



New World Priorities: Togetherness, Well-being and Fulfilment

Cigna Healthcare 360 Global Well-being Survey

Singapore Insights Report 2023 - Volume 2

New World Priorities: Togetherness, Well-being and Fulfilment



Do you have a sense that the pandemic marks a break with the past? If so, you're not alone. The unexpected, disruptive and isolating nature of the pandemic has affected and continues to affect us in ways more fundamental than how we work, live and play.

In January 2023, Cigna Healthcare surveyed almost 9,000 people in eight key markets* around the world, including 1,100 in Singapore, to find out how the pandemic has changed the way they live, their attitude and state of mind, and their perception of vaccines.

How the pandemic has changed us

In May this year, the World Health Organization declared an end to COVID-19 as a global health emergency¹. In Singapore, people were no longer required to wear masks other than in healthcare settings from February. However, despite a general downward trend in pandemic severity, people continue to live with the virus and its longer-term impacts.

In Singapore, almost nine in 10 (88%) people say the pandemic has led them to reassess their lives. This trend is much more prevalent in the nation than the rest of the world on average (79%). Younger respondents (under 45) are also more likely to have done so than those aged 45 and above, both in Singapore and globally.

The desire for togetherness stood out strongly as a result of this reassessment among Singapore respondents. More than half (52%) of those who have reassessed their lives have considered spending more time with family and friends.

Dr Nilufar Ahmed, Chartered Psychologist,
Senior Lecturer in Social Sciences at Bristol University

“Stress levels soared during the pandemic. During times of stress, people find comfort in familiarity, whether that is people, places, or cultural norms. This was a driving force for people, including those living abroad, to move to be closer to family.”



¹ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/05/1136367>

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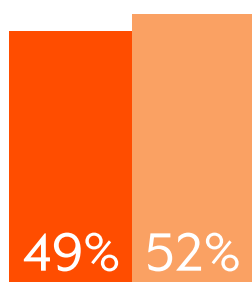


More natural approaches to diet and well-being (31%), and “being okay” with their emotions (25%) are also among the top three things considered by these respondents, reflecting a greater focus on health and well-being, both physical and emotional.

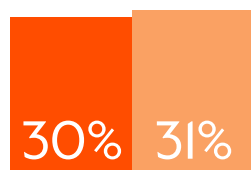
Notably, rethinking one’s occupation and career is also part of the post-pandemic reassessment

for people in Singapore. Finding a new job that is more fulfilling (23%) and retiring early (21%) were ranked most highly by respondents in the nation among all markets surveyed. Looking at different age groups, it is the 25-34-year-olds who are most focused on finding a fulfilling job (31%) while the 45-65 group is considering retiring early the most (29%).

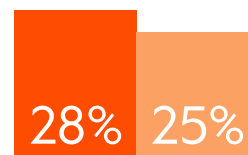
Top three actions people consider when reassessing their lives



Spending more time with family and friends



Trying more natural approaches to diet and well-being



Connecting more with their emotions



Global Singapore

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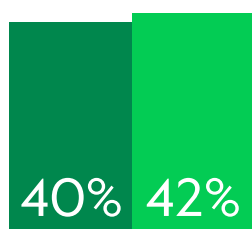
People are more adaptable and resilient despite illness concerns

Looking at the biggest changes in attitude among respondents, the experience during the pandemic has made 42% of people in Singapore more ready to embrace change and 36% more resilient.

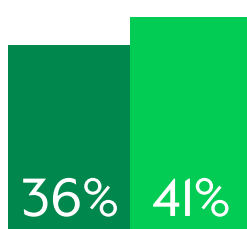
Nevertheless, 41% have also become more worried about illness. In fact, Singapore has

the second highest proportion of respondents who have become more worried about falling ill, just after Hong Kong (46%). Such worries could include, among other things, the possibility of being affected by “Long COVID” - clusters of fluctuating and relapsing symptoms which may appear around three months from the onset of the infection - as well as a host of other common ailments like the flu, which have increased in Singapore after mask-wearing requirements were lifted².

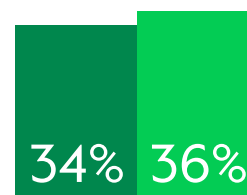
Top three changes in attitude



More ready to embrace change



More worried about illness



More resilient



■ Global ■ Singapore

² <https://www.straitstimes.com/life/revenge-flu-doctors-see-increase-in-cases-as-borders-open-and-masks-come-off?login=true>

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“It is unsurprising that after years of being so alert about health, certain anxieties remain about falling ill. When it comes to health, having access to trustworthy sources of healthcare and information provides essential reassurance,”
says Dr Nilufar Ahmed.

When asked what their main source of information about the pandemic and vaccines is, 38% of Singapore respondents said it is the Government. This is the second highest figure across all sources of information in all eight markets surveyed, behind the Netherlands, where 42% indicated that it is the Government.

Change in perception about vaccines after the pandemic

Trust vaccines more



Will take the next COVID-19 dose offered

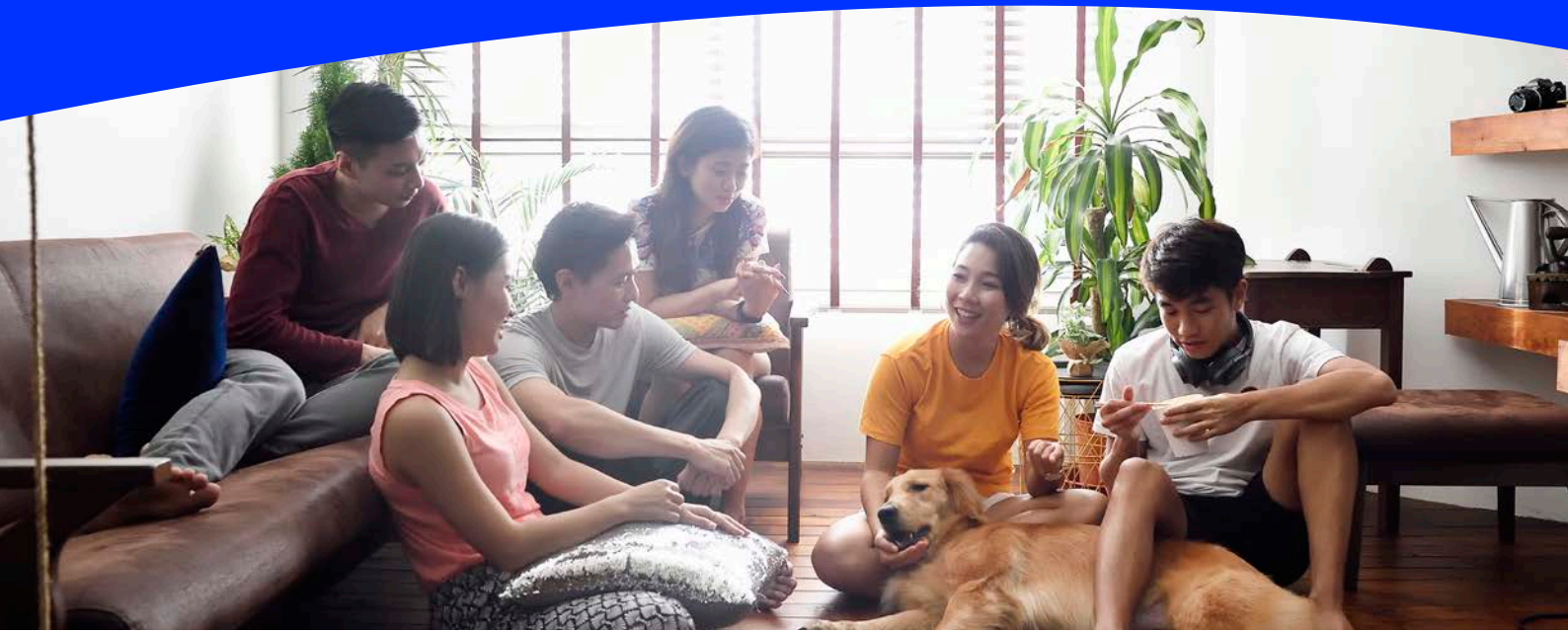


The Government is the main source of vaccine and COVID-19 information



 Global  Singapore

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Higher confidence in vaccines

The arrival of COVID-19 vaccines has played a critical role in controlling the pandemic. As of August 2023, 5.59 billion people globally have been vaccinated with at least one dose³, which is close to 70% of the world population⁴. In Singapore, 90.1% of the population in Singapore has received one dose of the vaccine and 89.5% has completed the primary series⁵.

But how do people currently view COVID-19 vaccines and vaccination in general (such as the flu shot and vaccines for polio or typhoid)?

Globally, public trust in vaccines has risen, with a third (35%) of respondents saying they trust vaccines more since the pandemic – although this varies by market. In Singapore, 37% of survey respondents said they trust vaccines more, in line with the global average. In comparison, those in the Middle East have significantly higher confidence in vaccines, with 60% saying they trust vaccines more, while those in European markets and Hong Kong are least confident.

When asked if they would take the next dose of the COVID-19 vaccine offered to them, seven in 10 respondents in Singapore (70%) said they would, reflecting trust in vaccine efficacy.

Raymond Ng, CEO and Country Manager, Cigna Healthcare Singapore and Australia



“People in Singapore have become more resilient and adaptable to change after the pandemic. At the same time, our priorities and aspirations have evolved, with many now valuing family and emotional well-being more, which we see as a silver lining from the crisis.

As people become more conscious about their health, both public and private organisations will have to play an even more active role in ensuring communities and employees get the support they need to stay healthy.”



³ <https://covid19.who.int/?mapFilter=vaccinations> (extracted on 3 August 2023)

⁴ <https://unctad.org/data-visualization/now-8-billion-and-counting-where-worlds-population-has-grown-most-and-why>

⁵ <https://www.moh.gov.sg/covid-19/statistics>

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How can employers ride the wave of change?

To look after the workforce, it is critical for governments and private organisations to understand the changes in what people value and how they perceive things. Now that people value well-being and time with family and friends over more materialistic endeavors, previously accepted workplace incentives are no longer sufficient to engage and motivate employees.

Companies may consider offering more flexible time off and leave entitlements like caretaker leave that allow people to spend time taking care of family members when they need to. Employers should also support their people to take care of themselves (not only when they are ill but also to become healthier) through well-

being initiatives and health plans which offer both physical and mental well-being support.

To support workplace mental health, Cigna Healthcare has launched [the 5% Pledge](#) which invites senior executives from all organisations to commit 5% of their work hours to understand the needs of employees as well as implement tangible change to improve their well-being.

At the same time, employers can also play a bigger role in providing trustworthy health and well-being information. With employees spending so much time at work and many relying on employers to provide healthcare support, organisations that go the extra mile to provide information and resources about vaccines and other relevant public health information will stand out as caring employers.

Dr Douglas Nemecek, Chief Medical Officer, Behavioral Health, Evernorth, a member of The Cigna Group



“More and more people are now looking for holistic well-being support that includes emotional wellness and behavioral health in addition to physical health. We must be mindful of the long-lasting impacts the global pandemic continues to have on people’s mindsets and behavior, and find ways to address their most current needs and aspirations.”





About the research

*The research was conducted through an online survey between January 3 and 31, 2023 in Singapore and the following markets: Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia, Spain, the Netherlands, UAE, UK, and USA. The respondents were members of the general population, aged 16 to 65, representative of age, gender, and income. The survey also included expats, aged 16 to 65, currently residing in a country other than their country of citizenship.