



AHWIN

Asia Health and Wellbeing Initiative

Nursing care in Japan

Office of Healthcare Policy
Cabinet Secretariat
Government of Japan

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1. Nursing care in Japan

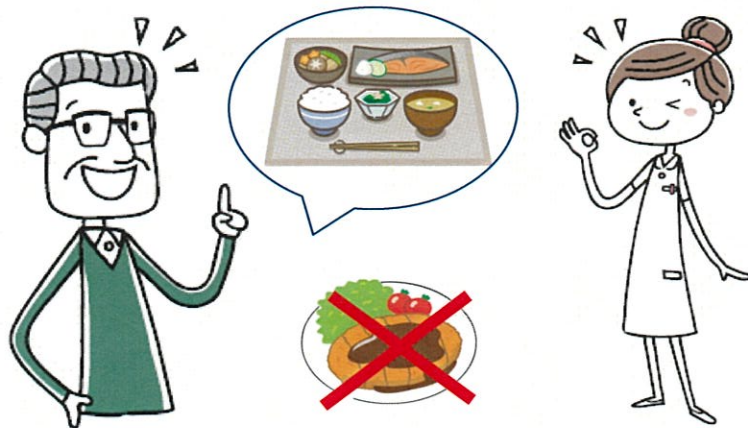
Introduction: Nursing care in Japan

■ Concepts for nursing care

- In nursing care in Japan, “Support for self-dependence” and “Preservation of dignity” are, respectively, concepts to prevent elderly people who require nursing care from becoming bedridden and that aim for the lifestyle that the individual desires.

Preservation of dignity

We are constantly observing whether the users are living the life they wish to, and providing them with tailored care and support



Support for self-dependence

More than simply just taking care of the elderly people that require nursing care, care will be provided to bring out the potential of the elderly people through monitoring what movements and actions they are able to do.



Introduction: Nursing care in Japan

■ Structure of nursing care services

- In Japan, those who are 65 years old or older with the Certification of Needed Support/Long-Term Care*¹, or those who are between 40 and 64 years old with Certification of Needed Support/Long-Term Care due to a Specific Disease that requires caregiving can receive nursing-care services with public nursing insurance. Nursing care services can be mainly divided into “Services in facilities/residences” and “In-home services.”

Services in facilities/residence

People can move into facilities etc. and have 24-hours nursing care services. Mainly, assistance/nursing-care services for overall daily life will be provided, such as meals, excretion, bathing, etc.



In-home services

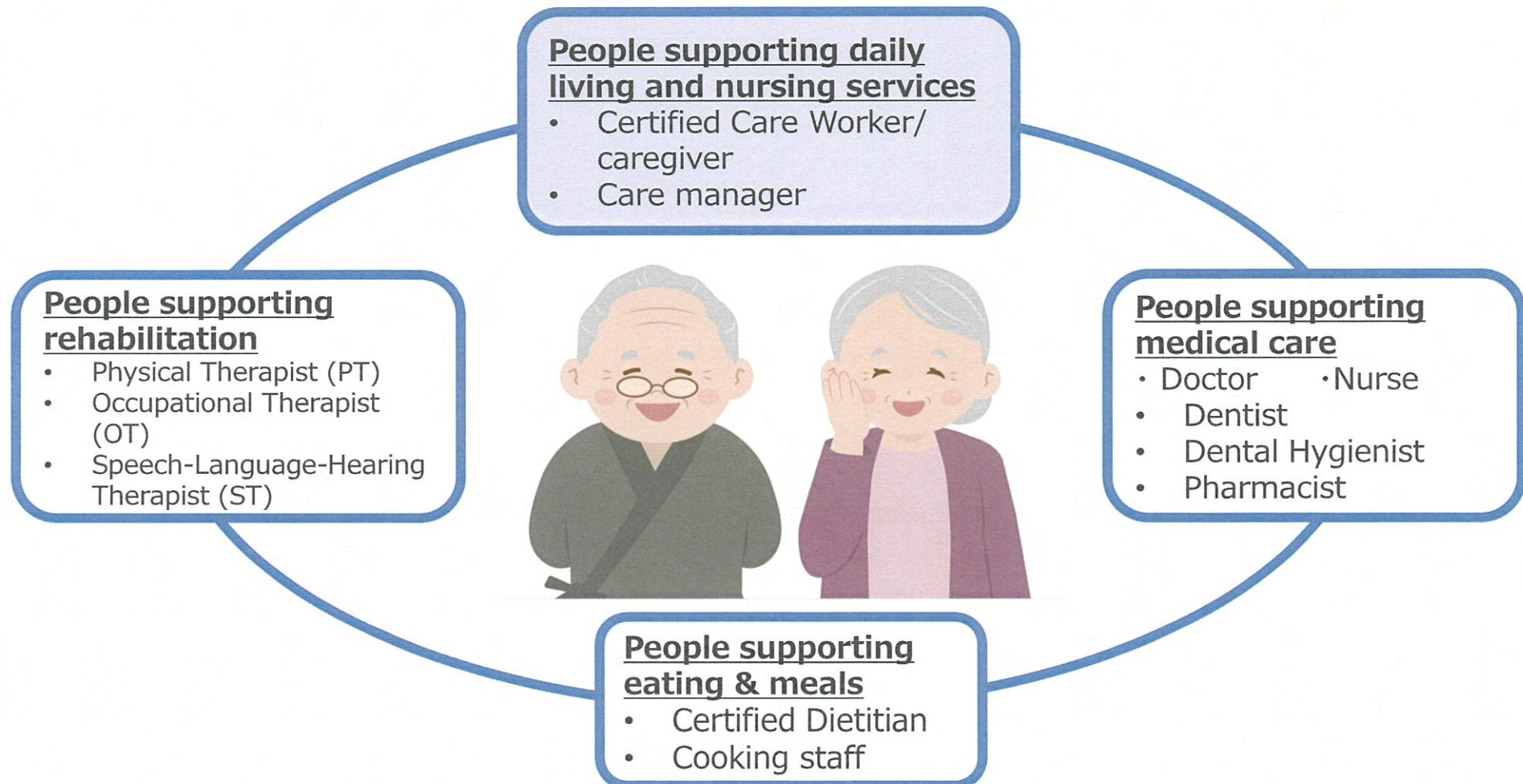
Users can maintain their daily life, staying at home where they are used to living and either visit a nursing-care facility or having care staff come to them at home to provide support/nursing services.



*¹ To use public long-term care insurance in Japan, users' conditions are rated by the following seven stages: Requiring Support Level 1 ~ 2 and Requiring Long-Term Care Level 1 ~ 5. A person under a condition of Requiring Support can basically live a daily life alone but requires partial care. A person under a condition of Need for Long-Term Care has a decline in movement functions, ability to think / understand and requires long-term care at home or in a facility. The larger the number for Requiring Long-Term Care becomes, the necessity of care increases. The type and frequency of services to be offered vary depending on the level of Requiring Support / Requiring Long-Term Care.

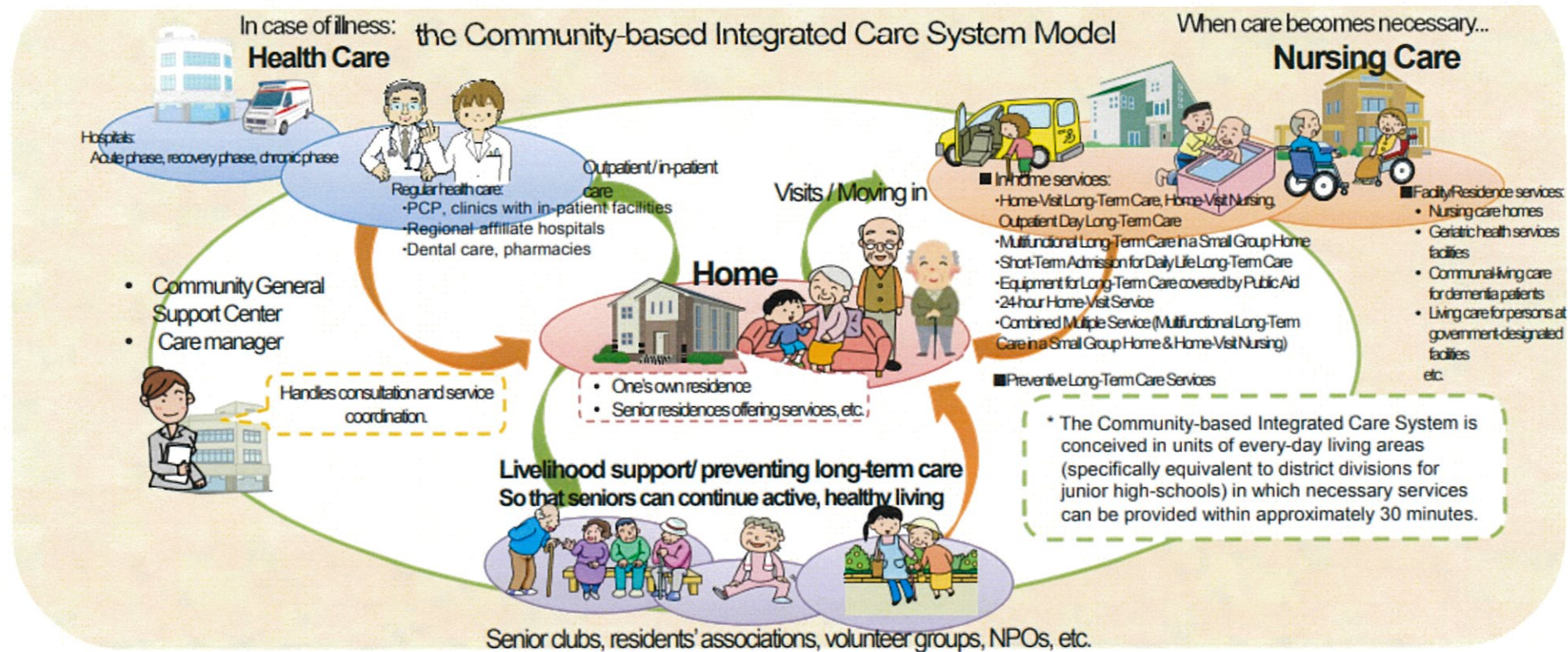
People supporting nursing care users

In the field of nursing care in Japan, a wide range of people from those without caregiving experience to professional care workers with qualifications as certified care workers all work in mutual coordination to provide services to users.



The Community-based Integrated Care System

- Japan entered “aging society” (aging rate *1: 7%) in 1970, “aged society” (aging rate: 14%) in 1994, and “super-aged society” (aging rate: 21%) in 2007. Japan, as a global frontrunner in coping with aging, has accumulated long-term care techniques and know-how that can be utilized in Asian countries where aging has been advancing.
 - The pillar of long-term care in Japan is the “Community-Based Integrated Care System”. This system provides elderly people with housing, medical care, long-term care, preventive care and livelihood support in an integrated manner, to enable them to continue living in their own ways in their familiar communities to the last stage of their lives.
- *1: Percentage of the population aged 65 and over to total population.



Five elements of nursing care contributing to “support for self-dependence”

To achieve “self-independence support”, support activities need to be implemented not just by taking personal care of elderly people but also with an aim to enable them to live a daily life by their own will and residual function *2. By maintaining their physical functions and abilities for daily activities, it aims to prevent them from being in a condition of need for long-term care *3, and even if they lapse into the need for long-term care, it still aims to recuperate them by preventing deterioration of the condition. It is designed to enable elderly people to live a healthy and independent life in their familiar communities as long as possible, while respecting their personalities and their own lifestyles.

Long-term care contributing to “self-independence support” has the following five elements. As long-term care services contributing to “self-dependence support” of the elderly, such as preventive long-term care and rehabilitation, have been widely implemented at care-giving sites in Japan, these care techniques and know-how can be acquired through technical intern training. Please check Facility Search for details of measures implemented by individual facilities *4.

Five elements that contribute to “self-dependence support”

Nutrition /
Water Intake



Eating /
Swallowing



Excretion



Activity /
Participation



Cognitive Function



*2: Abilities maintained by the person.

*3: In Japan, this means any condition that requires care on a continual and steady basis for a long period of time (two weeks or over) due to injury / disease / disability.

*4: The measures by individual facilities posted on this website have been selected based on self-recommendation from each facility. It does not mean that they are recommended by the Japanese government and Office of Healthcare Policy, Cabinet Secretariat.

Five elements of nursing care contributing to “support for self-dependence”



Securing of Nutrition / Water Intake (Nutrition / Water Intake)

Maintaining / Improving of nutritional status through offering of well-balanced meals set by a registered dietitian, correcting of dehydration through offering of water according to preference, etc.



Maintaining of oral functions, eating / swallowing functions (Eating / Swallowing)

Shifting to oral ingestion or regular diet, etc. by oral care, eating and swallowing training, or appropriate gastrostomy



Maintaining of excretion functions (Excretion)

Obtaining of the feeling of natural bowel movement through guided excretion or laxative adjustment (reducing of laxatives) to achieve natural excretion, acquiring of movements and actions for excretion, shifting to natural excretion, etc.



Securing of the amount of activities within the range possible for each user (Activity / Participation)

Creating of environments to promote leaving from bed, walking, activities to prevent bedridden condition, etc., as the rehabilitation management targets



Identification and appropriate handling of a decline in cognitive function (Cognitive Function)

Responses based on the understandings of dementia, alleviation of peripheral symptoms through adjustments of the surroundings, understandings by a user, family and supporter

Major types and overview of nursing care services

Under the Japanese long-term care insurance system, the available services are classified as follows.

The contents of the list below can be viewed in 11 languages such as Japanese, English, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Thai, and Indonesian on the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare website.

https://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/newpage_10548.html

Type of Service		Outline
Services in facilities/ residence	Intensive Care Home for the Elderly	The service is for the aged who require 24-hour care and are difficult to tend at home. The service includes meals, bathing and toileting cares. (In principle, care level 3 and above are eligible for this service).
	Geriatric Health Services Facility	Those who need assistance to be able to live at home can enter. We provide necessary medical care and daily life care such as nursing, long-term care, and rehabilitation.
	Daily life long term care admitted to a Specified Facility	Residents in fee-based nursing care facilities have access to long-term care services and assistance for their daily lives.
In-home services	Outpatient day long-term care (Day service)	Caregivers help with meals and bathing. They provide training to maintain and improve bodily functions and services to improve oral function at a day-care facility
	Outpatient rehabilitation (day care)	Occupational, physical, and speech language-hearing therapists provide rehabilitation at hospitals and care facilities for improvement and maintenance of mental and physical functions so that the service user can live independently.
	Short-term admission for daily life long term care (Short stay)	Service users stay at care facilities for a short term. Caregivers help with meals and bathing and provide training to maintain and improve bodily functions. The service aims to reduce the burden on family caregivers.

Source: "Long - Term Care Insurance System" (from the multilingual leaflet) Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare
<https://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/12300000/000614772.pdf>

Major types and overview of nursing care services

Type of Service	Outline	
In-home services	Home-visit long-term care	Caregivers visit a service user's home to help with bathing, toileting, cooking, laundry, cleaning, and other household chores.
	Home-visit Nursing	Nurses and other practitioners assist with daily living such as hygienic care and toileting. Medical care is provided as needed under the instruction of physicians so that service users can continue to live at home.
	Rental service of Equipment for long-term care covered by public aid	Service users can hire assistive devices that can be utilized to facilitate their daily lives (wheelchair, bed, etc.) .
	Multifunctional long-term care in small group homes	Day-care facilities are the core of this service. The service is provided in combination with short-term stays and home-visit care services. Caregivers provide assistance with daily living and functional training, according to service users' choices.
	Regular visiting/on demand type home visit long-term/nursing Care	Services are provided 24/7 on a flexible basis according to the service users' physical and mental conditions by periodic home visits and emergency call outs. Caregivers and nurses work together to provide comprehensive care and nursing services.

Source: "Long - Term Care Insurance System" (from the multilingual leaflet) Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare
<https://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/12300000/000614772.pdf>

People supporting nursing care users (outlines of work by occupation)

Care Worker/ caregiver	Provides a user with physical care (care for bathing, meals, excretion, etc.), livelihood support (cleaning, laundry, etc.), mental care by becoming a conversation partner, etc., and also providing family of the user with consultation, advices, etc., related to long-term care.
Certified Care Worker	A person with expert skills and knowledge who engages in the business of providing care and also provides care matching the physical disabilities or mental disorders of the patient, and gives instructions to other caregivers.
Care Manager (Care support specialist)	Provides consultation for a person requiring support / long-term care or their family, creating a plan for available long-term care service, etc. (long-term care plan), and coordinating with a local government, a long-term care service provider / facility.
Doctor/Physician	Provides a user and/or his/her family with instructions and advices under medical management, and also providing a Care Manager with necessary information and rehabilitation instructions.
Nurse	Implements health management (vital checks, prevention of occurrence / spread of infectious diseases, etc.) and drug management (drug administration management) for users.
Dentist	Provides treatment of cavities and tooth-related diseases, instructions for tooth brushing as a preventive therapy to keep teeth, scaling, etc.
Dental Hygienist	Provides preventive measures for tooth and/or gum diseases such as cavities and periodontal diseases, under direct instructions from a dentist.
Pharmacist	Checks a prescription issued by a doctor, dispenses medicine, and provides medication instructions, administration, etc. Also, checks side effects, etc. of prescribed drugs by comparing them with the patient's medical history, including allergic constitution, to confirm that there is no problem with the patient taking the medication concerned.
Rehabilitation specialist	Physical Therapist (PT) : supports maintenance / improvement of movement functions of users by using physical means (exercise, heating, electricity, water, light therapy, etc.)
	Occupational Therapist (OT) : promotes health of users through essential daily life motions such as housework, changing of clothes, work related to occupation, hobby, etc.
	Speech-Language-Hearing Therapist (ST) specialized in hearing impairments, speech dysfunctions, phonation disorders and deglutition disorders.
Certified Dietitian	Providing meals and nutritional guidance to maintain the health of people