Responding to the ‘silver tsunami’

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It has long been a fear that the rapidly aging population of Singapore, with its numbers and needs diminishing, is in the midst of significant demographic changes. By 2030, its elderly population will be on track to triple in size. Currently, the social and medical needs of older Singaporeans are likely to be greater. Is Singapore prepared? And what changes does its society and health-care system constitute in appropriate responses?

Our city-state’s “silver tsunami” is already here. The wall of water brought on by an abrupt shift in the sea floor’s tectonic plates can travel to the land mass (followed by a disastrous tsunami). Shifts in birth rates and the number of older Singaporeans are like a tsunami that is about to hit us, moving silently but swiftly.

Despite a heightened awareness of the need to address these needs, there are still major issues to be dealt with. Our understanding of the challenges and the ways to address them is still in its infancy. However, there are some positive signs emerging. The government has taken steps to improve the quality of care for the elderly. The elderly are becoming more active and are seeking ways to stay healthy and independent. The government has also been working on developing new policies and social programs to support the elderly.

Responding to the “silver tsunami” is a complex challenge that requires a multi-faceted approach. We need to ensure that our health-care system is equipped to handle the growing population of older adults and that we are able to provide them with the care and support they need. We also need to consider the impact of the “silver tsunami” on the economy and how we can best prepare for the future.

As a starting point, we could look to other countries in Asia, such as Japan and South Korea, which have already experienced a significant aging of their populations. We can learn from their experiences and implement similar policies in Singapore.

In conclusion, responding to the “silver tsunami” is a critical challenge that requires a coordinated effort from all levels of government, the private sector, and the community. We need to work together to ensure that our elderly population is well-cared for and that our society is prepared for the changes to come.