

Health and Welfare Bureau for the Elderly

In anticipation of the arrival of a super aging population

The Health and Welfare Bureau for the Elderly is working towards establishing an integrated community care system that will enable people to continue to live in their home town to the end of their lives with a sense of security once they need long-term care.



Full of smiles, full of spring

< Mission >

Japan will have a globally unprecedented super aging population. By 2025 when the baby boomer generation turns 75 years old or more it is being projected that:

- One in every three persons will be 65 or older (one in every five persons at present) and one in every five persons will be 75 or older (one in every ten persons at present),
- The number of persons with dementia will have increased from 2.8 million at present to 4.7 million,
- Approximately 30% of all households will be elderly single households or elderly couple households, and
- In urban areas the population will have remained stable but the population of those aged 75 or older will have rapidly increased while in rural areas the population of those aged 75 or older will have gradually increased but the total population itself have decreased.

The long-term care insurance system is essential for supporting the daily lives of people once they need long-term care. As the top runner of global aging, the Bureau is responsible for the creation of a society in which elderly people can live with a sense of security through ensuring the long-term care insurance system remains sustainable.

Policy 1 Establishment of a sustainable long-term care insurance system



Opening ceremony of "Nenrinpic"

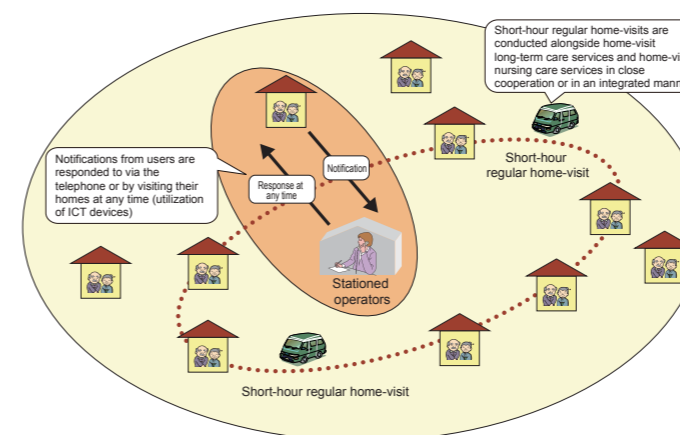
An increase in long-term care expenses due to the progress of aging can affect the insurance premiums of both the elderly and the actively working generation. In addition to raising people's trust in the system, making the system fairer will be necessary in the future. With the comprehensive reform of social security and tax, establishing an integrated community care system and ensuring the sustainability of the long-term insurance system will be the main subjects of future discussions.

Integrated community care system

- The "integrated community care system" is a system that provides [1] housing, [2] medical care, [3] long-term care, [4] prevention services, and [5] livelihood support in an integrated manner in communities (assumes an approximate range of a junior high school district).
- The integrated community care system aims to enable people to continue to live in their home towns to the end of their lives with a sense of security once they are in severe need of long-term care.
- The integrated community care system needs to be created by municipalities based on independent and original ideas of the community concerned and according to its characteristics.

The Bureau is working to enhance long-term care services, including 24-hour home visit services and multifunctional small group home services, for providing outpatient, home-visit, and overnight stay services in an integrated manner, developing services housing for the elderly, and promoting medical and long-term care cooperation. At the same time, even more focused and efficient long-term services and review of the system from the point of view of fairness between generations and within generations in terms of the burden (what the insurance premiums and co-payments of low income earners should be) are also unavoidable issues.

24-hour regular home visitation and as-needed visitation services (image)



Policy 2 Society in which people can live with a sense of security even with dementia

Dementia is caused by a brain disease that can inflict to anyone, and is becoming a major concern for individuals and their families as they reach old age. In addition, symptoms such as wandering could worsen due to environmental changes and thus they can face difficulties living at home once their symptoms grow more severe. Creating an environment in which they can live in their home towns with a sense of security is thus particularly necessary for people with dementia. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare formulated a "5-year Plan for Promotion of Measures against Dementia" in September 2012 as part of addressing Measures against Dementia. The Bureau is responsible for creating a system in which people can receive consultations as soon as they become aware of any symptoms of dementia and ensure that they are provided with appropriate diagnoses and support, thereby enabling them to continue to "live with dignity."

Policy 3 Long-term care sites where people can work for a long time with pride

As aging progresses, securing support personnel for long-term care sites is also important. It is considered that increasing the number of long-term care personnel by 1 million by 2025 will be necessary. When compared to other industries, the wages of those engaged in long-term care tend to be quite low and the turnover rate rather high. Enabling those working at

long-term care sites to continue to work for a long time with pride is therefore necessary. The Bureau is working towards raising the wages of those engaged in long-term and establishing an appropriate career path for them.



Thank you, these hands are valuable

Keyword

Dementia supporters

Enabling people with dementia to live with a sense of security in their community requires the understanding and consideration of the people around them. Those that possess the appropriate knowledge and understanding of dementia are therefore being trained as "dementia supporters." Training programs have taken place at various places that include neighborhood based self-governing bodies, elderly clubs, enterprises, police offices, and schools, with the number of "dementia supporters" having exceeded 3.9 million as of the end of December 2012.

"Dementia supporters" are highly regarded internationally as a representative measure to use against dementia in Japan.



Orange ring, the motif of a "dementia supporter"



"Captain Donkey," the mascot of a dementia supporter caravan