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## **Mather Institute Announces Latest Findings from Landmark Research on Life Plan Communities**

**Evanston, IL (January 14, 2020)** – What factors contribute to the health and well-being of Life Plan Community residents? Answers to this question were explored in Year 2 of the landmark, five-year Age Well Study being conducted by Mather Institute and Northwestern University.

The Age Well Study is the only national longitudinal study to evaluate the impact of living in a Life Plan Community on residents' health and well-being. In its first year, findings from the Age Well Study showed that Life Plan Community residents' health and wellness compared favorably to that of a demographically similar sample of community-dwelling older adults.

Year 2 of the study focused on investigating factors that may be associated with healthy behaviors and health outcomes among residents. Researchers looked for relationships between resident characteristics, organizational characteristics, and healthy behaviors and health outcomes.

Study findings are based on survey responses from more than 5,700 residents in 122 Life Plan Communities across the United States. Highlights of the findings include:

- Residents with higher scores of the personality trait of openness to experience and extroversion reported the highest levels of healthy behaviors and more positive health outcomes.
- Residents who form strong bonds within their community tend to engage in more healthy behaviors and have better overall health.
- Six out of ten residents indicated that they are sufficiently physically active. Among those who are not sufficiently active, the most commonly mentioned barrier to physical activity is health reasons.

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“We’re excited to see Year 2 results, and to contribute research that helps others make the connection between various personal factors and healthy behaviors,” said Mary Leary, President and CEO, Mather. “The associations outlined in the research findings offer valuable insights to both residents who want to be healthier, and to Life Plan Communities interested in developing and customizing resources and programs to better support resident wellness.”

The Age Well Study measures residents’ self-reported health and wellness metrics through a survey taken annually over five years. Results are being compared against a demographically similar sample drawn from the Health and Retirement Study (HRS) conducted by the University of Michigan. Mather Institute’s research partners include Northwestern University, ASHA, LeadingAge, Ziegler, Novare®, Life Care Services, and National Investment Center.

The Year 2 report is available as a free download (along with the Year 1 report) from [TheAgeWellStudy.com](http://TheAgeWellStudy.com).

#### **ABOUT MATHER**

Based in Evanston, Illinois, Mather is a nearly 80-year-old, unique, nondenominational not-for-profit organization that enhances the lives of older adults by creating Ways to Age Well<sup>SM</sup>. Mather Institute serves as an award-winning resource for research and information about wellness, aging, trends in senior living, and successful aging service innovations. Known for its vision of changing the way society views aging, Mather is committed to transforming practices, perspectives and language surrounding aging, and partnered with LeadingAge in 2015 to change the category name for Life Plan Communities. The landmark Age Well Study is the latest example of its commitment to these industries. To learn more about Mather Institute, or Mather senior residences and community-based initiatives, find your way to [www.mather.com](http://www.mather.com).

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