

The rights of older people, from an older person's perspective

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What should the rights applicable to older people be?

- The right to be safe
- To be secure including financially
- To be respected in society
- To be encouraged to have an active role in society
- To be free from discrimination
- To be treated as equals
- To have our special needs recognised

The state of the three 'isms' which take away these rights

- Sexism. Women have been fighting this for well over a century yet even in developed countries such as Australia we are still nowhere near achieving equality
- Racism. This is still widely practised
- Ageism. Recognition of this, and its effects, is still in its infancy
- All impact negatively on countries in terms of productivity, health and wealth

The effects of ageism

- Older people are still not treated as equals in most countries
- Inaccurate labels such as 'senile' are unfairly applied to us
- It should be unacceptable that we can be represented at the United Nations by a young woman. This violates our rights as older people
- It should be unacceptable that conferences on ageing largely feature younger people as speakers and audience. Our voices aren't being heard

A New United Nations Bill of Rights?

- The current Bill was passed many years ago
- Most of the world is now a very different place
- We need a new Bill which reflects the hopes and aspirations of many countries today
- This would include the needs of groups such as children, women, people living in multicultural countries and older people
- It would include the needs of different religious groups

Proposing a future for older people

- Enable older people to have our talents and skills recognised
- Enable us to work, if we wish, on our terms, such as part time and flexible hours
- Recognise our physical and other needs and allow for them to enable us to live in equity
- Respect us and value us for what we have contributed in the past and enable us to contribute in the future

The changing world is in our favour

- Brain plasticity enables our brains to continue to grow even in our later years
- Many of our talents have not been recognised earlier in our lives. We should have the right to follow reasonable dreams in the later stage of life
- This later stage should be recognised as a special part of life
- We should have the right to access appropriate, specialised medical care and other support to enable us to live life fully

Older people's rights should be:-

- Part of a living document, be easily available and understood and be put into practise
- To allow us equality with others, allowing for increasing frailty in the later years
- To enable us to live our lives as we want and to have our talents recognised
- To allow us to be treated as valuable members of society

Our rights shouldn't be:-

- In a hard-to-understand document, written in 'legalise'
- In a hard-to-find document that few are aware of
- Based on false or irrelevant information
- Written without the input of older people
- Written in a way that belittles us

What older people need

- The right to be respected
- The right to be able to satisfy our basic needs
- The right to have other needs recognised, including in the field of good health
- The right to have our talents and past achievements recognised
- The right to be recognised as valuable members of our communities