

Abstracts

Analysis of Recent Increase of Demand for Long-term Care in Japan

Wataru Suzuki (Japan Center for Economic Research)

This paper pertains to a discussion of the practicably difficult methods of predicting "long term demand and manpower estimates for nursing care services", which are indispensable in the formulation of maintenance strategies for the supply of nursing care. In the first instance and by way of preliminary work, the authors utilized the results of an independently conducted nationwide survey on households requiring nursing care, to perform a detailed analysis of the factors underpinning the increased demand for nursing care insurance since its inception. The results revealed that the causes of the increased cost of in-home nursing care services could be broadly explained by (1) the increased percentage of authorization and (2) actual increases in the number of people requiring nursing care itself. The authors subsequently sought out the factor determining the authorization percentage and estimated standards for this ratio at the time at which nursing care insurance would become ubiquitous in society. In addition, they also forecast the future take-up ratio and per capita costs of nursing care. Finally, utilizing the results of simple long-range estimates, it was predicted that nursing care expenses under long-term care insurance in 2010 would amount to somewhere in the order of 8.7 trillion yen.

Present State and Awareness of Care Workers and Future Direction

Yoshikatsu Shinozaki (Health Care Research Institute Inc.)

After the care insurance system was introduced in Japan, labour environment of care workers is adopted by mass media, while it has been somewhat taboo for community care workers in the country to express dissatisfaction or complaints about their working conditions due to prevailing views on welfare services. However, a series of care-related accidents and medical care by care workers have recently come to light, providing an opportunity for constructive improvements in the protection of the rights of care workers to provide the best possible care as well as the rights of community-care recipients to receive such care. The writer is calling for improvements through examination of community care workers' basic attributes, the present state and necessity of their wages and working conditions as well as their awareness for care environment

Job Performance Skills in Community Care

Koichi Ogasawara (Saitama University)

Establishing difficulty rankings of individual tasks in community care and job-performance skill levels may be core areas for study for optimum utilization of care workers' abilities and skills and job matching; promotion of a sustainable skills-based human resource management and treatment system; and the planning and development of a merit-based system, while considering the care insurance system. This article indicates the rationality of skills-based HRM and wage systems in community care and need for a comprehensive two-tier skills-development system to replace the general system currently widely practiced.

Does *Zitan* Improve Workers' Welfare? —Medical Care Analysis Approach

Koichiro Sawano (University of the Ryukyus)

The aim of this paper is to assess the impact of a reduction of working hours (*zitan*) on workers' demand for outpatient medical services. The study focused on the period between 1987 and 1993, years when the Labour Standards Law was revised. Our assumptions prior to the study proved correct; that is, an inverse relationship exists between the amount of leisure time for workers and their demand for outpatient medical care. *Zitan* policies have led to decreased demand for outpatient medical care.