



Home

Conditions

Quizzes

News &amp; Experts

• [Home](#)

Research &amp; Resources

Find Help

Pro

• [Conditions](#)

• [Quizzes](#)

• [Ask the Therapist](#)

- [Drugs](#)
- [Blogs](#)
- [News](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Resources](#)
- [Find Help](#)
- [Psychotherapy 101](#)
- [Forums & Support Groups](#)
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[Home](#) » [News](#) » Early Retirement Planning Can Aid Mental Health

## News

### Hot Early Retirement Planning Can Aid Mental Health

By [Rick Nauert PhD](#)

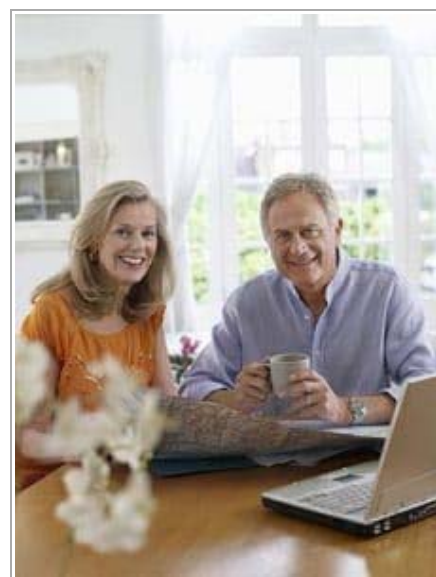
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A new European Union (EU) project established guidelines to prepare individuals for life after full-time retirement. Researchers from the University of Alicante urge people to start planning as soon as age 50 so as to live a fulfilling third life after retirement.

Improper planning of retirement may lead to [depression](#) and related mental health issues.

“Start early” is the main message from project partners after a two-year project led by the Evris Foundation in Iceland, and in which several EU Universities



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[Wellness](#)  
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[OCD](#)  
[pain](#)  
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participated.

The project addressed the urgent need to establish directives and best practices for preparing individuals early for retirement. Researchers stressed the importance of on-going learning, environment and cultural factors, and knowledge sharing.

Research partners created a model awareness-raising campaign, the “Personal Development Academy” and the “Warehouse of Opportunities,” all of which are outlined in the directives and recommendations document, “Towards a Dynamic Third Age.”

Specifically, the University of Alicante led the development of the awareness-raising campaign model with the intention of enabling any center, institute or association to prepare the local population for retirement.

Researchers Concepción Bru and Ronda and Nuria Ruiz of UPUA first made a European map of retirement and carried out surveys on the retirement situation. They then used this data to design the awareness campaign.

Researchers explain that it is important to prepare for retirement when a person is between the ages of 50-55 when they have between ten and fifteen years before retirement. During this period, individuals should also plan for twenty more years of a full and active life after that.

Investigators urge individuals to self-reflect on what they want to do with their time during this retirement phase of their life. That is, what might we need to train on beforehand, from financial and legal issues, to preventive health, social skills, leisure activities, and even dependence prevention.

In short, we need to be prepared for retirement to fully embrace this period in our life.

Bru stresses the importance of carrying out awareness-raising campaigns on the value of the third age in society, aimed both at the general public and those approaching retirement.

“More and more people are living longer and in better health [and] the sudden stop in the activity you have spent your whole life engaged in” can lead to depression and related mental health issues.

Encouraging physical activity and inspiring a sense of inclusion and purpose is the overarching goal of the project, but the key for Bru is that retirees, or those approaching retirement, are able to “reinvent themselves.

She recommends a strategy in which a person engages in something they’ve never done before, like volunteering. “If you

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prepare yourself in good time and with good organization and guidance, a better retirement is possible,” explains Bru.

The idea, Bru tells us, is to continue work in the EU to put these recommendations into practice. Indeed, they are already being implemented by companies that took part in the project, as well as at an institutional level, via the regional ministry of education and the University of Alicante.

Source: [Asociación RUVID/ScienceDaily](#)

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## About Rick Nauert PhD



**Dr. Rick Nauert** has over 25 years experience in clinical, administrative and academic healthcare. He is currently an associate professor for Rocky Mountain University of Health Professionals doctoral program in health promotion and wellness. Dr. Nauert began his career as a clinical physical therapist and served as a regional manager for a publicly traded multidisciplinary rehabilitation agency for 12 years. He has masters degrees in health-fitness management and healthcare administration and a doctoral degree from The University of Texas at Austin focused on health care informatics, health administration, health education and health policy. His research efforts included the area of telehealth with a specialty in disease management.

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