



# Measures taken by the Government of Guyana to implement International Agreement on Ageing

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# National Commission for the Elderly

The National Commission for the Elderly is a semi-autonomous body. It is Chaired by a representative from civil society and includes representatives from:

- ▶ the Ministry of Public Health,
- ▶ Ministry of Social Protection,
- ▶ National Commission on Disabilities,
- ▶ Parliamentary Political Parties and the Pensioners Association.

# Mandate of the Commission for the Elderly

The terms of reference of the Commission are as follows:

- ▶ (a) To advise Government on the formulation of a comprehensive policy for the elderly including matters relating to the care, financial security, health and medical, psychological, employment and recreational needs of the elderly;
- ▶ (b) To co-ordinate the planning and development of various programmes and services for the elderly, and to recommend priorities for implementation having regard to manpower, financial and other resources available; and
- ▶ (c) To monitor implementation of policies and programmes affecting the elderly and to make recommendations to Government to ensure that agreed objectives are met.

# Achievements in addressing issues related to the rights of older persons over the last five years

- ▶ The development and implementation of Minimum Standards Operating Standards for Elderly Residential Facilities (2016);
- ▶ The Launch of a Visiting Committee to monitor the operations of Elderly Residential Facilities
- ▶ A Situation Analysis of Older Persons (2016);

# Most relevant issues regarding ageing

Issues affecting older persons:

- Medical Care
- Transportation
- Protection from Abuse and Exploitation
- Financial Security

# Measures to strengthen social protection for older persons

- Universal Pension for persons 65 years or older
  - ▶ 50,000 persons (approximately 90% of citizens 65 years old and older)
  - ▶ 90 USD per month
- Conditional withholding tax waivers on savings
- Free crossing on state owned ferry services

# Humanitarian and disaster relief programmes

The Civil Defense Commission held an experiential learning activity in 2015, where elderly persons were able to share and discuss key topics surrounding Disaster Risk Reduction. The topics which were discussed were:

1. Cultural Shift in Environmental Management and the importance of Transferring Knowledge from the Elderly to the Young
2. Preparing for Disasters by including persons with disabilities and the elderly

The CDC also distributed emergency kits to approximately 15 elderly homes across the country.

# Standards and monitoring mechanisms

Monitoring of Elderly Residential facilities are conducted in accordance with the minimum standards for elderly residential facilities which were developed in line with international best practices and Guyana's obligations under international treaties and agreements.

A Multi-discipline Visiting Committee comprising of:

- ▶ A Gerontologist
- ▶ A Dietician
- ▶ A Representative from the Guyana Fire Service
- ▶ A Representative from the Social Services Department and
- ▶ A Representative from the Commission for the Elderly

Monthly visits are made by the committee to monitor, evaluate and report on Elderly Residential Facilities Adherence to the Minimum Standards.



# Measures to address financial exploitation of older persons

In 2015, the Ministry started to investigate reports of financial exploitation and other forms of abuse and neglect of Older Persons. Since its implementation:

- ▶ The Ministry has received 4 reports of financial exploitation;
- ▶ In 2 of the cases the Ministry sought the intervention of the Guyana Police Force and the Seniors were reimbursed;
- ▶ 1 senior was removed and relocated to the Palms and;
- ▶ 1 case was inconclusive since there was not sufficient evidence

The Ministry recognises that there is significant under reporting.

# Measures to enhance the public recognition of older persons

- ▶ “Stop Senior Citizens Abuse” campaign which was rolled out in the 4th quarter 2016; through the use of posters, pamphlets and bumper stickers the Ministry of Social Protection has been sensitizing and educating the public on the forms and effects of abuse perpetrated against older persons.
- ▶ Month of the Elderly Activities (October) are held in recognition and appreciation of the contributions made by our Senior Citizens.

THANK YOU!