

Defined Benefit Pension Plans Key to Aging in Place

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October 7, 2025

Most Canadians want to age in their own home in retirement¹, allowing them to maintain their independence and comfort as they grow older². This hope aligns closely with a key policy challenge many governments are grappling with: managing rising healthcare costs, compounded by increasing longevity and lower birthrates.

In Ontario's case, the government continues to expand initiatives to help seniors stay in their communities, reduce hospital visits and support independent living for the province's aging population. But several factors can influence Canadians' ability to age at home (also referred to as aging in place), including their health, finances and homeownership.

As the pension provider for Ontario healthcare workers, HOOPP is committed to building a stronger financial future for the healthcare community. Our *2025 Canadian Retirement Survey* revealed that Canadians with a defined benefit (DB) pension plan are the most confident in their ability to age in place. These findings demonstrate how workplace pensions, especially DB pensions, contribute to the financial well-being of Plan members and all Canadians. By supporting their financial security, pensions help retirees afford to live at home as they age, reducing pressure on the broader healthcare system.

¹ N Iciaszczyk, G Gallant, T Bronstein, A Brierley & SK Sinha. [Perspectives on Growing Older in Canada: The 2024 NIA Ageing in Canada Survey](#). Toronto, ON: National Institute on Ageing (2024), Toronto Metropolitan University.

² [Nearly All Canadians 45+ Years Want to Age at Home, But Only 1 in 10 \(12%\) Say They Can Afford the Cost of a Personal Support Worker](#) (2022). Ipsos.

By the numbers

Canadians with a DB pension are more likely to expect to continue living in their own home later in retirement:



Canadians
with a DB pension



Canadians with no
workplace retirement benefits

Canadians with a DB pension are more confident they can afford to continue living in their own home in retirement:



Canadians
with a DB pension



Canadians with no
workplace retirement benefits

Canadians with a DB pension are much less likely to see running out of money as the biggest financial barrier to living in their own home in retirement:



Canadians
with a DB pension



Canadians with no
workplace retirement benefits

Final thoughts

Defined benefit pensions are a key component to empowering Canadians to age in place. A DB pension provides individuals with financial security and confidence to remain in their home, allowing governments to evolve the healthcare system to meet the challenges of an aging population.

Unfortunately, many Canadians continue to lack access to workplace pensions, even as the vast majority would choose to contribute to one if given the choice. In fact, nearly nine-in-10 Canadians say they would contribute 9% of their salary, with employer matching, to a DB pension plan in exchange for a lifetime retirement income. That's because Canadians understand the value of a reliable, lifetime income in retirement and want a secure, stable future where they can choose to age in whatever place is right for them – without their finances getting in the way.

There are signs of a growing consensus on the value of DB plans. A recent report from Statistics Canada³ found active membership in DB plans surpassed 4.9 million workers in 2023, up 4.2% year over year. As well, in August 2025, the Ontario government reintroduced a DB pension plan for MPPs after a three-decade absence. These developments provide an opportunity for Canadian employers and policymakers to rethink the status quo, ensuring all Canadians can have a financially secure retirement.

By improving and expanding access to good workplace pension plans, we can make aging at home a more accessible goal for all Canadians.

³ [Pension Plans in Canada, as of January 1, 2024](#) (2025). Statistics Canada.