


Chapter 6

Health Workforce Preparedness for Geriatric Care

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ABSTRACT

India's life expectancy at birth (measured in years) increased from 62.1 in 2000 to 70.8 in 2019, an improvement of 8.68 years. India is currently undergoing a rapid demographic and epidemiological transition, with these processes occurring simultaneously. Population ageing is a major global trend impacting sustainable development. The percentage of Indians 60 and older is expected to rise from 7.5% in 2010 to 11.1% in 2025, according to projections made by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) in 2008. The primary challenge in geriatric care involves not only the inevitable physiological changes that come with aging but also the unique medical issues and diseases that often affect older individuals, requiring medical intervention to ensure a comfortable and healthy aging process. This chapter will highlight issues related to geriatric care and understand the health workforce preparedness for the geriatric care. Additionally, various approaches will be discussed to build the capacity of the health workforce.

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INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has established a concept of healthy ageing. It is the process of growing and sustaining functional capacity, which allows for wellbeing in old age. Functional ability refers to the abilities that allow people to be and accomplish what they value. It is referred to as the ability to meet their basic needs, to learn, grow and make decisions, to be mobile, to build and maintain relationships, and to contribute to society (Rudnicka et al., 2020).

Elders Classification According to Age: The older adult population can be categorized into three life-stage subgroups based on age: those in the ages of **65 and 74** years are considered young old, those in ages of **75 and 84** years are middle aged-old, those **over 85** years as old (Little & Little, 2014).

IMPORTANCE OF GERIATRIC CARE

Geriatric care is critical for meeting the demands of the ageing population. As people age, they frequently require specialised care and help to maintain their health and well-being. This section will look at geriatric care and how it may help older persons improve their quality of life.

Providing Specialized Care and Support

Geriatric care is committed to satisfying the unique and complicated requirements of older persons by providing specialised medical attention, preventative care, and support services tailored exclusively to elders. This approach recognises the physical, cognitive, and emotional changes that occur with ageing, ensuring that aged people receive adequate care and support. Geriatric care professionals, such as physicians, nurses, and carers, are specially trained to recognise the unique issues that older persons encounter. They have the knowledge to treat chronic illnesses, monitor prescription regimens, and promote healthy ageing. Geriatric care allows elders to keep their independence while also improving their overall quality of life.

Enhancing the Quality of Life for Seniors

Geriatric care is vital in improving the quality of life for seniors. It addresses not just medical needs but also promotes social interaction, emotional health, and mental stimulation. Through thorough assessments and tailored care plans, geriatric care professionals strive to enhance the overall well-being of older adults. This specialized care ensures that seniors receive the right medical treatments, therapies,

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