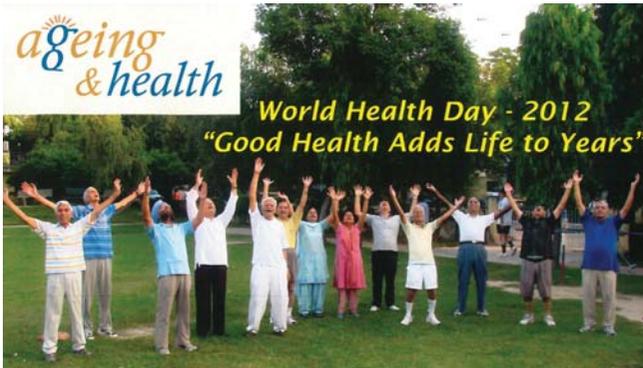


Editorial



Good Health Adds Life to Years

World Health Day (WHD) is celebrated every year on 7 April to mark the anniversary of World Health Organization (WHO) founded in 1948. World Health Day is a global campaign, inviting everyone – from global leaders to the public in all the countries- to focus on a single health challenge with global impact. The topic of World Health Day in 2012 is “Ageing and Health” with the theme “Good Health Adds Life to Years”. The focus is on how good health throughout life can help older men and women to lead full and productive lives and be an invaluable resource for their families & communities.

Ageing is a lifelong, inevitable universal phenomenon, common to all communities, nations & sexes. The number of people today aged 60 & over has doubled since 1980. People aged 80 years will almost quadruple to 395 million between now and 2050. Within the next five years, the number of adults aged 65 and over will outnumber children under the age of 5. By 2050, these older adults will outnumber all children under the age of 14. Now the majority of older people live in low- or middle-income countries which will be increased by 80% by 2050.

The 2001 census counts the proportion of Indian population above the age of 60 years as 77 million, which constitutes about 7.4% of the entire population. It is estimated that by 2051 the population of 60 plus is expected to reach over 300 million, translating to 17% of the total population. This increases the burden of chronic illness and ailments specific to these twilight years tending to bring down the quality of life. Population ageing will hamper the achievement of socioeconomic and human development goals, if it is not taken today.

Good health in older age can be achieved by promoting health across the life –course, creating age-friendly environments that foster the health and participation of older people, providing access to basic primary health care, long-term care & palliative care, acknowledging the value of older people and helping them to participate fully in family and community life.

The challenge for India as for all countries over the world is not just to add further years to life but to add “Life to Years”. To enable the elderly to live full enriching and productive lives, they need to remain connected to the world around them, staying amongst and in harmony with their beloved one’s and others of all ages in their communities. Let us join hands to promote a society in which the elderly are respected and treasured, stay connected to their families and their communities and live full and productive lives.

The biggest challenge of this hour for the physiatrist, more precisely for the young budding energetic rehabilitation physician of India is to play a pivotal role for the programme. They must be well equipped with proper training in clinical skills and acumen in managing these generations for better living and to re-able them as a resource of country rather than a liability.

Hence the need of this 21st century rehabilitation world is to engage more & more Physiatrist in the field of geriatric rehabilitation, to create a rehabilitation care system for the elderly. If we can expertise at optimum level in geriatric medicine then only we can really ‘Add Life to Years not Years to Life’.

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