

Ageing Population and Healthy Aging Framework

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Population ageing is first and foremost a success story for public health policies as well as social and economic development...

-- Gro Harlem Brundtland, Director-General, WHO, 1999

Worldwide, the proportion of people age 60 and over is growing faster than any other age group. In 2025, there will be a total of about 1.2 billion elderly people over the age of 60. By 2050 there will be 2 billion elderly with 80 percent of them living in developing countries. Ageing concerns each and everyone – whether young or old, male or female, rich or poor. Globally, the population is ageing steadily. One of the biggest social transformations is population ageing.

Magnitude of Ageing Population in Indian Context

India's population aged 60 and older is projected to increase dramatically over the next four decades, from 8 percent in 2010 to 19 percent in 2050, according to the United Nations Population Division. By mid-century, this age group is expected to encompass 323 million people, a number greater than the total US population in 2012.

The aging of India's population will lead to increases in the prevalence of chronic conditions such as diabetes and hypertension. By one measure, nearly one-half (45%) of India's disease burden is projected to be borne by older adults in 2030, when the population age groups with high levels of chronic conditions will represent a much greater share of the total population (Population Reference Bureau, March 2012).

The theme for the World Health Day 2012 "Ageing and health" was chosen by using the slogan "Good health adds life to years", campaign activities and materials focussed on how good health throughout life span is maintained by raising awareness of what individuals and Governments can do to promote active and healthy ageing. Health providers and societies to meet the health needs of older populations, which includes preventing and managing age-associated chronic diseases; designing sustainable policies on long-term and palliative care; and developing age-

friendly services and settings so that older people retain their health and lead full and productive lives and can be a resource for their families and communities.

New Concept of Ageing

Healthy ageing: "Healthy aging is the development and maintenance of optimal mental, social, and physical well-being and function in older adults. This will most likely be achieved when communities are safe, promote health and well-being and use health services and community programs to prevent or minimize disease" (West Virginia Rural Healthy Aging Network).

Successful aging: According to Marshall & Altepeter (2005), Rowe & Kahn (1998) established the framework for health promotion. This framework for successful aging includes avoidance of disease, maintenance of high cognitive and physical functioning, and ongoing engagement with life.

Healthy life expectancy: is commonly used as a synonym for "disability-free life expectancy".

While life expectancy at birth remains an important measure of population ageing, how long people can expect to live without disabilities is especially important to an ageing population.

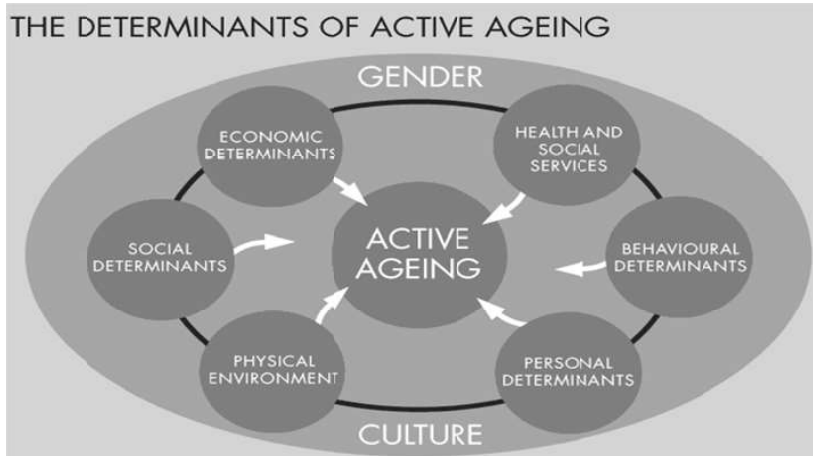
Active ageing: is defined by World Health Organisation "...the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age. It applies to both individuals and population groups". Active ageing allows people to realise their potential for physical, social, and mental well-being throughout the life course and to participate in society, while providing them with adequate protection, security and care when they need.

The strategic health framework provides a guide to allow the health system and its partners to develop and implement population health strategies that address health determinants of healthy aging.

The key components of the framework are:

- Target population: The target population includes all persons born in or prior to 1966 (35 years of age

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Source: *The wisdom years: Ageing in the 21st century* available at <http://wisdom.unu.edu/en/active-ageing>

and older) — the baby boomers and seniors. (A baby boomer is a person who was born during the demographic post-World War II between the years 1946 and 1964, according to the US Census Bureau).

- Four components of healthy aging are underpinned by the core values of dignity, choice and independence, participation, fairness and security. Health determinants are the multiple factors that have an impact on the health status of a population; the 12 health determinants are: income and social status, social support networks, education, employment and working conditions, social environment, physical environment, biology and genetics endowment, personal health practices and coping skills, healthy child development, health services, gender, and culture.
- Population health strategies refer to five strategies critical to promoting health. Inter-related and involving all sectors and stakeholders these strategies are: building healthy policies, creating supportive environments, strengthening community action, developing personal skills and reorienting health services.
- Partnerships indicate the need for multiple sectors to work together to deal with the range and complexity of the health determinants that influence health. The partnerships include individuals, families and the community-based organisations.

Healthy Ageing Conceptual Model Component:

1. Promoting health and preventing disease and injury : The World Health Organisation introduced their health promotion framework during first international conference on health promotion at Ottawa on 21 November 1986. Health promotion is defined by WHO as “the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve their health, to reach a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, an individual or group must be able to identify and to realise aspirations, to satisfy needs, and to change or

cope with the environment”.

It focuses on enhancing the capabilities and capacities of individuals, families and communities to make healthy choices and develop healthy and supportive environments. This includes the following key areas-

- Strengthen focus on health promotion, disease and injury prevention programmes
- Healthy eating practices
- Smoking cessation
- Prevention of injuries from falls
- Early detection of chronic diseases
- Vaccine preventable diseases

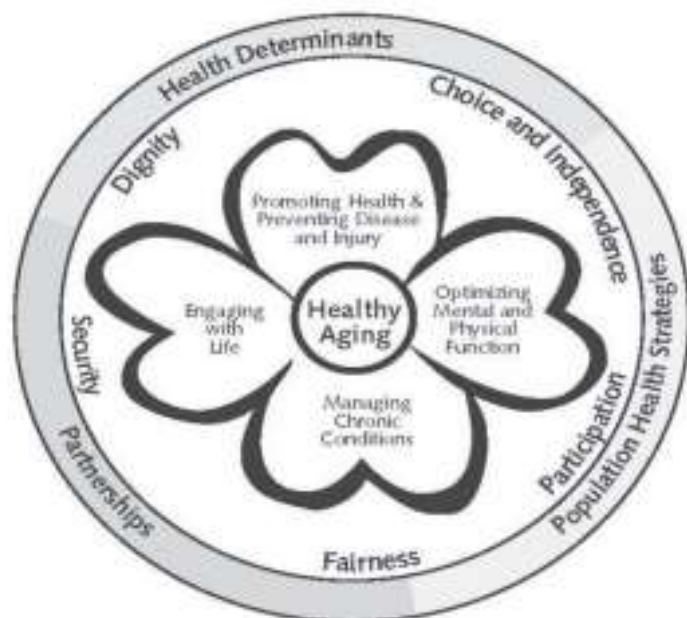
Health promotion programmes for the elderly do enhance quality of life. Healthy aging requires people to take personal responsibility for their health by taking advantage of opportunities for physical activity and good nutrition.

Disease prevention includes the prevention and management of the conditions that are particularly common as individuals age: non communicable diseases and injuries. Prevention refers both to “primary” prevention (e.g. avoidance of tobacco use) as well as “secondary” prevention (e.g. screening for the early detection of chronic diseases), or “tertiary” prevention, e.g. appropriate clinical management of diseases. All contribute to reducing the risk of disabilities.

2. Optimising Mental Promotion and physical function - enabling people to remain as independent as possible in carrying out the routines of daily living.

- * Develop and strengthen programs and supports aimed at improved mental and physical functioning
- * Physical functioning
- * Active living practices
- * Mental functioning and prevention of Depression and Addictions

The aim of mental health promotion is to improve the public’s state of mental health and increase awareness as to its importance also to make people realise that a healthy mental state is essential to well-being in general. Particular emphasis will be placed on the mental health of the elderly and at-risk groups in society; in addition, awareness as to positive mental health will be promoted in the work place and in schools..



Source: Alberta's Healthy Aging and Seniors Wellness Strategic Framework 2002 – 2012. Available at <http://www.health.gov.ab.ca>.

Mental health services, which play a crucial role in active ageing, should be an integral part of long-term care. Particular attention needs to be paid to the under-diagnosis of mental illness (especially depression) and to suicide rates among older people (WHO, 2001).

3. Managing chronic conditions - enabling people to effectively manage conditions caused by injuries or diseases, by facilitating self-care and independence and using collaborative approaches with professionals and caregivers.

- Strengthen self care, supports and collaborative management approaches
- Management of chronic pain
- Management of chronic condition and Medication use

4. Engaging with life - enabling people to have meaningful relationships with others and be involved in activities that are satisfying and purposeful.

- Facilitate meaningful relationships and purposeful activities
- Social interactions
- Community involvement

In the Thane District of Maharashtra, Acharya Atré Katta, a Social and Cultural weekly platform was initiated in the year 2001 with the thought of bringing people together and share the experience and knowledge with the audience; most of the elderly are en-

gaged in this constructive activity.

Services to help elderly to stay at home for long term care: Due to chronic health problems the elderly need health services at various level. Domiciliary care is to help elderly to remain at home as long as possible, rather than moving into a long-term care facility. It only needs minor assistance with daily activities and enjoy a close network of nearby family and friends. There is a wide range of home care services that can help elderly to maintain independence within the comfort of their own home.

Conclusion

Population ageing is one of humanity's greatest triumphs. It is also one of our greatest challenges. As we enter the 21st century, global ageing will put increased economic and social demands on all countries. At the same time, older people are a precious, often ignored resource that makes an important contribution to the fabric of our societies. It is a challenge for the health sector to enact "active ageing" and empower the older for health promotion practices. The time has come to plan and to act now for our "greying nation".

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