

Statement of Principles for Pyareo Home



I am very pleased with your idea to establish a Home for disabled and elderly people. It is a wonderful thing if it can be done. It's a wonderful way of expression our gratitude to our elders.

Sant Ajaib Singh (letter dated August 1, 1996)

The project which the dear ones have [started] for making the home for the older people and the handicapped people is very good. I hope that you will maintain the devotion with which you have started this project.

Sant Ajaib Singh (interview comments to Steve Gigas, February 1997)

Purpose of *Pyareo** Home and our Mission Statement

1. As God resides in every heart, service of others is service of God. We therefore recognize a responsibility to all those who need our help at any time in their lives.

We particularly recognize the increasing fragility of life as we get older, and that many of us may need physical help and emotional support in order to maintain dignified and productive lives to the end.

2. Our Mission Statement:

- *Pyareo Home is created to provide a loving and dignified living environment for the elderly and disabled members of our community, who meet criteria for residency.*
- *We emphasize harmony and tolerance, and encourage a simple, meditative, spiritual lifestyle. At essence, we see one another -- residents, staff and volunteers -- as part of the same whole.*
- *We provide support to residents to maintain their health, participate in activities, and generally maintain full lives.*
- *We recognize residents' right to make their own health-care and financial decisions, and we promote their autonomy.*

* In the Hindi language, "*pyareo*" means "dear ones" or "beloveds". The name thus reinforces our ideal of respectful service in all aspects of running *Pyareo Home*.

Criteria for Residency

1. In the spirit of community service, *Pyareo Home* is open to any one who:
 - *is lacto-vegetarian, or is willing and able to live by these restrictions while on the premises*
 - *does not smoke, or drink alcohol*
 - *wishes to live a life of simplicity, integrity and spiritual outlook*
 - *is interested in maintaining active life interests, such as gardening, art, writing, volunteering, etc.*
 - *cannot manage living unassisted*
 - *whose family can demonstrate that they cannot take care of him/her*
 - *is willing, along with immediate family, to assume responsibility for personal decisions regarding health maintenance and other personal requirements*
 - *is clearly willing, along with immediate family, to assume primary financial responsibility for cost of his/her room & board, health maintenance, and other personal requirements*
 - *is interested to help with the running of the facility, to the extent he/she is physically able*
 - *has general interest in, and tolerance for, communal living*
2. It is our strong belief that the best home for the elderly and disabled is with the immediate family. Admission to *Pyareo Home* will therefore be considered only for prospective residents whose families can clearly show that they cannot provide the time, attention and loving environment for in-home care of their elderly or disabled relative.
3. In appreciation of the community-supported nature of *Pyareo Home*, a strong empathy by the resident and his/her immediate family for the general goals of the home is essential for his/her acceptance into the *Home*, and for the maintenance of a positive and respectful relationship.
4. In recognition of our changeable health conditions and the social complexity of assisted living, residency at *Pyareo Home* is deemed neither permanent nor unconditional. A resident may decide to leave the *Home* at any time. Conversely, because of a substantially deteriorating health condition, or extreme social incompatibility, a resident may be required to leave the *Pyareo Home* either temporarily or permanently.
5. In recognition of the up and down nature of everyone's life, temporary residency may be provided (as space permits) to persons convalescing from illnesses or accidents.
6. Admission as a resident, membership on the Board of Directors, or involvement in the administration of the *Home*, will not be based on a person's race, religion, gender, or national origin. Nor will the practice of meditation be a criterion for these roles. However, we are clearly looking for "kindred spirits" who will respect the lifestyle goals and support the environment which we wish to maintain.
7. To implement our admissions policy fairly, an Admissions Review Committee, made up of the administrator and at least one member of the

Board of Directors, will be formed to review applications for residence at the *Home*. Roles of committee will be:

- *to develop a coherent admissions policy and review process, based on the criteria outlined above*
- *to set up an equitable method of determining all resident fees; and if necessary, to obtain the services of an impartial third party for the review of financial status of applicants*
- *to maintain a balance between prospective resident's needs, the need of existing residents, and the ability of the community to support the prospective resident in terms of time and funds*
- *to make recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding applications under review*

Physical Environment & Lifestyle

1. In order to foster independence and dignity of living, the design of the *Home* aims at providing maximum assistance to residents with mobility impairments and other disabilities. All common areas are wheelchair accessible, and a resident's private space will be adapted to suit his/her disability.
2. To avoid an institutional atmosphere, the design of the *Home* evokes a residential setting: ample daylight; functional, comfortable and intimately scaled spaces; common and secluded areas; natural materials and finishes; flower and vegetable gardens; etc.
3. As a resident's room or suite is considered his/her private space, residents are encouraged to decorate and furnish their personal area in a way which is most comfortable for them.
4. To encourage a centered and introverted lifestyle, a meditation room is provided for use by residents and helpers.
5. To provide opportunities for work and exercise, a crafts area, greenhouse, gardens and walking paths, etc. are provided, and their use is encouraged.
6. As a further encouragement to simple living, television viewing is not available in common areas, except for special occasions. However, it is acceptable for a resident to have television in his/her private room.
7. We recognize the beneficial presence of a dog or a cat in an assisted living environment in general, and to individual residents in particular. However, we all need to exercise caution when allowing existing pets of new residents into the *Home*, or getting new pets for individual residents or for the *Home*. In all cases, we will base our decisions primarily on the overall effect on the atmosphere of the *Home*, and on health of residents and staff.

Social Context

1. With the understanding that the Server and the Served are one, the relationship among staff, volunteers and residents, will be regarded as one of great dignity and mutual respect.
2. To reduce the feeling of disempowerment often felt by the elderly and the disabled, residents will participate in the decision-making at *Pyareo Home*, in all areas which affect their welfare.
3. The immediate family of residents generally form residents' strongest links with their past - home, relations and memories, and we thus encourage the family to make sincere and sustained efforts in maintaining the contact.
4. To foster a sense of community and participation in common goals, residents are encouraged - each according to his/her ability - to help with the day-to-day life at the *Home*, as well as in the life of the larger community.
5. As an acknowledgment of the deep contributions that the elderly and disabled can make to the younger generation, and to avoid the isolation often felt by the elderly and disabled, regular and sustained contacts between the *Sant Bani School* students and the *Pyareo Home* residents are encouraged. Residents are encouraged to work with some students in a mentoring capacity, and conversely, students are encouraged to be involved with activities at the *Home*.
6. We are each our brothers' keepers, and thus the community is invited to share their time, strength and love in the maintenance of *Pyareo Home*.

Financial Issues

1. We will not refuse residency to anyone who cannot fully pay the entrance or monthly fees. We will look at the need of the person first, and the options available to him or her, regardless of ability to pay. We will endeavor to raise funds to subsidize those whose need is great and who have few other options.
2. In appreciation of the nonprofit nature of *Pyareo Home*, residents and their immediate families are asked to strive sincerely to place the least financial burden possible on the community which supports the *Home*, and acknowledge the need to fully contribute financially towards the running of *Pyareo Home*.
3. In recognition of the freedom of residents to make their own financial decisions, primary responsibility for a resident's financial obligations

rests, in the first instance, with the resident; and in the second instance, with the resident's immediate family.

4. In recognition of the freedom of residents to manage their own health care, residents and their immediate families are financially responsible for the consequences of all decisions made regarding the resident's health requirements. Thus the direct cost for services of full-time personal care attendants, nurses and/or physicians will be borne by the resident.
5. To assist each resident in making his/her best financial and health care decisions, and in recognition of overlapping areas of responsibility for these decisions among the resident, his/her immediate family and the *Home*, a Support Committee - composed of the resident, a member of his/her immediate family, and the *Home* - will be formed for each resident. Each committee will review financial and health care choices available to the resident, and weigh the consequences of each option. Decisions within each committee will be made by consensus, but in aspects which do not affect the *Home* or the immediate family, the resident's decision will prevail.
6. With the understanding that the essential purpose of *Pyareo Home* is to offer a supportive environment to residents, responsibility of *Pyareo Home* will primarily involve:
 - *providing food and lodging*
 - *assisting with personal care, housekeeping, and local travel*
 - *interfacing with health care professionals and government agencies*
 - *supporting community and individual activities, recreation, and service*
 - *providing opportunities for meditation and worship*

Relationship of *Pyareo Home* to Supporters

1. We recognize that persons inspired to help with the work of *Pyareo Home* will do so in many different ways: with their time and skills, with their finances, and with their good wishes. We honor all modes of support.
2. Periodically, we may solicit financial help from the community to meet portions of the following expenses:
 - *assistance to residents with payment of monthly fees*
 - *cover a deficit in the general operating budget of the Home*
 - *assist with expansion of programs and purchase of equipment*
 - *assist with expansion of facilities*
3. We recognize that all those wishing to assist the *Home* financially will do so because they are inspired by its ideals. Therefore, our work will consist in informing supporters and well-wishers of the work being done, leaving it to their judgment and intuition on how best to respond. All our interactions with supporters will be highly respectful, non-manipulative and confidential.