

Future Trends Report
Based on Analysis of the Future Scene in Mid-Term and Final Evaluation

STEP 1. Identify Challenges

Read the Future Scene carefully and generate ideas for challenges, concerns, and possible related problems. Choose the 5 most important challenges and write them in the space provided. Include applicable research with appropriate in-text citations.

Challenge #1:

The Future scene states that tax rates were increasing as the population of seniors increased and the workforce shrank, placing more burden on young adults. This could be a problem as they would cause them to work for longer hours to earn the exact same pay, potentially leading to an overworked, unhealthy generation of young adults.

workSMART says that working long hours tends to reduce your level of fitness and put stress on your mind and body.

It leads to poor circulation, increased weight, heart problems, higher cholesterol levels, lack of energy, poor sleep, bad concentration, nervous conditions, depression and so on.

With that lot in mind, **health and fitness** should really be at the very top of your list of priorities.

HOW CAN I FIT HEALTH AND FITNESS AROUND THE DEMANDS OF MY WORKING LIFE? (n.d.). Retrieved June 21, 2018, from

<https://worksmart.org.uk/careers-advice/working-smarter/keeping-fit-work/what-effect-can-overworking-have-my-health>

Challenge #2:

The future scene states that elderly people are getting too used to being alone in their homes. Even though the elderly have access to elderly daycare centres, the elderly would not go there as the centres are not well-maintained. This could be a problem as they might succumb to depression and loneliness in their own homes and have a higher risk of getting dementia and even suicidal thoughts, which may lead to an emotionally unwell elderly generation.

Stanton Peele Ph.D. Addiction in Society said that he had participated in a debate in Psychology Today Blogs over the nature of the men who kill many people at once. They were often very lonely which leads some to strike out in bizarre and violent ways -- a profile that extends even to terrorists.

This was Based on three key cases that appeared on successive days, to which I added such other examples as the Unabomber and 9-11 murderers.

Peele S. (2012 Dec 15) Mass Murder and the Hidden Self Retrieved June 26, 2018 from

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/addiction-in-society/201212/mass-murder-and-the-hidden-self?amp>

Challenge #3:

The future scene states that following the replacement of restaurants and cafes with drone deliveries, elderly people rarely need to interact physically and are only involved in some online chat groups. If this were to happen to all elderly, this might lead to a decline of their social interaction skills and thus not be able to express their thoughts. This could be a problem as it could lead potentially to a large group of elderly who cannot integrate properly into society. Thus, they cannot get the help that they need and are completely left out, confused, struggling, unable to express their needs properly.

The New York Times conducted a study on 7,000 men and women in Alameda County, Calif., which began in 1965.

Lisa F. Berkman and S. Leonard Syme found that “people who were disconnected from others were roughly three times more likely to die than people with strong social ties.”

Brody J. (2017, June 12) Social Interaction Is Critical for Mental and Physical Health Retrieved June 26, 2018 from

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/12/well/live/having-friends-is-good-for-you.html>

Challenge #4:

The future scene states that the government is not subsidizing enough for the healthcare of the pioneer generation despite the rising cost of healthcare. In addition, the medical staff attending to them are extremely exhausted. This could be a problem because if the government does not subsidise them more, it could lead to the younger generation being unable to afford the healthcare for their elderly parents and thus leading to a growing number of pioneer citizens who do not have adequate healthcare and are more prone to diseases.

The Ministry of Health defines health subsidies as when the government helps to pay for healthcare, so that you can afford good, basic healthcare when you need it. For example, you can receive up to 80% subsidy when you are hospitalised, if you choose a subsidised ward.

You can also receive subsidies when visiting specialist outpatient clinics. Lower- to middle-income families can also qualify for the Community Health Assist Scheme, which provides them with subsidies at participating private GP and dental clinics.

-Ministry of Health

Challenge #5:

The future scene states that the government cares more about the youths of tomorrow than the elderly folks of the past. This could be a problem as the elderly would be neglected and not cared for, potentially leading to our world becoming a dystopian one; after being useful during your youth, you would be thrown away and replaced after that.

The three pieces of research showed:

There are now an estimated 1.2 million over-65s going without help for care - nearly one in eight of all older people. Some 300,000 of them have difficulty with three or more tasks, including dressing, washing and going to the toilet. Councils agreed to help under half the 1.3 million people who approached. The BBC identified 11 councils that rejected more than 75% of applications. Staff said they had not been given enough training to cope with the complex needs people had.

Families reported examples of poor care, including loved ones not being given medication, being left in dirty clothes for days and going missing after homes had not been properly secured.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-37992488>

STEP 2. Select a Fundamental Problem

Using the challenges listed in Step 1, identify a problem of major importance to the Future Scene situation. Write your Underlying Problem making sure your question clearly explains the action that will be taken and the desired results/goal of that action.

Incorporating Challenge(s) # _____

Underlying Problem:

Given the inference that we have made that the elderly in 2030 are likely to not have adequate healthcare and not have enough support from the overworked young adults, how might we let the elderly get adequate healthcare so that they will not be as prone to diseases in Singapore in the year 2030 and beyond?

STEP 3. Produce Solution Ideas

Generate solution ideas to the Underlying Problem in Step 2. Choose the 5 most effective solutions and write the elaborated ideas in the space provided. . Include applicable research with appropriate in-text citations.

Solution #1:

- **The government can reduce financial burden to increase support for the elderly:**
 - Depending on the income bracket, decrease tax rates for the lower and middle income earners (these are commonly known as the 'sandwiched' class). In order not to impact the total taxes received by the government, propose to tax the higher income earner at a higher tax rates.
 - Provide more grants to the younger workforce such as increase grants in the purchase of their first flats (E.g. increase to SGD80k from SGD30k).
 - Therefore allowing more financial support for the young working adults for the elderly.

Solution #2:

- **The government can provide incentives to encourage family members to visit frequently:**
 - The government could introduce more measures to encourage the family members of these elderly people to stay closeby. For example, tax rebates to be given to those who stay within 1km from their old folks. Thus, with the proximity, it facilitates visits to their old folks and thus, lower the risk of being lonely and depression.
 - More subsidies could be extended to the family members of the elderly to engage domestic helpers to take care of the elderly and keep them company.
 - The family members would be able to identify symptoms of mental illnesses earlier and prevent it from getting worse.

Most Researched Solution

Solution #3:

- **More interaction venues to be set up** in the neighbourhood for the elderly to visit apart from the elderly care centers. For examples:
 - Setting up of low cost cafes to encourage the elderly to meet and interact with one another.
 - Setting up of low cost fitness centers to encourage the elderly to exercise together.
 - Reduces the chance of the elderly falling sick, so total healthcare costs would be cheaper as elderly would be healthier.

Most Original Solution

Solution #4:

- **Incentives to encourage residents to join the healthcare profession:**
 - The government should provide grants for those to study in the healthcare sector.
 - Incentives could be introduced for nurses, e.g. tax rebates or lower income tax rates. An even bolder move is to shorten the National Service time of young Singaporean males who would want to be nurses, say from 2 years to 1.5 years.

Solution #5:

- **Good basic healthcare must be provided to defray healthcare costs:**
 - Good and basic healthcare has to be made available to all Singaporeans. The government could aim to subsidise more for healthcare, so that the lower and middle income earner and the elderly can afford good and basic healthcare when required.
 - Depending on income bracket, additional subsidies at polyclinics and hospitals should be given.

STEP 4a. Select Criteria

Generate criteria to determine which solution idea does the best job of solving your Underlying Problem and/or addressing the Future Scene situation. Select the 3 most important criteria for measuring solution ideas and write them in the spaces provided.

<p>Criterion #1:</p> <p>Which solution is the least costly?</p>
<p>Criterion #2:</p> <p>Which solution is the most efficient in solving the fundamental problem?</p>
<p>Criterion #3:</p> <p>Which solution is the easiest to implement?</p>

STEP 4b. Apply Criteria

List the solution ideas from Step 3 on the grid. Use each criterion to rank the solutions on a scale from 1 (poorest) to 5 (best). The weighting for one important criterion may be doubled if necessary.

Step 3 Sol'n #	Solution Idea	Criteria			Total
		1	2	3	
#1	Reduce financial burden to lower stress level	5	2	5	12
#2	Incentives to encourage family members to stay closeby	2	3	3	8
#3	More interaction venues to be set up	1	5	1	7
#4	Incentives could be introduced to encourage more to join the nursing profession	3	4	2	9
#5	Provide basic and good healthcare for all Singaporeans	4	1	4	9

Action Plan derived from Solution # ____:

Apart from building additional elderly care centers by 2032 across Singapore, the ERDB (Elderly Recreational Development Board) plans to **set up more interaction points in the neighbourhood for the elderly.**

Note that our idea is to set up more interaction points and not large venues as we are mindful of the potential high costs involved in setting up large venues and we might face with resource issues. In other words, the interaction points are not the typical large community centers that we are used to.

Instead, we plan to **set up low cost cafes** to encourage the elderly to meet and interact with one another. These low cost cafes will serve healthy food and drinks at cost price. They will also be free board games, newspapers and magazines for the elderly.

We also plan to set up **low cost fitness centers** to encourage the elderly to exercise together to stay healthy. These fitness centers will be equipped with basic gym equipment and they would run daily Tai Chi classes in the evenings. Classes are held in the evenings as we hope to save costs by arranging for volunteers to teach these elderly during their leisure time after work.

To facilitate easy access by the elderly as some of them might experience walking difficulties or may be tired after some walk, **these interaction points have to be easily accessible by the elderly.** Thus, we plan for these interaction points to be housed within the HDB housing blocks, such as the lobby or basement of the HDB flats. Ideally, **there should be an interaction point within every 2km radius.**

As a start, we plan to start off with one interaction center point in each district and this is expected to take one year to complete. In the second year, we plan to equip every neighbourhood with at least one interaction point within 2 km radius.

To promote these interaction points, **we will distribute flyers to each letter box and visit flats with elderly.**

The convenient interaction points will **allow and encourage the elderly to meet frequently** or even daily. The various interactions such as playing games or exercising together will **keep these elderly engaged.** Alternatively, even merely chit-chatting with one another or eating healthy food at the interaction points will **keep these elderly occupied.** Keeping the elderly engaged and occupied will help **keep their minds fit.**

STEP 5. Develop an Action Plan and Evaluate its Feasibility

Develop your top-scoring solution idea into an Action Plan. Thoroughly explain how the Underlying Problem is solved, how the plan will be implemented, and how the Future Scene will be affected. Explain how this Action Plan is feasible with research consulted.

(Action Plan Continued)

As a result of frequent interaction, it will **reduce the chance of the elderly being lonely and depressed**. Additionally, exercising frequently and eating healthily can also **prevent the elderly from falling sick**, thus it will indirectly help to **reduce their healthcare costs**.

Some obstacles would be groups that believe that we are wasting our resources on those who cannot be an advantage to our society, and they might protest where we decide to set up our interaction centres. The large amount of elderly living alone as well as their children who cannot afford to care for them would support our action plan, as the elderly would be able to socialise, possibly preventing social isolation and mental diseases such as depression. Also, their children would be less financially burdened and be able to focus on other important tasks they may have.

Surveyed elderly have said that our interaction points would be beneficial to them. One surveyee said that he could use these interaction points to meet up with his friends. Although he used to meet with them at Chinatown often, they soon stopped as they were too tired, or weak to do so. He said that he would finally be able to talk with them face to face, and hopes the government decides to actually implement these interaction points. Another surveyee mentioned that she is always cooped up at home, with nothing much to do than watch television or play some games on her phone. She said that with these interaction points, she would be able to socialise with others, and also make some friends along the way. She would definitely visit it daily if it was to be implemented, and finally be not constrained to the same old room.

List of References:

Bibliography

Cite the resources you consulted using the APA format.

1. HOW CAN I FIT HEALTH AND FITNESS AROUND THE DEMANDS OF MY WORKING LIFE? (n.d.). Retrieved June 21, 2018, from <https://worksmart.org.uk/careers-advice/working-smarter/keeping-f-it-work/what-effect-can-overworking-have-my-health>
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5. BBC, Trigg N. Rhodes D. (2016 17 November) Retrieved August 6 from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-37992488>