



**Economic and Social  
Council**

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**Statement submitted by organizations in consultative status  
with the Economic and Social Council \***

The Secretary-General has received the following statements, which are being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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24. Agewell Foundation

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Agewell Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation, has prepared this statement with the objective to create awareness among the concerned stakeholders at different levels about impact of Covid-19 pandemic, challenges related to it and possible as well as practical ways to deal with it effectively.

Covid-19 pandemic has emerged as a major cause of concern for every section of the society. People are struggling to protect themselves from Coronavirus and its consequences on human life all over the world. Though Covid-19 situation and related lockdown rules / restrictions have affected almost every human being, older persons are the most vulnerable so far as the Coronavirus threat and its impact is concerned.

In view of the current waves of Covid-19 older persons are more disturbed as the second and in some parts even third waves are spreading quite rapidly and causing more casualties among the communities across India.

Older persons are not only prone to the severity and fatality of COVID-19 due to age, they are going through a very tough phase in their life and living under the shadow of constant fear of death / loss of family members / loss of jobs to earning family members due to Covid. Today they are facing severe psychosocial challenges such as;

- Anxiety / restlessness / depression
- Isolation / loneliness
- Neglect / Marginalization
- Lack of autonomy / psychological dependence
- Sleeplessness / fatigue, and chronic stress
- Addiction disorders – alcohol/smoking
- Fear of death / prolonged illness / loss of money due to Covid treatment
- Nervousness / frustration / desperation
- Self-neglect / self-denial
- And even risks of abuse / elder abuse

Social distancing / isolation is impacting their mental well-being and increasing the risk of psychiatric disorders. Covid-19 induced circumstances have turned life in old age more challenging and complicated.

### A way forward

With a rapidly growing elderly population and longer life span in old age, ensuring the holistic safety of older persons is of utmost importance during such turbulent times through effective disease control, treatment and management techniques.

There is an urgent need to extend a create awareness in the society and sensitize people, particularly younger generations about the disease and its impact on elderly, particularly who are socially isolated and facing psychological issues due to loneliness / isolation. For this social media and other online platforms can be used in order to reach out to older persons, their family members

and caregivers, social workers/volunteers, young school children. Concerned stakeholders at Government level and other institutions like educational / religious / social / political / business organizations should be approached for ensuring their active support and participation.

At the same time, real-time measures like door-step delivery of medicines, healthcare services and other essential commodities during lockdowns/ restrictions, access to healthcare facilities in case of need, counselling, consultancy, advisory and referral services should also be taken in order to protect vulnerable older persons from deadly corona virus and ensure their safety and wellbeing.