

More in danger of outliving savings

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More people will outlive their retirement savings if the Canadian pension problem isn't addressed, Sun Life Financial's chief executive officer says.

That will cause individuals and families to experience real hardship in the future as the population ages, Don Stewart told shareholders at the insurer's annual meeting Wednesday.

"There will be growing pressure on health care and other government services as the ratio of retirees to workers increases," he added.

Mr. Stewart said he supports the federal government's current pension consultation process, and said the solution to the challenge needs to be balanced and thoughtful.

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Mr. Stewart also touched on the issue of financial reform, noting that a number of countries have made a variety of proposals that could have a negative impact on the Canadian financial services industry.

"It would indeed be ironic if Canada, a country which came through the financial crisis better than most, was to find itself at a disadvantage on account of new international rules originating from outside our country," he said.

The life insurance industry is working with policy makers to address the potential problems and mitigate the impact they might have, he pointed out.

Mr. Stewart also added his voice to the chorus of Canadian executives and politicians who are speaking out against a global bank tax.

"It's hard to see how that's favourable for Canada," he said.