

CHAPTER X

INSTITUTIONAL LIVING ARRANGEMENTS: OLD AGE HOMES IN PUNE

Introduction

Development of institutionalized care for the handicapped, infirm and aged persons in India has a long history. The first old age home in Pune was started on 8 February, 1864. Today such services are provided mainly by non-governmental agencies, particularly religious charitable organizations. The Central and State governments still play only a negligible role in providing care to the deprived sections of the society. According to the present study, there are about 5 per cent elderly living alone and 14 per cent elderly living only with spouse. These elderly are educated and financially independent as they can rely on retirement benefit as well as pension. However, the living arrangements like living with children in a family is a cheaper option for providing care and support to the elderly which policy-makers would like to promote. But the concept of 'living together but apart' is catching rapidly and as a result, families are dissolving. In this situation in the future, the elderly will need institutionalized services and support.

The aim of this chapter is to assess the existing old age homes in Pune. It has two sections. The first section is regarding the profile of old age homes in Pune and the second deals with the case studies of old age homes which provides care to the elderly. Following are three case studies of homes which provide professional services to the elderly. *Athashri* is for the elderly who afford professional services, *Janseva Ambi* is an old age home providing services to the destitute as well as the elderly from well to do family. *Niwara* is the oldest - old age home in Pune.

According to the survey conducted by Madras Institute of Ageing, there were 529 old age homes in India in 1995 (Nair, 1995). HelpAge India has reported that there were 700 old age homes in 1998. India had only 96 old age homes before 1950, and another 94 homes were added in the next two decades (1951-70). During next two decades, there was a rapid expansion in the number of old age homes in the country. In 1995, Maharashtra had 65 old age homes (HelpAge India, 1998).

The profile of old age homes in Pune

Sl.No.	Name of old age home	Address of old age home	Number of inmates	Deposits/ Donation (Rs.)	Monthly rent (Rs.)	Admission to whom	Availability of facilities and services ⁶⁸
1	Aai Adhar Kendra	Gute Nursing Home, Sinhgad Road, Kirkitwadi, Pune-411024	20	Not fixed	Not fixed	Ill elderly	Doctor
2	Aadhar Sevavradi	Om 60, Green Town Society, Sukhsagarnagar, Bibwewadi, Pune-411046	12	9000	3000	Elderly should be able to do all activities by self	Doctor available
3	Agrasen	E-52, Poular prestige, 141 Varje Chowk, Mumbai-Banglore Highway, Pune-411058	18	15000	1000	-Elderly should be able to do all activities by self -Fitness certificate	Doctor after every 10 days
4	Anjali Hosital and Day Care Centre	12, Tadiwala Road, Ladkatwadi Nagar, Pune-411001	10	15000	1000	Mental illness and ill elderly	Doctor
5	Apala Ghar	Donje, Singhgad, Siddhanath forest Ashram, Pune	10	Nil	Nil	Physically and mentally fit	Doctor
6	Apualki	Singhagad, PMT last bus stop, Tal. Hevali, Pune	15	Nil	4000	Able to do self work	Doctor
7	Arpan	Near Sanas High School, Manas Riddhi-Siddhi Society, Vadgaon Dhyari, Pune 411041	30	10000	4000	Bedridden elderly	Doctor
8	Arpan	Near Nawale Hosital, Manaji nagar, Narhe, Tal. Haveli, Pune	100	10000	4000	Bedridden elderly	Doctor
9	Cipla Palliative Care	SN 118/1, Warje National Highway No 4, Pune 411058	50	Nil	Nil	Only cancer patients and training to relatives	Doctor
10	David Sassoon Infirm Asilayam-Niwara	96, New Sadashiv peth, Pune 411030	Both	Nil	Nil	Elderly having no one to look after	Doctor
11	Even Tide Home	1A, Nepear Road, Solapur Bazar, Near police station, Pune 411011	12	10000	1500	Elderly	Doctor
12	Ishprem Niketan	972, Nanapeth, Padmaji park, Pune 411002	50	Donation	Nil	Children and elderly living alone or separated	Doctor
13	Janseva Foundation Rehabilitation centre	Bhilwadi, Taluka Hevali, Pune 411041	100	Nil	Nil	Elderly having no one to look after	Doctor
14	Janseva Foundation Old Age Home	Ambi, Near Panshet, Pune	150	Donation 10000	1500	Age 65-85 and bedridden patients	Doctor
15	Jevanashray	Namdoshi, Taluka Hevali, Pune 411024	200	Nil	3000-4000	Only bedridden patients	Doctor

Table 10.1 continue: The profile of old age homes in Pune.									
Sr.No.	Name of old age home	Address of old age home	Number of inmates	Deposits / Donation (Rs.)	Monthly rent (Rs.)	Admission to whom	Availability of facilities and services*		
16	Jivahala	19/6, Garmal, Rayker Nagar, Dhayari, Pune 411041	34	20000	4000-8000	No age condition, any person	Doctor		
17	Kamalakant Bhise Vishramalay	Satyakamal colony, Chakan Road, Talegaon Dabhade, Pune 410507	20	10000-50000	2500	Only age between 55-60	Doctor		
18	Krushnantar Prabhu Care Centre	77, Laxminagar, Near police chowki, Next to bus stop, Parvati, Pune 411009	40	5000	3000-4000	Only bedridden	Doctor		
19	Maharshi Karve Shree Shiksha Sansthan	Karvenagar, Pune 411052	58	Donation	Nil	Age 60-70	Doctor checkup on Saturday		
20	Matoshri	Near Rajaram Bridge, Pune 411052	100	Nil	500-1000	Elderly	2 Allopath, 1 Homeopath		
21	Missionaries of Charity	13, Tadiwala Road, Pune 411001	120	Nil	Nil	Serious illness and homeless	Doctor		
22	Olava	Near Amureteshwar mandir, Shinghad Road, Near Donje Village, Pune 411042	30	Nil	3500-5000	Age 55-60 bedridden patients only	Doctor		
23	Pitashree	Dagadusheth Halwai Ganapati Mandal, Bhagyodaya Nagar, Kondhwa Khurd, Pune 411048	100	Nil	Nil	Age 60 years and above	Doctor		
24	Pune Mahilamandal Matrukul	17, Parvati payatha, Pune 411009	25	12000	2200	Age 55 and above	Doctor		
25	Sahajivan Ashram	Plot 13, Girinagar society, Dhankawadi, Pune 411043	13	10000	3000	Age above 60 and only bedridden patients	Doctor		
26	Sandhya	410/11, Nana peth, Pune 411002	30	Nil	400-2000	Age 60 and above	Doctor		
27	Sankalp Sevadham	Singhad Road, Gohre Bd, Pune 411042	30	Nil	3000-6000	Age 60 above and any age patients with mental disorder	Doctor		
28	Sarthak	Donje, Golewadi, Singhad Road, Hewali, Pune	30	Nil	3000	Age 50 years and above and no one to look after	Doctor		
29	Savali	32, Mhaskehans Colony, Near Atum plaster, Talegaon Dabhade, Tal. Maval, Pune 410506	27	10000	2500	Age 55 and above, should be able to do work self	Doctor		
30	Sevadham	Near Songhad Road, Tal. Hevali, Pune 411030	20	10000	2500	Age 55 and above, should be able to do work self	Doctor		

Sr.No.	Name of old age home	Address of old age home	Number of Inmates	Deposits / Donation (Rs.)	Monthly rent (Rs.)	Admission to whom	Availability of facilities and services*
31	Bhavan Old Age Home	Vidyanagar, Parvati, Pune 411009	41	40000	4000	Age 60 and above, should be able to do work self	Doctor
32	Shavaganga	Plot no 53, First floor, Balaji Shelter, Pune 411040	22	10000	4000	Age 60 and above, needy and bedridden elderly	Doctor once in a week
33	Shirdi Saibaba Old Age Home for Blind Women	Poona Blind Men's Association, sector 135, Dhayari Gaon, Khadakwasala Road, Pune 411041	100	Nil	Nil	Age 50 years and above, blind, having no one to look after	Twice a week
34	Society of St Merry Virgin in India	808, Gurvar peth, Panch Houad, Pune 411042	40	Nil	800	Age 60 years, needy, widow and separated	Doctor
35	Spandan Care Centre	SN 41, D, Lalita Niwas, Behind pragati Hostel, Jadhav Nagar, Pune 411041	34	7000	4000-7000	No age condition, ill and bedridden person	Doctor
36	St Walburgas Home	Near Puigate bus stop, Solapur Road, Pune 411001	35	Nil	After enquiry	Age 60 and above, physically fit	Doctor
37	Tapodham Ashram	Tapodham, Warje, Pune 411052	20	Nil	2500	Only middle class elderly	Doctor
38	Umed Care Centre	SN10/11, Sukhasagar Nagar no 1, Pune	30	5000	6000	Age 60 and above , only bedridden patients	Doctor
39	Unique Care Centre	Bhanulaxmi Vilas, Singhgad Road, Near Trimurti hospital, Pune 411041	25	7000	4000-5000	No age condition, only bedridden person	Doctor
40	Vanprashtha Ashram	Plot no 20A, Tapodham Vasahat, Talegaon Station, Tal. Maval, Pune	35	Donation 10000	3000	No age condition, only bedridden person	Doctor weekly ones
41	Mahervat	Dhyari gaon, Pune 411041	45	Donation 10000	5000	Age 50 and above, ill elderly	Doctor on call

Source: ILC-1, Janseva Foundation.

Note: All these old age homes are for both the genders, * Most of them are managed privately by NGOs.

Case 1: Niwara Old Age Home

Niwara is a self- sustained trust which is managed by the society. Niwara as a family is committed to support all inmates for basic needs throughout their life.

Historical beginning

Change of stages in life is unavoidable. Thought emerged in the minds of some social reformers decided to establish an asylum for handicapped and leprosy affected persons, to support them by providing shelter and basic needs. They the City approached authorities for piece of land. Mr. W. Wart, the then Commissioner of Revenue, Southern Division (At Camp Solapur dist), on 8, February 1864, allotted a portion of land situated at Thosar Paga near Mutha river bank at Pune for “Pune Infirm Asylum”. Sir David Sasoon generously donated an amount of Rs 50,000/-. In recognition of this September on 22 Sep 1864, “Pune Infirm Asylum” was renamed as “David Sasoon Infirm Asylum”. The “Foundation Stone” was laid by the Hon. Governor. That time His Highness Maharaja Sindiya of Gwalior visited the Asylum and extended it whole hearted support. From 1870 to 1940, the District Collector was the President of the Asylum. On August, 1863 a meeting was held at Sardar Kibe’s residence to formalize modalities for fund generation. From 1870 till 1903, efforts were made to generate financial resources. During 1941-42, the Government took the decision that the District Collector be relieved from social responsibilities. Order No 3942/33, was issued to this effect dated August, 1940. Thereafter on 16 January 1942, Shrimant Raje Malojirao Nanasaheb Naik Nimbalkar of Phaltan became the first Indian President. It is needless to mention that the office bearers were honorary (Niwara, *Annual Report, 2014*).

Sardar Raste, Sardar Kibe, Sardar Natu and Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade were deeply involved in the foundation of this home. In the past, all the renowned activists and leading personalities were associated with it including Jyotiba Phule, Dorabaji Padamaji, Babaji Balkrishna Gokhale and Ramkrishna Gopal, to name a few. The Chairman and Executive Secretary look after its day to day functioning. A team of volunteers supports the asylum round the clock. All of them render their honorary service.

In April 1989, the Asylum came forward to shoulder the responsibility of attending daily needs of patients who are bed-ridden and cannot be looked after by the families. It emphasises providing simple but proper diet to the patients. The staffs are trained to take care of patients considering their health. Doctors and nursing staff are available on daily basis (*Niwara Annual Report, 2014*).

Facilities and services provided by Niwara

Physiotherapy: Niwara felt that it is necessary to create facility for one of the major needs of old persons whether inmates or outsiders. Physiotherapy is the main requirement. In the centre a full-fledged Physiotherapy treatment facility is available throughout the day at a nominal rate.

Samaj Mandir and Gymnasium: Samaj Mandir was constructed and dedicated to the society. Samaj Mandir is developed to establish interactive relations with other social groups and NGOs to create awareness in the society for overall support. Samaj Mandir is now converted in full fledged up to date Gymnasium.

Community Hall: Community hall is constructed to accommodate 300 personnel. Many social programmes are held in this hall for education, entertainment and public meetings for all the citizens. Niwara's community hall has become the centre to carry out important social activities by NGOs (Swadhar, Snehseva, and Sanvedana).

Case 2: Janaseva Foundation: Rural old age home

Background

Janaseva Foundation as registered charitable institution was founded in 1988 and is dedicated service to the people. Over the last 25 years the Foundation has made great strides with a range of health care activities, e.g., a rural hospital, mobile medical units, three old age homes, day care centre for senior citizens, century club, three physiotherapy centres, destitute rehabilitation centre, nursing school, research centre, rural hub and sanitation programme in 22 villages. Its beneficiaries are elderly, sick, disabled, destitute, women, divorcees and poor youth. The Foundation does not discriminate on the basis of religion, caste, sex, ethnicity and region. Foundation honours the dignity of each

individual and its complex is a special place where all can enjoy peace and joy. The UN has accredited Janaseva Foundation for its programme on ageing. It is also an accredited member of UN which is working for ageing and human rights of the older persons.

The Janseva Foundation was registered under the Bombay Public Trust Act, 1950 and has been working since January 15th, 1988. It celebrated its Silver Jubilee in 2013. This complex is built on five acres of land. It is located some 45 kms away from the city of Pune in a scenic, pollution-free area of Ambi Ranwadi (Panshet). Its vision is to be a role model while doing humanitarian work, to help needy people and rehabilitate them, to make them a physically and socio-economically healthy section of the society and let them happy life. Its mission is “to promote efficient and effective, healthy ageing to elderly, rural population and to create activities for the welfare of the disadvantaged elderly, destitute and disabled, young unemployed and reach maximum number of needy, rehabilitate them and provide employment opportunities”. The main objective is to help all the needy sections of the society without any discrimination on the basis of religion, caste, creed, language, gender, race, etc.

The organization has been active in the field of ageing, rehabilitation, destitute care and rural health services in Haveli and Velha Talukas serving nearby 70 villages. Its base institution are a rural hospital and a nursing school and offers primary and secondary health care, rehabilitation, sight restoration and other essential services. It has constructed a rural hub for elderly care and health education in rural areas.

The old age homes at Ambi include:

- Late Haribhai V. Desai Old age Home (built-up area 3760 sq.ft.)
- Shri Rasiklal Manikchand Dhariwal Old age Home (built-up area 4834 sq.ft)
- Mrs. Icharjbai Chunnilal Khivansara Old age Home (built-up area 2190 sq.ft.)

Urbanization has affected the elderly from both poor and well to do families. Initially the Foundation reserved a few rooms for the elderly in the hired Sonapur Hospital and started the old age home in it where 30 elderly could be accommodated. Later on, after the formation of Janaseva Foundation, Late Shri. Haribhai V. Desai Old Age Home was constructed with the help of a generous donation by Shri Nitinbhai Desai. About 50 elderly can be accommodated here. The Foundation has built 16 special rooms as extension of Desai Old Age Home with the help of a generous donation by Shri

Nitinbhai Desai. However, later even this was found to be insufficient to accommodate ever rising influx of the elderly. Therefore, a second old age home was constructed with the donation received from Shri Rasiklal Manikchand Dhariwal and Mrs. Shobha Dhariwal. Hence, it is named Shri Rasiklal Manikchand Dhariwal Old Age Home. It can accommodate about 50 elderly. With the donation received from Khivansara family, Smt. Icharajbai Chunnilal Khivansara Old Age Home came into existence for 20 senior citizens who can pay money.

Approximately 210 elderly from the poor, middle class and affluent families live happily here. Of them, 150 elderly live totally free while others pay as per their capacity. Personal attention, 24-hour healthcare, friendly atmosphere, and nutritious and tasty food are some of the features of these old age homes. Approximately 20 to 25 mentally challenged persons have been given admission here along with 40 to 50 physically disabled elderly. As the old age home and rural hospital, nursing school and ward boy aaya training school are in the same campus, the elderly get round the clock health care. The number of elderly persons who were enrolled in these old age homes during the year 2013-14 is as follows:

Month	Males	Females	Total
April, 13	68	72	140
May, 13	71	76	147
June, 13	74	79	153
July, 13	70	88	158
August, 13	65	84	149
Sep. 13	67	87	154
October, 13	66	85	151
Nov. 13	66	85	151
Dec, 13	67	81	148
Jan, 14	67	78	145
Feb. 14	68	77	145
March, 14	69	80	149
Total	818	972	1790

The Foundation has also constructed the luxurious old age home having all the modern amenities for the parents of NRIs and for the elderly who are financially sound and need luxurious rooms. The payment received from the inmates would be utilized to support 100 elderly living free in the Foundation's other old age homes. This old age home has 15 double occupancy rooms for couples. Each room contains refrigerator, TV set, microwave oven, computer and internet apart from the kitchen. Daily newspapers are

delivered in each room and if required a care-taker is provided. There is a common hall / kitchen where vegetarian food is served or it can be delivered in the room. The beneficiary has to pay one time donation and monthly charges towards, accommodation, food, etc.

Facility and Services

Foundation serves in 70 remote and rural villages having a population of 50,000. These villages have poor transport facility and almost no health care facilities. They are about 45 to 75 kms away from Pune. The Foundation's hospital is the nearest healthcare facility for these poor villagers, mostly elderly and disabled. It is a 50-bed hospital with the Operation Theatre. It is equipped with necessary equipment, medical officer, nurses and other essential staff. Needy patients are treated free or on very nominal charges. Many handicapped senior citizens are admitted in the 'paralytic wing of the rural hospital. Recently it has started homeopathic consultancy for senior citizens. The Foundation runs a mobile medical unit covering most of Velha Taluka. The unit goes to the villages daily and provides services to the old people, mainly senior citizens. Blood pressure, sugar, urine, ECG, BMD and general check-up of the old people is done. The Foundation also conducts health check up camps, eye check up camps, cataract surgeries and physiotherapy entirely free of cost. The old people get such services at their door step. The old patients who require long-term treatment are brought to the rural hospital, Ambi and few of them from many villages stay in the old age home.

Taking into account the special need of the disabled and the elderly for physiotherapy, the Foundation has made this service available at its rural hospital, Ambi, day care centre, Aundh Road and at Erandwane with the help of Lions Club of Pune, Aundh and Pashan, PMC and Village Development Council of England. The Foundation has appointed a trained physiotherapist at these centres. Yoga and meditation are also taught in these homes.

Rural Hub: The Foundation has rural hub for the elderly. It consists of a big hall having audio video equipments for lectures and presentations. There is also a library for them. The Foundation conducts free lectures for them on various topics. It serves as a meeting place for elderly and for arranging informative lectures on various issues concerning not only for the residents of the old age homes at Ambi, but also for the

elderly of nearby villages. Festivals, yoga classes, cultural and musical programmes, bhajans, etc, are conducted regularly. Conferences and seminars are also arranged on various topics.

Century Club: The Foundation has started the novel activity of “Century Club” for the senior citizens aged 85 to 100 years. It was inaugurated on Friday, January 1, 2010 at Nivara Old Age Home, Pune. Every month this Club has a meeting and entertainment programmes, and educational lectures are arranged. On the 1st day of every month there is meeting of members of the Club in the auditorium of Niwara Old Age Home, Pune, from 4.30 to 6.30. Besides the regular meeting, various programmes are arranged. Since senior citizens from far-away places find it hard to come to this club, the Foundation decided to open several such clubs in various parts of the city. Another Century Club was started at Kothrud, Pune on Januray 2014, and the third at Sahakar nagar on March 2014.

Senior Citizen Forum: The Foundation started a Senior Citizens Forum for those elderly who wish to utilize their skill or do some social work or establish contact with people of the same age group. So far 1000 elderly have registered their names. They are informed about the forthcoming programmes, e.g., Meet the Stalwarts, Anand Melava, lectures arranged on issues of elderly at Rural Hub and Century Club, etc. The Foundation has a news bulletin, entitled *Ageing and Longevity* which is distributed monthly to all the members.

Day Care Centre

In 2000, the Foundation started a Day Care Centre at Shewale Hospital Premises at Aundh. This Centre is run by the Foundation in the place provided by Pune Municipal Corporation and with the monetary help of Lions Club of Pune, and contribution by members. About 200 elderly live in the Day Care Centre.

The day begins with devotional programmes, yoga, meditation and morning walk. News papers, magazines and books are available for reading. There is a computer literacy class and physiotherapy. TV sets, DVD players and indoor games, e.g., carom, chess, T.T., etc. are available. Outdoor sports like badminton, tennis, etc., are also played by the inmates. Birthdays of the members are celebrated. Lectures on various topics for the

elderly are arranged. A Mobile Van is available in the Centre. Elderly members arrange picnics and visit places. Some members think that spending time in this Centre is enjoying life, playing games, laughing with other members as friends, etc (Janseva Foundation, *Annual Report, 2014*).

Case 3: ‘Athashri’ – Auspicious beginning

Background

Athashri Foundation was established to enhance the beginning of a movement for the elderly, assisting them in need and making their life joyful and comfortable. The Foundation believes that “holistic approach should be applied while providing services to elderly”. ‘Paranjape Scheme’ - a known name in the construction industry – was launched the idea of constructing apartments for the elderly. It has built-up an assisted-living complex in Pune called “Athashri”. It has been acknowledged with the ISO 9001:2000 certification for maintenance; making the Paranjape Schemes the first construction company in India to receive such an honour. Athashri’s main objective is to create a stress-free world for the elderly by looking after their every need. The first such complex was developed in 1990 and now six Athashri projects have been successfully completed in Pune. The only condition for buying the apartment in this complex is that the person should be elderly. About 1500 elderly are residing in these complexes. They can sale the flat, if required, to the elderly persons only. In April 2005, a similar assisted living complex was started at Whitefield, Bengaluru having 250 apartments.

This residential society is with a difference. It is only for senior citizens who require assistance in their day-to-day chores. But it is way different from an old age home or a hospital. Athashri is for those elderly who can stay independently. The design of each apartment is elderly-friendly. Enough sunlight is there in all rooms. In every flat there are panic switches, skid-free tiles, railing on stairs and wide space for lift and handle to hold it, wide and easy access to bathrooms with railings on the walls for support, handles in toilets to provide support, etc. Electric switches are placed low on the wall so that the elderly can easily reach to them. Corridors and balconies are equipped with rods with the help of which the residents can walk. There are sliding doors in the bathrooms and toilets with locks easy to open. Elderly-friendly furniture makes it comfortable.

Maintenance and housekeeping services are provided by the management for a monthly fee ranging from Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 5,000.

A community kitchen serves special diet at a competitive cost so that the residents do not have to cook. This service is optional for them. They can also hire a cook and maid for cleaning, etc., with the help of office staff. For security purposes, visitors get admission only after writing all their details in the entry register which has been kept on the gate with the security officer. Professional security system is provided for 24 hours. There is a shuttle bus service for visiting various destinations in the city. Picnics to nearby places are frequently arranged for the residents.

Life begins at 60!

At Athashri medical records of residents are stored in the central computer. Regular medical check-ups of the residents are at the infirmary within the complex. Facilities like canteen, doctor on call, 24x7 ambulance, 24x7 special security, maintenance services, shuttle bus service, well equipped library, internet connectivity, lawns, swimming pool, club house, gym, and yoga centre are all available within the campus. The complexes have in-house diagnostic facilities. There are ambulances and infirmaries. Athashri maintenance team and support services run things with clock-wise precision to create a stress and worry free environment for the elderly residents.

Astha care centre

Aastha is a place of assisted living for the elderly that comes with round the clock nursing and household facilities for its inmates. It is a logical expansion of Athashri. Aastha is meant for the elderly who require assistance - be it for the household chores, outdoor activities or nursing care. It was launched in 2009-10 by Athashri Foundation which is situated within campus of Athashri Housing Society for the elderly in Pashan. It caters to the social and personal requirements of over 40 elderly persons who need assistance for daily activities and health care. There are more than 25 well furnished rooms, each with a double-bed and sitting arrangements with capacity for a couple.

Most residents are people who require continuous care. Assisted living is what Astha provides to the elderly who are dependent in some way or the other. The Centre

helps the elderly in their daily activities. Some elderly need assistance due to illness or physical disability. Some others need help even in daily activities like bathing, dressing, walking, etc.

The Centre has furnished self-contained single room apartments with all the facilities. Rooms in Aastha cannot be purchased, but are given on rent. They are available on six-monthly and annual rental basis, which can be renewed if needed. Those willing may even stay permanently by paying due charges. Currently an elderly needs to pay Rs. 35,000 towards one time deposit and about Rs. 25,000 rent per month which varies according to the health of the elderly. If they need continuous medical monitoring, then they need to pay additional but subsidized charges for those services.

The building is also elderly-friendly, equipped with rods in corridors with the help of which the old can walk. Non-skid tiles and elderly-friendly furniture makes it easy for the residents. A wheel-chair enabled design and assisted devices and stretcher lifts with generator backup have also been provided. The Aastha complex is also equipped with a stretcher lift, TV lounges on each floor and a library. It also has internet facility that can be used by the elderly residents to interact with their family members abroad and telephone connections in their rooms. Healthy meals according to the need of each elderly including at least one fruit every day are provided by the Centre.

Daily routine at Aastha involves reading newspapers in the morning followed by breakfast, watching TV programmes, walking in the campus, chit-chatting with neighbours till lunch and then rest till evening. Evenings usually involve watching movies or reading, playing carom, scrabble games, etc., generally celebrations of birthdays, anniversaries, etc., are organised in the evening. The elderly who need assistance also need to interact with people and express themselves. Volunteers and appointed professional staff, whenever needed, listen to them and provide them as much comfort as possible. It provides a sense of security to the elderly and helps them to feel at home even when they are away from home.

The facilities included lodging, food, nursing care, housekeeping, transport, internet and most importantly primary medical care. Routine check-ups, doctor's visit, timely dispensation of medicines, etc., are some of the important facilities provided to the

elderly occupants who need assistance in daily activities. They have 24-hour staff and call-for-aid monitoring. The centre has a 24-hour ambulance service. The Centre has tie-ups with leading multi-specialty hospitals, in case a resident needs specialised medical support. The Aastha campus has three nurses in three shifts and two ward boys on each of the three floors along with two doctors on day and night shifts to look after the inmates. The nursing staffs are trained as personal care-givers by the Foundation. The managers of Astha also stay in the same campus.

Future perfect

The Foundation is further planning to come up with similar residential facilities for those suffering from dementia and Alzheimer diseases. Yet another residential project for families having mentally challenged children is in the pipeline. It is the need of the time as many senior citizens who need assisted living are languishing alone in homes (*DNA*, Pune 2011).

Qualitative data and discussion with guardian of the elderly show that there is growing a realization amongst urban households (which have witnessed marginal increases in nuclear families) that they are no longer equipped to take care of their elderly family members. In this changing scenario, the concept of old age home is becoming acceptable in the higher social class where younger family members either migrate to other cities or abroad or for some other reasons are not be able to keep their elderly parents.