

Study on the Construction of the Day Care Centre for the Elderly in Chinese Communities

LA CONSTRUCTION DES CENTRES DE SOINS JOURS DES PERSONNES ÂGÉES DANS LA COMMUNAUTÉ CHINOISE

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Abstract

The functional orientation of constructing the day care centre for the elderly in communities should be providing life care, health care and rehabilitation and consolation services to the elderly that need them. It is required to fix the constructing scale according to the total number of the elderly and the degree of aging. Housing construction must contain houses for life service, health care and rehabilitation, amusement and supplementary house, etc.

Key words: Community care; Day care centre for the elderly; Construction

Résumé

Construire les communautés âgées de garderie à la vie des personnes âgées ayant besoin de soins, la réhabilitation de la santé, mentale orientation vers le service de consolation fonctionnelle, basée sur la population totale au sein de la communauté et intégrée afin de déterminer le degré de vieillissement de l'échelle de la construction, le contenu de construction de logements services devraient comprendre la vie, la réhabilitation de la santé, les loisirs et autres bâtiments auxiliaires.

Mots-clés: Soins communautaires; Personnes âgées des centres de soins de jour, Construction

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In the process of resolving the problem of population aging, community has become a significant factor. This is not only because community is the main area for the elderly apart from the family, no matter life care, health care and rehabilitation, consolation, or cultural life of them cannot live without the community, but also under the concept that subjects of welfare diversified, community has turned into a subject of liability in resolving the problem of population aging like the government, society, market, family and individuals, especially in resolving the problem of the elderly care, community plays an essential role.

The community care has become an important way in resolving the problem of the elderly care in developed countries, for example, the United Kingdom, the America, Japan, that population aging starts early and turns into a high level. In those countries, a complete system of community care for the elderly has been set up in various aspects such as the policy, system, environment, facility and staffs to make sure that the elderly can live in a familiar community and family in a long term and receive community care in health and hygiene, rehabilitation, life care and consolation. China has promoted the home care service for the elderly in recent years and has stated to build elderly service system based on home, depended on the community and supported by organizations. It also gives support in different degrees to the staffs, funds and facilities and has built home care service centers for the elderly, activity rooms and day care centers in several communities. However, from the current situation it can be found that the orientation of the main function is ambiguous, service object is not clear and the constructing standard is not unified which has not only caused

problems of repeated construction and resource waste but also affect the usage of facilities and quality of the day care for the elderly. This paper starts from the concept of community care and takes consideration on how to perfect the construction of the day care centre for the elderly in Chinese communities and wishes to give some references to the construction of the warfare service for the elderly in Chinese communities.

1. COMMUNITY DAY CARE CENTRE FOR THE ELDERLY – REALISTIC CHOICE FOR RESOLVING THE PROBLEM OF THE ELDERLY CARE

The rapid declination of the fertility rate and the mortality rate has turned China into an aging society in the late 20th century and the speed of the development of the aging population has been very fast. The sixth census taken in November, 2010 shows that the elderly population aged 60 and above has reached 170 million which accounts for 13.26% of the total population and the number is still increasing with 8 million per year. The elderly population will increase to 400 million in 2040. China has stepped into the population aging stage. Due to lack of care in daytime many elderly people have very low life quality and at the same time face various insecurities. As facility that provides day care service to the elderly, the day care centre for the elderly in the community is a way of community care for the elderly to get involved in the daytime and receive care and enjoy family life in the night time. It can not only ease the pressure of family and organizations by providing life care, health care and rehabilitation, entertainment and comprehensive day time services, but also can improve the life quality of the elderly and make sure they can live in the familiar family and community so that to enhance physical and mental health. Therefore, community day care centre for the elderly has become the main method for resolving the elderly care problem in countries around the world and at the same time the realistic choice for China.

2. CURRENT SITUATION OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE DAY CARE CENTRE FOR THE ELDERLY IN CHINESE COMMUNITY AND PROBLEMS

Since the “Star Plan” carried out by Ministry of Civil Affairs of China in 2001, many places have built facilities for the warfare of elderly people in the community such as 3 rooms (community day care centre for the elderly, activity room and medical room), gymnasium and civilization school for citizens. However, it has been very common that many facilities have been left unused

after built up due to the problem of funds, staffs and management in the community and the construction of the day care centre for the elderly has also been stopped. With the increasing of the aging population and the problem in the day care of the elderly, as a means for resolving the day care problem for the elderly, the day care centre in the community has developed again. Shanghai, Shenzhen, Guangzhou, Tianjin and Shenyang etc. have made great effort to promote the construction of the day care centre for the elderly in the community. In addition, in Hong Kong and Taiwan the community day care centre for the elderly have become very mature and they have given great examples for the cities in inland China.

2.1 Current Situation of the Construction of the Community Day Care Centre for the Elderly in China

2.1.1 Community Day Care Centers for the Elderly in Hong Kong and Taiwan

There has been 31 community day care centers in Hong Kong in January 2000 and each of them offers 40 places for the elderly to receive services. They not only provide professional services but also have complete facilities which include various kinds of rehabilitation training equipments, wheelchairs, toilet chairs, quadropods, folding walking frame, bath sitting plates, corner spoons and other daily facilities to provide comprehensive day care service to the elderly. The services that provided by the day care centre is a complete set. It includes (1) meal services; (2) personal care which is mainly taken by the staffs to help the elderly eating, toileting, washing, bathing and hair cutting and so on; (3) health care such as allocation of medicine, injecting medicines, dressing changing, taking blood pressure, examining health conditions and health educations; (4) rehabilitation activities, for example, physiotherapy, ergotherapie, equipment auxiliary motions and so on; (5) social recreation activities to enhance the spiritual pleasure and social participation; (6) supportive services for the elderly minders which provide trainings and directions for the home watchers and nurses; (7) Alzheimer’s patients services. In addition, the day care centre has to provide shuttle services for the elderly.

2.1.2 Community Day Care Centers in Shanghai and Tianjin, China

Shanghai: Shanghai has started to build community day care centers for the elderly in 2008. The Bureau of Civil Affairs in Shanghai has promulgated “Notice regarding allocation on constructing community day care centers for the elderly projects” which provides subsidies to the organizations that have built community day care centers for the elderly. Until now there are 101 day care centers for the elderly in Shanghai. Take the Cao Jiadu street community, Jingan District for example, a day care centre with 680 square meter gross building area has complete facilities and functions. Inside of it there are dining room, recovery room, library, computer room, psychological

counseling room and multi-function activity room, etc.. There are also electrically leisure sofas, bath equipment, washing machines with dryer, massage armchairs, rehabilitation equipments. The centre can provides more than 30 kinds of services to the elderly. In order to pick the elderly to the centre, the centre has sent vehicles to give free shuttles for them and has resolving the problem of day care for the elderly in the community in a large scale.

Tianjin: Tianjin prepared to build community day care centers for the elderly in 107 streets communities and 137 rural town and villages and 300 day care service stations in communities and natural villages in 3 years from 2009. In March 2009, the Bureau of Civil Affairs, the Finance Bureau and the Labor and Social Security Bureau has jointly issued "Suggestion on the construction of the day care centers for the elderly" which clearly states "to establish and perfect community day care centre system that has the main functions in life care, dining and food delivery, health and medical rehabilitation, spiritual comfort to serve mainly for the elderly that have difficulties in living, movements and also the empty nesters". The document also stipulates that the day care centre (station) must have the main function in life care, dining and food delivery, health and medical rehabilitation, spiritual comfort to serve mainly for the elderly that have difficulties in living, movements and also the empty nesters. It also has to build lounge, dining rooms, reading room, activity rooms, medical and rehabilitation room and school (lessons) for the senior, etc.. At the same time, the document has stipulated the construction scale of the day care centre for the elderly. It states that the scale should not be less than 300 square meter and also has separate stipulations on the areas of the lounge, dining and cooking rooms, activity rooms, medical and rehabilitation room and school (lessons) for the senior.

2.2 Problems in the Construction of the Community Day Care Centre for the Elderly

2.2.1 Small in Scale and Amount

This is one of the problems in the construction of the community day care centre for the elderly. The construction of the elderly service system in Chinese communities has been improved in recent years. Many communities have built up the community service centre and Stars home for the aged and so on. However, these services are designed for the healthy elderly and the facilities for the half disabled elderly are still not complete. There are several communities do not have community day care facilities for the elderly and some that even have those centers or stations are very small and limited in one or two rough houses which cannot meet the need of the increasing amount of the half disabled elderly.

2.2.2 Housing Shortage and Lack of Area

A comprehensive and completed community day care centre not only provides basic daily services such as meals, beverages and bath for the elderly, but also has to provide simple fundamental rehabilitation and nursing services for the elderly that have difficult in activities or have functional obstacles. However, community day care centers have been limited by the areas they locate currently and they can normally provide simple meal services not to say health rehabilitation rooms and entertainment rooms. Due to the restriction on the housing in some places, the community day care centers have to construct the rest rooms, dining room and activity rooms together which have restricted the development of the service. The lack of housing of the community day care centre cannot only caused the lack of services for the elderly that have difficulty in self care, but also cannot meet the need of many elderly that depend on the wheelchairs. Although many communities have built facilities for the day care centers, the lack of space and construction field have made those facilities cannot meet the need of the elderly and also resulted in great resources waste.

2.2.3 Facilities Equipment Shortage

The work of the community day care centre for the elderly is based on certain facilities as the fundamental guarantee. At present, most community day care centre for the elderly only provide basic catering equipments or entertainment facilities. The facilities can hardly meet the need of the service from the community day care centre for the elderly. There is a great shortage in health care and rehabilitation training equipments. Besides, there is no shuttle service for the elderly in most community day care centre for the elderly which has caused many problems to the service quality and efficiency.

2.2.4 Lack of Standardization in Architectural Design

The object of the services provided by the community day care centre is the elderly that have difficulty in self care and movements who depend on wheel chairs or other people's care. Therefore, Barrier Free Design has to be fully considered when constructing the community day care centers. However, from the current situation we can find that most community day care centers for the elderly have been transformed from the unused resources in the community. Some of them are in the basements and some are in the top floors of a four or five floors building. The housing of those places is not only rational but also does not contain elevators or barrier free facilities. Some places with better conditions are only limited with some handrails in the aisles. Many community day care centers for the elderly even have floor tiles that do not prevent slippery and the toilets are very narrow. The architectural design of the community day care centers needs standardization urgently.

3. CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT PERFECTING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE COMMUNITY DAY CARE CENTRE FOR THE ELDERLY

3.1 Service Object

Care service is based on the health condition and self-care ability of the elderly. According to this, we can divide the elderly people into 3 types: the first type of the elderly people is the ones that in good health condition and have ability to take care of themselves. The biggest need of them is spiritual comfort and financial support but not an urgent need for care service. The second type is the ones that totally lost the ability to take care of themselves such as the paralyzed elderly. They need more professional nursing and care service which must rely on the professional organizations and nurses. The last type is the ones that between the first and the second. This type of elderly people has certain requirement for the care service and most of them live in their own homes and communities. If the family members cannot provide effective care to them, the community will be the reliable provider of care service.

3.2 Functional Orientation

3.2.1 Life Care

The main purpose is to provide basic life care service to the elderly that includes day time rest, catering and bath, etc. so as to help the elderly finish eating, toileting and bathing and other daily activities with the assistance of the staffs. It should provide spaces for the elderly to take rest in the daytime.

3.2.2 Health Care and Rehabilitation Service

The community day care centre must provide simple hygiene and health care services to the elderly people, for example, simple medical examinations and basic medical treatment in emergency. In addition, rehabilitation service should also be taken by the centre for some elderly people that have chronic diseases, mental or physical disabilities to help them recover basic body functions or slow down the speed of the recession of the body.

3.2.3 Spiritual Comfort

The main content is to carry out related entertainment activities and spiritual comfort activities, for instance, chat, playing poker and chess, practicing painting and writing, etc., to enrich the cultural life of the elderly and provides all kinds of opportunities to encourage them to take part in the community life and make sure they have good body and mental conditions.

3.3 The Construction Scale

The construction scale of the community day care centre depends on the number of the objects of its service, that is to say, the number of the elderly person. When determining the construction scale of the community

day care centre, we should take full consideration on the number of the elderly people in the street and community and at the same time the tendency of the development of aging population should also be considered. The scale can be determined according to the two factors mentioned above and also the economic development level and the scale of service.

3.4 Content of the Construction

The community day care centre should provide life care, health care and rehabilitation service, spiritual comfort services to the elderly. The main content of constructing the community day care centre should include housing construction, construction equipment, spaces and basic facilities and so on. Housing constructions should mainly include rooms for the life service, health care and rehabilitation service, entertainment and supplementary rooms. The construction equipment must include power supply, water supply and drainage, heating and ventilation, communication, fire control and internet equipments and so on. Apart from the basic spaces as road, parking lot, and grass land, the spaces should also contain outdoor activity and rehabilitation areas. Basic facilities must include related facilities of life service, health care and rehabilitation service, entertainment and monitor and management. In addition, there should be vehicles to pick up and send the elderly conveniently and easily.

Community care is an important part of the home-based care for the aged people policy in China. From the view of a long-term development, most daily life care and spiritual and cultural life of the elderly in China will happen in family and community. Therefore, strengthening the construction of the community endowment service is a key aspect for guarantee the quality of community endowment service. However, the construction of the Chinese community endowment service is far behind the actual needs at present and in practice, staffs, funds and service standards are all in an early stage. We need to perfect policies, carry out related construction standards, increase input, standardize services and complete hardware constructions. This is a long-term process which needs support and efforts from the government, society, community, family, market and various social departments.

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