Social program on the elderly

The study of ageing and the elderly not only deals with the physical aspect of ageing but it goes on to discuss the other social implication of the process of ageing on social structures. The processes are very contradictory if considered in the context location for example, elderly people in the modern, so called civilized society, are held in low social status as compared to their counterparts in the backward areas, furthermore they do not readily accept that aging is a process that one has to undergo if he/she is to fully complete the human life cycle; a fact that is readily accepted by the elderly in a backward society (Aye & Oberg, 1997). Gerontology is a field that deals in the study of ageing and the elderly.

The field not only deals in the physical aging process but also discusses areas likesociologyandculturethat are highly influential in the aging process (Manning, 2003). The thesis of the paper is to come up with a comprehensive program that would deal effectively with the problem of the elderly in the society. Statement of the Problem The society that we are currently living in has an ever increasing number of persons over the age of 65 years. The rate of aging has considerably increased.

The social effects of aging should be viewed from different points of view which include the question of what aging is and the effects of the said phenomena (Aye & Oberg, 1997). In the uncivilized cultures the elderly are respected as they are seen to be a source of immense knowledge and thus they play the role of decision making. In the modern society such knowledge is rarely considered to be of use as the current society views such accumulated wisdom to be outdated and obsolete. On the other hand, the

elderly are less acceptant of the idea that aging is inevitable to them as living humans.

Advancements in several fields for instance nutrition and medicine has turned the nature of aging from inevitable to 'delayable' or in some cases preventable (Hooker, 1978). As compared to a couple of decades ago people now live longer as a result of better hygiene, foodand healthcare. Thus due to this changes in demographics sociologists nowadays speak of population ageing. To bring the problem into perspective in Britain the proportion of the elderly in the society was 5% in 1850, the current proportion is 25%. The problem is brought out more clearly by putting into consideration the population increase that is of over 700%.

With the current trends almost all developed countries will experience the problem of ageing populations. In the developed world one out of every six people is an elderly man. The forecasts have projected that in the next 30 years 25% of the population will be composed of the elderly. The situation is more grim in Austria and Germany where it is projected that by 2030 the population of the elderly will be 33% and 50% respectively (Watson, 1985). The problem is aggravated by the trend of the ever increasing number of the very old people in the population of the elderly.

The process which is at times referred to as the ageing of the elderly is a phenomenon in which the number of persons in the lower ages in the population of the elderly perpetually becomes insignificant to the number of the extremely elderly. The number of persons over the age of 85 years in the next 50 years will be six times the current number. Description of the Organization. Overview This program is aimed at bringing together the

elderly in a bid to improve their lives in afamilylike setting. It therefore includes the provision of basichealthservices and counselling in order to improve the ageing process for the elderly.

Authority The program is constituted under the US laws that allow for the creation of social programs that cater for special interest groups like the elderly. Scope The program will provide healthcare to the elderly as its basic mandate. To aid this, the program will also provide nutritional services and a forum through which the elderly can interact with both the elderly and the young in a family like setting. The program will also be involved in counselling and outreach programs for the elderly. Eligibility The following two conditions must be met by all who wish to join the program:

- Must be of 65 years and above.
- Must have documents proving his/her identity and age. Benefits The benefits of the program are:
- The elderly are provided with better healthcare.
- The elderly are provided with better nutrition.
- Provides a platform through which the elderly can interact with their peers thus dispelling the feeling of loneliness. Goals
- Efficient service provision to the elderly in the society.
- Reach as many elderly persons in the society as possible.

Objectives
- To provide a community for the elderly through which they can feel more appreciated as a constituent part of the society.
- To ensure that the elderly find a community in which they can feel more attached to.

- To ensure the elderly also contribute to the development of the society.

- To ensure the elderly have access to recreational facilities.

- To ensure the elderly have access to basic healthcare and nutrition. Services

- Provision of basic healthcare services to the elderly in the society.

- Providing peer mechanism through which the elderly relate to their peers and to the young as they relate their experiences.

- Advising on and provision of proper nutrition services to the elderly. Mission Statement

To ensure the betterment of life for the elderly by providing to them all their basic needs as human and social beings in an ethical manner. Value Statement As a social program we believe inrespectand adherence to thehuman rights. We therefore help the elderly as a means of alleviating and/or eliminating the suffering both physical and psychological that is associated with old age. We value the family as the basic social unit. Code of Ethics There are several rules that must be put in place to ensure that the ethics code and mission statements are adhered to in the course of achieving the objectives of the program.

The rules can be categorized into those that deal with the relationship between the worker and the elderly and those that deal with the worker and the administration (Watson, 1985). They include:

- Human rights The social worker must at all times protect the rights of the elderly. Furthermore, the rights of the social workers must be respected by both the patients and the administrators.

- Confidentiality Confidential information on the patient must never be delivered to other persons without the consent of the patient or the intervention of the law.

- Professional development

- The social worker and all other employees must exhibit competence and act according to the professional ethics and standards as stipulated by their profession's code of ethics.

- ResponsibilityThe social workers and all other employees are answerable to the patient and the administration.

- Stewardship The program is responsible for the life of the elderly under their care and all employees must behave and act in a manner that is aimed at achieving the mission of the program.

- Group Autonomy The organization and all that are involved in the program will at all times respect the culture, autonomy and rights of the program.

- Conflict of Interest All complaints or issue arising in the course of working must be addressed through the laid down guidelines

- Respect, equity and trust. The organization will always strive for anenvironmentin which all members live with respect and trust for each other and where decisions are made in an equitable manner.

- Tools, process and methods All processes, methods and tools will be used as per the requirements of the profession and as per the professional ethical code.

- Law The program will at all times obey the authority under which it is instituted.

Organizational culture The organizational culture that will be adopted is the clan culture. This type of corporate culture is characterized by a family like setting in the organization (Watson, 1985). The personal wellbeing of the elderly and the people attending to them is a great concern in this type of culture. Furthermore, social workers and the elderly will be encouraged to interact at a more personal level as such interaction will go in line with the objective of creating a family like setting for the elderly.

This type of culture is also characterized by promotion from within, which will aid the creation of a family like setting for the elderly which is in line with the objective in the quest for the mission. LeadershipThe leadership approach that will be employed by the program is transformational leadership. The leadership will be aimed at inspiring and motivating employees so that they can achieve new heights in both their personal and social lives. This kind of leadership has four components namely charisma or idealized influence, motivation, individualized considerations and intellectual stimulation.

Being charismatic is defined as having a dynamic, commanding and energetic presence. Such leaders are often idealized. Motivation means having the ability to appeal to basic values coupled with compelling vision. The ability to inspire people into thinking differently is referred to as intellectual stimulation. Lastly, paying attention to and meeting peoples need is referred to as individualized consideration. This program typically presents a clash between standards of behavior and values. Furthermore, the evidence of the problem that the program deals in are based on forecasts and are therefore not quite clear.

Transformation leadership is best suited for this kind of situation because, a leader who has a good idea and integrity is more likely to create a change or implement the idea if he/she presents the case with enough enthusiasm that will inspire the people. Oversight There are two important aspect in evaluating the success of an organization. These are service delivery and the method or technique used in evaluation. The important aspect to look at are what we want in a good service delivery system. There are several key areas that our services must fit in, these are:

- Our services must be integrated and continuous
- Accessible to the elderly
- Promote a culture ofaccountabilityfor actions and decisions in service delivery.

Integration and Continuity The program will deliver more than a single program benefit or service. On that account, problems of integrating different program operations, benefits, and services are always an issue. For instance, if system or program parts are not integrated, clients or consumers may be continually sent from one office to the next without understanding the reasons for being shuffled around, this can be so frustrating.

Thus integrating the services that are often needed by persons seeking a particular service will ensure integration and also ensure good service provision while at the same time cutting on the costs. The continuity of the program will be ensured by following up all decisions and advice may have been made concerning the old people. Every policy will have an implementation plan that is conclusive and addresses the entire problem of the elderly. Accessibility The program is also set on the key value of

accessibility as a service is of no importance if it can't be accessed by the target population.

To ensure this, the services will be provided in all the major towns in readily accessible areas by any means of public transport. The procedures in accessing the services are also simple and do not require much paper work nor prowess in reading or writing. The personnel will also be a mixture of several ethnic groups in order to ensure ease ofcommunicationin cases where the service seeker cannot communicate effectively in English or in other major languages. Accountability Another key ideal that the program will be built on is accountability.

The following will be implemented to ensure accountability:

- Mechanism will be put in place for instance, the use of suggestion boxes, to aid the identification of employees that are irresponsible.
- It should be possible for both the employees and their bosses to identify the specific organizational policy that justify any policy by creating well defined policies.
- Creating mechanisms through which substantive disagreement, with the preceding opinions by outside third parties, can be heard and resolved. This is provided for in the rules.

Independent observers and valuators will be involved in evaluating the success of the program by getting the elderly persons involved in the program take on the service delivery and the effect the program has had on their lives. The success of the program will thus be evaluated by comparing the input into the program and the output. Conclusion The above program if well implemented will lead to the improvement of the lives of the elderly in

various locations, even though success largely depend on its implementation.