



Neighborhood Support Guild (NSG)

An initiative of

Dr.V.S.Natarajan Geriatric Foundation

Project summary:

Project brief	A community based initiative where a group of volunteers from the same neighbourhood will provide peripheral care for an elder living in their neighbourhood. They will function only as per the guidelines stipulated in the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual
Project model	Community Service
Project range & scope	A ward under the Corporation or Municipality / Town
Project roll out & expansion plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Pilot project in a ward in Chennai 2) Expansion to other wards in Chennai 3) Expansion to other townships in Tamilnadu 4) Export of model to other states
Stakeholders	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) NSS units of Schools & colleges in the neighbourhood 2) Citizens forum, NGO based out of the neighbourhood 3) Government & quasi government agencies in the Jurisdiction (Police, Home guards & Department of Social Welfare) 4) Counsellors specializing in Geriatric issues
Beneficiaries	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Elders, particularly those who are living by themselves in the neighbourhoods 2) Caregivers of ailing elders 3) Students will gain immensely from their interaction with elders
Execution methodology – setting up of a NSG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Identify charter members 2) Orientation program for charter members 3) Launch of NSG 4) Periodical appraisal & R&R

Introduction:

With the advent of globalization came a phenomenon popularly known as the '**EMPTY NEST**'. More and more households, which were once thriving with life, are becoming deafeningly silent 'empty nests'. Whether left behind on cordial terms or out of compulsions, the elders are left to live all by themselves when they need their kith and kin the most. The empty nest syndrome has the following adverse effects on the elders:

- **Loneliness**
- **Safety**
- **Medical Emergency**

The Foundation seeks to address these issues by sensitizing the local people about the need to take care of the elders and also inculcate the sense of preparing themselves for their own evening years.

Putting together an NSG:

It is a unique community initiative which seeks to forge relationships between people who are not blood relatives but have lived in the same neighbourhood for years together. Service minded individuals from the following sectors shall be initiated into the NSG:

- 1) NSS units of Schools & colleges in the neighbourhood
- 2) Citizens forums such as Exnora, Local Senior Citizen association, Residents welfare groups etc.
- 3) NGOs & organizations like Rotary Club, Lions International, Jaycees based out of the neighbourhood
- 4) Counsellors specially trained in Geriatric issues (bereavement etc)

Each NSG will have the local Police Station Head and Department of Social Welfare officer as it's patrons

Salient features of an NSG:

- 1) With the presence of young students, it offers the possibility of inter-generational companionship
- 2) Driven by fresh retirees also known as 'the young of old', systems and processes will get a fillip because of their professional competency and wisdom.
- 3) Modeled in the lines of international organizations like Rotary Club, the office bearers and committees will be rotated periodically to ensure transparency and freshness in execution without diminishing the range of scope of the program.
- 4) Periodical Rewards & Recognition (R&R) programs to bolster the NSGs

Activities of an NSG:

The primary objective of an NSG Commando is to ensure that the elder in their neighbourhood feels safe and secure under their care. They have their duties cut out and clearly defined. The three main focus areas of the NSG are:

- **Loneliness**
- **Safety**
- **Medical Emergency**

Inter-generational Companionship	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Periodical home visits by students who have been assigned a Grandma-Grandpa 2) Participating in group activities in neighbourhood community center 3) Celebrations of festivals / birthday / anniversaries
Utility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Running small errands & purchases 2) Help with repairs & maintenance 3) Communication (emails, internet, social media)
Counseling	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Bereavement 2) Relationship
Safety	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Beat patrol 2) Emergency response
Medical emergency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Emergency response 2) Hospitalisations & patient attending

**strict standard operating procedures (SOPs) & protocols to be followed as per SOP Manual*

Initiation process:

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)	A manual comprising of Standard Operating Procedures will be compiled and issued to every NSG which has to be followed diligently
Launch of an NSG	Each NSG will be formally launched in the presence of Government authorities and all other stakeholders to ensure credibility and accountability
Rewards & Recognition	In order to sustain and grow consistently, generous rewards and recognition will be accorded to all those who perform exceptionally

Way Forward:

- We need an institutional back to pull of this large format activity which has to be nourished extensively at the beginning
- Extensive research and field studies to be done prior to compilation of the Standard Operating Manuals
- Academic activities such as Counsellors training, Train the trainers to be executed as per global standards
- All stakeholder groups to be addressed intensely to get them take up the cause with missionary zeal.
- Students who participate in the program should be accorded badges recognized by the international community when they apply for higher education, jobs, Visa etc.

Join our Journey:

We earnestly request you to support this much-needed initiative. You can associate with the project in one or many of the below ways:

- ✓ **Be a stakeholder**
- ✓ **Fund the project**
- ✓ **Be a volunteer**

Look forward to your active participation in realizing the mission of **HAPPY ELDERHOOD**.

Together we can and together we will....!!!

Prepared by
Rajasekaran Manimaran
Co-Founder & Managing Trustee

May 11, 2018