



South Asian Muslim Association

سماا

## SAMAA MISSION STATEMENT

***“ To evidence the Islamic spirit of love, compassion and charity in providing a range of services to the aged of South Asian Muslims in NSW that best meet the physical, spiritual, cultural and emotional needs of the individuals, their families and the Muslim community”***

## LOVE LIFE, LIVE LONG

People who love their life are three times more likely to live longer and have less chance of disability and poor health than those who aren't happy, according to UK research.

AAP reports researchers from University College London studied 10,000 English people aged 50 to 100. They interviewed them three times between 2002 and 2011, asking about their happiness and psychological state.

The people who were most satisfied with their life were more likely to be alive at the end of the nine year study than those who hated life.

“The difference between those who enjoyed life the most and those who enjoyed life the least was marked, with nearly three times more people dying in the lower than greater enjoyment group,” the study authors wrote.

“What we found is that out of those people in the highest third of people with the most enjoyment, 9.9% died. Of people in the lowest third of enjoyment 28.8% of them died,” researcher Professor Andrew Steptoe said in a media release.

“This was the case even when factors such as age were taken into account, we still find this protective effect of enjoyment.”



***Late Zohra Qureshi celebrating her 75th birthday at SAMAA's Eid Milan on 26 Aug 2012 at Auburn Town Hall : Report on Page 3***

Professor Steptoe said the results were probably because people who are happy are more likely to look after their health and are less likely to be stressed. He also hypothesised that strong social networks could be contributing to their longevity — and that wealthier people were 50 percent less likely to become socially isolated.

Source : DPS news

***Muslim AID Australia*** is an international relief and development agency working to support and assist the world's poorest and most needy communities regardless of race, creed or nationality.

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[www.muslimaid.org.au](http://www.muslimaid.org.au)

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## SAMAA CELEBRATED EID MILAN



South Asian Muslim Association of Australia (SAMAA) celebrated Eid Milan on 26 August 2012 at Auburn Town Hall to mark Eid ul Fitr. A few parliamentarians, a large number of elderly, their families, SAMAA members, volunteers and friends attended the event with much enthusiasm and joy. The key feature this year was the tribute to the great Ghazal singer Mehdi Hassan who passed away a few months earlier. The large number of elderly found an ideal opportunity to meet their contemporaries and enjoy ghazals of their times.

The federal MP Hon Laurie Ferguson, a staunch supporter of SAMAA, applauded its members for their excellent work with true volunteering spirit and not for seeking individual recognition. He commended SAMAA's effort in engaging with other organisations in providing services to the elderly. Laurie told audience that he is much impressed by very logical and practical approach SAMAA takes in achieving its objectives instead of being over ambitious. Auburn MP Hon Barabara Perry spoke about great volunteering spirit and reassured SAMAA of her ongoing support in loud applause from the audience.

SAMAA official Mr Zahid Jamil gave an overview of SAMAA's activities over past few months. He told audience that in running such programmes, we face challenges all the time.

Mr Jamil said that this year SAMAA's main focus has been the volunteering programme. SAMAA expect to

allot a dedicated volunteer for each 75 plus elderly. SAMAA has divided Sydney into 7 major regional areas. We wish to have a nursing home (with whom we have signed MOU) and a local volunteering group in each area.

SAMAA coordinate and cooperate with various groups so as to provide facilities to its elderly. Under one such program, SAMAA is currently working with Muslim Aid Australia to provide aged care equipment such as wheel chairs, shower seats, walkers to the elderly. In coordination with a young Muslim volunteer group Y Factor, SAMAA distributed Eid gifts to many elderly which included flowers, holy water and dates. Such activities reflect SAMAA's philosophy that It carries out its mission by interacting with relevant government and non-government bodies and all people of good will, to develop programs to enhance the human dignity of our elderly.

A highly talented Ghazal singer Dr Pradeep Bal entertained audience with Ghazals specially that of Mehdi Hassan. Famous Sydney Ghazal singer Mrs Shahnaz Hyder who had close association with late Mehdi Hassan for many years paid tribute to this great icon of the sub-continent. An elderly Zohra Qureshi celebrated her birthday with a round of applause from audience and another elderly Mrs Mahfooz Hussein received a wheel chair from SAMAA/Muslim Aid. All elderly received gifts from SAMAA and the evening concluded with lots of good will and exchange of Eid greetings.

## SAMAA ELDERLY ZOHRA QURESHI PASSED AWAY

The much loved SAMAA elderly Begum Zohra Qureshi passed away on 29 Sept 2012. She suffered a major heart attack on her way to hospital and died. Her Janazah prayers were held at Rooty Hill mosque on 3rd Oct and she was later buried at Riverstone cemetery by her son, close friends and a few SAMAA volunteers.

Mrs Qureshi was a graduate of famous Aligarh Muslim university in India. She had lived in Sydney since late 70s. Her husband had died in late 80s. She had lived in Wallgrove nursing home in Lakemba for nearly 10 years. Mrs Qureshi was very competent in Urdu literature and remembered poetry of famous Urdu poets Iqbal and Ghalib by heart.

SAMAA had celebrated her 75th birthday at its last major event of Eid Milan on 26 August 2012 at Auburn Town hall. At SAMAA we pray for the departed soul and send condolences to her son and relatives.

## MUSLIM JANZAH SERVICE

The Australian Muslim Janaza & Community Services (AMJCS) has been established over past few months and now provides full funeral services to the Muslims. The Ghusl (bathing of the body) facility is located at 50 MOREHEAD AVE, MOUNT DRUITT, only a few minutes drive from Rooty Hill mosque. The janazah prayers are held at Rooty Hill mosque and burial is held at Riverstone cemetery. Mr Jawed Iqbal of AMJCS told SAMAA that they aim to provide an efficient funeral service to Australian Muslims at the minimal cost. They have further plans to setup similar facilities across Australia. They are also working towards acquiring land for Muslim burials in NSW and other states.

They request community members to assist AMJCS by registering as a donor member. You can reach them by ringing 04 JANAZA 44 i.e. 0452 629 2 44. To learn more about them please visit their website at muslimjanaza.org

## SAMAA'S MAIN OBJECTIVES

- a) Providing home help to the aged and infirm.
- b) Alleviate loneliness, as many of our elderly are unable to mix in society due to language, religious and cultural barriers.
- c) Coordination with relevant aged care agencies and service providers to provide culturally appropriate care to our elderly.
- d) Provide ancillary services such as arranging get togethers, information sessions and other voluntary services for the elderly.
- e) Long term objective of South Asian Muslim Association of Australia (SAMAA) is to build an Aged Persons Hostel to provide culturally appropriate care to South Asian elderly. Our hostel/s will provide relief of needs arising from old age, sickness or incapacity, loneliness. The hostel will run appropriate programmes for the elderly and will include a high care facility.

We request all Muslim elderly of Subcontinent origin to join SAMAA by filling out the registration form and inform us about their specific needs. We need volunteers in various areas of Sydney to provide the services mentioned above. We request all brothers/sisters who can spare some time to offer their services and register themselves as volunteers. SAMAA has also introduced the system of paid volunteers where volunteers can be paid for the work they do or for the personal expenses they incur in serving the elderly.

## DONATE TO SAMAA

SAMAA is a Public Benevolent institution and your donations to SAMAA are tax deductible. Please donate to SAMAA by sending cheques or depositing your donations in SAMAA account.

**A/C Name:** South Asian Muslim Association of Australia Incorporated.

**Address:** 72 Hobart Place,  
Illawong NSW 2234

**BSB:** 012- 081

**Account Number:** 4877-20869

Please send us an email with your address to confirm your deposit so that a receipt could be sent to you.



## AGEING AND HEALTH -- Md Bayzidur Rahman, PhD

Healthy ageing is desirable to everybody. It is related to the life expectancy. There is a high level of disparity in life expectancy across the nations including South Asians for example, India & Pakistan (64.8 years), Bangladesh (68.3 years) and Sri Lanka (74.6 years). Life expectancy is known in two different ways in health sciences such as (1) Life Expectancy (LE) and (2) Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE). Life expectancy is the expected number of years of life remaining at a given age and Healthy Life Expectancy is the average number of years that a newborn can expect to live in "full health." Australia has the 2nd highest LE and the 4th highest HLE among the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. However, life expectancy of the Australian indigenous people is twenty years less than other Australians. Most disadvantaged non-indigenous Australians have 6 years less LE than those who are most advantaged.

The disease burden and health costs are increasing among the elderly people in all countries. Various age groups of elderly people suffer from different diseases such as cancer, heart disease and stroke. These are the main killer diseases in above forty five years of age. Mainly mental disorders (predominantly depression), musculoskeletal disorder (arthritis), coronary heart disease, diabetes and cancer are common illnesses up to seventy five years. Particularly, Neurodegenerative disorder (dementia), Parkinson's disease, vision and hearing disorder attack after seventy five. There is also mention of the problems at elderly in the holy Quran "And among you there is he who dies (young), and among you there is he who is brought back to the miserable old age, so that he knows nothing after having known. (Chapter Al-Hajj, verse no.5)"

Death rate due to heart attack has reduced by 60% in Australia. But this benefit is being outweighed by increased rate of diabetes lead by obesity due to lack of physical activities and healthy diet. Poor diet (unhealthy diet predominantly including fat), lack of physical activity, tobacco and alcohol abuse are common causes for all chronic diseases.

### How can we prevent, or cure those diseases?

Prevention is better than cure. There two ways of prevention approaches (1) Individual level intervention (2) Community Level Intervention. It is possible to improve the LE and HLE at individual level addressing smoking, alcohol, diet, physical activity and environmental factors. It is also possible to prevent many diseases through education, making healthy choice of lifestyle and workplace as well. There is a cancer council helpline (phone number: 131120) for helping cancer patients and their relatives.

There are many successful examples around the world in community based interventions. Review of a large number of medical researches suggests that community level interventions reduce 5% risk of not living at home and 13% of nursing home admission and 6% of hospital admission. The issue of community level intervention was also emphasised in A'Hadith: narrated by Abu Hurairah (Raziallah Anho) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "There are five claims of a Muslim upon a Muslim: to return his greetings when he greets; **to visit him when he falls ill**; to attend his funeral; to accept his invitation to a meal and to pray for him, when he sneezes, by saying 'yarhamukallah'(May the mercy of Allah be on you)."

### What's next?

More than half a million of South Asian people live in Australia. Many of them are elderly. Large number of elderly parents of the migrants is waiting to come. What about you? What is your current age? Do you have any elderly people in your family? It is always better to have a regular health check-up especially if you are already 40 years old or above. Initial screening may prevent a number of chronic diseases to occur or may help to detect at its primary stage when successful intervention or treatment is possible to cure or control the disease. Did you think about healthy lifestyle and healthy life expectancy? Please think about it before it's too late.

**Author:** Lecturer, Faculty of medicine, School of Public Health and Community Medicine, The University of New South Wales, Australia.

**"Your Lord has commanded that you worship none but Him, and be kind to your parents. If either or both of them reach old age with you, do not say 'uff' to them or chide them, but speak to them in terms of honour and kindness. Treat them with humility, and say, 'My Lord! Have mercy on them, for they did care for me when I was little.'" (Qur'an 17:23-4)**