

Development and Exploration of Home-Care in Community Mode -----Taking Donghu Community of Qingyang as an Example

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Abstract: With the aggravation of population aging in China, the aged-care problem has become a significant problem in social life. However, due to changes in family structure and impact of social factors, the traditional family security cannot meet the current needs of aged-care in China, and social aged-care dominated by family-care in community service becomes more and more important. Taking Donghu Community in Qingyang City as an example, this paper analyzes the current situation and existing problems of family-care in community service, with countermeasures put forward.

Keywords: aging; home-care mode; social aged-care

1. INTRODUCTION

With the progress of science and technology and economic development, people's living standards have been improved, the population mortality rate has decreased, and the average life expectancy has been prolonged with quantity of elderly population increasing. According to the sixth national census in 2010, the population of China had reached 1.37 billion by the end of 2010. There were about 170 million people aged 60 and over, accounting for 13.26% of the total population, while there were 119 million people aged 65 and over, accounting for 8.87% of the total population. Apparently, the aging society of China is beyond dispute. Moreover, entry of aging society with underdeveloped economy of China is a typical case of getting old before getting rich. The elderly population has become a huge group with special needs, but existing nursing homes cannot meet housing requirements of elderly to a great extent, while the traditional family security is also in a weakening state. As a result of development of market economy, the opportunity for young people to take care of elderly has been reduced greatly by working outside; in addition, the amount of empty nest family is also increasing, with family security function weakened further. The objective reality requires the community to strengthen care and services for the elderly urgently, as urgency and necessity of community care service have been shown increasingly.

According to searching and reading previous research literature, many scholars have studied the current type of supporting mode in China. However, regardless of division standard, family security and social aged-care are indispensable. In short, family security is a mode with aged-care resources provided by the family members; while social aged-care means that aged-care resources are provided by the society. In the course of historical evolution, the gradual socialization of family functions is a sign of a mature society. The process with aged-care function borne by the society gradually and necessary aged-care resources bought by the family embodies the socialization of aged-care. In accordance with the above discussion, the family-oriented support mode is facing severe challenges, as promoting social support vigorously and facilitating transition from family support to social support is the inevitable trend of aged-care approach of China.

2. Connotation of Home-Care in Community Mode

Home-Care, the "community service plus home care for the elderly", is dominated with door-to-door service in family care service of elderly and supplemented by service of nursery for the elderly with social forces integrated. As a socialized aged-care mode of self-care plus community assistance, it is quite common in western countries. It appeared in China nearly a decade ago as a historical extension of traditional family care. Home-Care for the aged is aged support in community rather than family care, as it is based on individuals, families, communities and the state. It takes home-based care for the aged as the form, community care network as the basis and national system, policy and legal management as the guarantee. As a aged-care system combined with family care and social care, it absorbs advantages and maneuverability of family care and social care, with the best combination of family care and institutional care concentrated in the community.

It is a new aged-care approach put forward for the tremendous aging problem faced by China in the social transition period of the first half of the 21st century. With intensified social aging degree, families are increasingly miniaturized and centralized. Since

social care cannot replace family care completely due to the current economic development, the key of solving such problem lies in exploration and establishment of an aged-care mode in line with social development of China. It shall be a complementary combination of advantages of family care and social care, which is also a feature of the home-care mode. It has two main forms: by dispatching professional service staff to provide care services for the elderly at home, establishing a service system relied on professional service on the basis of community service with family care being the core; establishing daytime service center for the elderly in communities to provide day care services for the elderly. Home-care is generally led by the civil affairs department, arranging aged laid-off female workers in the street community to work as family-care staff, take care of daily life of the elderly of lonely family with difficulties in life and help the elderly to enjoy a healthy and happy life in the form of "family nursing home".

3. Situations and Problems of Home-care of Donghu Community

In recent years, with reform and promotion of social aged-care service, home-care service is subject to the attention of all levels of government and the society gradually with a certain development. According to survey of home-care in Donghu Community, old solitary people and elders living with spouses account for about 55.10% of the total sample, with empty nesters taking more than half of the sum. Elders living with children and grandchildren accounts for 44.89% of the total sample. Compared with the former, it takes nearly half of proportion with less weight. The excessive proportion of aged population causes heavy burden to children and outstanding problem of family care. What's more, with social development, continuous enhancement of people's living standard and transition of career concept and impact of population flow, the oldest olds and empty nesters will become more and more with increasingly heavy burden of family and social care. Therefore, home-care in community will develop in boom to alleviate pressure on family and society.

Although most of the elderly want to live with their children, as the proportion accounts up to 64.29% in the survey, 30.61% of the elders hope that the community can provide home care services. In addition, more than half of the elders in the survey are willing to use smart phones with tremendous promotional role in construction of the future intelligent aged-care system. Consequently, home-care in community has drawn much attention from the government as a development orientation of aged-care mode. However, in general, out of impact of traditional ideas and the national economic system, community home-care service has also some problems for attention and solution. The following aspects can be concluded:

(1) Insufficient Concept Awareness

Although in face of severe challenge of population aging, relevant management and service departments of Donghu Community are of insufficient awareness of the importance and urgency of carrying out and strengthening the service of community support for the elderly with backward concepts. They fail to include the community aged-care service in the scope of reflecting the level of social progress, improving people's quality of life and maintaining social stability with relatively poor service awareness.

(2) Unsound Policies and Regulations

Entry of aging society with underdeveloped economy of China is a typical case of getting old before getting rich. Home-care for the aged, an emerging aged-care system, is still in the construction stage for implementation in local communities with unsound policies and regulations, as many guidelines have yet to be improved. In addition to the economic system reform, social community needs to undertake dual tasks of "poverty alleviation" and "old-age service", so that policies and regulations cannot take home-care in community into account, with legitimate rights and interests of the elderly in some places are yet to be guaranteed.

(3) Insufficient Service Items

① Services provided by the community are relatively single. It turns out that the services provided are dominated with recreational activities and health care, accounting for 47.3% and 28% respectively. Since the items of community service are too less, living requirements of elders are hardly met with problems in aged-care. In addition, life care provided by the community accounts only 7.3% and material assistance provided accounts only 5.3%. Actually, it should be the top aspect of concern for daily life of elderly, but the proportion of the two is too little.

② Health care is unsatisfactory. Health care for the elderly is relatively scarce despite a certain proportion, as patients could and dare not seek medical advice for high medical costs. Along with annual increase of medical expense, medical insurance, urban and rural social assistance and subsidies for elderly are relatively low, as many elders meet severe problems in medical treatment, so an exclusive health care institution is urgently needed by elders.

③ Cultural and sports facilities for the elderly are not enough. Compared with rich and colorful cultural and recreational sports facilities and various activities suitable for the young people, there are less facilities and activities suitable for elders, so that they may feel boring in life.

④ The utilization rate of existing old-age facilities is low. On the one hand, elders cannot afford the high charge; on the other hand, facility conditions and management service level of existing old-age facilities are far from satisfactory.

(4) Imperfect Service Functions

First of all, when it comes to the development of home-care for the aged of Donghu Community, there is a shortage of funds and a serious shortage of inputs, and the preferential policies of land use, tax relief, government subsidies and other preferential policies are not very supportive, which restricts the rapid development of home-care in community service. Secondly, the nonsystematic organization and coordination of home-care service, low quality and professionalism of service providers restrict the development of home-care for the aged. At present, most of the aged-care service providers in the community are those who work only on the basis of humanitarianism and experience, and have not received the relevant professional education or training on the knowledge of aged-care services. From the survey of the satisfaction degree of the Donghu Community aged-care service, it is found that 18% of the elderly are satisfied with the community aged-care service, 39% of the elderly are relatively satisfied, 28% of the elderly feel general and 13% of the elderly are dissatisfied. It is not difficult to draw a conclusion that the lack of experience not only affects the quality of aged-care services, but also restricts the development of the aged-care cause, so that the elderly have difficulties in such daily activities as cooking, cleaning, outings, shopping, clothing and laundry. Moreover, from the viewpoint of service content, the aged-care service provided in Donghu Community focuses on a number of simple recreational activities with little concern on material assistance, life care and legal rights protection. On the other hand, the volunteer service team in the community is obviously insufficient, which is mainly manifested in the lack of number and specialized management and training of the volunteers, resulting in failure to serve the community well.

(5) Intelligent Aged-care Service Faces Challenges
With the rapid development of the economy, the Internet has entered millions of households and mobile phones, computers and other intelligent products have become an important part of people's lives. However, the elderly are unfamiliar with the concept of intelligence, and they do not know how to use digital products such as mobile phones and computers. Since their ability to touch new things or learn new skills is hindered by literacy, age, and physical condition, they are less sensitive to digital products than young people, are not interested in mobile phones and computers, and do not want to use apps that provide aged-care services. So in the future, we should spare no efforts in turning to Internet for aged-care services.

4. Countermeasures and Suggestions

In order to improve the elderly's satisfaction to the community service and deal with a series of problems, the Donghu Community should further establish and perfect the aged-care service system. The home-care

in community service is a social system project with far-reaching significance and benefits to the elderly in all aspects of social life and millions of households. In order to build this project, we should give full play to the support of the Government, community organizations and community public. In view of the present situation and existing problems of the home-care service in Donghu Community, the following countermeasures and suggestions are put forward to develop and strengthen the service.

(1) Strengthening the Understanding of Concept

The home-care in community service is a strategic measure to meet the challenge of population aging, satisfying the needs of the elderly and promoting the sustainable development of population aging. In the course of development, we should strengthen the understanding of the importance and urgency of the aged-care service of the management and service departments of the Donghu Community, strengthen the theoretical research, increase the propaganda and capital investment, and formulate preferential policies and encourage the development. At the same time, we should standardize management, clarify responsibilities, and strive to improve service levels and quality of service.

(2) Perfecting Policies and Regulations

Qingyang Municipal Government is supposed to unite local legal department to formulate relevant policies without violating the national constitution, perfect the aged-care regulations, form a complete home-care service system suitable for local development, comprehensively cover community construction, service charge, community management and so on as well as make it gradually legalized and institutionalized so that the protection of the rights of the elderly is truly implemented.

(3) Improving Service Items

①Extending service items. Donghu Community shall increase the support and help for the elderly in the life care, material assistance, and enhance psychological counseling, spiritual comfort, legal rights and other items in addition to recreational activities and health care to promote the elderly's spiritual needs while gaining material needs.

②Optimizing health care services. Donghu Community shall appropriately reduce the proportion of medical expenses, really implement the reimbursement of medical insurance and configure professional medical service staff to offer preferential care to the elderly in the community.

③Configuring cultural and sporting facilities. Donghu Community shall purchase or raise a variety of sports equipment from the society for the elderly to use, helping them to organize all kinds of access to enrich their lives.

④ Increasing utilization of facilities. Donghu Community shall appropriately reduce the fees for related facilities and improve the management level of the aged-care services.

(4) Improving Service Level

First of all, we should expand the fund-raising channel and establish a diversified investment mechanism to solve the problem of insufficient funds. To this end, Qingyang Municipal Government should increase the financial investment, establish a budget system for the aged-care service, encourage and support the enterprises and institutions and social organizations to set up home-care in community service so as to raise more funds and promote the development of Donghu Community. Secondly, we should improve the training mechanism such as pre-job training and on-the-job training for the community's aged-care service providers, to enhance the professional level and service quality, and to improve the satisfaction degree of the elderly. Thirdly, we should establish corresponding volunteer service team, strengthen the training and management of volunteers and highlight the volunteer service prescription to attract more volunteers by increasing the publicity of the community's home-care services so as to expand the sphere scope of home-care service in the community and promote its sustainable development.

(5) Promoting the Intelligent Development

It is obvious that the elderly are not as sensitive to intelligent products as young people, so the implementation of intelligent home-care services in the Donghu Community is blocked. However, the development of economy and the progress of science and technology have pushed the home-care service to be more personalized, humanitarian and informatized, intellectualization is an inevitable trend. Qingyang Municipal Government should encourage the community to establish training institutions for the elderly, hire professionals to explain the knowledge of intelligent products, enhance the elderly's understanding of modern society and information, and learn to use electronic products. Secondly, Donghu Community should perfect the information service platform, provide a variety of services to increase the elderly's recognition of intelligence services in the community. Once again, the community can simulate intelligent home-care services, highlight its convenience, effectiveness and security, and enhance the elderly's interest in learning electronic products.

In a word, the community's home-care service is an inevitable trend from Qingyang Donghu Community, to China and even throughout the whole world under the new social and historical conditions. We should comprehensively develop community home-care service to meet the needs of the elderly at different levels, improve the quality of service, promote the sustainable development of home-care services and respond to population aging.

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