Minimum Standards for Senior Citizen Homes

Government of India

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

Department of Social Justice and Empowerment

Senior Citizens Welfare Division

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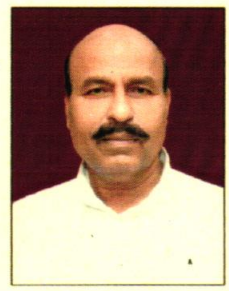

Preface

It is with great pleasure and a sense of responsibility that I introduce this crucial framework, the "Minimum Standards for Senior Citizen Homes", under the auspices of the Ministry for Social Justice and Empowerment. As our nation progresses on the path of development, it becomes imperative to address the evolving needs of our senior citizens, who are the pillars of wisdom and experience in our society.

The elderly population in India constitutes a valuable segment of our demographic landscape, and it is our duty as a compassionate and inclusive society to ensure their well-being and dignity in their golden years. Recognizing the significance of quality care and living conditions for senior citizens, the Ministry has taken a proactive stance in formulating these minimum standards for senior citizen homes.

This booklet serves as a comprehensive guide outlining the benchmarks and criteria essential for the establishment and operation of senior citizen homes across the country. The standards herein encompass a broad spectrum of considerations, ranging from the physical infrastructure and healthcare provisions to recreational activities and social engagement. Our objective is to create an environment that fosters not only the physical well-being of the elderly but also their mental and emotional health.

The development of these minimum standards has been a collaborative effort, drawing on the expertise of professionals, stakeholders, and advocacy groups devoted to the cause of senior citizens' welfare. It reflects a commitment to creating a framework that upholds the principles of dignity, respect, and quality of life for our elderly citizens.

I would like to express my gratitude to all those who have contributed to the formulation of these standards, including the Government officials, field experts, and various organizations. Their insights and dedication have been invaluable in shaping a document that aligns with the diverse needs of our senior citizens.

As we release this booklet, I am confident that it will serve as a guiding light for organizations and individuals involved in the care of senior citizens. By adhering to these minimum standards, we aim to establish a network of senior citizen homes that not only meet the basic requirements but also exceed expectations, ensuring that our elderly population receives the care and attention they rightfully deserve.

I encourage all stakeholders, including administrators, caregivers and policymakers, to embrace these standards and work collectively towards creating a society that cherishes and safeguards the well-being of its senior citizens.

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सामाजिक न्याय और अधिकारिता मंत्रालय
सामाजिक न्याय और अधिकारिता विभाग
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Foreword

As our societies continue to evolve, we are faced with the ever-important task of ensuring the well-being and dignity of every member, especially our senior citizens. The provision of adequate and compassionate care for our elderly population is not just a measure of our societal progress, but a reflection of our values as a community.

2. It is with great pleasure that I introduce this invaluable resource, the Minimum Standards for Senior Citizen Homes. Compiled meticulously by experts in the field of elder care, this book represents a significant step towards ensuring that our senior citizens receive the respect, care, and support they rightfully deserve.

3. In recent years, the global population of older adults has been steadily increasing, presenting new challenges and opportunities for our societies. Senior citizen homes play a crucial role in providing a safe and comfortable environment for our elders, where they can thrive and maintain their dignity.

4. This book lays a thorough framework of minimal requirements that senior citizen homes must follow. It covers a wide range of topics, including lodging, medical treatment, recreational opportunities, and social support. By creating these requirements, we hope to ensure that senior citizens living in these kinds of facilities get excellent care that supports their mental, emotional, and physical well-being.

5. Furthermore, this book serves as a guide for institutions, policymakers, caregivers, and all stakeholders involved in the care of our elderly population. It emphasizes the importance of upholding principles of compassion, respect, and dignity in every aspect of elder care.

6. I applaud the commitment and knowledge of all who helped to create this valuable resource. Their dedication to improving our senior citizens quality of life is appreciated.

7. To sum up, I request everyone working in the elder care industry to adopt the principles presented in this framework and work towards establishing surroundings in which our elderly population can age with honour and dignity.

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MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR SENIOR CITIZEN HOMES

A) Location

The decision on the location of is crucial and involves careful consideration of various factors. A comprehensive understanding of the local context, combined with a focus on the well-being of residents, should guide the decision on the location.

Parameters	Description
1)Physical Accessibility	The facility must not be in isolated/remote place. 1) Proper connectivity to public transport and other basic public services. 2) Geo tagging shall be ensured. 3) Name of the facility with complete address along with the supported scheme should be displayed prominently.
2) Nature of Facility	Government/Semi-Government/Private The nature of facility should be clearly stated along with name Displayed stating clearly: a) Implementing agency name, address and contact number, project ID, accreditation b) Whether free or paid by user c) Government aided or unaided
3) Land	The land should comply with the Floor-Area Ratio (FAR) as prescribed by the relevant urban local body/State Government.

B) Infrastructure and Facilities

The infrastructure of can vary based on factors such as location, size, and the specific services provided. However, there are common features and components that are typically found in such facilities. It's important to note that the quality and range of services can vary, and some facilities may specialize in certain types of care, such as assisted living, dementia care, or skilled nursing. Regulations and standards may differ by region.

1) Accessible Infrastructure	Ensure that there are handrails along the walls on either side of the corridor and stairs at equal affordable heights above the floor level.

	1) Presence of handrail alongside steps, at minimum of 900mm and maximum of 1000m from floor height. 2) Ensure that when there is a difference in the floor level, the steps must be distinguished with contrasting strips on the edges. 3) The steps should be on equal heights (l*b*h) 4) Use of easy to grip door knobs and lever type handles of large size. 5) Guidelines of DePWD should be followed (like double height rounded handrail, ramps, Braille buttons and auditory announcement systems in the elevators). 6) Ring bell shall be at entry level.
2) Living Space Quality	Clean, well-maintained, and well-lit living spaces, cross ventilation. 1) Disinfection control measures, trained HR availability 2) Bed bugs/Pests/Rodents control measure should be taken. 3) Facilities to handle harsh/extreme weather conditions. (AC/cooler/heater/etc.)
3) Safety Measures	Emergency response systems, evacuation plans. 1) Immediate contact details of the concerned authority needs to be displayed 2) Training to respond emergency situations of HR and residents. 3) Proper boundary wall of the institution shall be ensured (at least 4ft tall wall). 4) Provides grab-rails in bathrooms, corridors, stairs and other relevant locations. Bathrooms doors are sliding or outward opening. 5) Anti skid tiles. 6) Provide at least one wheelchair in a well-maintained working condition. 7) Emergency evacuation plan for the facility is documented and displayed with instructions written in language(s) understood by resident on critical location. 8) Emergency lights on all critical locations. 9) Storage of flammable fuels, such as diesel oil, gasoline, motor oils, etc. must not be allowed anywhere within the premises.
4) Electricity & Light	Adequate lighting in the common areas including corridors, lobby and lifts to be supplied with power backup facility. 1) All electrical circuits need to have MCB & ELCB provided for. 2) Electrical cables should not be laid in ducts along with

	telephone wires, water mains lines, gas pipes, intercom, audio visual lines.
5) Relatives Meet	Provisions for family and friends to meet 1) Separate room for their meet 2) Proper time allocation (45minutes to 1 hr, evening, morning) 3) Records of the visitors should be maintained.
6) Rooms	Natural lighting and ventilation, sufficient space, storage capacity, intercom facilities 1) One intercom in each room. 2)Area of bedroom/dormitory per resident (7.5 sq.mtr) 3) Properly ventilated rooms with sufficient space between the beds. 4) Every bed should have a bell/button for any emergency situation. 5) Ensure the following standards for sleeping space: a) Provides at least 6 sq.mtr of space per resident for single occupancy room b) Provides at least 4 sq.mtr of space per resident for multiple occupancy room/dormitory c) Ensure that there is at least 2m space between walls of the room d) Ensure that there is at least 2.5m space between the floor and ceiling of the room 6) Provides clean mattress, pillow and cover/blanket. 7) Provides gender separation of sleeping facilities. Couple can be accommodated in a single room. 8) Beds should have rails to prevent falling off from beds. 9) Sufficient space for wheel chair movement. 10) Door locks in the single occupancy room shall be avoided.
7)Maintenance	Every senior citizen home will have the schedule of maintenance and SOP of their services. A regime of planned, preventive and corrective maintenance, including cleaning and waste removal, is in place and implemented on an ongoing basis to ensure buildings, facilities and surrounding areas remain in good and hygienic condition.
8) Internet Access	Wi-Fi or land-line router. Ensure that internet connectivity is available for both staff and residents.

C) Human Resource

Human resource is a crucial aspect that directly impacts the quality of care and overall well-being of the residents. Properly trained and compassionate staff contribute significantly to the success of an elderly care facility. By focusing on these considerations, old age homes can establish a supportive and caring environment that enhances the overall quality of life for elderly residents.

1)Caregiver Qualifications	Trained, qualified, and certified caregivers. The facility must ensure the professionalism of caregivers. 1) Shall be qualified as per the industry standards. a) Supervisor shall possess graduate degree. b) All the staff shall possess the required qualifications and skill set 3) Medical check-up of all the staff shall be done before hiring. Police verification must be done by providing Aadhaar card details to nearby police stations.
2) Staff-to-Resident Ratio	1) Ensure that there is no vacancy of the staff. 2) Staff to resident ratio shall be set as per the number of residents.
3) HR policies	Recognition policies shall be there. 1) Recognition mechanism for the staff. 2) Sensitization of the staff shall be done regularly 3) Defined roles and responsibility to the staff.
4) Record keeper	Dedicated staff to maintain and update all kind of records. 1) Records of Personal details of the all the staff. 2) Documents of every resident. a) Personal data (contact, home address, etc.) b) Contact details of family/relatives c) Legal and financial documents 3) Documents pertaining to the Senior Citizen Homes.
5) Others (Supplementary staff)	Dietician, Yoga &Meditation/Spiritual instructors 1) One Yoga/Physiotherapist (offline/online) 2) One dietician (online consultation) 3) Proper equipments
6) Health and Safety of Staff	1) Ensure the health and safety of all staff, volunteers, residents, care- givers and visitors.

	2) An immunisation program is in place consistent with national guidelines. 3) Ensure that staff has access to mask, gloves and sanitiser in case of need.
7) Dress code	Uniforms/badges shall be assigned to every staff. Uniforms can be optional.

D) Health and Medical Services

The health facilities and services contribute to the comprehensive care and well-being of the residents, promoting a supportive and enriching living environment. The facility should provide a range of health facilities and services to meet the unique needs of elderly residents. Here are key components related to health facilities and services.

1) Health Check-ups	Regular health assessments for residents. 1) Weighing machine, BP machine, etc. 2) Check-up at Hospital 3) Consultancy service post check-up
2) Medical Staff	Regular presence of medical professionals for care and emergencies. 1) Nursing staff 2) Doctors specialized in geriatric care 3) First aid box and storage of medicine in Senior Citizen Homes. An information sheet on the box of first aid kit with contents and uses. 4) The staff shall be aware of the use of first aid box and other essential medicines and medical equipments. 5) Medicines and supplies for emergency first aid are easily accessible.
3) Access to Medical Care	Availability of medical professionals and facilities, hospital, ambulance with oxygen support. 1) Oxygen cylinders 2) Contact details of nearby hospital (ambulance or other medical services). 3) List and contact details of blood donors may be maintained.
4)Medication Management	Proper administration and management of medications. 1) Time charts shall be displayed in resident room and supervisor room. 2) Daily monitoring of medication by staff.

	3) A register of medicines to be administered to the residents is maintained with expiry dates of the medicines in stock
5) Medical Reviews	Health condition of the residents of should be reviewed in monthly meetings. 1) Superintendent, Medical expert, resident and family member shall be present. 2) Medical records of the residents shall be maintained at time of admission and thereafter.
6) Isolation Rooms	1) Separate rooms for sick residents. 2) At least 4 bed isolation room shall be made available
7) Mental health	Mental health should be taken into account. 1) Counsellor (online/offline) Elderline/NIMHANS helpline 2) Companion among the staff or residents.
8) Adult Diapers	Adequate number of adult diapers. 1) Quality diapers 2) Know how to use 3) Proper disposal
9) Digital Health	Tele-health/telemedicine. 1) Computer 2) Know how of any device or application
10) Bed Ridden Care	Residents who are bed ridden need special attention. (Even if a facility is not designated to accept bedridden resident, it needs to provide for care of residents who are temporarily bedridden). 1) Necessary aids for bed care are available Trained staff is deputed to look after such residents. 2) Diapers and/or bedpans are provided for elders who are bedridden. 3) Record of bedridden patients. 4) To avoid bed sores, regular turning schedule is implemented for the bedridden elder. A manual clock for turning should be maintained. 5) Humaneness of treatment shall be ensured.
11)Information Dissemination	Protocols shall be established to inform family/relatives in case of emergency. 1) Has a documented protocol for informing the family member in case of health emergencies.

E) Nutritional Care/Kitchen

The facility should provide residents with meals that support their health and well-being while creating a positive dining experience. Regular communication

with residents, healthcare professionals, and kitchen staff is essential for maintaining a high standard of nutritional care. Here are key considerations for nutritional care and the kitchen environment.

1)Nutritious Meals	Balanced and tailored meals considering dietary needs. 1) Medical conditions to be taken account 2) Consulting dietician if required
2)Food Hygiene	Hygienic preparation, serving, and storage of food. 1) Proper washing of utensils. 2) Thoroughly cook foods 3) Correct food storage (place and temp.) 4) Kitchen should be kept clean, ventilated, hygienic and free of pests & rodents. 5) Appropriate utensils for preparing and serving food are available
3)Special Dietary Needs	Accommodation of special dietary requirements
4)Food Menu	Food menu should be diverse. 1) Locally available nutritious food 2) Everyday different Menu should be displayed
5)Kitchen facility	Safety and mobility 1) Gas leak detection mechanism 2) Easy wheelchair movement 3) Worktops, sinks and cooking area at same height 4) Refrigerator is compulsory for storage of dairy products. 5) Cleaning products should not be stored nearby food/utensils storage. 6) Food shall be prepared, handled, stored, and distributed safely. 7) Height of wash basins should be appropriate. 8) Ensure zero wastage of food. In case of food waste, it may be turned into compost. 9) Willing senior citizens shall be allowed in the kitchen for cooking.

F) Cleanliness and Hygiene

Maintaining health hygiene is crucial to ensure the well-being of residents and prevent the spread of infections. Regular assessments, feedback from residents

and staff, and continuous improvement in hygiene protocols contribute to creating a safe and healthy environment. Complying with local health regulations and guidelines is essential to ensure the highest standards of health hygiene.

1)Sanitation Practices	Regular cleaning and sanitation of living and common areas. 1) Promoting WASH practices 2) Adequate toilets for different genders 3) Toilets should be cleaned thrice a day. A written time schedule for cleaning is available and followed. 4) Register of cleanliness checks
2) Waste Disposal	Proper methods for waste disposal. 1) Segregation of wastes shall be practiced. 2) Sanitary landfills should be mapped. 3) Dustbins should be placed in toilets, bathrooms and at appropriate places.
3) Infection Control	Hygiene protocols to prevent infections. Personal protective equipment
4) Water supply	Safe drinking water 24*7. 1) Alternate sources of water 2) Natural/local and scientific methods of water purification.
5) Inspection of Hygiene Management	1) Individual hygiene 2) Institutional hygiene 3) Environmental hygiene
6) Washing Materials	Soap, Powder, Brush, etc. 1) Adequate supply of the bathing materials should be provided to every resident. 2) Mugs/buckets should be of material and size which can be easily used by the residents. 3) Arrangements for washing and drying clothes shall be made.
7) Washrooms	Should be safe and secure. 1) Anti slippery tiles 2) Wash basin at appropriate height with rails. 3) Outward door opening 4) Wheelchair moving area 5) Emergency bells 6) Availability of hot and cold water must be ensured.

G) Safety and Security

Ensuring the safety and security of residents in the facility is paramount. Regular reviews and updates to safety and security protocols, along with ongoing staff training, are crucial to maintaining a secure and supportive environment for elderly residents.

1)Security Measures	Comprehensive security protocols to ensure safety. 1) Adequate security staff 2) Well trained with safety equipments
2)Emergency Procedures	Well-defined procedures for handling emergencies. 1) Well prepared Contingency plans 2) Awareness among residents and staff 3) Emergency lights on all critical locations 4) Emergency exit and evacuation plan prominently displayed in the local language at relevant locations.
3)Surveillance Systems	Monitoring of common areas and premises for security. 1) Surveillance cameras and critical event recording is available for review for at least 365 days. 2) Door locks 3) Sensors and detectors if required
4) Fire Safety	Fire fighting tools and training. 1)Training/Drilling 2) Protective gears 3) Fire safety committee 4) Contact of nearby fire station. 4) Emergency Communication 5) Sand buckets/Fire extinguisher at prominent places. 6) Fire Safety Certificate from local fire fighting office or the local council / Municipal Corporation or approving authority. 7) Fire safety audit
6) Prevention from Abuse	Safety protocols should be in place to prevent abuse of the senior citizens in any form. 1) Has an appointed committee, with at least one external member, to address any issues of abuse; contact numbers, email ids for complaints are displayed and provided to the residents and their family members through facility information booklet. 2) District Welfare Officer shall be the nodal officer

H) Recreational and Social Activities within the vicinity and arrangements to be made

Recreational and social activities play a vital role in enhancing the quality of life by providing entertainment but also contribute to physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Regularly evaluate and adapt the activity program to meet the changing needs and interests of the residents. Here are various recreational and social activities that can be implemented in old age homes.

1)Activity Variety	Diverse range of engaging activities for residents. 1) Books/newspaper 2) Physical activities 3) Memorising activities 4) TV, Radio, etc. 5) ADLs (Activities for Daily Living) like gardening, singing, etc.
2)Social Interaction	Opportunities to increase social engagement and community involvement for intergenerational bonding. 1) Talks forum- online/offline 2) Debates 3) Institutions engagement (school/college)
3)Cognitive Impairment Activities	Tailored activities for residents with cognitive issues. 1) Music/Art/Colour/Spiritual therapy 2) Pet therapy 3) Puzzle games 4) Cognitive apps
4)Vocational	Skilling and re-skilling. 1) Cooking 2) Gardening 3) Computer 4) Any others skills as per demand

I) Emotional and Psychological Support

The aging process often comes with various challenges, including loss of friends or family members, physical health issues, and adapting to a new living environment. Creating a supportive and enriching environment that involves a comprehensive approach that considers the emotional and psychological needs

of residents. Regular communication, meaningful activities, and professional support contribute to a positive living experience for elderly individuals.

1)Counselling Services	Access to counselling for emotional and psychological support. 1) Need assessment 2) Counselling programs (Helpline numbers) 3) Family/friends involvement
2) Support Groups	Support groups for residents dealing with common issues
3)Mental Well-being Programs	Proper facilities for promoting mental and emotional well-being 1) Talks/thoughts sharing forums 2) Help them to build network 3) Psychiatrist shall be made available when required 4) Spiritual programs

J) Resident Rights and Dignity

Respecting the rights and dignity of residents is essential for providing quality care and maintaining their well-being. The facility should develop and adhere to policies that explicitly outline residents' rights and ensure that staff members are trained to uphold these rights. Regular communication with residents and their families is key to maintaining a supportive and respectful environment.

1)Autonomy and Privacy	Respect for residents' privacy and autonomy should be ensured. 1)Knocking before entering their room 2) Being more trustworthy about their decision making 3) Participation in decision making shall be ensured and encouraged. 4) Last rites of the resident shall be done as per their wish. (Cultural/Religious rituals.)
2)Data Privacy	Protecting sensitive information from damage or loss. 1) All the data must be stored safely 2) Necessary restrictions should be imposed as per the law to access such data.

	3) Cyber protective measures should be in place
3)Protection against Abuse	Policies against abuse, neglect, and discrimination should be in place. 1) Proper rules shall be made in consulting all stakeholders 2) 2-3 Assigned individuals to address the complaints 3) Awareness about the abuse and rules
4) Information Dissemination	Informed about rights and welfare programs through- 1) Monthly meetings 2) Important decisions should be displayed on notice boards. 3) Handbooks/Flyers shall be provided to every resident and their family member at time of the admission. 4) Displays the charter of residents' rights prominently and provided to the residents at time of admission. 5) Do's and Don'ts for the residents should be communicated to them at the time of their admission. 6) Death certificate must be provided to the Family/Relative of the deceased resident. The dignity and respect to the deceased must be ensured.

K) Family and Community Involvement

Family and community involvement are crucial aspects of ensuring the well-being and happiness of the residents. By actively involving families and the broader community, the facility can create a supportive and enriching environment for residents. Building strong relationships with families helps enhance the overall quality of life and contributes to a sense of community within the facility.

1) Family Engagement	Encouragement of family visits and involvement. Day, time, and space must be allocated and informed to residents and their family/friends
2) Community Collaboration	1) Partnerships with local organizations and volunteers, educational institutions/orphanage, etc. 2) Collaborating with such institutions will help in intergenerational bonding, medical care, etc. 3) Visits to community events.
3) Communication Channels	Open feedback and communication channels for concerns. 1)Visitor book

	2) Feedbacks can be implemented. Non acceptance may accompany an explanation.

L) Sensitivity and Diversity

Sensitivity and diversity in old age homes are crucial considerations to ensure that the needs and preferences of elderly residents are respected and met. Here are some key aspects to consider. By incorporating these considerations, old age homes can create a more sensitive and diverse environment that promotes the well-being and quality of life for all residents.

1) Cultural Accommodation	Consideration of residents' diverse cultural backgrounds. 1) Training for all staff/volunteers 2) Non-Discrimination Policies 3)Diverse Recruitment and Hiring
2) Inclusive Practices	Practices that respect residents' diversity. 1) Friendly homes 2) Age-Appropriate Activities 3) Family-friendly events 4)Culturally diverse food

M) Financial Transparency

Financial transparency is essential to build trust among residents, their families, staff, and the broader community. Open and clear communication about financial matters helps ensure accountability and allows stakeholders to understand how funds are managed and allocated. By implementing these practices, old age homes can promote financial transparency, build trust with stakeholders, and demonstrate a commitment to responsible financial management.

1) Fee Transparency	Clear fee structures and billing practices. 1) Guidelines on budgeting, finance approval, and procurement. 2) Whistleblower Policy for encouragement and protection of the whistleblower. 3) Financial Auditing

	4) Provides clear terms and conditions detailing services provided and cost to residents and their families which are documented in an agreement/ form.
2) Financial Reporting	Transparent financial reporting and accountability. 1) Regular Data Entry 2) Timely reporting 3) Awareness among the staff about NGOs financial policies and procedures. 4) Files information annually as statutorily required
3)Bank Account	Single dedicated bank account. 1) All the donation/grants by government/non-government agencies shall be credited to a single bank account. Multiple accounts not permissible.

N) Environmental Considerations

By addressing these environmental considerations, the facility can create a supportive and comfortable living environment for elderly residents, enhancing their quality of life.

1)Sustainability Practices	Eco-friendly and sustainable operational practices. 1) Reduction of plastic usage 2) Green Energy (solar/wind/biogas, etc.) 3) Plantation (native plants) 4) Reducing/Recycling
2) Access to Outdoor Spaces	Availability of outdoor areas and gardens. 1) Safe and accessible outdoor spaces shall be made available. 2) Two helping staff must be there during outing time

O) Governance

The governance involves the establishment and implementation of policies, procedures, and organizational structures to ensure the effective and ethical management of the facility. Effective governance is crucial for ensuring the long-term sustainability and success. Regular assessments, stakeholder engagement, and a commitment to continuous improvement contribute to the overall effectiveness of the governance structure.

1)Quality Assessment and Improvement- Audits and Assessments	Regular evaluations to ensure compliance with standards. 1) Compliance in Building code, all kind of audits (fire, finance, social, etc.) shall be complied and submitted. 2) Food safety inspection
2) Continuous Improvement	Mechanisms to address feedback and improve services. Resident Satisfaction Surveys
3) Movement register	A movement register shall be maintained containing all the details of all the residents when they are on move.
4) Complaint Redressal	Must maintain records of action taken and timelines