in exchange for room and board. Lastly, engaging in a little medical tourism can save you money – as an example, a doctor's visit in Colombia costs about \$25 U.S. right now.²

On the Bright Side

Working a little longer may be good for you. One study published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health found that staying on the job just one more year after age 65 was linked with an 11% lower risk of mortality.³

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CITATIONS

- 1 - cbsnews.com/news/boomers-elder-care-financial-burden-on-children/ [6/6/17]
- 2 - wisebread.com/6-ways-travel-in-retirement-keeps-you-young [4/4/17]
- 3 - money.cnn.com/2017/04/27/retirement/delay-retirement/ [4/27/17]

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