

Summary of the Research Report

International Comparative Study on Care Management and Controlled Service to Support Independent for Older People

1. Incorporating potential for recovery in eligibility decisions and simplifying outcome categories

It was particularly informative to learn that in the countries we studied (the Netherlands, the U.K. and Germany), potential for recovery (i.e., whether a person can recover his/her functions or not) is part of the eligibility factors for long-term care insurance programs and social services. Incorporating the perspective of potential for recovery in eligibility decisions can serve as a foundation for prevention and promotion of independence through rehabilitation. Moreover, simple categorization based on quality of needs, with a certain level of directions, can make it possible to conduct assessment to also look at the person's overall life, strengths and relationships in the community that can be seen only from a close distance. This will make it easier to develop a plan that contributes to the person's well-being and independence.

2. Controlling quality and efficiency in long-term care insurance systems

The countries we studied have been robustly reforming their systems with a sense of crisis, aiming to make them sustainable. The key point in these efforts is "sticking to quality and efficiency" even though their budgets are insufficient. These countries have effective systems to manage benefits. For example, in the Netherlands, insurance companies conduct rigorous audits on quality and efficiency within the budgets. In the U.K., means tests serve as powerful gatekeepers. In Germany, the insurance only covers partially.

3. Developing local resources and revitalizing communities

In order to make systems sustainable, the countries we studied are calling on communities to provide solutions. The informal sector is once again attracting attention due to several factors, including further population aging, a lack of human resources and insufficient budgets. This global trend is called "informalization." Comprehensive support projects (*Sogo Jigyō*) are examples of informalization in Japan and should be considered opportunities for community revitalization.

4. Aiming to build cohesive communities

In the countries we studied, long-term care insurance and social service systems cover not only older people but also people of all generations. In particular, neighborhood social support teams (sociale wijkteams or SWTs) in the Netherlands have the universal nature beyond age and disability categories, where services cover all the citizens who have difficulties in daily living due to illness, disabilities and old age.

5. Independence of individuals/communities/municipalities and productive aging

In the countries we studied, medical professionals guide people to local resources through “social prescription.” Voluntary organizations are also actively engaged in sales and marketing activities. As roles of local communities expand, the concept of productive aging will also become more and more significant. As members of communities, older people will increasingly participate in and contribute to society along with people of other generations. Sometimes they will provide support, and other times they will be supported; this is how their well-being will be promoted.