



Addressing the Challenges and Opportunities of Ageing: Empowering Older Persons Through Person-Centered Care

IAHSA Commitment to the Madrid Plan on the International Day of Older Persons

October 4, 2007

The International Association of Homes and Services for the Ageing (IAHSA) – a global network of provider organizations, businesses, researchers, and government officials representing the interests of more than 20,000 aged-care providers and the 4 million elderly whom we serve every day – celebrates the 17th Annual United Nations International Day of Older Persons and the empowerment of elders as set forth in the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing.

While *quality of care* is critical for the aged, IAHSA believes that *quality of life* is a much more relevant gauge of empowerment in older persons. Thus, IAHSA promotes *person-centered care*, a philosophy that respects the dignity of the people who live and work in aged care by drawing upon the older person's individual needs, values, and expectations to guide decision making.

As person centeredness empowers older individuals to direct their own care, organizational *culture change* supports provider transformation and the empowerment of the aged-care workforce. IAHSA supports transformational leadership and the status of women as leaders in our field; we also strive to empower the frontline workforce, comprising lower-income migrant women in many countries.

IAHSA is partnering with providers and consumers around the globe to advance person centeredness and move away from medical models of long-term care. Person-centered care honors individual preferences and is critical in multicultural settings where cultural competence can help ensure equal access to appropriate services for all members of society.

Likewise, IAHSA advocates *shared learning* between and within the developed and the developing worlds. We believe it is critical to bring person-centered philosophies and practices of care to developing countries as they institute formal services and residences for the elderly. IAHSA is sharing lessons learned, from the developed world's journey to person-centered care, with the developing world as it establishes services for our most vulnerable elders.

IAHSA and our *Global Ageing Network* are committed to working with governments and advocates worldwide to advance policy formation and best practices in aged care.

Please visit www.iahsa.net to learn more about our organization and programmes!