



NATIONAL POLICY

ON

RESIDENTIAL

CARE FACILITIES

FOR

OLDER PERSONS

December, 2012

Preface

Over the years government has recognized the importance of Senior Citizens and the need for a more comprehensive approach to drafting a policy document as a step in the process of integrating our seniors socially, culturally and otherwise.

The policy document takes note of the recommendation of several international meetings since 1999; including The General Assembly of the United Nations, World Health Organization, Pan American Health Organization, The Merck Institute of Ageing and Health and the Second World Health Assembly on Ageing in Madrid 2002.

The main goal of the policy document is to meet the challenges of a growing, healthier and more active senior citizen population, by ensuring that those in need of institutionalized care can access available supportive environments where they are assisted and protected from abuse and violence.

Appreciation for the preparation of this comprehensive document is extended to the Directorate of Health Services Quality Management and the very hardworking team which include the Chief Nursing Officer/ Director of Health Services Quality Management Mrs. Serene Carter Davis, Quality Management Officer Mrs. Alma Hughes, Senior Children Maintenance Officer Ms Louraine Gumbs, PAHO Country Representative Ms. Katrina Smith, and Summer Placement Student Ms. Janicia Harris.

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**NATIONAL POLICY
ON
RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES FOR THE ELDERLY**

BACKGROUND

The International Context

Population ageing is undoubtedly a global phenomenon, a process which is enduring and irreversible and has major implications on all aspects of human life in every society. The year 1999 was proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations as the year of older persons. This recognition reinforced the fact that ageing is one of the major challenges all populations will have to cope with in the twenty first century and beyond.

To ensure that older persons not only survive but thrive, the World Health Organization, Pan American Health Organization, The Merck Institute of Ageing and Health echo the call for the health span to increase with the life span. To this end government at the Second World Health Assembly on Ageing in Madrid 2002, agreed to implement the following plan of action:

1. Develop guidelines and processes for monitoring the health status of older people and implement a surveillance system.
2. Promote and fund a public health research agenda to identify threats to the health of older persons.
3. Promote healthy behaviors and environments for older persons.
4. Develop a regulatory framework for protecting the rights of older persons in long-term care settings.
5. Define standards of geriatric appropriate health services, monitor and evaluate access of older persons to necessary health services.
6. Develop a national plan for training in geriatrics for the primary health care workforce, and provide every health care worker with some education and training in geriatrics.



The Regional Context

Subsequently, the Caribbean Regional Charter on Ageing and Health was adopted in 1999 by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). This charter calls on all governments in the sub-region to acknowledge ageing as an issue of priority in the areas of Health and Social Planning. The study of the ageing process in the Caribbean identifies critical areas of major concern for policy makers. There is the need for more data, research on socio-economic well being, as well as on the health condition of the elderly and finally a thorough overhaul of existing policies and programmes. Also of paramount importance is the need for a design to include new approaches to cope with implications these dramatic changes in the age-structure are having and will continue to have on the lives of the entire population.

Population ageing in the Caribbean generally follows global trends. It is a well known fact that women generally live longer than men. This is also true for the countries in the Caribbean. It is estimated that the number of persons sixty (60) years or older living in Latin America and the Caribbean will increase from forty two (42) million in 2000 to hundred (100) million in 2025. In every country at least ten percent (10 %) of all those aged sixty (60) years and older will be those aged 80 years and older by 2025. The majority of these being females and widowed as the life expectancy of females is higher than that of males?

The Caribbean Charter on Health and Ageing focuses on the fundamental principle that health and wellness encompasses the need for preventive strategies, supportive environments and consumer friendly goods and services. Older persons must be regarded as resources for development and supported in seeking their physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual fulfillment. They must also be regarded as having the right to live and die with dignity.

Strategies as outlined in the charter should address the following areas:

- Supportive environments at home and in the community.
- Supportive environments in long term care facilities.
- Primary Health Care and Health Promotion.
- Economic security, employment and other productive activities.

The Charter of Civil Society for The Caribbean Community establishes the human rights of all Caribbean people regardless of age. The charter promotes the right of the retired person without adequate means of subsistence to social and medical assistance.



The National Context

In Anguilla, the 2001 census establishes life expectancy for males to be 73.6 years and 79.5 years for females. For 2008 it is estimated to increase to 78.01 years for males and 83.12 years for females. The demographic data according to the census shows that 10.2% of the population of 12,182 is characterized as older persons as defined by the **United Nations** which is sixty (60) years of age and older and 2% of the population as **Oldest old** or older than 80 years. The census also stated that there were seven hundred and three (703) households with an elderly occupant. One hundred and ninety eight (198) of those seven hundred and three (703) house holds were elderly people living alone. Nineteen (19%) percent of households had someone who was sixty five (65) years or older. This data indicate that Anguilla is experiencing the same global phenomenon on ageing as her counterparts.

1. INTRODUCTION

Ageing is a universal experience closely linked to life styles, social activities, living conditions, poverty, health and well being. The challenging fact is that as the population ages there will be fewer wage earners to provide for older persons who are frail and vulnerable; and who because of certain health conditions can no longer maintain their independence or live at home on their own.

The health status of Anguillans has improved and life expectancy has increased. This has resulted in the progressive ageing of the Anguillian society, increased the level of existing and future demands for accommodation for older persons and was instrumental in the government's decision to move the retirement age from 55 years to 65 years. All these factors demand that the government legislate for **All Types of Residential Care Facilities for Older Persons**, formulate Social Policy guidelines and welcome proposals for the provision of all types of residential care facilities and services for older persons.

2. ORIGIN OF POLICY

The progressive ageing of our societies as well as the continuing increase of older persons in the population demands that both government and the private sector address the needs of the country's elderly citizens by instituting aged care policies and programmes.

POLICY:

THE NATIONAL POLICY ON RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES AND SERVICES FOR OLDER PERSONS.

2.1 Policy Statement

This National Policy sets forth the guidelines for all residential care facilities for older persons namely:

- i. Home For Senior Citizens
- ii. Nursing Home/Infirmarary
- iii. Adult Day Care /Recreation/Rehabilitation Centre
- iv. Convalescent Homes.

Senior Citizens Home

Any facility where the operator provides boarding with food service for a group of three (3) or more older persons who are not related by blood or marriage.

Nursing Home/Infirmary

A care facility providing basic nursing care services in addition to domiciliary and custodial care; the operator has a satisfactory agreement with a physician for medical coverage.

Adult Day Care

An adult day care centre is a non residential facility offering supervised social activities during the day for persons who are aged and infirmed and need recreational and rehabilitative care.

Convalescent Homes

Convalescent Homes are primarily designed to provide a home-like environment while patients recover from long term illnesses or medical procedures.

Residential Care Facilities and Services for older persons shall be governed by the Ministry of Social Development via utilization of the guidelines contained herein.

3. GOAL

To generate the regulatory and enforcement frameworks that will protect the rights, dignity and well being of all residents of elderly care facilities, ensuring adequate care and appropriate services that will enhance the quality of life for older persons.

4. OBJECTIVES

- i.** To provide residential care facilities for those who, for personal, social, health and/or other reasons, are unable to live at home.
- ii.** Establish residential care accommodation standards to monitor accommodation services in residential care facilities.
- iii.** Establish Adult Day Care Centres where the elderly can come on a rostered basis for fellowship, recreation, rehabilitation and occupational therapy within their community.



- iv. Develop a cadre of trained personnel in geriatric care.
- v. Ensure that all institutions which will cater for the elderly are equipped with warning devices, sprinklers, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers and up-to-date disaster and emergency management plans.
- vi. Educate, train and update the skills of all care givers including family members and community support groups on quality of care issues.
- vii. Develop a Charter of Personal Rights and Responsibilities on Residential Care Facilities and Services for older persons.

5. DIRECTION OF THE POLICY

The fundamental principle of health and wellness encompasses the need for preventive strategies and supportive environments. These will set the main direction of government to support a wide range of care options that are attractive, appropriate, non-restrictive models that protect and enhance the autonomy, dignity, privacy and safety of older persons.

6. KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- i. The design of the building must be aesthetically pleasing and spacious enough to ensure protection of privacy.
- ii. Sites shall be easily accessible, and premises shall provide adequate space for parking of vehicles and an area for ambulance pick- ups.
- iii. Prospective applicants are advised to consult the Ministry of Social Development regarding the necessary registration requirements prior to submitting a formal application for planning permission.
- iv. The granting of planning permission for residential care facilities shall be restricted to the use for which it was intended.

7. GUIDELINES

Government hereby establishes and ensures minimum standard of care guidelines for all group homes, residential care facilities and the development of regulatory frameworks for protecting the rights of older persons at home, in the community, residential care facilities and/or institutions.

The facilities will be monitored and evaluated through the creation of legislation, regulations, and the development of Accommodation Standards categorized under the following themes:

- i. Physical Environment
- ii. Safety Services
- iii. Dietetic Services
- iv. Residential Services
- v. Coordination and Referral Services
- vi. Human Resources
- vii. Management and Administration

These themes shall have a set of detailed standards that are designed to support a safe and comfortable environment for Anguillans in long term care facilities by promoting their safety, security and quality of life. The standards are mandatory for all long term care facilities in Anguilla.

8. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for admission to a home or facility for the aged, an applicant should be:

- i. Sixty five (65) years and over.
- ii. Assessed to be suitable for admission to facilities for the aged through the Standardized Care Needs Assessment Mechanism for Services for Older Persons.
- iii. Experiencing a social or housing need and unable to live independently.
- iv. Assessed by a social worker.

9. STRATEGIES

To ensure achievement of the above policy objectives and requirements the following strategies will be developed:

- i. The establishment of more facilities as well as institutional care for older persons.
- ii. Ensure prospective proprietors build facilities to the required standard specification.
- iii. Comprehensive regulatory guidelines, standards and procedures for the registration and monitoring of residential care facilities for the elderly.
- iv. “Assisted living” housing schemes.
- v. A cadre of supervisors and/or inspectors who would inspect periodically and/or annually facilities for older persons and thereby strengthen the scope and quality of care trained.

- vi. The regulatory framework for protecting the rights, dignity and well being of older persons.
- vii. A Registration Committee to assess proposals, monitor and evaluate all residential care facilities and services for the elderly, register and/or certify the facility, and enforce statutory provisions.

10. CONCLUSION

The residential care facilities and services policy for the elderly is a proactive approach to creating home like living environments, a culture of mutual respect, and quality of care for elderly persons residing in such facilities on Anguilla.

The policy takes into consideration housing requirements, social and service needs, and provides a much greater range of support and flexibility, whilst enhancing the independence and individuality of older persons.

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