



The New Zealand Seniors Series: The Digital Trends Report 2022

DECEMBER 2022



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About the report

The Digital Trends Report 2022 forms part of the New Zealand Seniors Research Series. In its latest instalment, this study explores seniors' usage and adoption of emerging technologies in New Zealand, with a focus on the challenges, concerns, and the types of technology being used. It also explores the impact that COVID-19 had on the usage and eagerness to embrace modern technology.

The report is compiled based on research commissioned by New Zealand Seniors and conducted by CoreData between 11 July and 15 August 2022. The research was conducted via a quantitative online survey, gathering **1,129** responses from over 50s in New Zealand.

The sample is representative of the general over 50 population of New Zealand in terms of technology usage, concerns and difficulties, and willingness to embrace modern technologies across gender, wealth, and region.

Important things to observe about the charts and figures:

- *Footnotes directly underneath the charts (e.g. * Asked to people who check symptoms online) mainly refer to the sampling involved per question. This is to differentiate who was asked that particular question in the survey.*
- *Charts without a specific note represent questions that were asked to all respondents.*
- *The types of questions asked are also noted. For instance, '*Multiple answers allowed' appears when the question called for more than one answer from the respondent.*
- *Some charts and figures may not be equal to 100% due to rounding differences. This is also true for summed up figures.*
- *Age generation bands: Generation X (43 - 56 years old), Baby Boomers (57 - 76 years old), Pre-Boomers (77 years old and above)*
- *Figures were determined from self-reported estimates provided by respondents.*
- *Certain figures have had outlier responses removed and where applicable this will be accompanied with a specific note.*



Key findings

Key findings

Technology is becoming more important

- Smart phones are the most important technology device for 43% of over 50s, closely followed by a desktop/laptop computer at 38%.
- More than 4 in 5 (82%) agree that banking, finances and paying bills are important functions for them to be able to access with their devices. Internet browsing (79%) and communication (65%) are also important.
- Over 50s who use technology devices on a weekly basis spend 5.3 hours on average per day using these devices.
- The most common day-to-day uses of technology for over 50s include staying up to date with global affairs (71%), managing finances (64%), and keeping them keeping them entertained/busy (58%).
- Nearly 1 in 2 (48%) agree that it would be hard to manage without access to their digital technology devices.
- Almost 2 in 3 (64%) think that modern technology is more of an assistance than a hindrance in their daily life with close to 1 in 4 (24%) stating it is a great assistance. Only 2% stated that modern technology is a hindrance.

Over 50s are embracing new technology

- 2 in 5 (40%) NZ seniors feel they have embraced modern technology more due to their experience through the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Over 9 in 10 (91%) say that they are using technology more compared to 1 year ago, 15% of which are using it much more.
- Close to 1 in 2 (46%) prefer to wait until new technology is well established and mainstream before using.
- 1 in 2 (50%) state that they feel like they are being left behind by modern technology, however more than 4 in 10 (45%) claim to be 'tech savvy'.
- Over 7 in 10 (72%) agree that advancing technology helps them to be more independent. Almost 2 in 3 (65%) agree that they feel confident they can keep up with future innovations in technology and more than 3 in 4 (77%) will always consider adopting new technology.

Key findings

Sometimes the old ways are the best

- Close to 4 in 5 (77%) agree that technology has been reasonably easy to embrace. However, the greatest challenges over 50s face when using technology include safety and security (69%), understanding how it works (65%), the constant learning curve to keep up with the changes (61%) and the cost of devices, programs and apps (56%).
- Gen X seniors tend to show a greater likelihood to uptake modern digital services when compared to other generations of seniors, while Pre-Boomers generally prefer traditional ways of doing things when compared to other generations of seniors.
- Over 4 in 10 (45%) believe that there is not enough easily accessible support for people less familiar with technology to make sure they can also get all the benefits.
- Close to 3 in 5 (56%) over 50s would like to see younger generations avoid making assumptions about their capabilities to help teach older generations about new emerging technologies.

Podcasts keeping seniors up to date

- Majority of over 50s never listen to podcasts (63%) while less than 2 in 10 (16%) listen every now and again.
- Over 1 in 3 (36%) over 50s who listen to podcasts daily or weekly have somewhat increased the time they spend listening to podcasts.
- For respondents who listen to podcasts daily or weekly, their average listening time was 3.8 hours per week.

Technology usage jumped since COVID-19

- 2 in 5 (40%) have embraced modern technology more due to their experience through the COVID-19 pandemic. The most commonly noted reasons that led to a greater embrace of modern technology for seniors during the COVID-19 pandemic include staying connected (82%), to help stay across news updates/government updates about the pandemic (64%), and to shop more conveniently (51%).
- Over 1 in 2 (55%) agree that the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way they use technology to communicate with people.
- Many have started using digital communication technologies because of experiences associated with COVID-19, namely videoconferencing services (28%), online news/media consumption (22%) and online chat services (18%).
- Over 50s report that they are using digital communication technologies more now because of their experiences associated with COVID-19, particularly videoconferencing services (26%), online news/media consumption (23%) as well as social media (20%).
- More than 4 in 5 (81%) agree that modern technology has helped them keep in touch with family over the last 2 years, and over 3 in 4 (77%) agree it has helped them keep in touch with friends.
- Over 3 in 5 (62%) agree that they are relying on their technological devices to inform them more in a post pandemic world.

Key findings

Using technology to improve health and wellbeing

- Over 50s are using technology to improve their physical and mental health. They are doing so by staying connected with family/friends via messaging services (58%), staying connected with family/friends and community through social media (43%), staying connected with family/friends via video call/conferencing (34%) and self-improvement and building skills online (11%).
- Over 2 in 5 (41%) said they tend to check their symptoms online before consulting with a doctor. The reasons being; help decide whether it's worth going to the doctor (78%), not costing anything (56%), it can be done at any time (53%) and checking first is quite easy (37%).
- Of over 50s who check their symptoms online first, more than 9 in 10 (94%) trust a doctor to diagnose their health issues more than online sources, while almost 2 in 3 (64%) still prefer to rely on in-person care in terms of the provision of health care services when required for their parents, partners or themselves.
- Almost 4 in 5 (79%) think there will be a major increase in the use of technology such as Telemedicine to help service the health care needs of over 50s in New Zealand.
- Over 7 in 10 (72%) view inadequate assessment/limit of treatments due to lack of physical contact as one of the greatest disadvantages of using telemedicine, followed by close to 2 in 3 (64%) who miss the in-person interactions.
- The greatest perceived advantages of using telemedicine are the time saved travelling and waiting (59%), convenience and safety of remaining at home (51%), and avoiding exposure to illnesses from other patients (49%).

Online safety still a threat

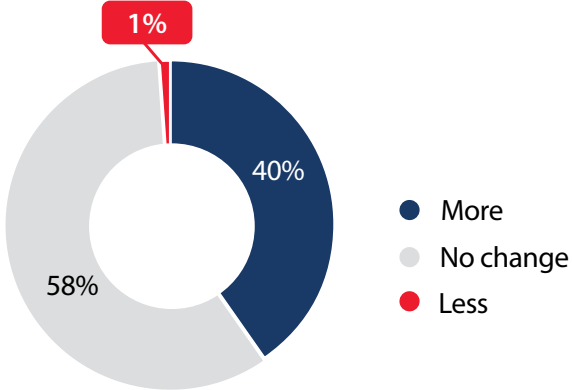
- 4 in 5 (80%) are at least reasonably concerned about the safety of their private information online, with nearly 1 in 5 (19%) extremely concerned.
- Over 3 in 4 (77%) are at least reasonably confident in their ability to keep their digital information confidential and secure.
- Close to 4 in 5 (79%) know someone or have been personally targeted by online, email or phone scams. Majority of these scams are phone calls (67%) and emails (55%).
- Around 7 in 10 (69%) of respondents who were targeted by a scam or had family/friends/colleagues who were targeted by a scam did not follow the instructions of the scammer.
- Almost 3 in 5 (56%) who were scammed or had family/friends/colleagues who were scammed and followed scammer's instructions reported it to authorities to investigate. However, only around half (53%) got some of or all their money back.



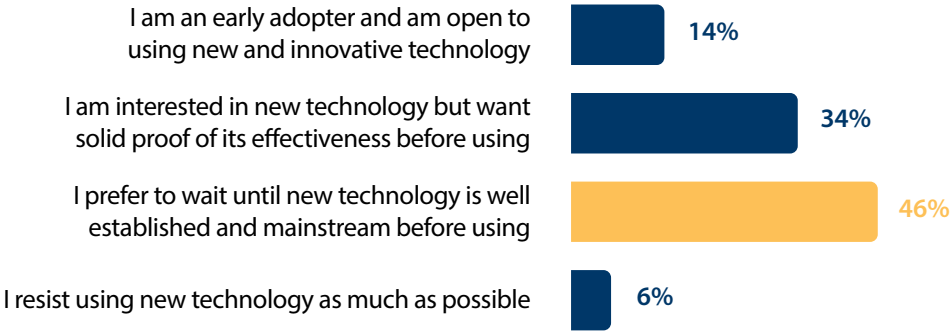
Tech savvy seniors

Embracing technology

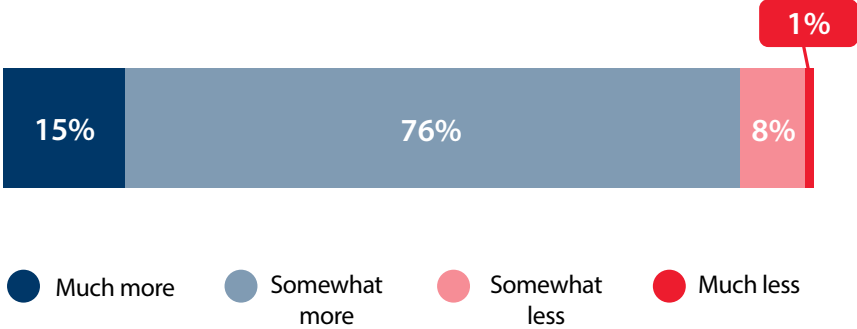
Have you embraced modern technologies more or less due to your experience through the COVID-19 pandemic?



Which of the following best describes your attitudes to new technology?



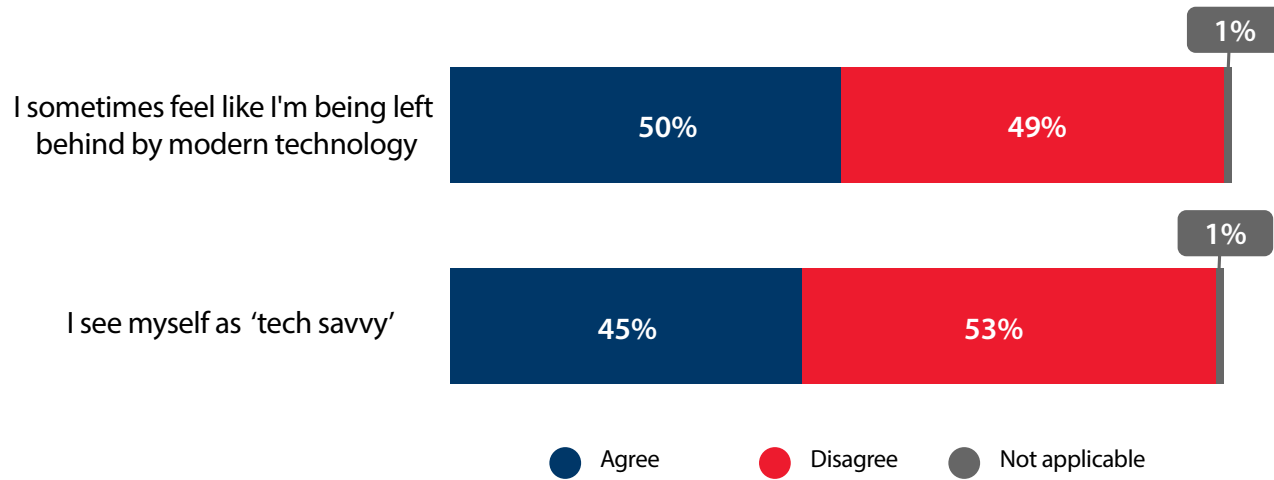
Are you using technology more or less now compared to 1 year ago?



2 in 5 (40%) feel they have embraced modern technology somewhat more through the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, over 9 in 10 (91%) said they are using technology somewhat more compared to 1 year ago, with 15% saying much more. Close to 1 in 2 (46%) prefer to wait until new technology is well established and mainstream before using.

Tech savvy seniors

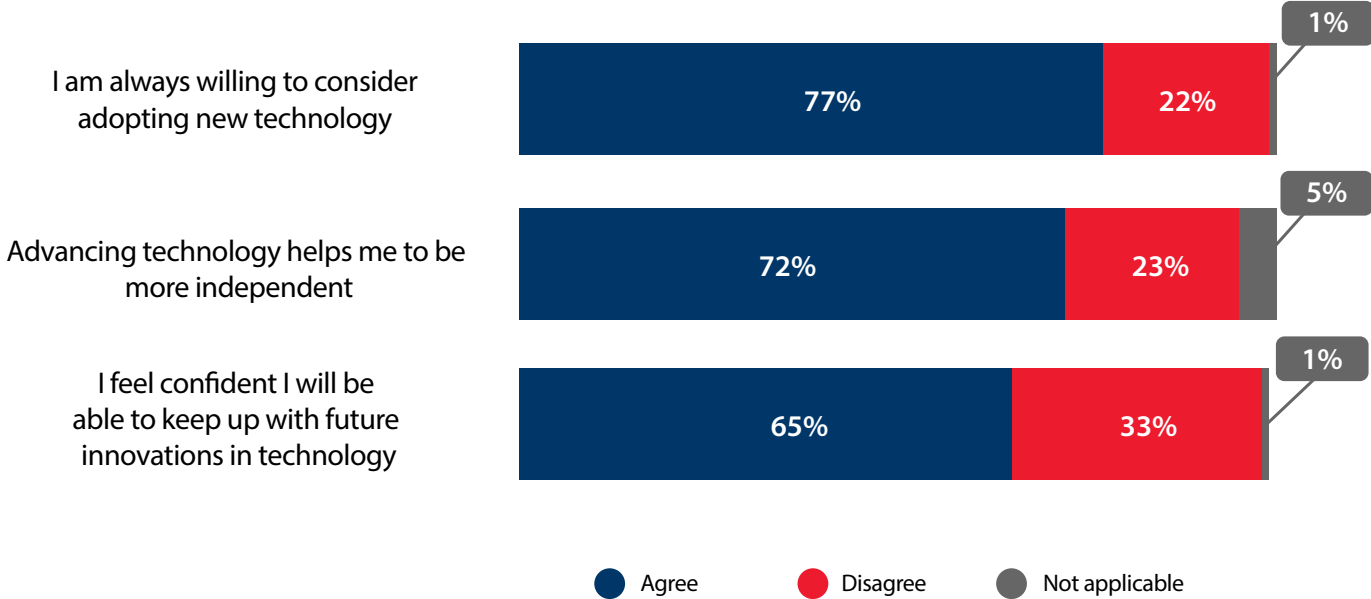
How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your technology use?



1 in 2 (50%) state that they feel like they are being left behind by modern technology, while over 4 in 10 (45%) claim to be 'tech savvy'.

Positive attitudes towards technology

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your technology use?



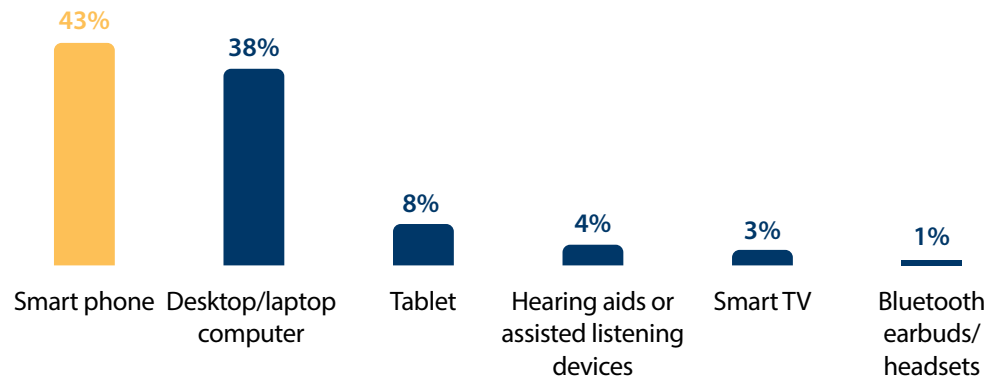
Over 7 in 10 (72%) agree that advancing technology helps them to be more independent. Almost 2 in 3 (65%) agree that they feel confident they can keep up with future innovations in technology and more than 3 in 4 (77%) will always consider adopting new technology.



Technology now part of daily life

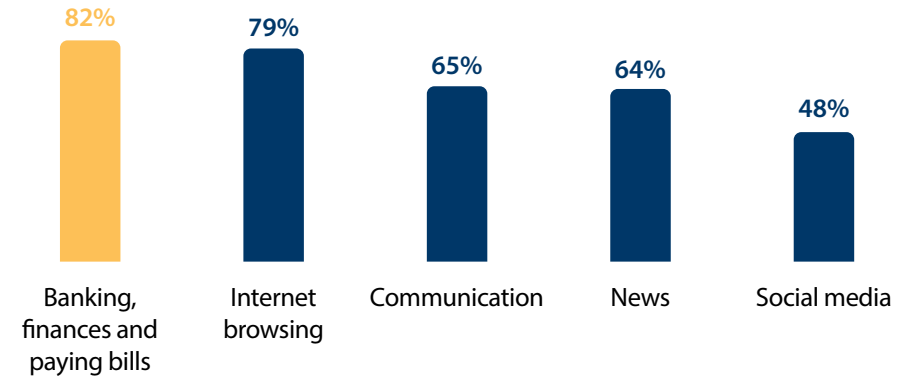
Technology importance and use

What is the single most important technology device you use on a weekly basis?



*n = 1,124, respondents who use technology on a weekly basis

What functions are important for you to be able to access with your devices?



*Multiple answers allowed

**n = 1,124, respondents who use technology on a weekly basis

How many hours per day would you estimate you use digital technology devices?



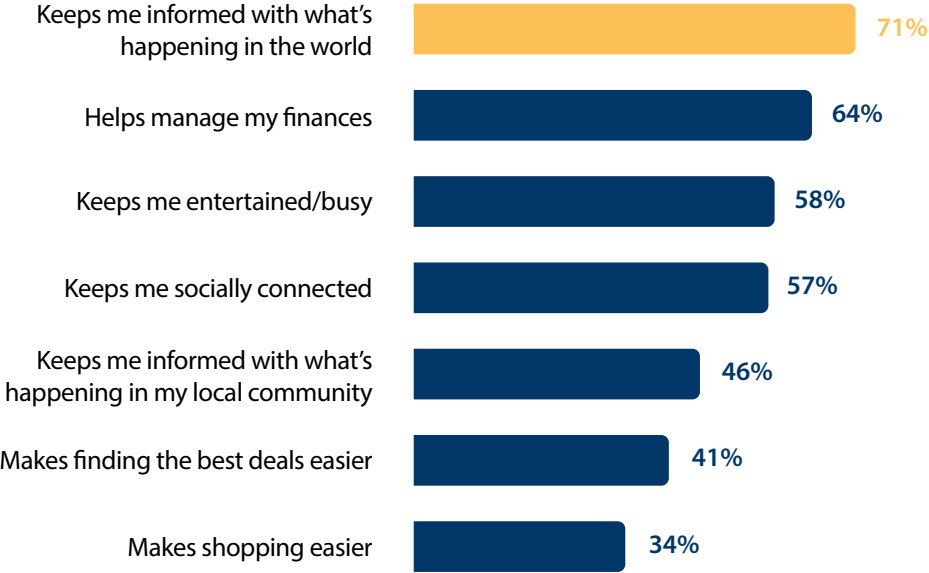
*n = 1,106, respondents who use technology on a weekly basis

** Outliers removed in analysis

Smart phones are the most important technology device for 43% of over 50s, closely followed by a desktop/laptop computer at 38%. More than 4 in 5 (82%) agree that banking, finances and paying bills are important functions for them to be able to access with their devices, followed by Internet browsing (79%) and communication (65%). Over 50s who use technology on a weekly basis spend 5.3 hours on average per day using digital technology devices.

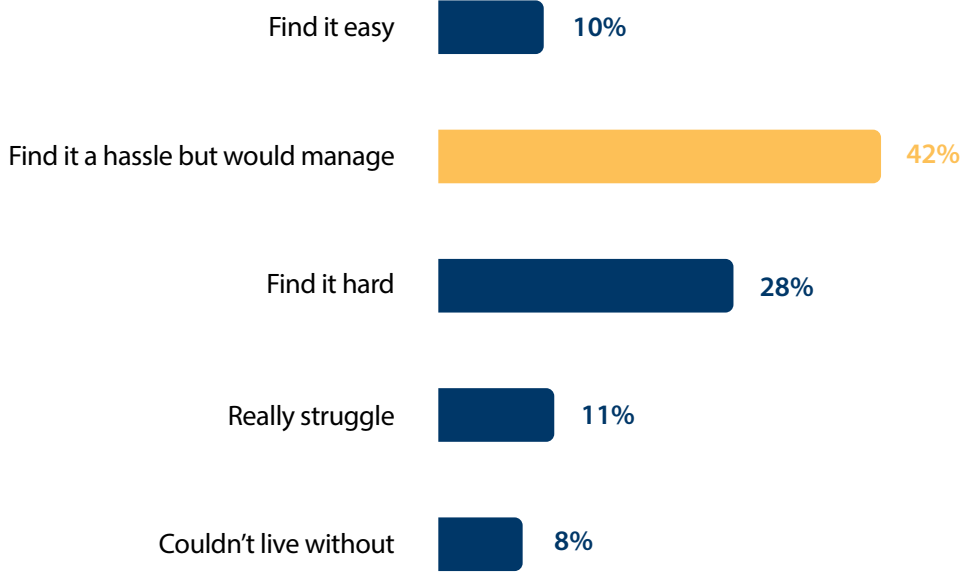
Reliance on technology

How does technology assist you most in your day-to-day life?



**Multiple answers allowed*

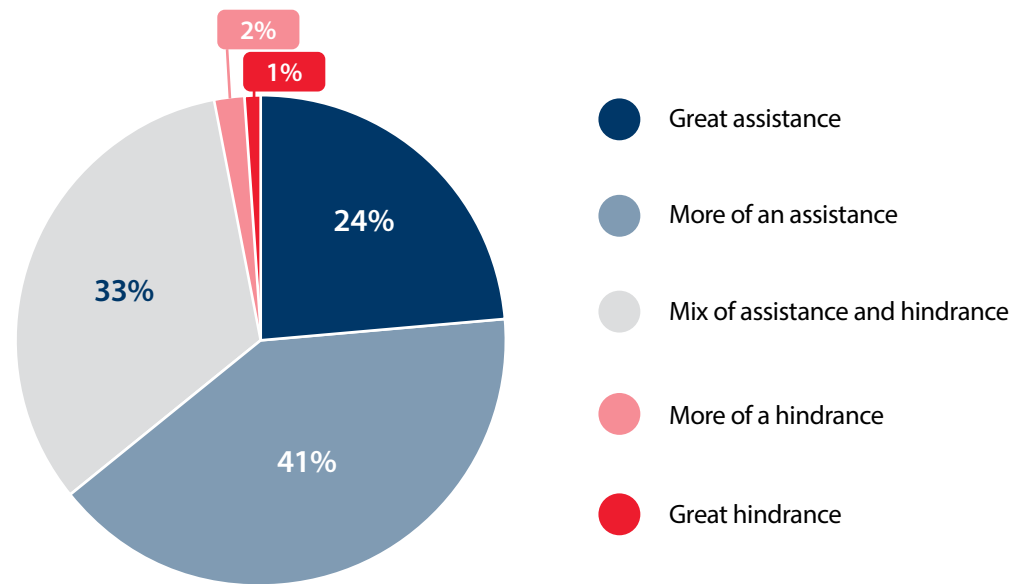
How do you think you would manage without access to your digital technology devices?



The most common day-to-day uses of technology for over 50s include staying up to date with global affairs (71%), managing finances (64%), and keeping them entertained (58%). Nearly 1 in 2 (48%) agree that it would be hard to manage without access to their digital technology devices.

Assistance over hindrance

Do you feel modern technology is more of an assistance or hindrance in your daily life?



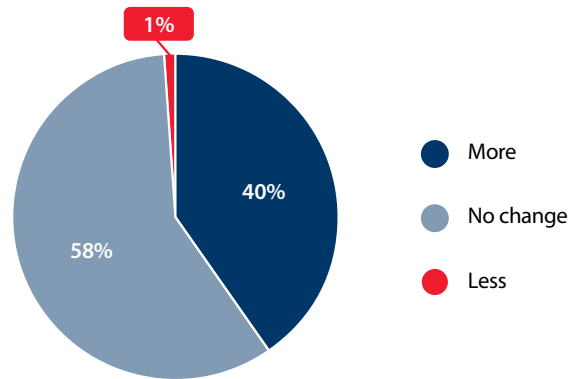
Almost 2 in 3 (64%) think that modern technology is more of an assistance in their daily life with close to 1 in 4 (24%) stating it is a great assistance. Only 2% stated that modern technology is more of a hindrance.



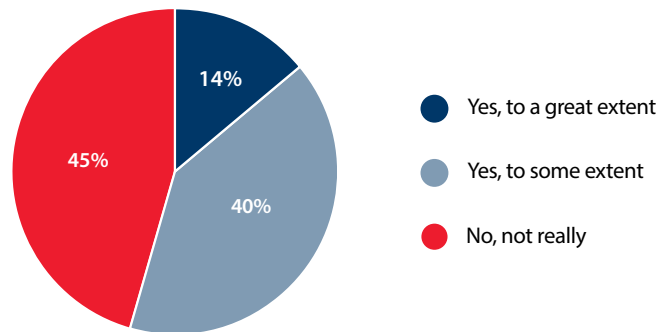
COVID-19 cut our learning curve

Technology usage through COVID-19

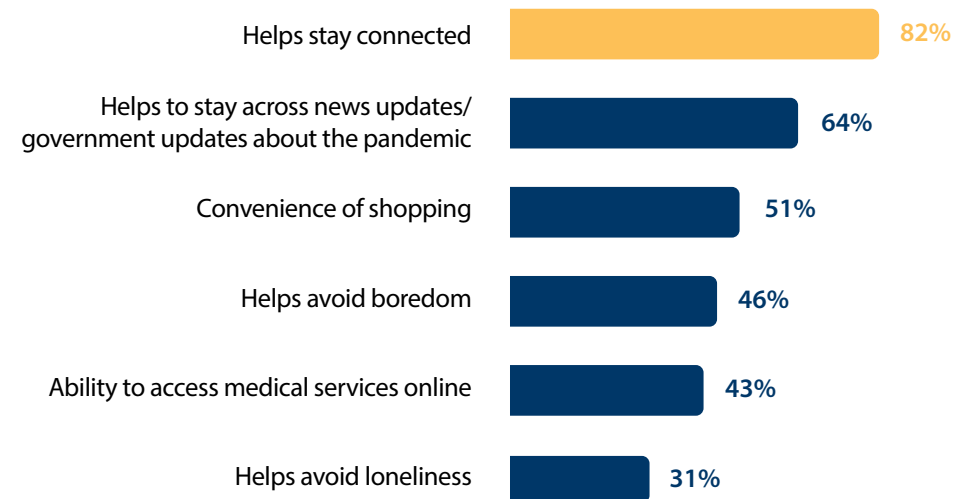
Have you embraced modern technologies more or less due to your experience through the COVID-19 pandemic?



Has the COVID-19 pandemic changed the ways you use technology to communicate with people?



Why has your experience through the COVID-19 pandemic led you to embrace modern technology more?



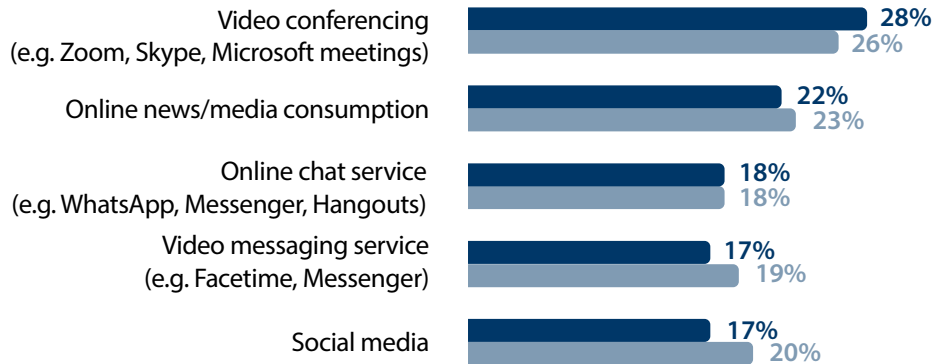
*Multiple answers allowed

**n=456, seniors who have embraced technology more

2 in 5 (40%) have embraced modern technology more due to their experience through the COVID-19 pandemic. The most commonly noted reasons for use include staying connected (82%), to help stay across news updates/government updates about the pandemic (64%), and to shop more conveniently (51%). Over 1 in 2 (55%) agree that the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way they use technology to communicate with people.

Keeping in touch

Impact on communication technology usage because of experiences associated with COVID-19

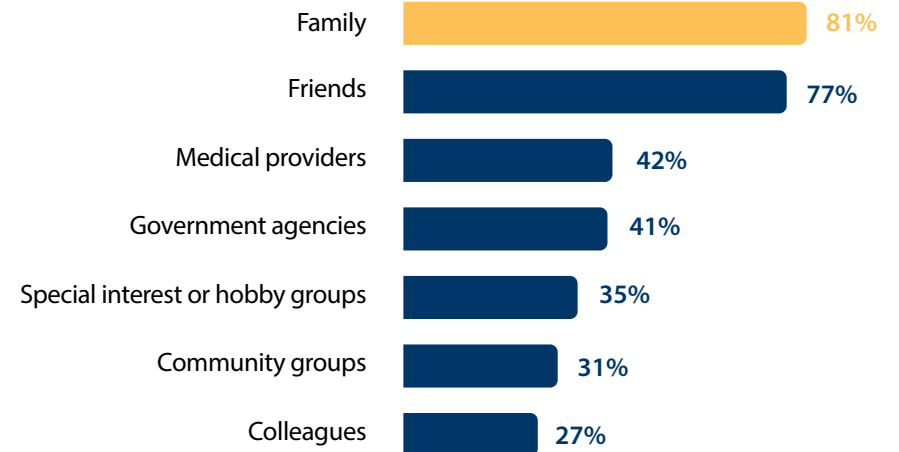


- Have you started using any of the following digital communication technologies because of experiences associated with COVID-19?
- Are you using any of the following digital communication technologies more now because of experiences associated with COVID-19?

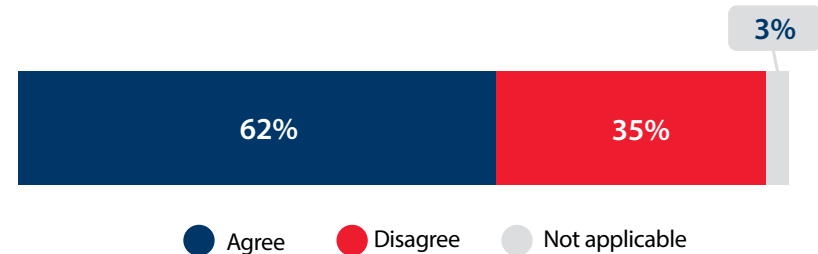
*Multiple answers allowed

Many have started using digital communication technologies more because of COVID-19, namely videoconferencing services (28%), online news/media consumption (22%) and online chat services (18%). Most report that they are using digital communication technologies more now because of their experiences associated with COVID-19, particularly video conferencing services (26%), online news/media consumption (23%) and social media (20%). Over 4 in 5 (81%) agree that modern technology has helped keep them in touch with family over the last 2 years, and more than 3 in 4 (77%) agree it has helped them keep in touch with friends. Just over 3 in 5 (62%) agree that they are relying on their technological devices to inform them more in a post pandemic world.

Over the last 2 years, modern technology helped over 50s keep in touch with...



I am relying on my technological devices to inform me more than ever before in a post COVID pandemic world



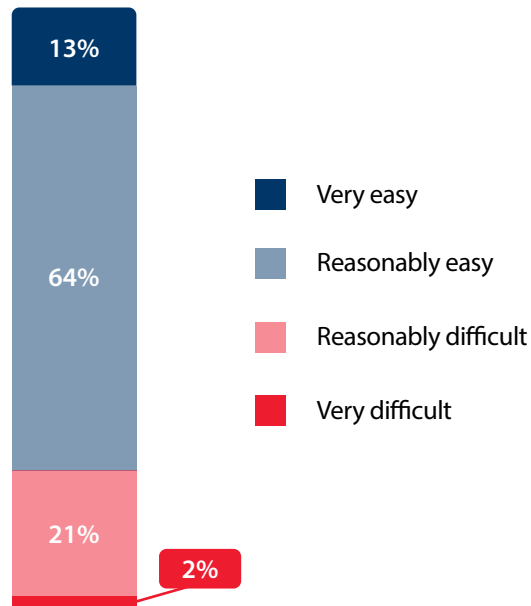
- Agree
- Disagree
- Not applicable



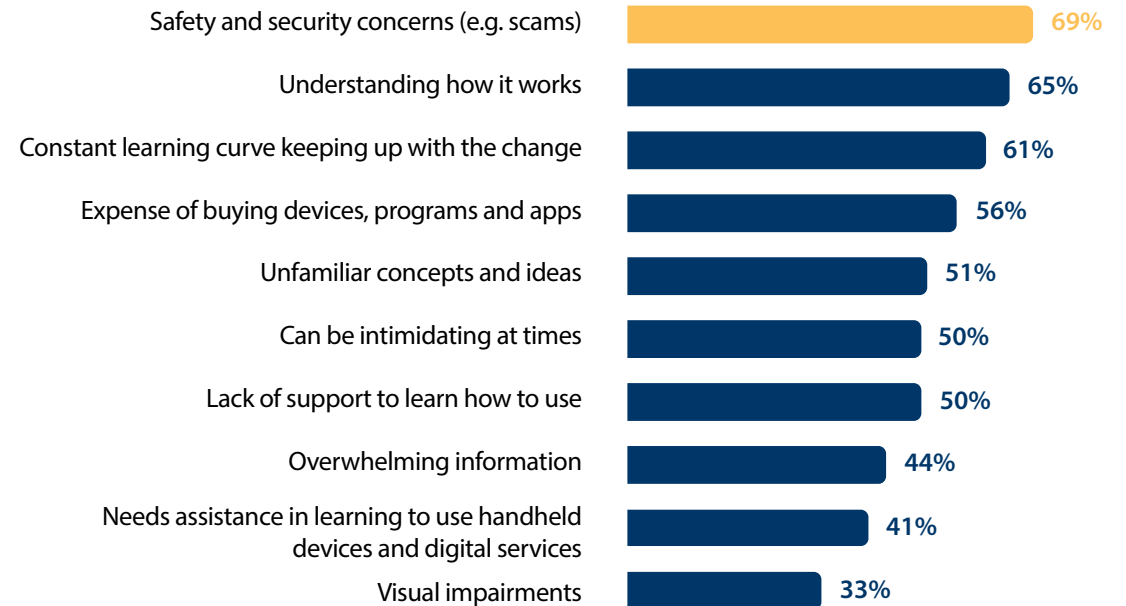
Sometimes the old ways are the best

Constant change and costs

Is technology something that has been easy or difficult for you to embrace?



What do you feel are the greatest challenges seniors face using technology these days?



**Multiple answers allowed*

Close to 4 in 5 (77%) agree that technology has been reasonably easy to embrace. However, the greatest challenges over 50s face when using technology include safety and security (69%), understanding how it works (65%), the constant learning curve to keep up with the changes (61%) and the cost of devices, programs and apps (56%).

Traditional vs modern digital services

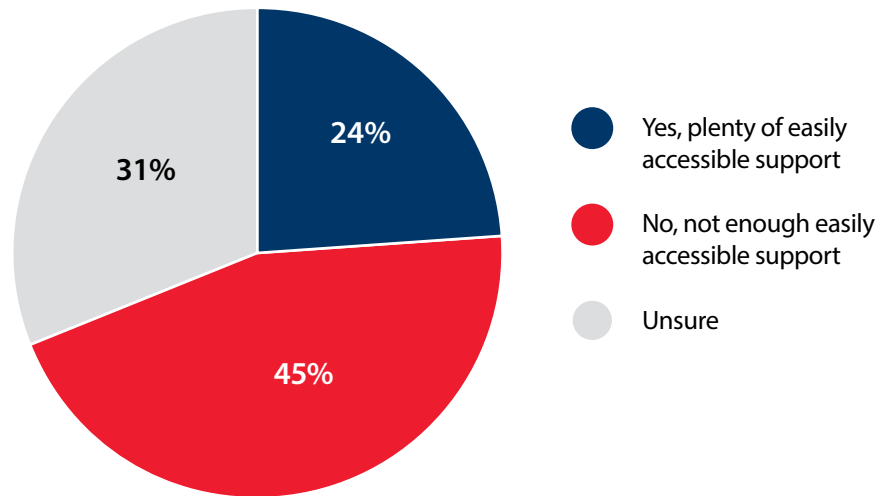
If you had to choose, which of the following are your preferences between traditional and modern digital services?

	Generation X	Baby Boomers	Pre-Boomers	Overall
Banking and paying bills in person	15%	14%	27%	16%
Banking and paying bills via app or website	85%	86%	73%	84%
Reading physical newspaper	32%	45%	59%	44%
Reading news online	68%	55%	41%	56%
Listening to radio, record or CDs	51%	70%	76%	67%
Listening to music streaming services	49%	30%	24%	33%
Using paper based street maps	19%	26%	41%	27%
Using GPS maps	81%	74%	59%	73%
Shop in person for groceries	82%	85%	84%	84%
Shop online for groceries	18%	15%	16%	16%
Listen to news or talkback on radio to catch up with things	48%	55%	73%	56%
Browse social media streams	52%	45%	27%	44%
Shop in person for clothes/apparel	76%	82%	83%	81%
Shop online for clothes/apparel	24%	18%	17%	19%
Speaking to friends or family on the phone with just voice	55%	57%	70%	58%
Speaking to friends or family with video	45%	43%	30%	42%

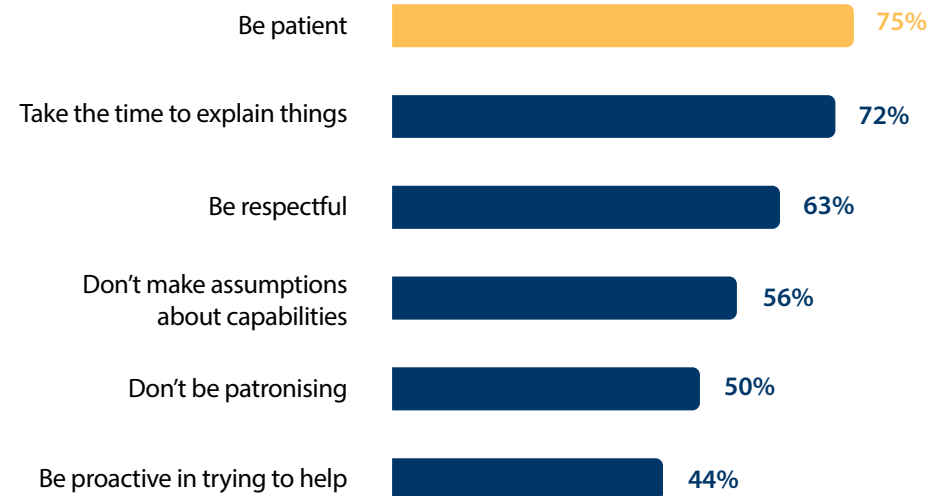
Gen X seniors tend to show a greater likelihood to uptake modern digital services, while Pre-Boomers tend to prefer traditional ways of doing things when compared to younger generations of seniors.

Supporting older technology users

Do you feel there is enough support for people less familiar with technology to make sure they can also get all the benefits?



What would you like to see from younger people to help teach older generations about new emerging technologies?



**Multiple answers allowed*

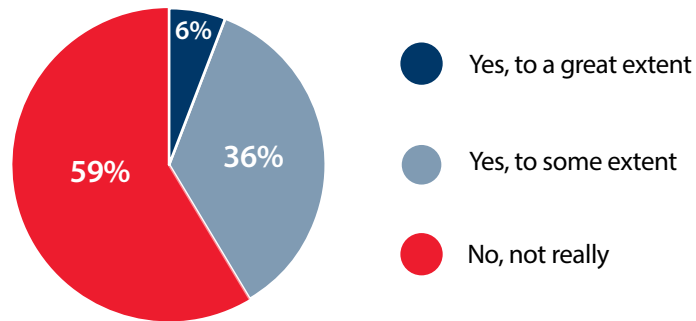
Over 4 in 10 (45%) believe that there is not enough easily accessible support for people less familiar with technology to make sure they can also get all the benefits. Close to 3 in 5 (56%) over 50s would like to see younger generations avoid making assumptions about their capabilities to help teach older generations about new emerging technologies.



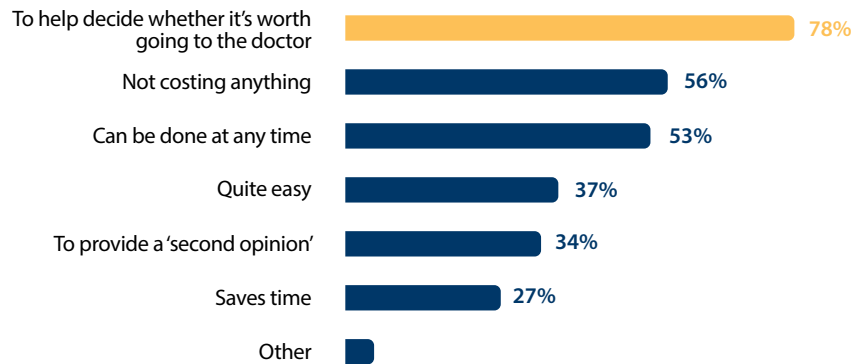
Improving health and wellbeing with technology

Using technology for better health

Do you tend to check your symptoms online first before consulting with a doctor whenever you do not feel well?



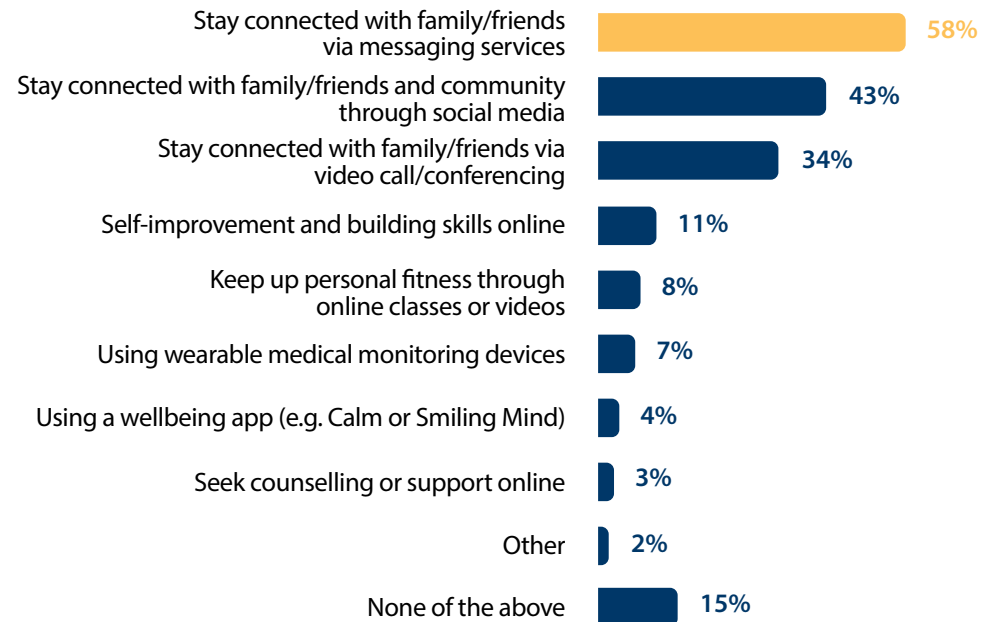
Why do you tend to check your symptoms online first before consulting with a doctor?



*Multiple answers allowed

**n = 464, respondents who check symptoms online first

Are you using any of the following technologies to take better care of your own physical and mental health these days?

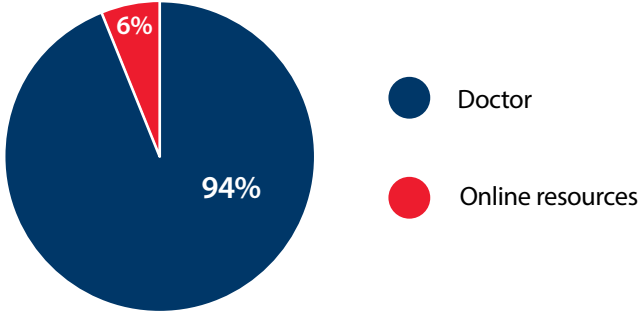


*Multiple answers allowed

Over 50s are using technology to improve their physical and mental health. They are doing so by staying connected with family/friends via messaging services (58%), staying connected with family/friends and community through social media (43%), staying connected with family/friends via video call/conferencing (34%) and self-improvement and building skills online (11%). More than 2 in 5 (41%) said they tend to check their symptoms online before consulting with a doctor. The reasons being; help decide whether it's worth going to the doctor (78%), not costing anything (56%), it can be done at any time (53%) and checking first is quite easy (37%).

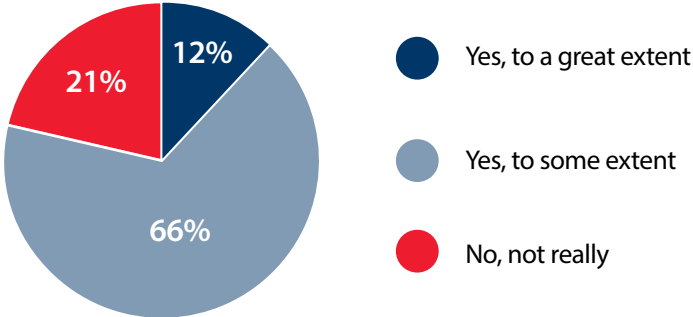
Perceptions of Telemedicine

Who would you trust more to diagnose your health issues?

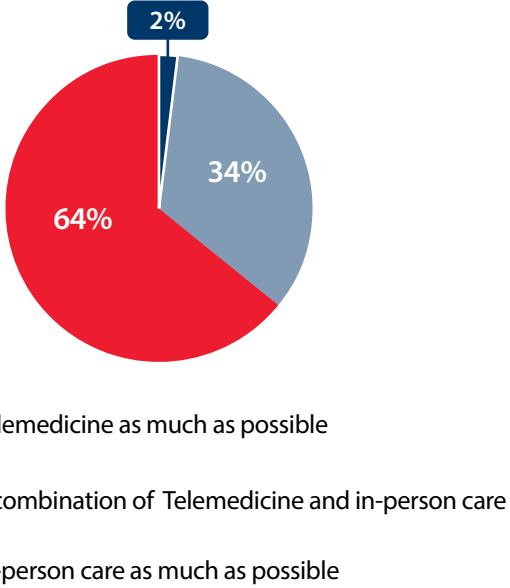


*n = 464 respondents who check symptoms online first

Do you think New Zealand will see a major increase in the use of technology such as Telemedicine to help service seniors' health care needs?



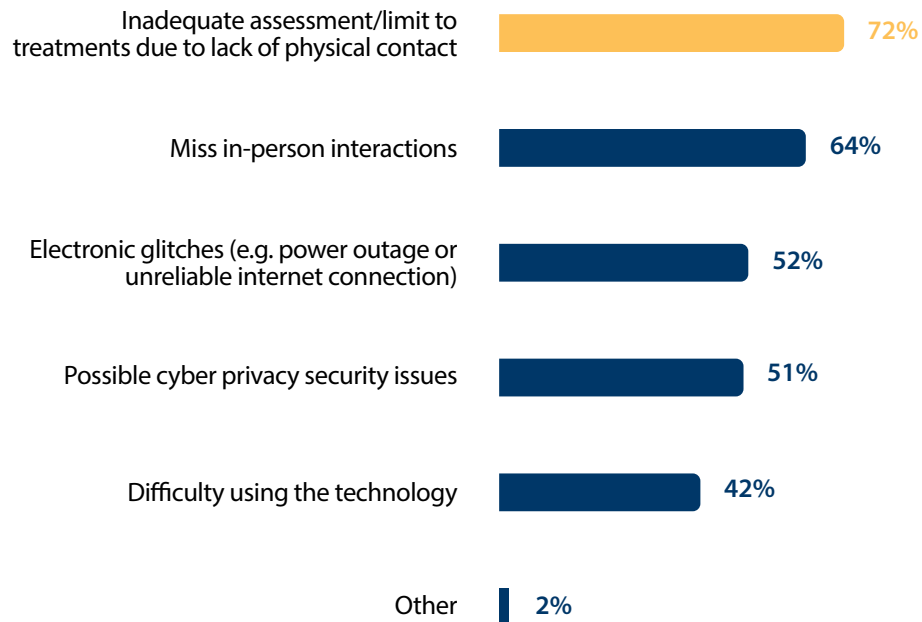
Thinking about your parents, partner and yourself, what is your preference for the provision of health care services when it is required?



More than 9 in 10 (94%) trust a doctor to diagnose their health issues more than online sources, while almost 2 in 3 (64%) still prefer to rely on in-person care. Around 4 in 5 (79%) think there will be an increase in the use of technology such as Telemedicine to help service the health care needs of over 50s in New Zealand.

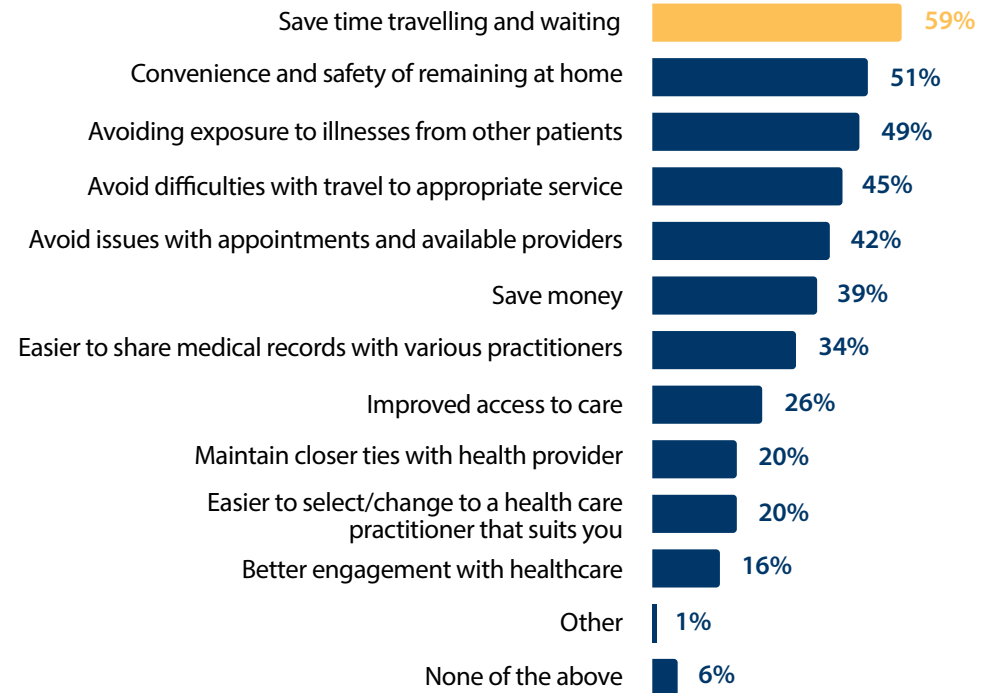
Benefits and disadvantages of Telemedicine

What do you see as the greatest disadvantages of using telemedicine?



*Multiple answers allowed

What do you see as the greatest advantages of using telemedicine?



*Multiple answers allowed

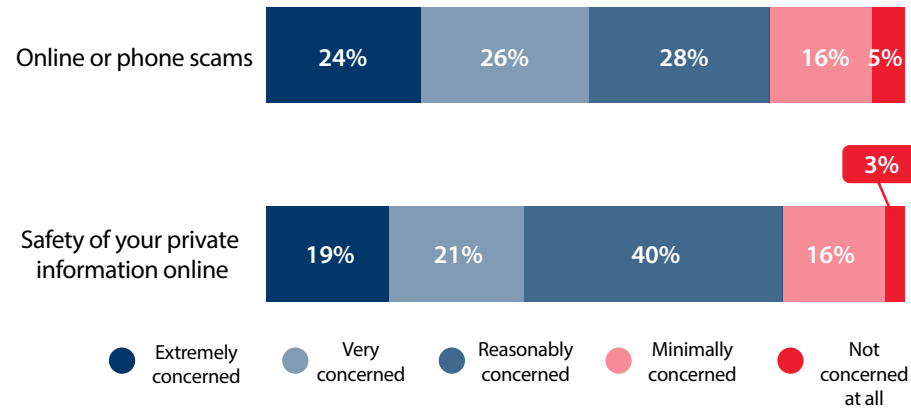
Over 7 in 10 (72%) view inadequate assessment/limit of treatments due to lack of physical contact as one of the greatest disadvantages of using telemedicine, followed by close to 2 in 3 (64%) who miss the in-person interactions. The greatest perceived advantages of using telemedicine are the time saved travelling and waiting (59%), convenience and safety of remaining at home (51%), and avoiding exposure to illnesses from other patients (49%).



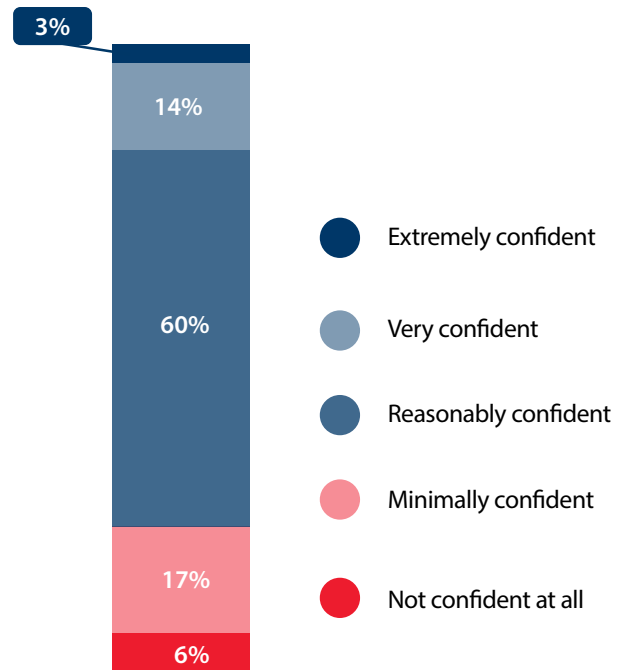
Cyber security concerns

Online safety and security

How concerned are you these days about the following?



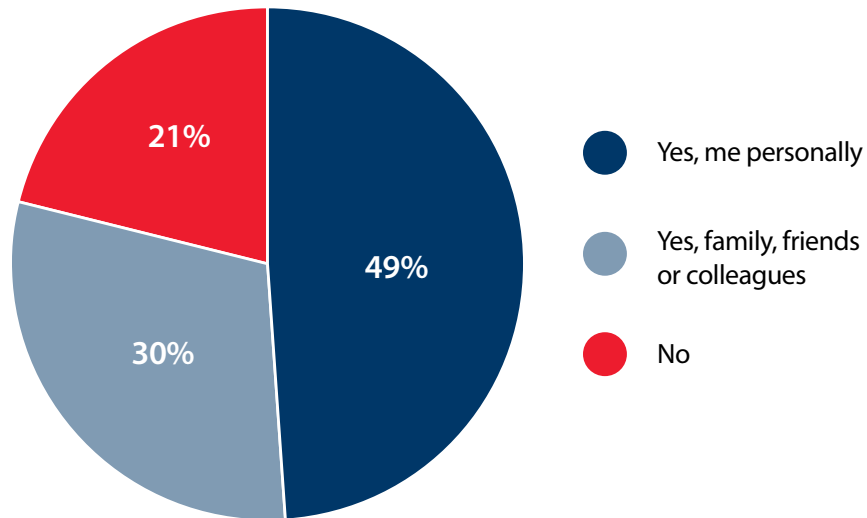
How confident are you in your ability to keep your digital information confidential and secure?



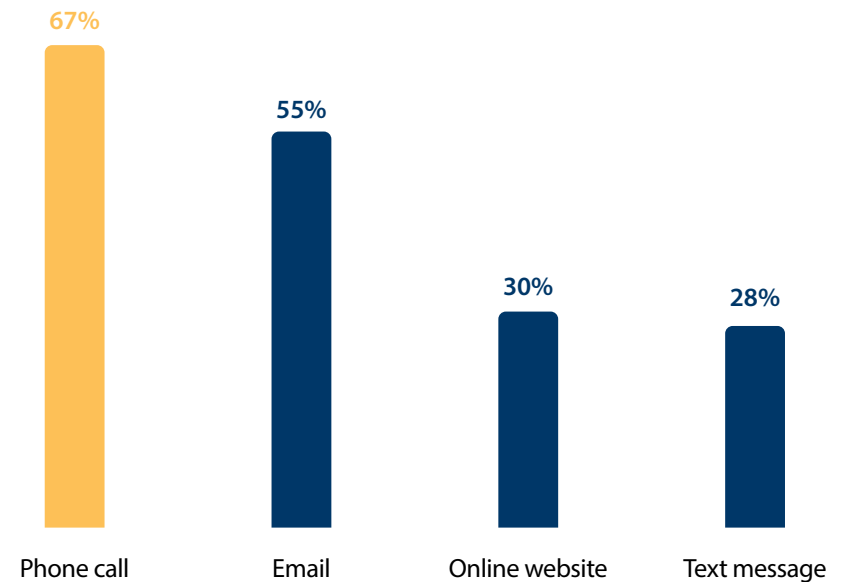
4 in 5 (80%) are at least reasonably concerned about the safety of their private information online, with almost 1 in 5 (19%) extremely concerned. Over 3 in 4 (77%) are reasonably confident in their ability to keep their digital information confidential and secure.

Online safety and security

Have you or people you know ever been targeted by online, email or phone scams?



Was the scam(s) online, via email or over the phone?



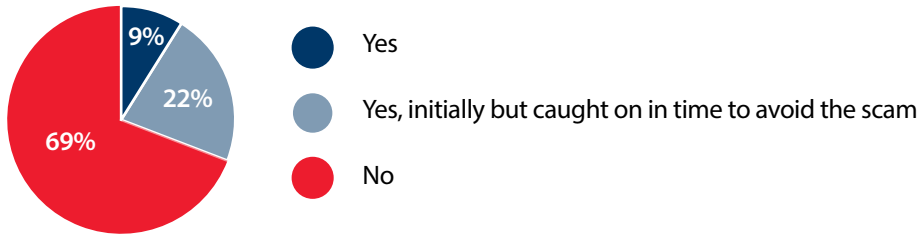
**Multiple answers allowed*

***n = 895, respondents who were targeted by scams (self and/or friends/family)*

Almost 4 in 5 (79%) know someone or have been personally targeted by online, email or phone scams. Majority of these scams are phones calls (67%) and emails (55%).

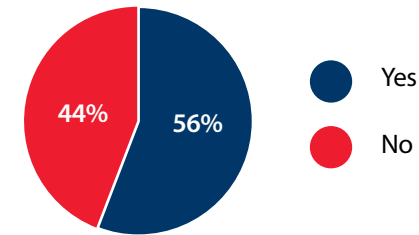
Scams hurt the bank

Did you/they follow the scammers' instructions at all?



*n = 895, respondents who were targeted by scams (self and/or family/friends/colleagues)

Did you/they report it to authorities to investigate (e.g. Police or Netsafe)?



*n = 281, respondents who were scammed or had family/friends/colleagues scammed and followed scammers' instructions

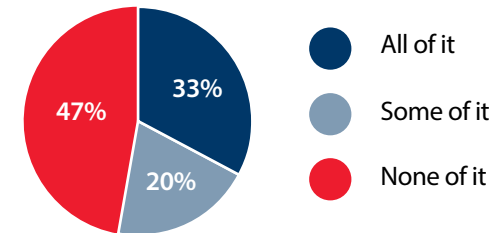
How much money was taken?



*n = 277, respondents who were targeted by a scam or had family/friends/colleagues who were scammed and followed scammers' instructions

** Outliers removed in analysis

Did you/they get the money back?



*n = 144, respondents who were scammed or had family/friends/colleagues who were scammed and followed scammers' instructions and had their money taken

Close 7 in 10 (69%) who were targeted by a scam or had family/friends/colleagues who were scammed did not follow the instructions of the scammer. For those who did, the average amount of money taken was \$1,390.

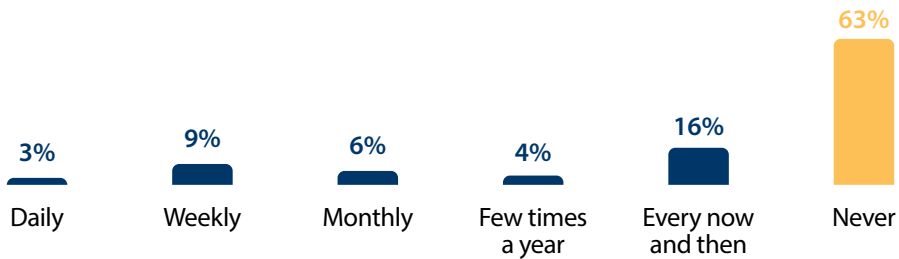
Almost 3 in 5 (56%) who were scammed and followed the scammers' instructions reported it to authorities to investigate. However, only around half (53%) got some of or all their money back.



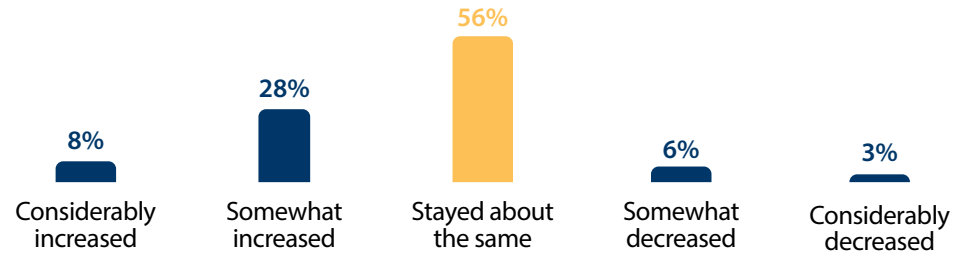
Podcasts to keep up to date

Podcast usage

How often do you listen to podcasts?



Has the amount of time you spend listening to podcasts increased/decreased in the past 2 years?



*n = 418, respondents who listen to podcasts

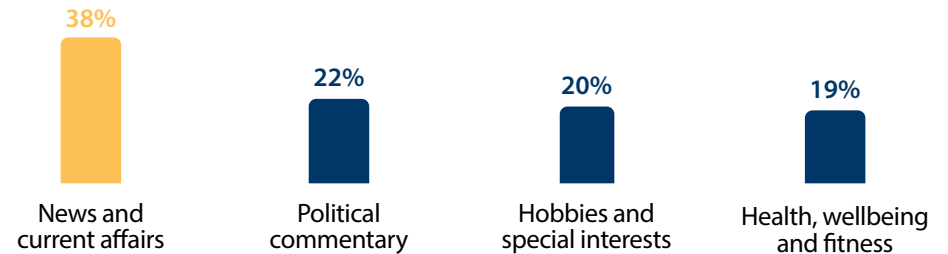
Over 50's spend on average 3.8 hours per week listening to podcasts



*n = 126, respondents who listen to podcasts daily or weekly

** Outliers removed in analysis

What genres of podcasts do you listen to? (Top 4)

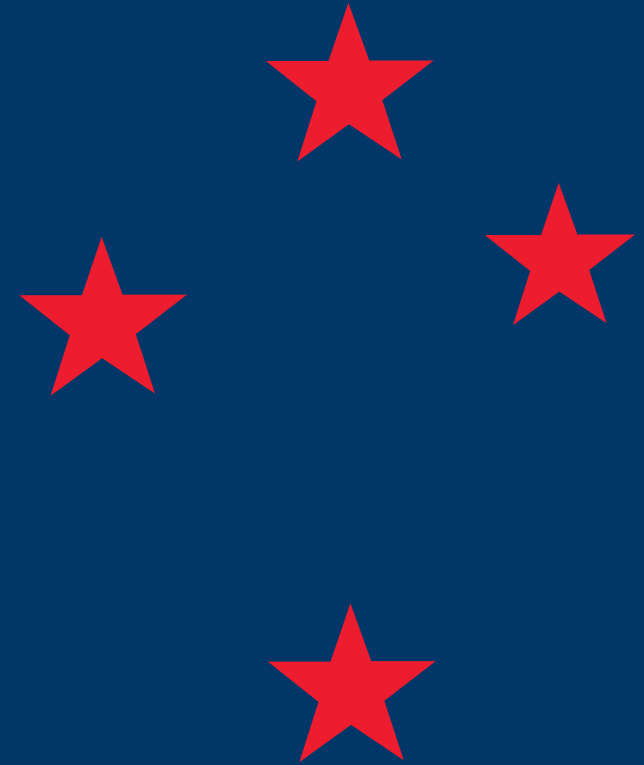


*n = 418, respondents who listen to podcasts

Majority of over 50's never listen to podcasts (63%), while less than 1 in 5 (16%) listen every now and again. On average, 3.8 hours per week is spent listening to podcasts and over 1 in 3 (36%) have somewhat increased the time they spend listening to podcasts. The four most popular genres are news and current affairs (38%), political commentary (22%), hobbies and special interests (20%), and health, wellbeing and fitness (19%).



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We are committed to identifying and developing services and products we believe protect and improve the wellbeing of all senior New Zealanders.

