



Report On

Elderly Caregiving in Singapore Study

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**Please note that the data and findings in this report should not be published without consultation with TNS.*



Background & Research Objectives

Background



- The TSAO Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life of older people by alleviating the hardships of ageing through its community health services, promoting successful ageing and pioneering new approaches to ageing and eldercare throughout Singapore and the region.
- It also aims to be a catalyst for constructive change by addressing ageing and eldercare issues at policy level.
- The Foundation actively pursues its mission by focusing its work on these three pillars of eldercare: Service, Education and Collaboration.
- One of the key eldercare issues at hand is the impact of the global economic crisis on the caregivers of the elderly.
- In order to remain in the forefront in understanding the issues of older people, the TSAO Foundation has partnered with TNS to conduct a research study to gain insight to the profile of elderly caregivers in Singapore and the extend of the impact of the global financial crisis on their caregiving abilities.

Research Objectives



The research objectives of the study are as follows:

- To better understand the profile of caregivers to the elderly in Singapore, including:
 - Their awareness of government policies
 - The different types of caregiving they offer – Financial and Non-financial
 - Their spending patterns and priorities
 - Healthcare awareness and involvement

Executive Summary



Awareness of Government Policies

- Awareness of recent local news on government policies does not seem to be an issue as almost all (98%) elderly caregivers have read, heard or seen them in the past 6 months and about 4 out of 5 (79%) elderly caregivers felt that these local news topics in the past 6 months had an impact on their elderly person.
- Overall, about 1 out of 2 (Top 2 Boxes (T2B) – 47%) elderly caregivers felt that the recent government policies were useful to their elderly person and 2 out of 5 (T2B) felt that the policies were useful to them as elderly caregivers.
- 74% of elderly caregivers indicated elderly medical needs as the most important issue to be highlighted in government policies in order to provide better support for the elderly.

Types of Eldercare

- Overall, financial eldercare was perceived by elderly caregivers as the most important activity to their elderly person.
 - Elderly caregivers indicated that they felt that the most important activity to their elderly person was paying for their medical bills (Mean – 1.7).
- This was in line with the current care and support being provided for elderly persons.
- The most common form of eldercare provided was giving their elderly person an allowance at 72% followed by paying for their medical bills at 66%.
 - However, it is noted that 66% of elderly caregivers were also providing non-financial support in the form of companionship.
- The most important non-financial eldercare was thought to be feeding their elderly person (Mean – 1.43).

Spending Patterns & Priorities

- 65% of elderly caregivers said that they would not change their current spending on their elderly person even if the recession were to worsen further.
- Beside caring for their elderly person, elderly caregiver's most common personal priorities were their basic living necessities (82%), spending time with their families (64%) and saving for their own retirement (64%).
- When elderly caregivers were asked to rank their overall commitments (personal priorities and eldercare together), caregiving commitments to their mother and father were ranked at 0.7 (Mean) and 0.59 (Mean) respectively.
 - The most important commitment overall was their financial commitment of paying off their rent/ housing loan/ mortgage (Mean – 1.47).

Healthcare Awareness & Involvement

- About 9 out of 10 (89%) elderly caregivers were covered by Medishield.
 - For those who were not covered, 65% of them indicated that they had purchased other medical/ health insurance schemes.

Key Findings (1)



Awareness of Government Policies

- 98% of elderly caregivers were aware of local news on government policies in the past 6 months.
 - Local news on the Eldershiield program (70%) and the Medishiield Program (69%) had the highest level of awareness among elderly caregivers.
- About 4 out of 5 (79%) elderly caregivers felt that the local news topics in the past 6 months had an impact on their elderly person.
- 74% of elderly caregivers felt that elderly medical needs was the most important issue to be promoted in government policies in order to better support elderly persons.
- Overall, about 1 out of 2 (Top 2 Boxes (T2B) – 47%) elderly caregivers felt that the recent government policies were useful to their elderly person.
 - 2 out of 5 felt that the policies were useful to them as elderly caregivers.

Types of Eldercare Offered

Current Eldercare Provided

- Currently, the top three eldercare support being provided are: providing an allowance for their elderly person (72%), paying for their medical bills (66%) and providing companionship (66%).
- Among those who provided financial support to their elderly person, it was found that elderly caregivers who paid for the elderly person's maid/caregiver services spent the most overall (Mean=S\$392) on a monthly basis.
- When it came to non-financial support, about 2 out of 5 (39%) elderly caregivers who provided companionship did so on an almost daily basis.
 - This was the most frequent form of non-financial support provided by elderly caregivers on average every month.

Elderly Perception of Eldercare Activities

- Elderly caregivers ranked the most important financial eldercare activities to their elderly as follows: paying for their medical bills (Mean – 1.7), giving them an allowance (Mean – 0.88) and paying for their maid/caregiver services (Mean – 0.62).
- When it came to non-financial eldercare, elderly caregivers ranked the top three activities most important to their elderly as: Feeding him/her (Mean – 1.43), helping to transfer the elderly from the bed to an upright chair or wheelchair and vice versa (Mean – 1.12) and helping to move the elderly indoors from room to room on level surfaces (Mean – 1).
- When asked to rank financial and non-financial eldercare activities together, elderly caregivers perceived financial eldercare activities as more important than non-financial eldercare activities: paying for their medical bills (Mean – 1.7), giving them an allowance (Mean – 0.88) and providing them companionship (Mean – 0.75).

Key Findings (2)



Spending Patterns and Priorities

Impact of Recession

- 65% of elderly caregivers said that they would spend the same as before on their elderly person despite the current recession.
- Only 21% of elderly caregivers said that they would reduce their spending on their elderly persons should the current recession worsens.
 - Elderly caregivers who would spend less on their elderly persons would spend an average of S\$250 less.
- 14% said they would increase their spending on their elderly persons even if the current recession worsens.
 - Elderly caregivers who would spend more on their elderly persons would spend an average of S\$396 more.

Personal Priorities

- Besides caring for their elderly person, the most common other commitments were their personal basic needs (82%), spending time with their own immediate family (64%) and saving for their own retirement (64%).
- When asked to rank their personal commitments together with their eldercare commitments, the top three personal priorities of elderly caregivers were: paying off their rent/housing loan/mortgage (Mean – 1.47), financial commitment to their own families (Mean – 1.43), and spending time with their own family (Mean – 1.41).

Confidence of Fulfilling All Priorities

- Elderly caregivers were most confident of continuing their current caregiving commitments to their immediate family in the next 6 months: father (T2B – 56%), mother (T2B – 53%) and their sibling (T2B – 33%) on top of their personal commitments.
- However, they were not at all confident of continuing to care for elderly persons who were not their family members: friend (T2B – 0%), employer (T2B – 0%) and employee (T2B - 0%).

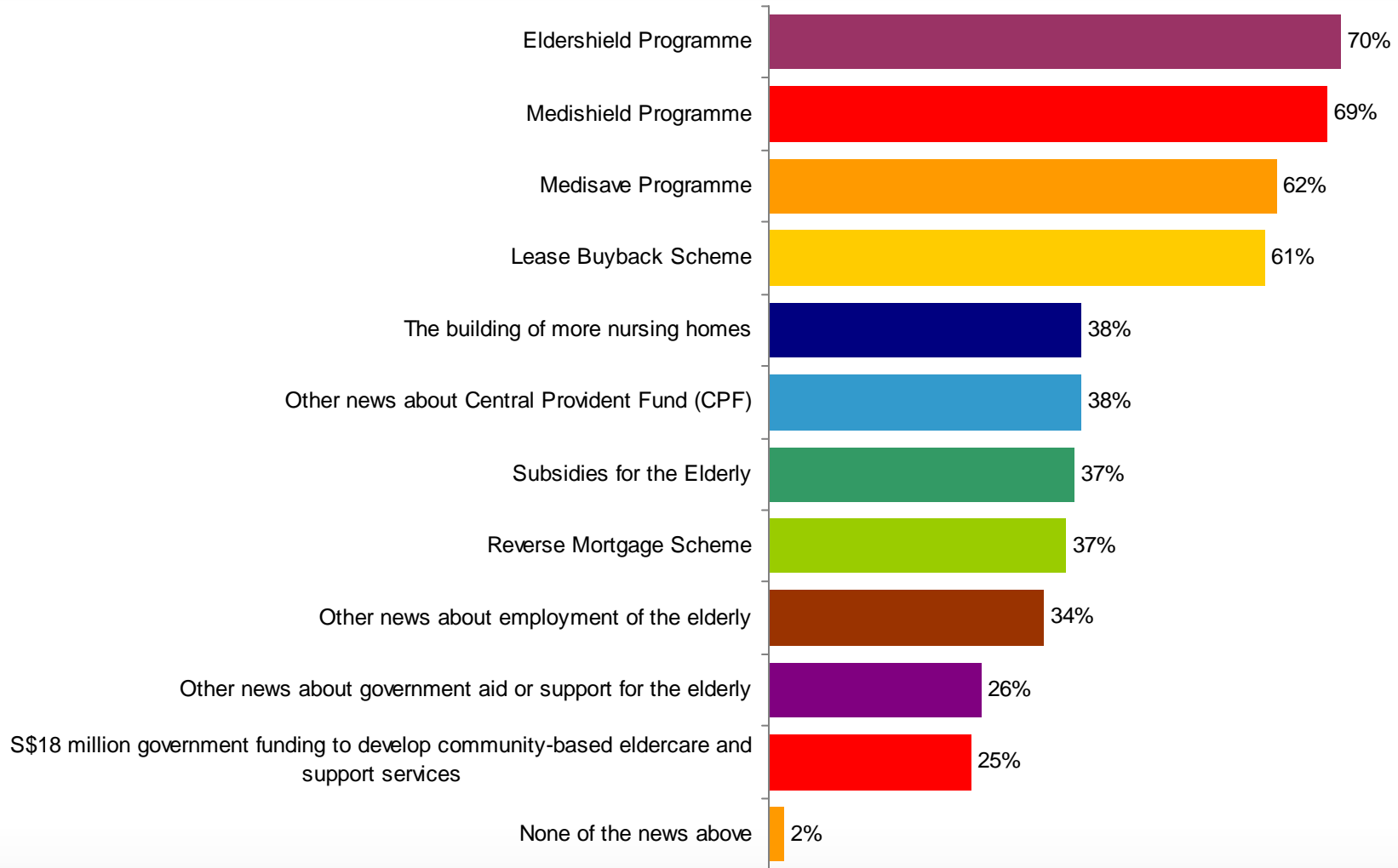
Healthcare Awareness and Involvement

- Almost 9 out of 10 (89%) elderly caregivers were covered by Medishield.
 - However, it is noted that about 1 in 5 elderly caregivers aged 40 – 44 years (22%) and 55 and above (19%) either did not have Medishield or were unsure if they were covered by it.
- Overall, for those who were not covered by Medishield, 65% said that they had purchased other health/medical insurance schemes.

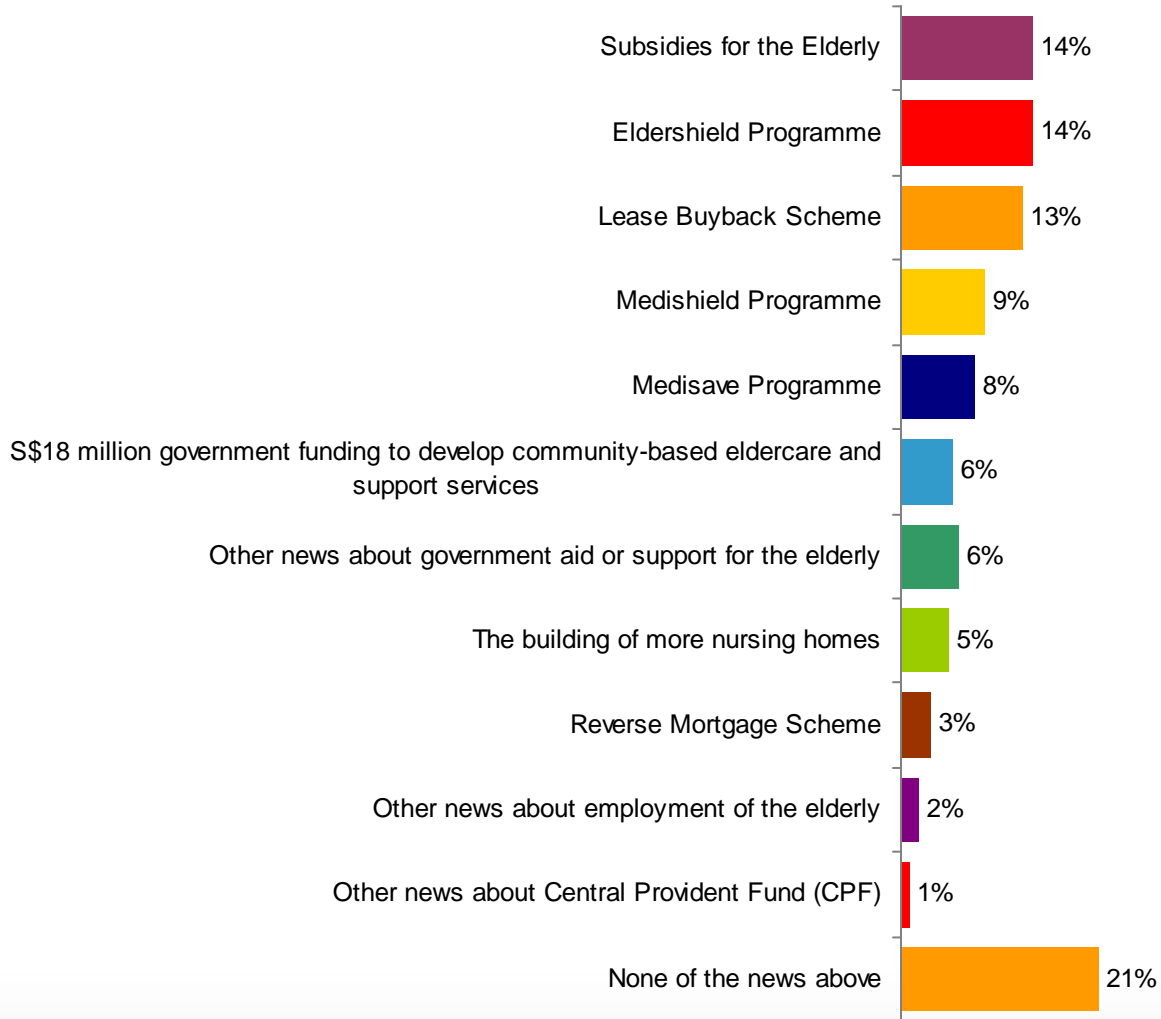


Findings – Awareness of Government Policies

Awareness of Local News



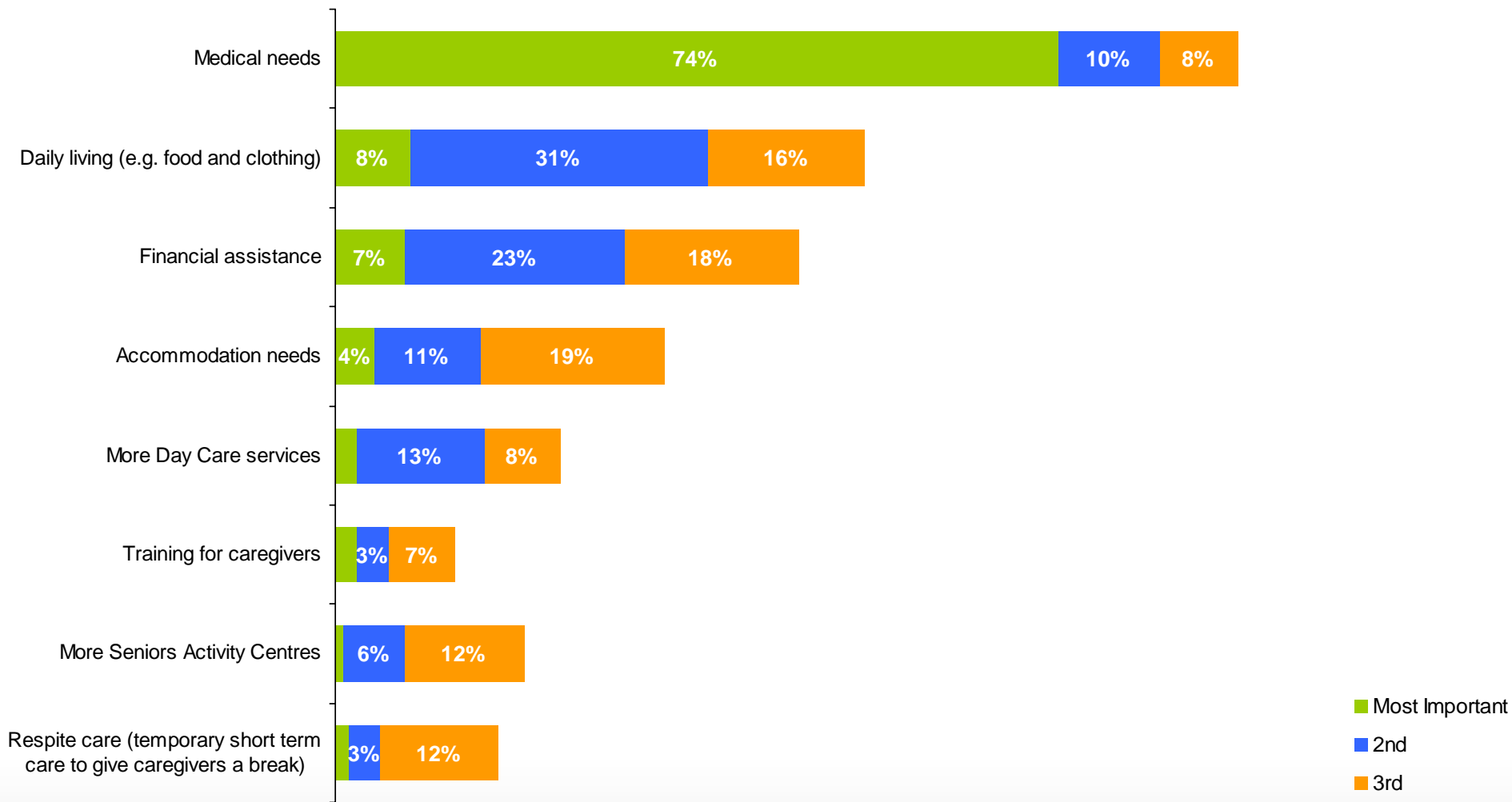
Local News with Most Impact



Recommended Priorities for Eldercare Policies



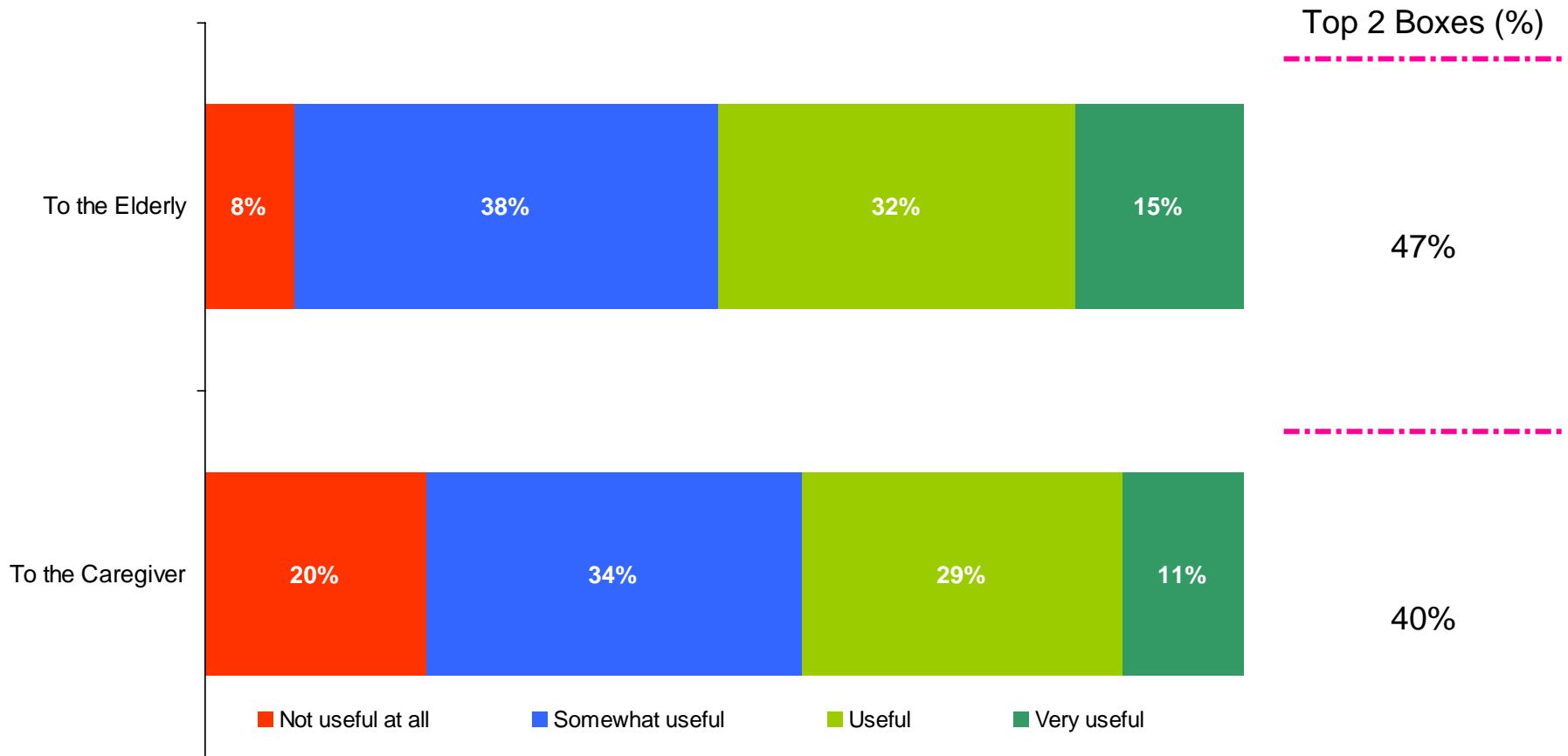
TOTAL (%)



Base: All elderly caregivers (n=222)
 Q2. Among the following areas in government policies, which are the 3 areas that you feel should be promoted to better support elderly persons such as your (elderly person)?

*Multiple Answers

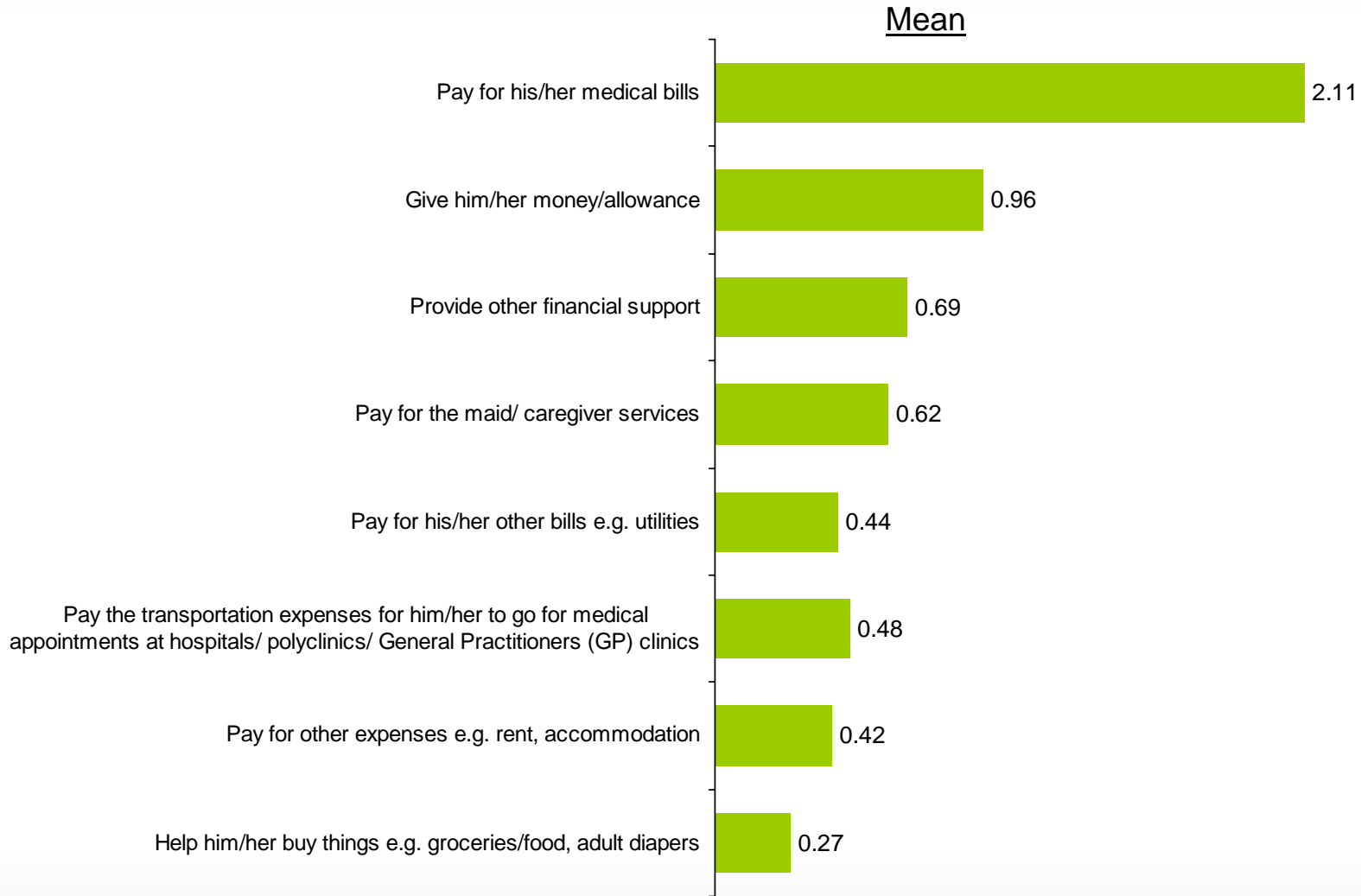
Usefulness of Government Policies





Findings – Types of Eldercare Offered

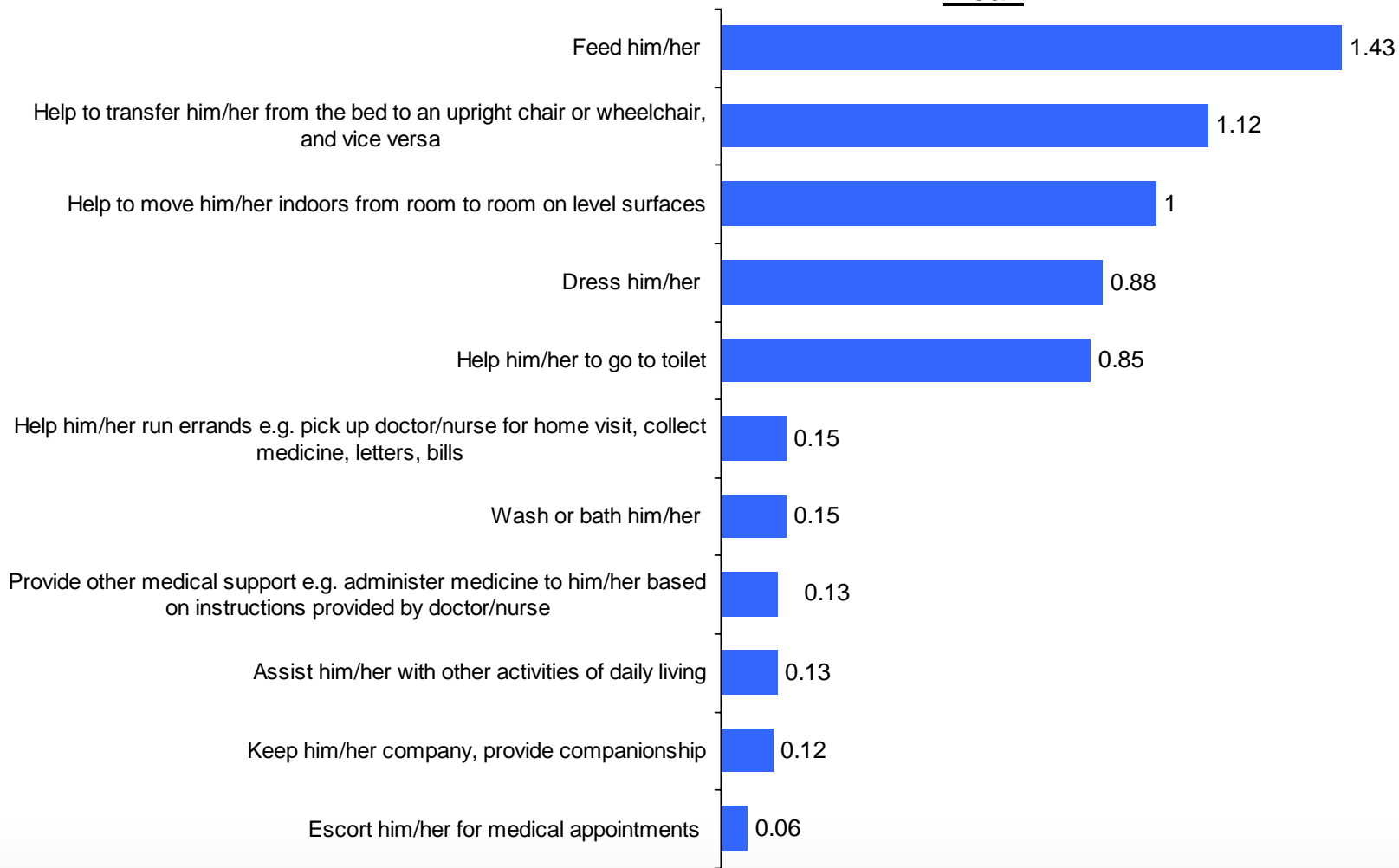
Activities Important to the Elderly – Financial



Activities Important to the Elderly – Non-Financial



Mean

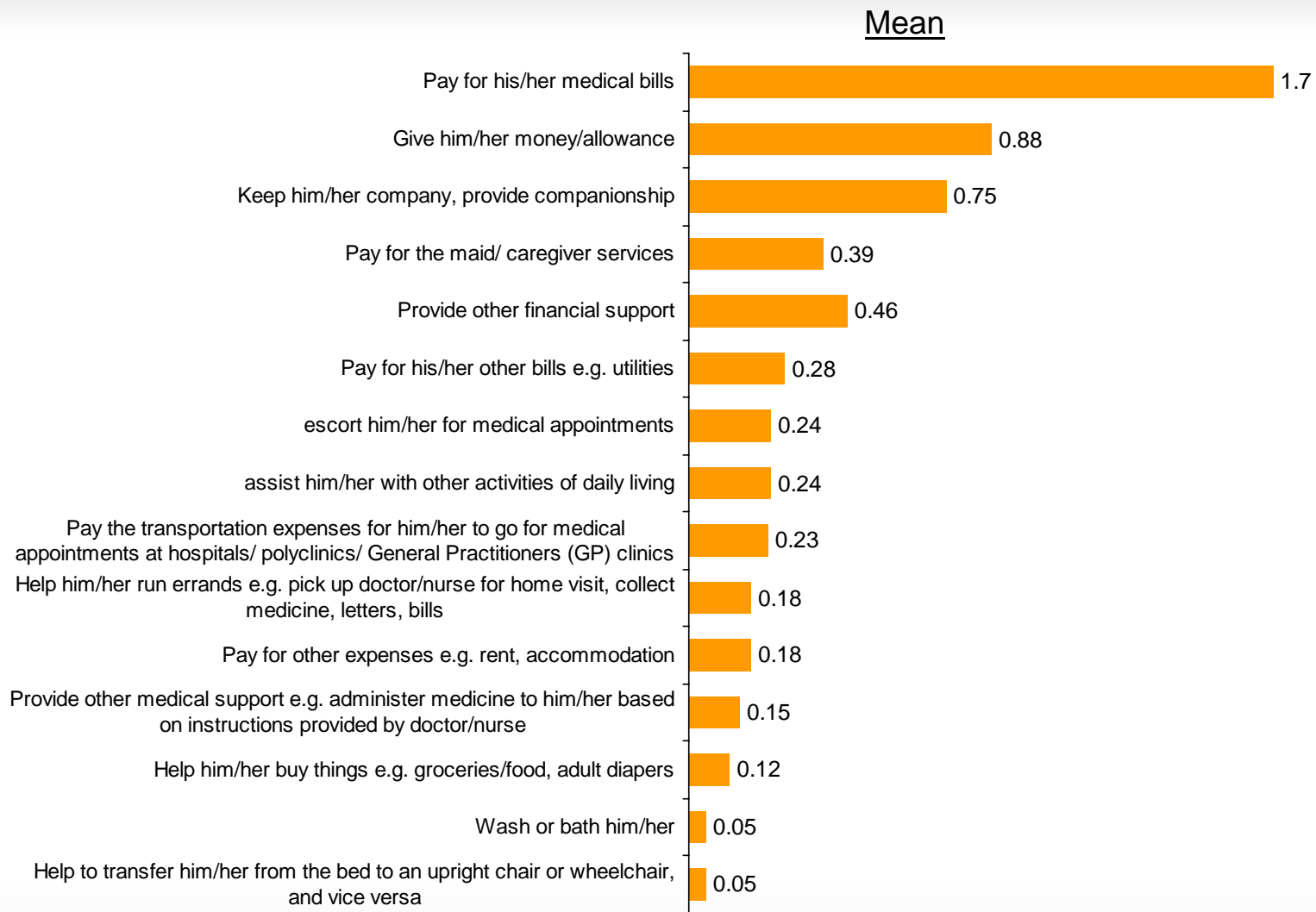


Base: All elderly caregivers (n=222)

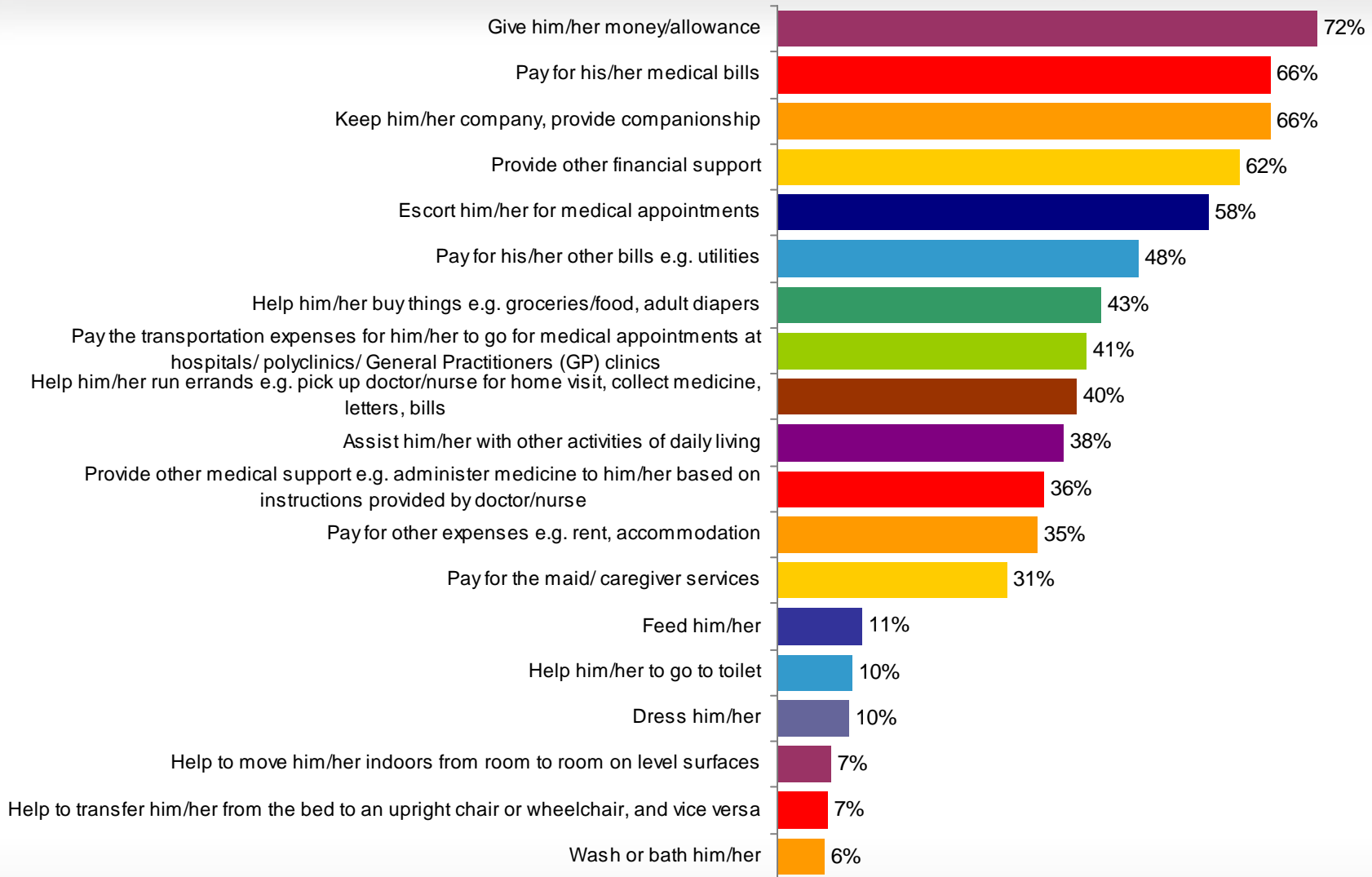
Q4. Thinking about your (elderly person), which are the top 3 activities/support that you think he/she will feel are most important to him/her. Please select the 3 most important and rank them, with 1 being "Most important" and 3 being the "3rd most important".

*Multiple Answers

Top 10 Most Important Activities to the Elderly



Current Care and Support for Elderly



tns Base: All elderly caregivers (n=222)
 Q6. Thinking about your elderly (elderly person) how do you care for and provide support to him/her? Please select all the relevant activities and/or support that you are currently providing to care for him/her.
 *Multiple Answers

Amount of Financial Support for Elderly



	S\$100 and below %	S\$101 – 200 %	S\$201 – 400 %	S\$401 – 600 %	S\$601 – 800 %	S\$801 – 1000 %	More than S\$1,000 %	Mean (S\$)
Give him/her money/allowance	14	18	39	14	6	3	1	313.67
Pay for the maid/ caregiver services	9	18	31	16	9	2	4	391.67
Pay for his/her medical bills	25	26	19	10	1	1	3	265.85
Pay for his/her other bills e.g. utilities	39	35	13	1	-	-	-	131.38
Pay for other expenses e.g. rent, accommodation	31	22	16	7	4	-	1	216.94
Help him/her buy things e.g. groceries/food, adult diapers	38	29	13	7	-	-	-	157.83
Pay the transportation expenses for him/her to go for medical appointments at hospitals/ polyclinics/ General Practitioners (GP) clinics	51	16	7	4	1	-	-	124.66
Provide other financial support	26	24	21	7	4	2	2	249.58

Non-Financial Support for Elderly

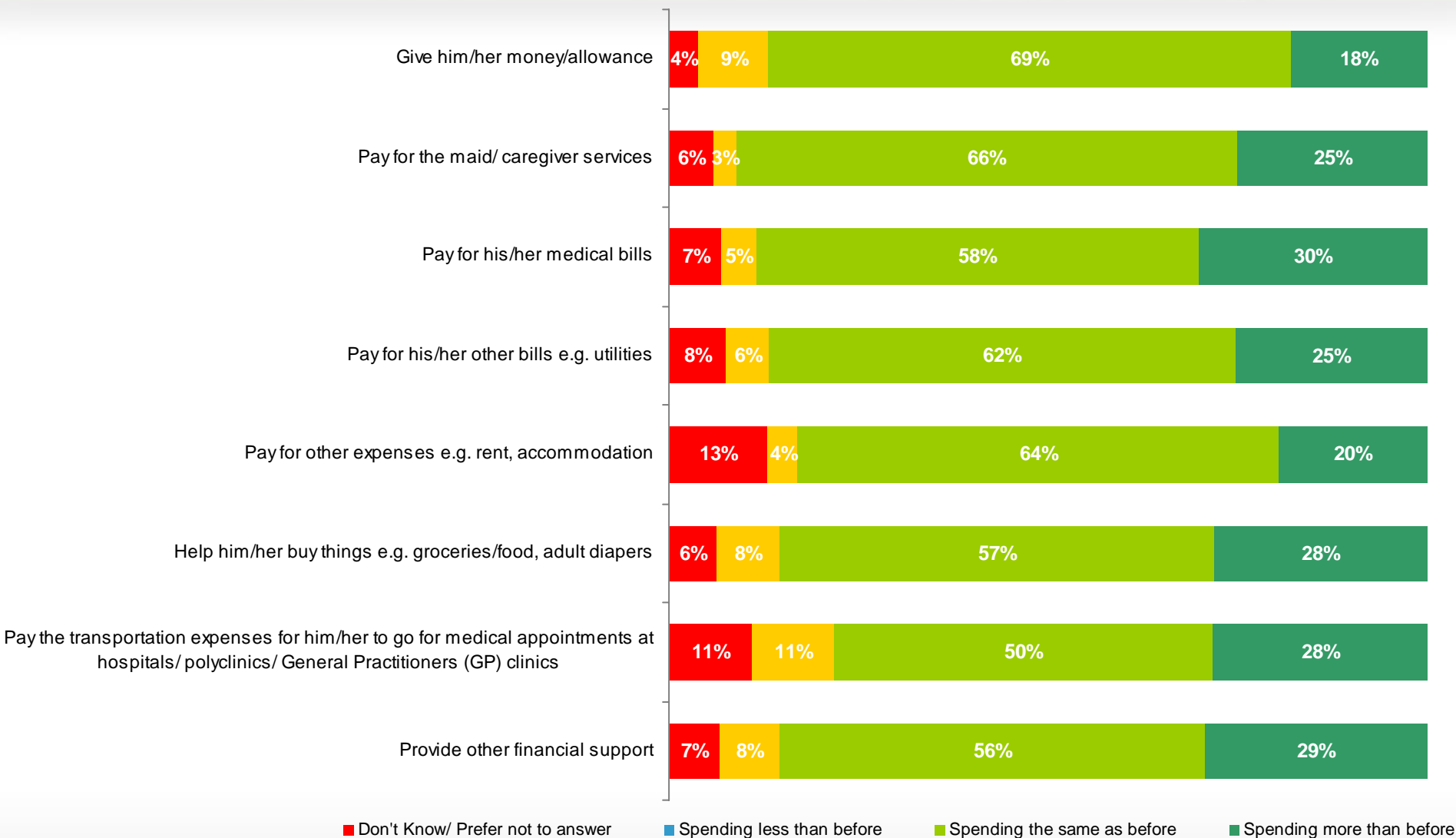


	Less than once a month	Once a moth	2 - 3 times a month	Once a week	2 - 3 times a week	Almost everyday
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Wash or bath him/her	36	7	7	21	7	21
Dress him/her	24	14	14	14	10	24
Feed him/her	16	12	8	16	16	32
Help him/her go to the toilet	14	14	18	9	9	37
Help to transfer him/her from the bed to an upright chair or wheelchair and vice versa	13	7	-	33	13	33
Help to move him/her indoors from room to room on level surfaces	19	6	6	13	25	31
Keep him/her company, provide companionship	1	5	11	21	23	39
Help him/her run errands e.g. pick up doctor/ nurse for home visit, collect medicine, letters, bills	15	26	25	17	12	6
Escort him/her for medical appointments	38	38	13	5	6	-
Assist him/her with other activities of daily living	15	9	7	24	9	35
Provide other medical support e.g. administer medicine to him/her based on instructions provided by doctor/nurse	23	17	9	9	22	22



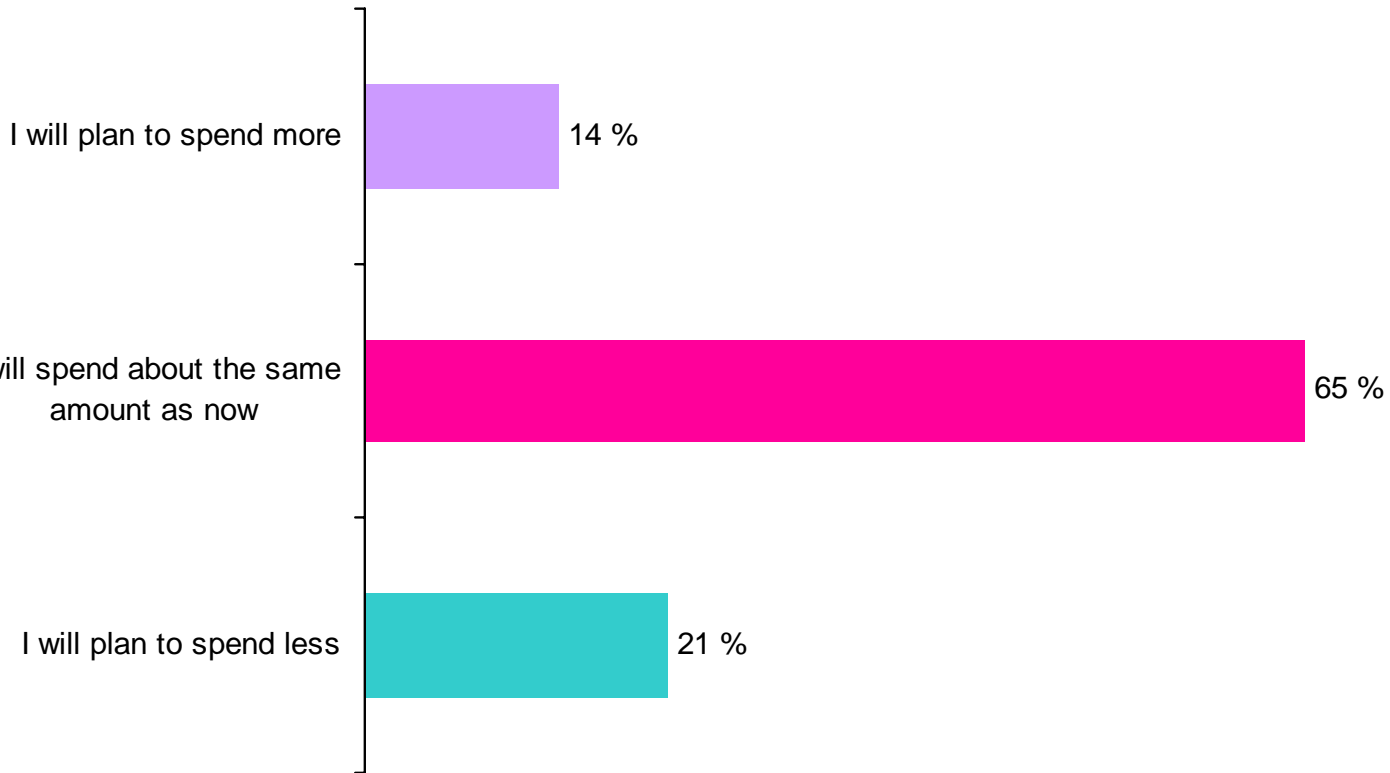
Findings – Spending Patterns & Priorities

Spending on Elderly



Base: Those who provide financial support (n=160)
 Q9. With the recent economic recession, overall do you find yourself spending more or less on the following for your (elderly person)?

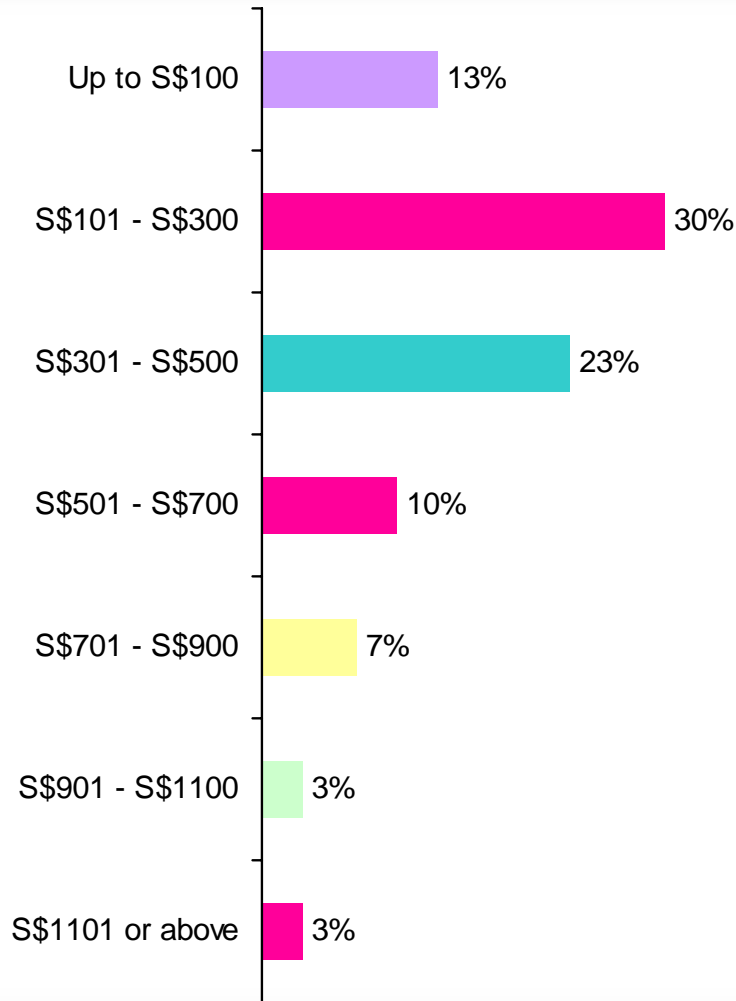
Impact of Recession on Elderly Spending



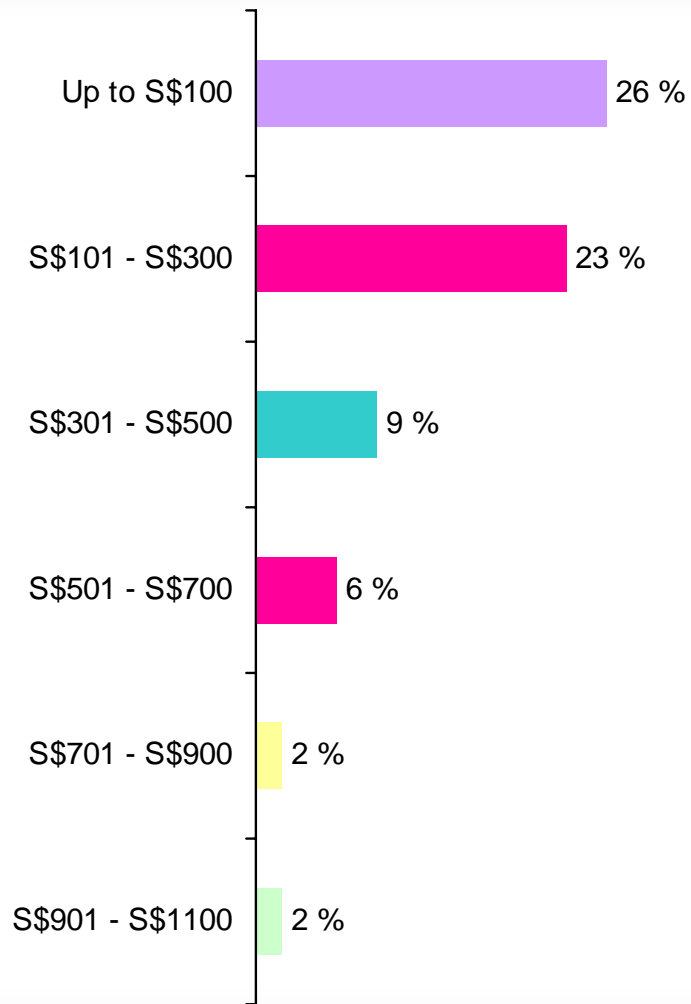
Increased Spending Amount



Mean: S\$396.30

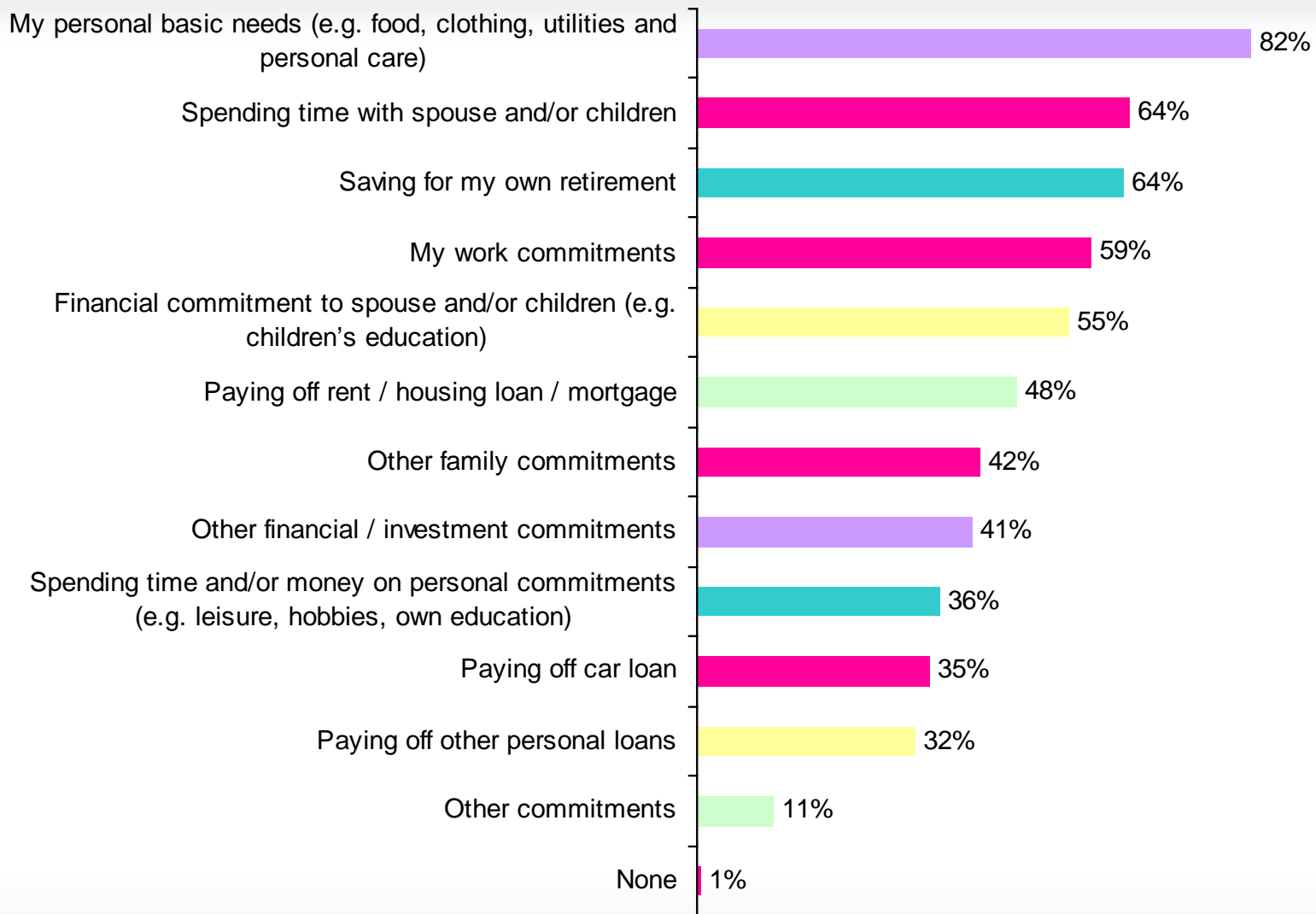


Decreased Spending Amount



Mean: S\$250.00

Personal Priorities



Top 3 Personal Priorities

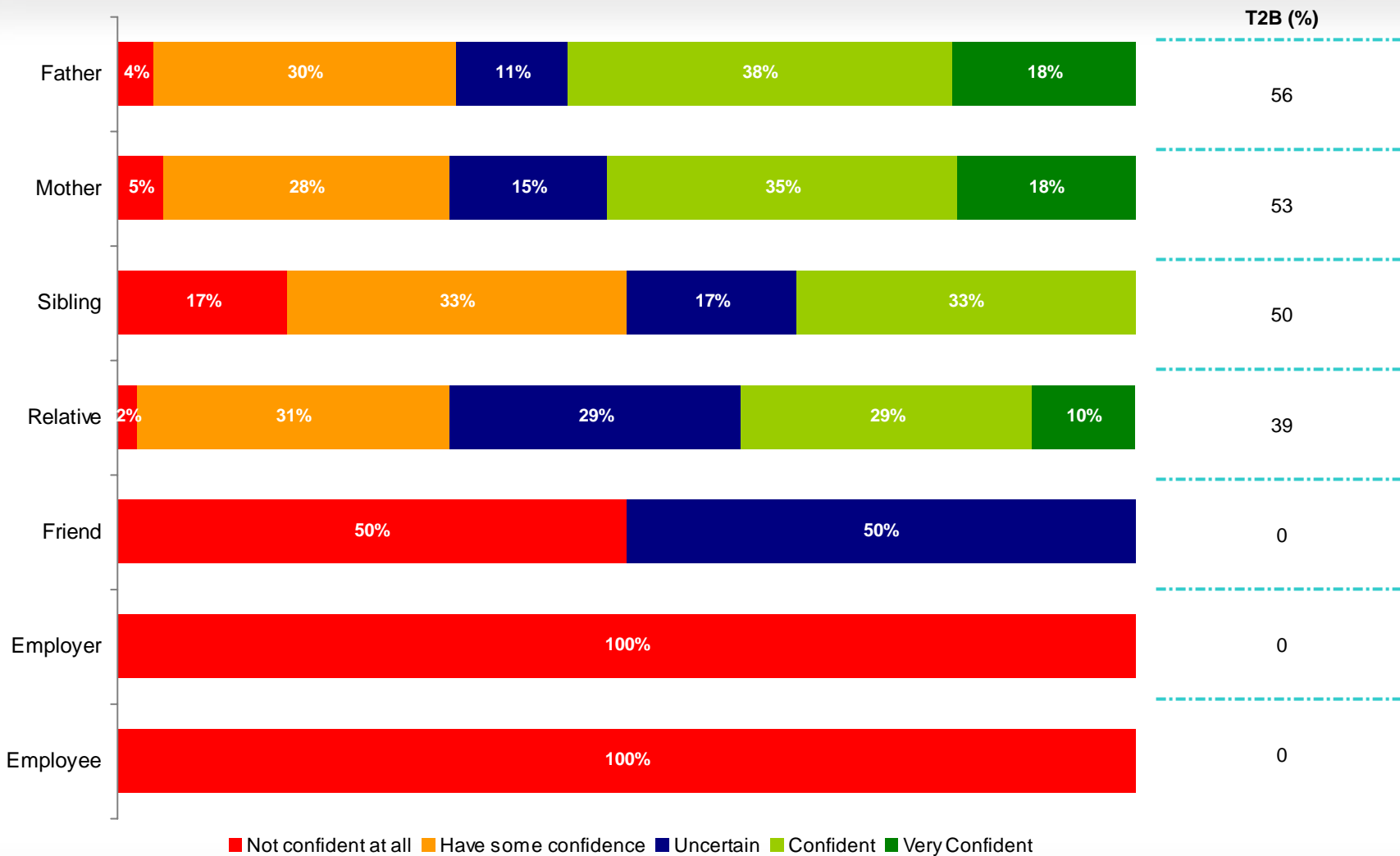


Mean



Base: Those with personal priorities (n=183)
 Q16. Thinking about your current commitments, which are your top 3 most important priorities at this time? Please select and rank the top 3 areas that are most important to you, with 1 being "Most important" and 3 being the "3rd most important".
 *Multiple Answers

Confidence of Fulfilling Current Caregiving Commitments

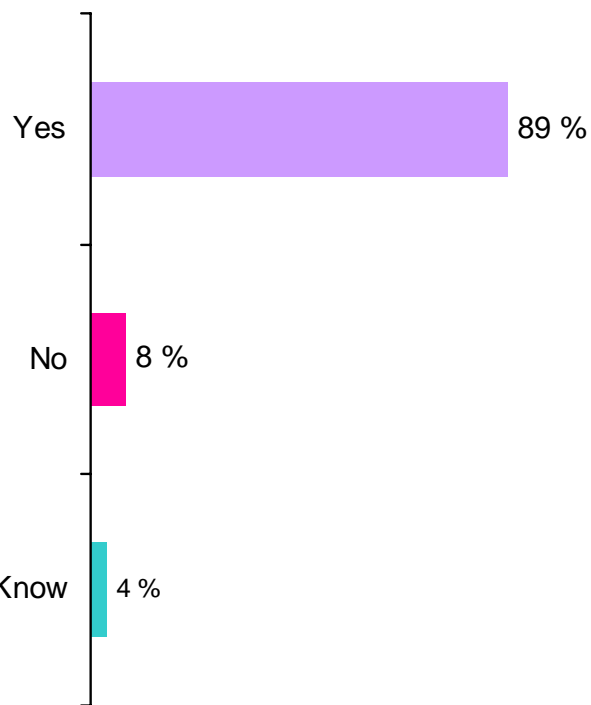


Base: All elderly caregivers (n=111)
 Q17. How confident are you to fulfill your current care-giving commitments to these elderly person(s) in the next 6 months, on top of your own commitments?



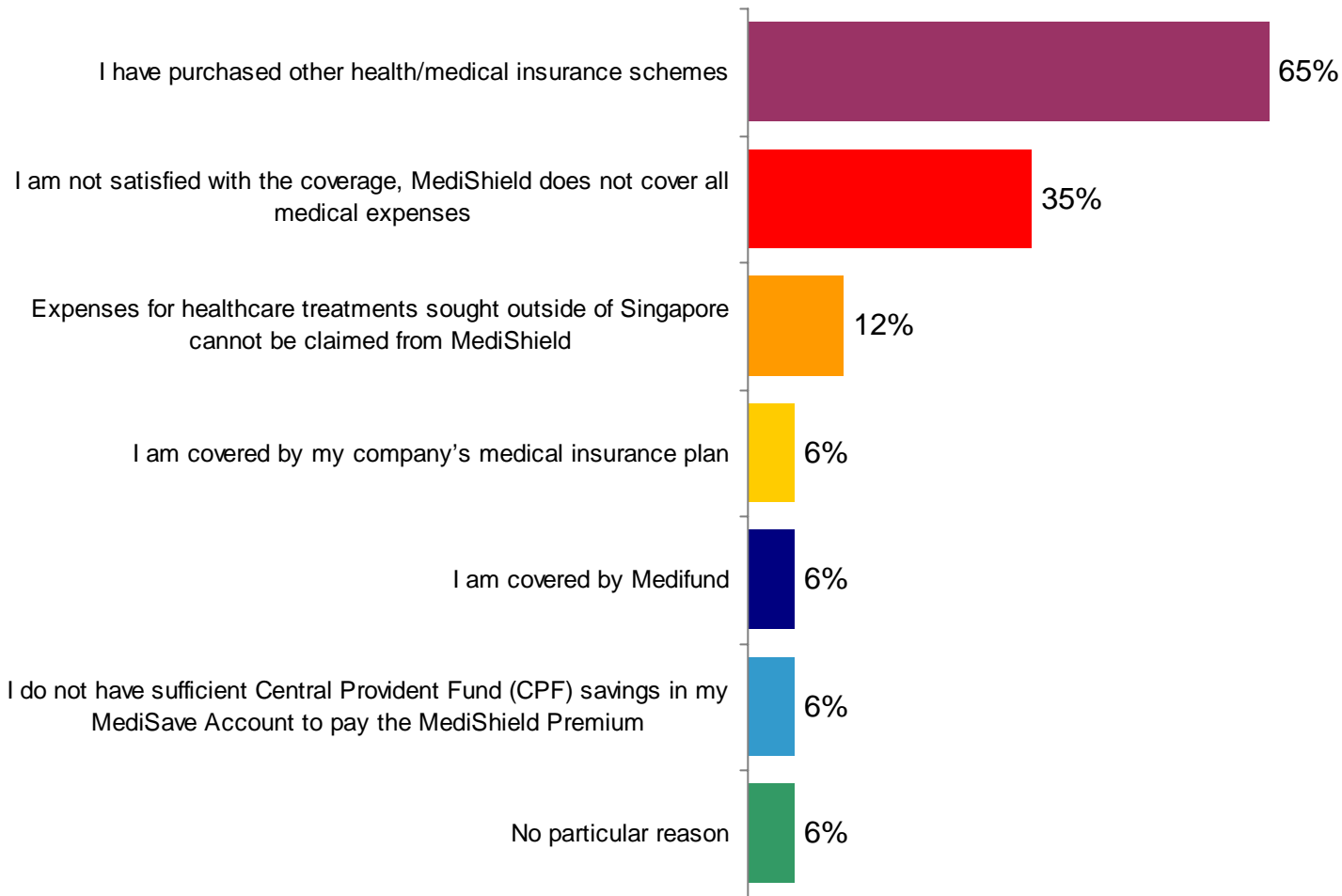
Findings – Healthcare Awareness & Involvement

MediShield Coverage



AGE						GENDER	
30 – 34 years	35 – 39 years	40 – 44 years	45 – 49 years	50- 54 years	55 and above	Male	Female
91	88	78	96	90	81	92	86
-	11	13	2	10	13	7	8
9	2	9	2	-	6	1	6

Reasons for Not Using MediShield



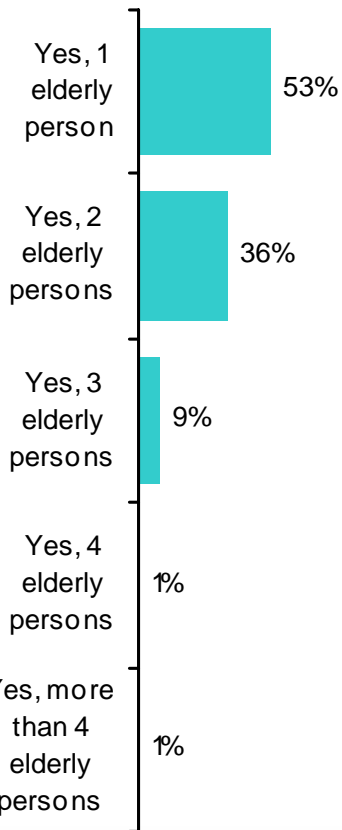


Demographics

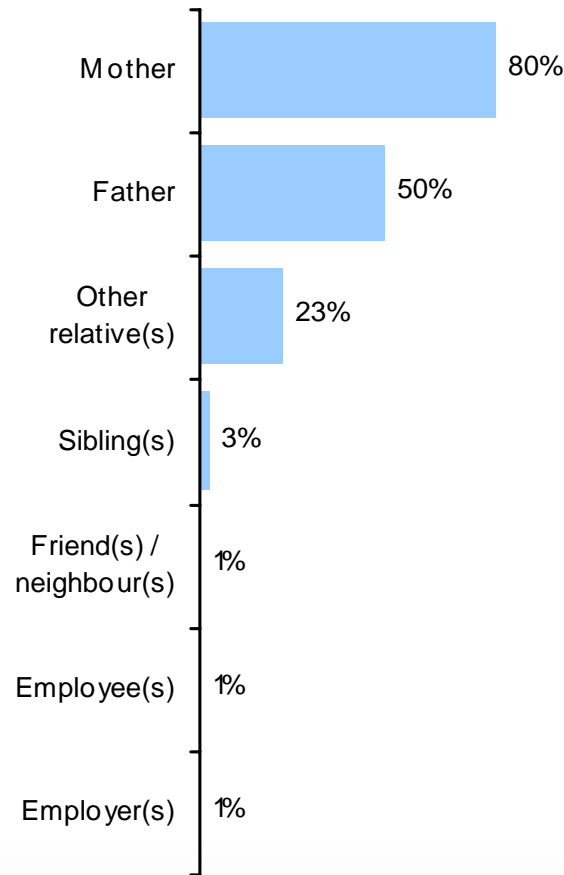
Profile of Elderly Caregivers



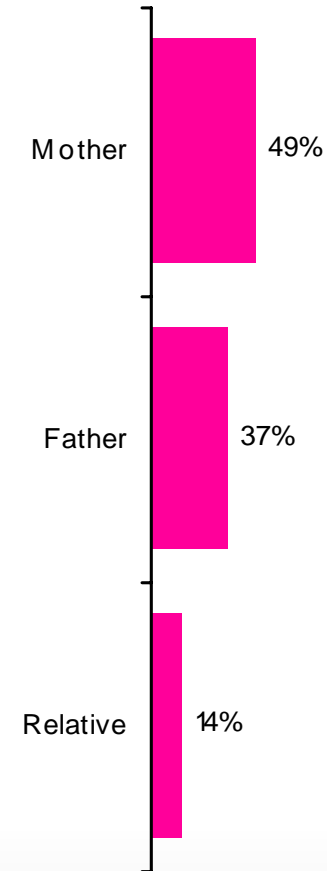
No. of Elderly Taking Care of



Relationship with Elderly



Elderly who require more assistance



Base: All elderly caregivers (n=222)

S5. Are you currently looking after or providing financial support to any elderly persons (age 60 and above)? Please note that these elderly persons may or may not be a relative.

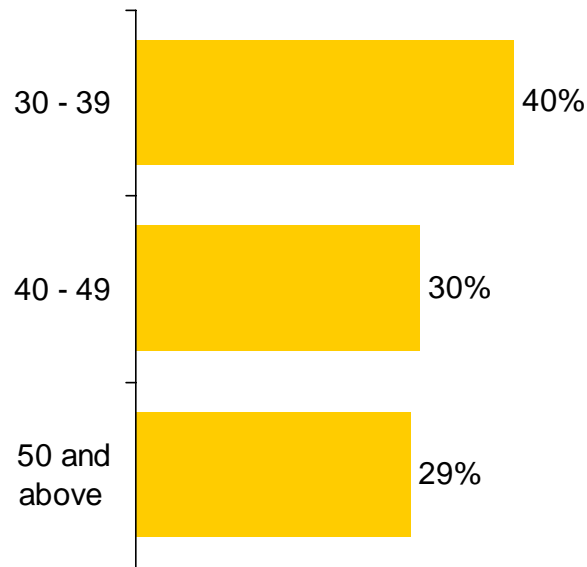
S6. How are you related to the elderly person(s) (age 60 and above) that you are caring for?

S7. You have mentioned that you are caring for more than 1 elderly person, which one of them requires more assistance than the other(s)?

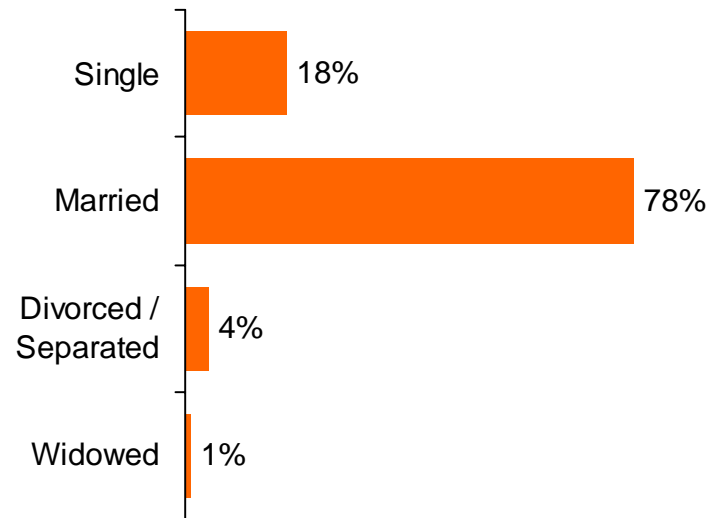
Profile of Elderly Caregivers (1)



Age



Marital Status



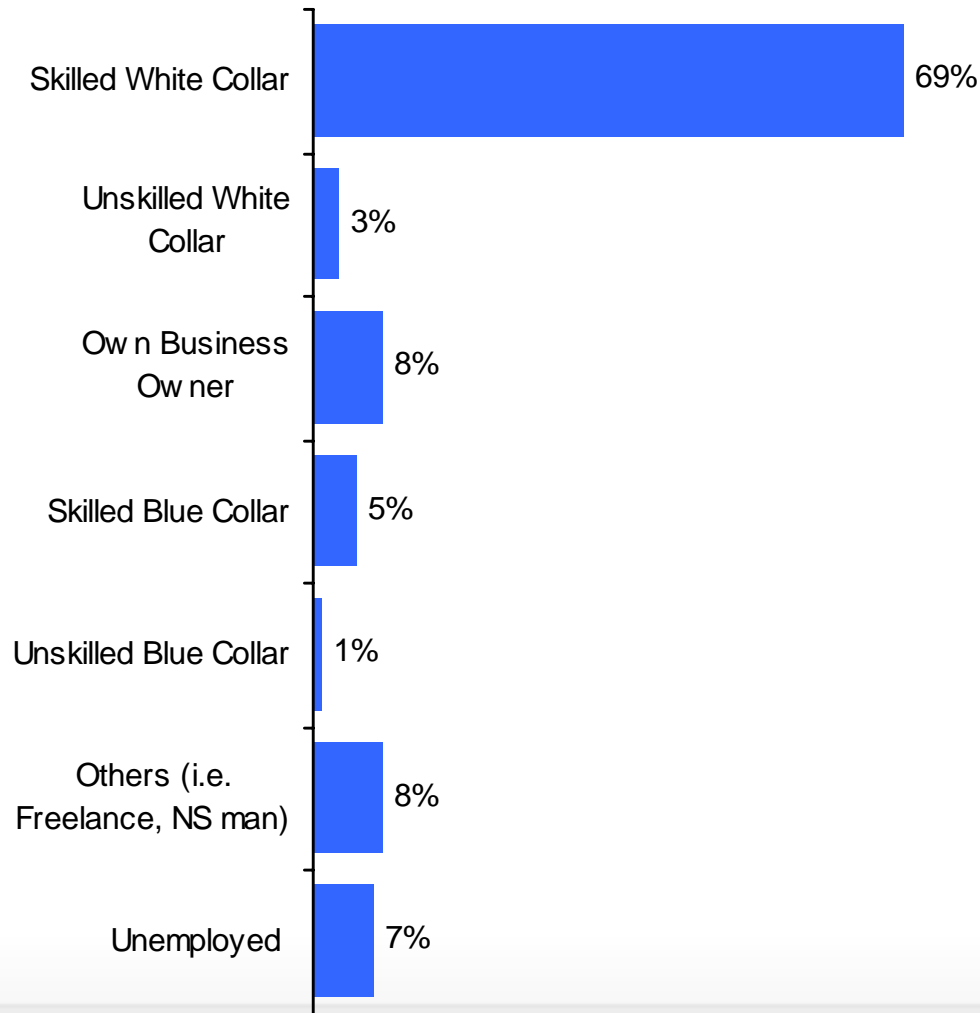
Gender



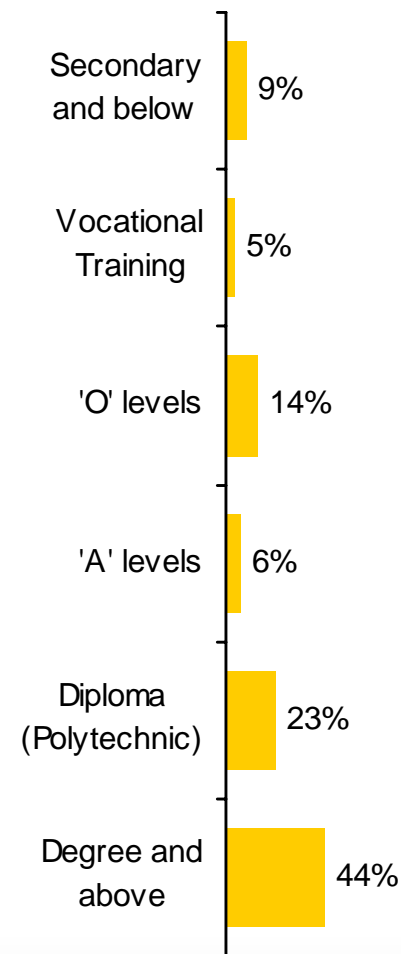
Profile of Elderly Caregivers (2)



Occupation



Education Level

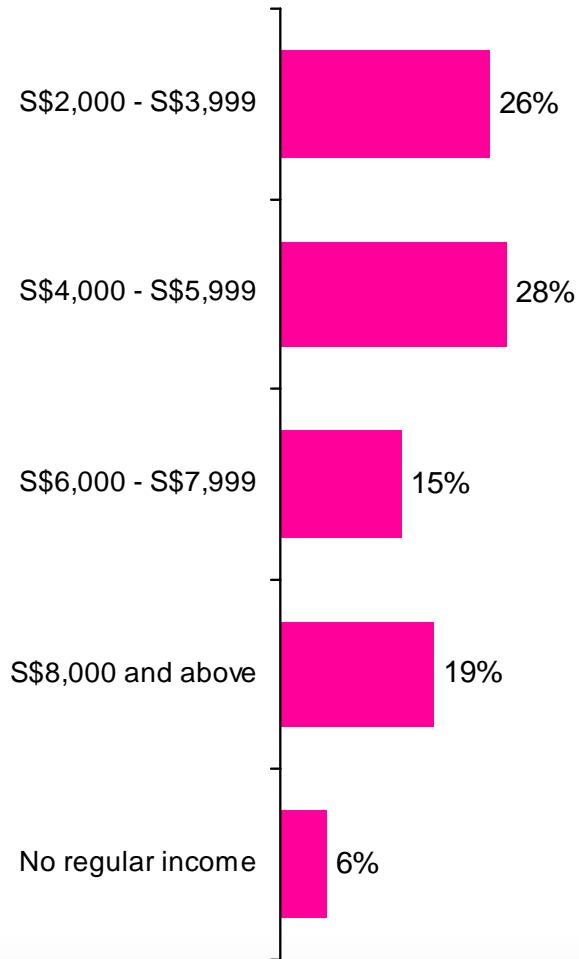


Profile of Elderly Caregivers (3)



Monthly Household Income

Mean: S\$5390.67





Thank You