

DAY 2: 27 AUGUST 2013, MULTIPURPOSE HALL

India International Centre 40, Max Mueller Marg, New Delhi-110001

TIME: 2:00- 3:00 PM

The Session for Empowerment: Health & Well Being was taken by

1. Dr. Massouda Jalal, *Founder, Jalal Foundation, Afghanistan*
2. Anupama Datta, *Director, Policy Research and Development Department, HelpAge India*
3. Dr. Nidhi Mishra, *Research Consultant, Mumbai*
4. Neha Sinha, *Epoch Eldercare*

Topics covered:

- a) Challenges of Empowering the Women in the context of Population Ageing in India by Anupama Datta, *Director, Policy Research and Development Department, HelpAge India*
- b) Psycho-Social issues related to Health and Wellbeing of Elderly Women by Dr. Nidhi Mishra, *Research Consultant, Mumbai*
- c) Intellectual Companionship by Neha Sinha, *Epoch Eldercare*

Abstracts from this sessions are:

1. Title: Psycho-Social issues related to Health and Wellbeing of Elderly Women

Author: Dr. Nidhi Mishra, *Research Consultant, Mumbai*

With an increase in proportion of older persons in India, maintenance of health and well-being of both male and female elderly has become an important issue, however, this is even more serious concern among the elderly women, who as compared to their male counterparts are more vulnerable to health problems such as osteoporosis, menopausal complications and depression; and are more likely to face financial constraints due to less workforce participation or lack of financial savings for old age. As they live longer than men, they are more likely to be widowed and living alone, thus becoming more vulnerable to crimes and abuses. Situation is worst for those who belong to lower economic status. Due to the phenomena of feminization of ageing in India, all these issues have become more acute and are thus emphasizing on the dire need to implement older women specific programmes and schemes toward promotion of their health and wellbeing.

Health and Wellbeing of elderly women are a multidimensional concept which in terms of physical aspects mainly comprises of proper functioning of body parts and sensory systems,

mobility with least dependence and satisfaction with physical appearance. Psychologically, it includes having high self-esteem, satisfaction with life, sense of autonomy, adaption to life changes and absence of depression. Socio-Economic dimension of wellbeing mainly comprises of satisfaction with family, society, government schemes and one's financial situation. Psycho-Spiritual dimension involves experiencing peace with oneself and also a sense of self growth.

The population of elderly women is a heterogeneous group with varied needs, demands and factors influencing their wellbeing. Some of the major determinants of health and wellbeing among them are physical and mental fitness, positive relation with family, positive body image, participation in household activities, social interaction, financial security and supportive environment.

Promotion of health and well-being of elderly women is a major step towards their empowerment, because until and unless they are not physically and psychologically healthy and are not satisfied with their life and environmental context, they won't be able to empower themselves. Empowerment of elderly women is a gradual process in which elderly women, their family, civil society and government have a major role to play to tackle the various challenges they face from time to time at their own level towards achievement of this goal.