

Respite Service for Senior Home Care: A Study of Zhejiang

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Abstract. Integrating available resources for self-reliant aging cares and mutual supports, respite service reduced family members' loads, improved life satisfaction and increased sense of well-being for seniors.

Introduction

The author and his team members started their field study for aging care in Zhejiang since 2004 and related statistics data showed that urban senior citizens who reach the age of 60 or over had accounted for about 15% to 20% of the total population. These of 80 years or above had accounted for the elderly population of 15% to 20%. In the meantime, elderly population increased 5%. Considering that socioeconomic capabilities, more than 90% of the elderly must be cared at home and have to face related issues.

Issues

Phenomenon of Survive with Serious Illness, 2/3 Remaining Time live with Disease.

After 60 years old, 2/3 of their remaining time is to live with disease.

With the time passing, the tissues, organs and related physiological functions decline, senile ones change, decreased health status decrease, the prevalence rate rise. According to statistics result of the survey, senior citizens have to spend their 2/3 remaining time with serious illness.

65% to 70% of the elderly suffer from varying severity, a variety of age-related diseases. At the same time, disabled elderly people keeps increasing. The available health care resources are highly demanded at present, and will become scarce while aging population keeps increasing.

Phenomenon of 8421 Inverted Pyramid Structure, and Family Members Overloaded by Senior Home Care.

Analysis report of the aging trend shows that urban families have entered the 421 structure model. That is, a family, a middle-aged husband and wife have four elderly but only one

child. By 2020, there will be “8421” family structure, that is, eight aged old men, four elderly, a couple, one child.

Research data shows that problems related to senior home care become more and more serious, care loads become more and more heavy.

This study confirms that long-term care for the elderly, especially those who are sick, requires a large investment of family members in energy and time, including daily activities in accordance with laundry, cooking, action, taking a bath and going toilet.

Taking into account their own work and their own family duty, family members or the elderly caregivers are over loaded, the heavy care work and the huge economic costs bring them some psychological stress and life stress and social stress.

Furthermore, long-term senior home care forced family member caregivers to reduce interpersonal communication, resulted in a sense of loneliness and helplessness, lead in anxiety, depression and other negative emotions,.

In fact, family members as the caregivers are tied with greater psychological pressures than physical ones.

Therefore, family members of elderly are in urgent need of some relaxation to relieve their burden as caregivers.

Phenomenon of Serious Shortage of Aging Cares, Only 5% of Elderly People are able to enjoy their Rest Life in Nursing Home for Elderly Men.

Organizational nursing home for elderly men can offer professional care, reduce family burden, make new friends and enrich the spiritual life. However, in most cities, public nursing beds are limited and in short supply, and it takes two to three years to approach.

The majority of private cares are leased on premises, with small-scale operation whose hardware and software facilities are limited. It is difficult to tie up the clinic units and medical drugs. At the same time, private agencies prefer to choose a relatively independent place that difficult to access transportation and to implement security measures.

Therefore, most of the elderly prefer to stay at home and to be cared by family members.

While the population of disability elderly people climbing high, many family members become exhausted.

This research team has contacted aging cares over the world since 1996, empirical evidence shows that only less than 10% of the elderly prefer staying in nursing homes for long term cares rather than home care.

Theoretical Framework

Respite service is the provision of a series of temporary, supportive alternatives to the care of the aged disability, allowing their caregivers to enjoy temporary relaxation and rest.

Beginning in 1960, some developed countries such as Australia, tried to develop some standard implementation for senior home care respite services while government subsidize about one half cost.

The United States and the United Kingdom later improved and promoted senior home care with offering elderly ones respite service one week per year.

Germany and other Europe countries contributed a lot to the standard long-term care system in the field of elderly rehabilitation, pension and nursing complement.

Chinese research started at 2000, Hong Kong and Macao recognized and practiced the Aging in place.

Zhejiang province and Hangzhou city are the first ones in mainland to enter the aging society.

In accordance with the policy of 9073 or 9064 which means institutional cares' bed limitation at 5% while other 90% of elderly people should take senior home care, this research team contact some pilot field study to meet related demands.

From 2002 to 2012, this research team leaded by Tang Shi Ming created model mechanism for urban senior home care with "Eight One Community Services" and "Four Home Daily Services".

Eight one services include a file service for senior well informed mental and physical care, a guard network service for senior monitoring care, a on line help service for senior responsive care, a mediator service for promising care, a team service for comprehensive social care, a pager for emergency care, a chat room service for mental hygiene care, a visiting room service for support care.

Four home daily services include "a visit to elderly per day", "a house service to elderly per day", "a neighborhood care to elderly per day" and "a volunteer assistance to elderly per day".

2013-2015, this research conducted a need census and local survey for respite service in Hangzhou and proposed to set up the first provincial standard on respite service for the senior home care and to meet the challenges of 8421 inverted pyramid family structure.

The theoretic discussion on above mentioned local standard can improve significantly the senior home care service system and thus facilitate the establishment of relevant policy support to firstly, the standard service access; secondly, and standard personnel training, thirdly, the standard technical operation and fourthly , the standard care regulation.

At the same time, the research results have empowered the provincial, municipal and even district level department of civil affairs to coordinate the resources for senior home care and provide a theoretical basis for long term care decision-making argument.

The practice process, the establishment and improvement of this respite service with operational standards, systematic professional standards and targeted evaluation standards has greatly enrich and innovate social security and family peace.

While the elderly are assured of health insurance, pension insurance and nursing insurance and other protection, it works well especially in coordination of rehabilitation, pension and nursing.

Accordingly, this study takes feasible precautions in upgrading and standardizing the future viability for coming senior home care with the qualification system, professional development and technical platform.

Action Research

This action research efforts to clarify and develop standard senior home care respite services for: the definition of old-age home respite service, operational orientation for home care respite services, standard senior home care respite service assessment, standard home care respite service personnel duties, classification of home care respite care, standard home care respite service schedule, standard home care pension management and standard respite service training course.

The research is focused on the completion of a comprehensive well-off society of Chinese dream, combined with the operational standard on senior home care in Europe and the advanced experience on respite service in United States, its team works support each other

and develop some local characteristics for Chinese senior home care 9073 mode and 9064 mode.

Based also on over ten years' field study of long-term care over the world, it concludes a set of standardized service specification.

The research difficulty is the establishment of standard home care respite services while there are no other experiences to compare with.

It summaries firstly the national advanced concepts and methods in different regional operation, secondly the analysis and oral historical data to support large data case, thirdly the integrated rehabilitation and health management for long-term care norm, fifthly the advanced models on health insurance, senior pension and clinical nursing , and finally the insurance data collation, analysis, calculation for inductive research, so as to determine the measurable scope of work, staff quality and performance evaluation criteria etc.

Zhejiang Province, in recent years, efforts to implement the senior home care with number policy to support respite services.

Provided with resourceful first-hand information, this survey reaches desirable summary and innovation from the grassroots and thus improves greatly the system mechanism on senior home care respite services.

The establishment of a standardized system enable region to provide the subjects more channels to explore new and orderly development.

In recent years, this research team created some model communities or demonstration windows for senior home care innovation in the city of Hangzhou, they are Wang Ma community, Xiaoying community, Chuang Qiao community and other community.

These positive local typical achievement constructed a new normal for both the professional development of senior care service and the teamwork mechanism of multidisciplinary experts, thus fully supported the feasibility study of local standard on respite service oriented senior home care.

Most members of this research come from China, Australia, Europe, and the United States. Based on their over ten years' field studies and pilot promotion over the world, especially in urban and rural areas of the Zhejiang, Shanghai and other Yangtze River Delta Provinces, this research make great theoretical and practical contribution for the coming implementation of the standard respite service in its service content, duty classification, care mechanism and decision management.

In recent three years, this project contributed also several proposals for National People's Congress and Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, related police making process and social warm reflection continually highlighted the home care frame based respite service.

Result

The team leader completed a series of research projects including “Model Construction and Mechanism Innovation for Empty Nest Aging Service” and “Problem Solving for City Senior Home Care”, filled the research blank in “Volunteers Intervention”, “Psychological Guidance” and “Emergency Assistance”, set up some demonstration windows for integration both national development livelihood improvement and won some national, provincial and municipal awards in multiple level.

The principal researcher Dr. He Ying in Europe, Mr. Zhu Yanzhang in Gaoxiong and Dr. Zhu Shengjing in Hangzhou have introduced some professional standards from Europe,

Japan, Hong Kong and Taiwan for aging cares, explored regulation for the chief nurse, nursing staff, institutionalized procedures and training mode, and discussed the support transferring from downtown hospitals to the community ones.

As to the implementation of on job training, other principal researchers Ms. Wei Hua in Melbourne, Dr. Zuo Xiaoming in Sydney and Dr. Barbara in Canberra contributed their inputs, conducted a decade tracking study for the international cooperation between the Municipality of Hangzhou and Capital City Canberra, improved the exchange mechanism for China and Australia in the field of senior home care.

To reach the feasible solution for problems of respite service and concise evaluation for care proceed, this study pay efforts also to strain aging society, to maintain social stability, to implement the national policy, and eventually to develop public pension supplement..

As one of the achievements, the successful formulation of local standard on respite service has a positive and far-reaching impact on the implementation of regional sustainable development, economic innovation and harmony and stability.

In fact, this action research provided a comprehensive understanding to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse senior ones. It turned crisis into opportunity and equipped caregiver and even the family members with knowledge and skills of second opinion acquisition theories and methodologies to address elderly needs. It realized the Chinese Dream in “family trust”, “aging at large”, “working efficiency”, “sustainable development” and “community peace”.

It equipped the cities also with the senior ones’ data collection for emergency assistance warm, tracking channels for respite service, quality community care support, a planned program of study consisting of long term care in Chinese family and some additional volunteer training.

Suggestions

Applying Respite Service for Quality Life and Family Members.

Respite care is planned for the primary caregivers, mainly family members and domestic helpers who cares the elderly with a chronic illness or disability to have a short rest. Comparing with the care offered by nanny market, respite service is a teamwork providing professional rehabilitation, care and therapy which is very favorable to elderly.

At the same time, it connects also remote counseling and care such as second opinion, plays an active role in professional counseling. Thus, these elderly who survive with dementia and disability could be favored by the professional care and treatment, which can significantly improve the quality life of the elderly population.

As a matter of fact, respite care is able to reduce the burden of family members and caregivers, to avoid the phenomenon of “a straw to breaks the camel”, to avoid their family members to be collapsed due to pressures from life, social burden and exhausted soul.

Utilizing Available Energy for future Self Reliant and Mutual Pension.

The establishment of P.R. China facilitate 1950’s and 1960’s Baby Boom which brought also some population bonuses. Respite service encourages the “old people” to utilize their available energy to help “very old elderly”, thus to harvest “self-reliant” and “mutual pension” through some platforms such as “time bank” and “Volunteer Recruitment”,

This conversion or exchanging can turn square dance aunts' negative energy releasing such as "burst tire" into positive energy for old (old man) service, thus to improve people's livelihood and well-being.

Compared with the family caregivers who did not use the respite care, these who used the respite care had a low stress state with improved life satisfaction and increased well-being. Whenever the caregiver cannot withstand the pressure anymore, the timely external support and assistance coming from the respite service could reduce their burden significantly.

Developing Local Economy while Promoting International Cooperation.

In the perspective of social and political economy, respite service is a project of well-being for family members doing job, senior citizens enjoying life. The field study of this research team, the newest report from French tourism resort city Nice, and the scientific conclusion from Swiss University in Lugano reveal that respite services can increase massive jobs and create an economic growth pole.

It is worth noting that, conducting international cooperation, this study will integrate respite services in China, France Nice migratory bird model and Lugano Switzerland pension model to achieve complementary advantages, and will promote and lead global pension industry and cooperation.

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