

The FY2022 Health and Global Policy Institute (HGPI) Dementia Policy Project

Compilation of Good Examples for Early Detection, Intervention, and Support for Dementia

March 2023



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Introduction

Health and Global Policy Institute (HGPI) has made continuous efforts to identify and address various policy issues surrounding dementia. In July 2022, we presented policy recommendations based on knowledge acquired over the course of those activities titled, “The Future of Dementia Policy 2022: Deepening Dementia Policies Centered on People Living with Dementia and their Families to Lead Global Society.” In those recommendations, we arranged topics for future dementia policy in terms of four perspectives: the social environment, care, research, and political leadership. We have presented recommendations focusing on “care” among those four perspectives with the objective of advancing measures for early detection, intervention, and support for dementia.

From the time the Government of Japan formulated the Five-Year Plan for the Promotion of Dementia Measures (the Orange Plan) in 2012 to today, dementia policies in Japan have consistently included early detection, intervention, and support as key topics. However, the forms of support that are necessary in the early phases of dementia are difficult to grasp, and there are currently blank periods in which people are not being provided with sufficient support. It has been reported that social isolation tends to worsen during such blank periods, which lowers quality of life (QOL) for the parties most affected. To help address such issues, a system has been established in which local governments (those classified as basic municipalities) play central roles in comprehensive support programs classified as community support projects within the Long-Term Care Insurance System, while prefectures (or local governments serving wider areas) provide support for those programs. This means that progress in efforts to promote early detection, intervention, and support are heavily influenced by the capacities of local governments. To further promote these efforts throughout the country, it will be important to disseminate initiatives horizontally, from innovative municipalities to other municipalities. Promoting early detection, intervention, and support, however, is not something that should depend entirely on the solitary efforts of officials at municipal governments. Expectations are high for wide-ranging collaboration with health and welfare professionals in communities and other multi-stakeholders to build effective and efficient systems for responding to this issue within the framework of the Integrated Community Care System. There have been examples of initiatives in which municipalities collaborated with parties like citizen and patient advocacy organizations, healthcare and long-term care facilities, and private companies, and it is desirable for there to be further progress in such initiatives driven by diverse stakeholders. With the cooperation of a number of stakeholders who are advancing groundbreaking initiatives for this area, we have created this compilation of good examples to present details of each initiative, challenges that have been overcome, and innovative measures taken to carry out each plan in hopes that these practices can be spread horizontally among municipalities.

Acknowledgments

We express our sincerest gratitude to everyone who took part in preparing this compilation of good examples by agreeing to be interviewed.

List of interview participants (in no particular order)

Wakasa Dementia Link Worker Team
Alzheimer’s Association Japan, Tottori Branch
Miyagi People With Dementia Network (DENMY)
Permanent Dementia Café Phoenix and Clinic, Kyoto Integrated Center for Dementia
Oouchi Hospital Northeastern Tokyo Metropolitan Medical Center for Dementia Diseases (Arakawa City, Adachi City, and Katsushika City)
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Longevity and Social Welfare Division, Welfare and Health Policy Bureau, Welfare and Health Department, Wakayama Prefecture

A resident-driven community development initiative to make Wakasa a town where people can say, “My family member has dementia” (Wakasa Dementia Link Worker Team)

Key points of this example

The Wakasa Dementia Link Worker Team is a civil society organization based in Mihama Town in Fukui Prefecture. It was established by the family members of people with dementia and professionals in healthcare and welfare and was borne out of the lived experiences of its members. Based on the concept of “Having citizens deal with dementia independently,” the Team provides healthcare- and welfare-related information and emotional support to people living with dementia and their families at monthly study sessions and workshops. In addition to such activities, the Team has expanded its efforts in recent years with initiatives like the formulation of a guidebook compiled from the perspectives of people living with dementia and their families.

Efforts to train link workers in Wakasa

One event that led to the establishment of the Wakasa Dementia Link Worker Team was when its secretary-general saw no improvement in their own mother’s condition when she was receiving medication and undergoing other treatments as part of long-term care. During consultations with their mother’s attending physician, they decided they had to learn more about dementia themselves. As a result, in 2015, they started holding study sessions once every month with people who were involved in their mother’s long-term care. The group had about twenty members at first. They decided on various issues and themes like prevention, blank periods, and post-diagnostic support and invited specialists to give lectures. Then, in April 2016, the Wakasa Dementia Link Worker Team became formally recognized as a civil society organization with the objective of establishing support targeting the first and second year after diagnosis, a period when information is particularly lacking.

“Link workers,” the concepts the group is named for, are a type of staff member that was first established in Scotland, U.K. that specializes in providing a system for post-diagnostic support for dementia. In Scotland, these link workers provide support to people who are diagnosed with dementia and their families during the period following their diagnosis by guiding them to various community resources. They also provide psychological support for their independent living as well as help them navigate the procedures needed to access medical and long-term care services. (This program is named “Post Diagnosis Support”, or PDS.) The secretary-general of the Wakasa group first heard of link workers from their mother’s attending physician and was deeply impressed. The organization was named the Wakasa Dementia Link Worker Team to reflect their objective to work closely with people who are diagnosed with dementia and their families to help them overcome their worries, confusion, and concerns, like the link workers in Scotland.

Creating an environment where people can say, “I have dementia”

While holding study groups and workshops, the Wakasa Dementia Link Worker Team drafted a guidebook that provides basic information about dementia, medications types and administration methods, descriptions of real-world examples that provide clues for early detection, and methods of addressing specific challenges when interacting with people with dementia. It is backed by their members’ lived experiences and is an initiative that has helped people feel that steps are being taken toward achieving a dementia-inclusive and friendly society. In the past, when someone was diagnosed with dementia, there were times when individuals or their entire families were treated like unwanted growths by their communities. Since the start of the Team’s activities, they have started to hear people say things like, “My family member has developed dementia,” which has made them feel that the stigma toward the disease is gradually dissipating.

It will be necessary for the Team to secure stable financial resources and government support to make its activities sustainable. This has led some members to call for its incorporation. However, they also feel the value and freedom that can only be achieved by being a voluntary organization of community members, so they are making rigorous efforts to secure highly flexible forms of funding and financial resources. Furthermore, compared to more highly-populated areas, Mihama Town lacks long-term care resources to enable people to continue living at home, so the Team is also considering efforts to address this and related issues.



**若狭・認知症
リンクワーカー
樹の輪**

認知症の人と共に、希望をもって暮らせる地域に

敦賀・美浜・若狭・小浜から多様な人々が集まる自発的な住民の会です。温かい心と深い知識を持って、認知症当事者の社会参加を応援する「リンクワーカー」を目指して結成しました。認知症になっても、自宅や地域で住み続けることができるように、当事者と家族、住民、医療・福祉関係者等が歩調を合わせて活動しています。




- 1 認知症専門学習や認知症関連の学習会**（月1回実施）
 家族、住民、医療・福祉関係者などの多様な方が参加


- 2 目からウロコの啓発講演会**（年1回）
 県外から講師を招き、100～150人が参加する講演会


- 3 集落講演会**（年1～2回）
 美浜町の集落を、松原六郎 Dr が講演して回ります



ドクター六郎が、やってくる!

松原 六郎（まつばら ろくろう）
 東京医科歯科大学医学部卒業
 金沢大学大学院卒業
 2002年医療法人「福井心のクリニック」開設
- 4 リンクワーカーカフェ**（月1回）
 家族・介護者・近隣の方などの何でも相談カフェ
 ○第4水曜日 13:00～14:30
 表茶スタフル

【お問い合わせ先】 若狭・リンクワーカー樹の輪 090-2836-2072（渡辺）

A community-wide initiative to be closer to people living with dementia (Alzheimer’s Association Japan, Tottori Branch)

Key points of this example

While cooperating with stakeholders in the community, the Tottori Branch of Alzheimer’s Association Japan (AAJ) is playing a central role in efforts to establish a foundation for early detection which include consultations on daily living and peer support. In particular, to respond to the concerns of people in the early stages of dementia and their families, its Orange Door facility and Dementia Café are cooperating with the municipality and local medical centers for dementia to provide consultations on daily living and peer support that emphasize perspectives of people living with or affected by dementia. The Branch also provides telephone counseling, conducts Dementia Supporter training courses, and plays a number of other roles that reinforce their ability to operate as a one-stop consultation service.

Providing peer support and daily life consultations that respect the opinions and meet the needs of people living with dementia

Suspicion of dementia or concerns about daily living after diagnosis can cause relationships among people with dementia and their family members to worsen or other effects that can harm QOL for the person most affected. To help address such issues that are encountered in the early stages of dementia, the Tottori Branch of AAJ provides a peer support program and daily living consultations to contribute to maintaining and improving QOL for people with dementia. People in the early stages of dementia have a broad variety of needs. For example, they may need places where they can feel they belong and frequently interact with others. They may also require opportunities to talk to people in similar positions in greater depth and for longer periods of time as well as hold consultations with personnel who are involved in advancing community dementia support. To meet these diverse needs, the AAJ Tottori Branch utilizes the Dementia Café as a place to frequently gather a relatively large number of people and Orange Door as a place where a smaller number of people can hold longer conversations.



Conversations among people living with dementia at Orange Door *Domanaka* (lit. “Right in the Middle”)

Serving as a hub for one-stop consultations led by a patient advocate organization

The Tottori Branch of AAJ works with the prefectural and municipal governments to operate a number of projects such as those for promoters, Dementia Cafés, Orange Door events, telephone consultations, and Dementia Supporter training. Over the course of these initiatives, they have been responding to a growing number of consultations from people living with dementia and other various stakeholders, which has reinforced its ability to

serve as a consultation service. Looking at the consultations provided to people living with dementia in particular, they take time to listen carefully to the issues and concerns of those most affected and introduce appropriate medical, long-term care, and other services that are tailored to the needs of the consulting party. They even have requests for consultations from outside of Yonago City, where they are based, or from outside of Tottori Prefecture. This means the Tottori Branch of AAJ works across regional boundaries to respond to various issues encountered in daily life during the early stages of dementia.

Moving away from the concepts of “provider” and “receiver” to develop human resources who embody inclusivity based on the concepts of achieving closeness and shared enjoyment of activities

When supporting people with dementia, it is important to step outside of the relationship based on providing and receiving support and to engage in activities while keeping closeness and shared enjoyment in mind. Relying on the concept of providing and receiving support can result in activities being supporter-centric, which does not always result in the creation of an environment in which those most affected can take part in conversations and consultations with peace of mind. The Tottori Branch of AAJ is working to create opportunities where those parties can seek consultations with peace of mind through activities based on the concepts of shared enjoyment and achieving true inclusivity rather than providing support.

Collaborating with multi-stakeholders in the community to establish a sustainable system

The Tottori Branch of AAJ has five full-time staff members who actively work to meet the various needs of people in the early stages of dementia to improve QOL for the parties most affected. To maintain their activities, they are collaborating with related municipalities, taking on existing projects from the prefectural or municipal governments on commission, and submitting proposals to launch new initiatives as official projects. While continuing their ongoing initiatives that have been launched as new, official projects in collaboration with the local government and that emphasize the perspectives of those most affected, they have advanced various groundbreaking initiatives including the establishment of the Tottori Early-Onset Dementia Support Center and the Integrated Support Program for People With Dementia and Their Families (also referred to as “The Smile Group”). It has been engaged in such activities even before the national Government began advancing such measures as national policy. Instead of limiting itself to its own initiatives and engaging in fundraising on its own, the Tottori Branch of AAJ also places great emphasis on collaborating with other local organizations to expand initiatives for dementia throughout the entire community. Progress in collaborative efforts with other organizations and stakeholders like health institutions or long-term care facilities, starting with the medical center for dementia, are also helping to make its efforts sustainable.



A walk around town with people with dementia and other affected parties as part of a Smile Group event

Creating an environment where people living with dementia can lead efforts to provide mutual support (Miyagi People with Dementia Network (DENMY))

Key points of this example

Dementia diagnoses can disrupt the lives of the people diagnosed and their families in a manner that prevents them from returning to their previous ways of living. To address the challenges they face, in addition to mounting responses to the symptoms of dementia in the form of medical treatments, it is important to provide such parties with peer support that helps them live happier lives while living with dementia. The Miyagi People with Dementia Network or DENMY is an organization that collaborates with healthcare and welfare services to provide a form of peer support that values activities led by people with dementia rather than those of their supporters.

Providing peer support in clinical settings from people living with dementia without requiring the presence of specialists at peer support meetings

Recognizing the value of opportunities for people to provide each other with peer support, the Miyagi People with Dementia Network (DENMY) holds peer support sessions that can only be attended by people with dementia but not supporters like specialists in healthcare, long-term care, and welfare. By holding these peer support sessions without supporters and without keeping any records of their content, they are creating an atmosphere where participants can open up and share their true feelings with each other. While the specialists providing support for these activities do not participate in the meetings, DENMY is paying close attention to creating a place where people with dementia can feel comfortable talking to each other and is working to inform participants that such meetings are being held.

A vital aspect of providing peer support in a broad manner to the people who need it is selecting the right place to hold such meetings. Many healthcare and long-term care facilities are easily accessible to people with dementia. For example, the Izumi no Mori Clinic (which is located in the Izumi district in Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture) offers its second floor for conducting peer support activities.



A peer support session at Izumi no Mori Clinic's second floor

Building a framework to appropriately evaluate the efforts of people with dementia and to compensate them

Peer support is growing more widespread and its importance has become well-recognized, so to make such activities sustainable, it will be necessary for the efforts of people who provide peer support to receive proper evaluations as well as compensation. DENMY has a system in place to aid peer support activities by providing compensation to people who engage in them and to reward people who are recognized as experienced specialists in an Initial-Phase Intensive Support Project. Rather than the amount of the compensation, the fact that participants are paid to take

part in such activities fosters feelings of fulfillment and allows those who participate to recognize that their activities are being seen. There have also been many voices from the parties most affected that the social participation provided by this framework gives them a sense of purpose in their own lives.

Building relationships that surpass the boundaries of specialties to provide as a foundation for multidisciplinary cooperation and activities with leadership from the parties most affected

The Miyagi Association for Thinking About Dementia Care was established in 2001 as a healthcare and welfare network in Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture with the leadership of Professor Shuichi Awata, who served at Tohoku University at the time and currently serves as Director of the Tokyo Metropolitan Geriatric Hospital and Institute of Gerontology. The effort was joined by various related organizations including the Miyagi Nursing Association, the Miyagi Care Managers Association, the Miyagi Prefecture Liaison Conference for In-Home Care for Older Persons, and the Miyagi Branch of AAJ. Together, they worked to establish opportunities to bring specialists in healthcare and welfare together to build relationships across fields of specialty and on equal footing. Later, in 2014, they were joined by Mr. Tomofumi Tanno, a person living with early-onset dementia, and the organization changed its name to the “Miyagi Association for Considering Dementia Together.” This decision was made in response to a shift in the organization’s mission to operate without the constraints of professional specialties to think about dementia together with people living with dementia and their families. They had momentum from multidisciplinary collaboration in the community and built a network for that purpose. They then became aware of the importance of the perspectives of the parties most affected through that network, and they were fortunate enough to have opportunities to meet people living with dementia and their families. These past developments led to their current activities.

Through these opportunities for multidisciplinary discussions on equal footing from people involved in in-home medical care, long-term care, or welfare, people from various specialties were able to go beyond the boundaries of their fields to foster a strong awareness toward the importance of the perspectives those most affected have on daily or social life. This made the current initiative possible. As they take steps to expand nationwide, expectations are high for further reinforcement of their multidisciplinary, collaborative network as well as for steps to further promote understanding of the social model among specialists.



A group discussion held with people living with dementia at a local lecture on dementia

Reinforcing the functions of the organization’s secretariat to collaborate with other sectors and begin compensating affected parties for their activities and to improve sustainability

In the past, people living with dementia and other affected parties engaged in peer support and activities on a volunteer basis. This led to a number of issues when trying to maintain such activities. The National Framework for Promotion of Dementia Policies formulated in 2019 makes clear mention of supporting the activities of people living with dementia and their families, and there are high expectations for further progress to be made in such initiatives.

However, there are a number of conditions that must be met before these initiatives can be officially entrusted to existing support projects. For example, the organizations who are commissioned to operate such initiatives must be corporations. So, one part of the Miyagi Association for Considering Dementia Together incorporated as the Miyagi People with Dementia Network or DENMY in 2019. DENMY is now working together with various stakeholders to provide compensation for the activities of those most affected and is contributing to better sustainability of their activities.

Moving forward, it is likely that further reinforcing the functions of secretariats at patient advocacy organizations to smooth out efforts to cooperate through individual measures will be necessary to further promote peer support and other activities from people living with dementia and their families. Instead of providing financial support in a piecemeal manner through individual initiatives, there are also high expectations for the establishment of a system providing comprehensive evaluation and compensation for those initiatives as one way of promoting them.

Collaborating with local governments to develop one-stop health, medical, and welfare services (Permanent Dementia Café Phoenix and Clinic, Kyoto Integrated Center for Dementia)

Key points of this example

The Kyoto Integrated Center for Dementia has a single building that houses the Kyoto Integrated Center for Dementia Clinic, a dementia café, communal living quarters designed for long-term dementia care, a facility for dementia day care, a support office for in-home care, a visiting nurse station, and a visiting long-term care station. The premises are also home to a special nursing home for older adults, the “Care House,” and a day care service. The facility has been carefully designed to allow users to access one-stop healthcare, long-term care, and welfare services, such as by having a permanent dementia café attached to its clinic.

Developing one-stop services with leadership from the municipal government

The concept of the Kyoto Integrated Center for Dementia was proposed by the Governor of Kyoto Prefecture in 2016 based on what they observed on a visit to Sweden. Then, after a call for proposals, the Takeda Hospital Group’s Yujin Welfare Association (now the Kyoto Yujin Welfare Association) was selected to operate the facility. The governments of Kyoto Prefecture and Uji City, Uji-Kuse Medical Association, and Takeda Hospital Group began collaborating on a plan to bring the vision to life. Aiming to make society a place where the wishes of people with dementia are respected and where people with dementia can enjoy safe living in the communities they know best, the Kyoto Integrated Center for Dementia opened its doors in March 2018 and became Japan’s first facility to provide one-stop access to the right services at the right time to meet the conditions of each individual. As of 2022, the Clinic has accepted over 1,650 new patients.

The Kyoto Integrated Center for Dementia provides four functions: medical support, support in the initial phase, in-home support, and services to introduce people to long-term care facilities. In addition to providing seamless healthcare, long-term care, and welfare services from dementia’s initial stages to end-of-life care, the Center also conducts research on support and publicizes its findings and challenges encountered. The Clinic provides initial nursing consultations and guides people to appropriate support from the permanent on-site dementia café after information is gathered. This means that around 80% of dementia café users are people who have undergone examinations at the clinic. At the dementia café, meetings are held to assess the conditions of people who have been diagnosed with dementia using an objective scale. These meetings include face-to-face consultations or interviews with the individual or with the individual and their family. Based on the information obtained, opportunities for activities are provided according to their preferences and their conditions. These efforts are made possible by having the dementia café attached to the clinic.

There are, however, issues that must be addressed in the future. While the name “Kyoto Integrated Center for Dementia” can help it reach citizens who are somewhat aware that their issues may be related to dementia, it is difficult for it to deliver services to people who are unaware of dementia or are reluctant toward considering the possibility of dementia. So, the center would like to conduct health checkups for community members and make efforts to build awareness and better understanding of dementia to deliver support to more people who are in the early stages of dementia.



An activity at the Café to provide employment for people with dementia

Continued operations of the Committee for Community Cooperation for Dementia

The Committee for Community Cooperation for Dementia is the party behind the seamless provision of healthcare, long-term care, and welfare services at the Center. Committee operations are conducted with subsidies from the Kyoto Prefectural Government and involvement from two cities and one town. Project operations are outsourced to the Center by Uji City. In addition to people living with dementia, the Committee has a wide range of participants from organizations including medical, dental, and pharmacist associations; AAJ; neighborhood associations; the Support for Senior Citizens Division of the Kyoto Prefectural Government; and the Uji City Division for Longevity and Fulfillment. This makes it a regional base for multi-stakeholder cooperation involving patient advocacy organizations, specialists, the government, and industry. Since the Center opened in 2018, the Committee has met once every three months or four times per year. The Committee discusses a broad range of topics. For example, in FY2021, themes of its discussions included a dementia café support program in the community during the COVID-19 pandemic; and supporting employment and social participation for people living with dementia.



A meeting of the Council

Leveraging medical resources from medical centers for dementia to meet the multifaceted needs of healthcare, long-term care, and welfare services (Oouchi Hospital Northeastern Tokyo Metropolitan Medical Center for Dementia Diseases (Arakawa City, Adachi City, and Katsushika City))

Key points of this example

Oouchi Hospital is a medical center for dementia that serves the northeastern medical district of Tokyo, namely Arakawa City, Adachi City, and Katsushika City. There, the center's medical resources are utilized in the hospital and in homes to provide respite care for both dementia and for complex cases that involve comorbidities as well as a diverse range of social needs. In addition, immediately after someone is admitted, the hospital is proactive about working across disciplines to establish an environment that fosters their return to the community. To that end, it has established a support system to help to make that transition a seamless one.

Delivering respite care and cooperating with the community for early response for early-stage dementia, comorbid physical or mental conditions, and other difficult cases

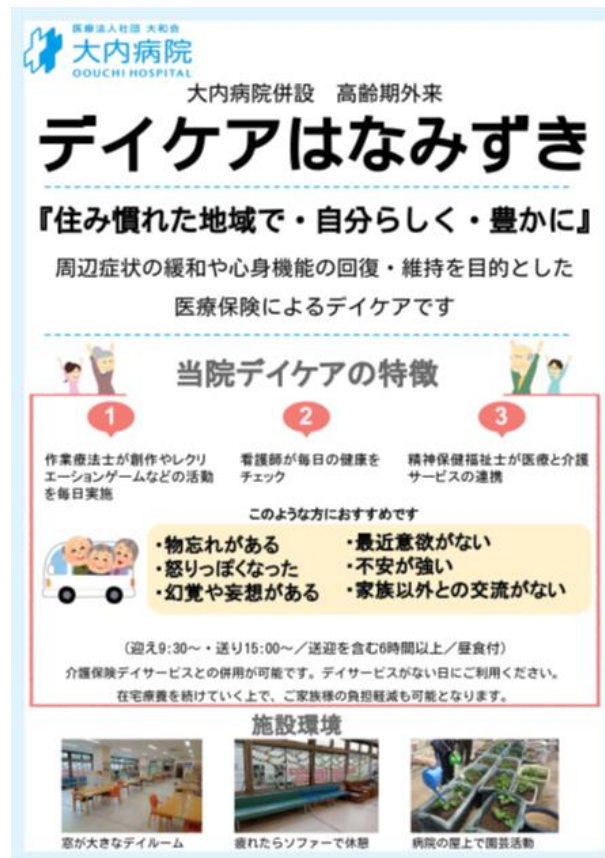
Oouchi Hospital is a regional medical center for dementia diseases for the Tokyo metropolitan area that serves a secondary medical care area located in the northeastern parts of Tokyo and includes Arakawa City, Adachi City, and Katsushika City. It is the only medical center for dementia in the area that is equipped with psychiatric care beds and it handles many consultations from partnering institutions in the area regarding complex cases that involve mental disorders and various other symptoms and diseases. In addition to cases that involve advanced dementia or the behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD), these difficult cases also include early-stage dementia in which factors other than dementia have a great impact. Compared to the averages for Tokyo's 23 wards, the region assigned to Oouchi Hospital has higher rates than average for both population aging and in the proportion of single-person households with older residents. This means that even when dementia is detected early, there are many cases that involve major health conditions and other factors that are difficult to respond to in the community due to conditions surrounding housing and the social environment. Taking these regional characteristics into consideration, Oouchi Hospital provides support through its abundant medical resources and serves as a source of respite care. By providing support that includes voluntary admission to psychiatric care beds as well as in-home services, Oouchi Hospital is a gathering point for complex cases in the area. However, it does not only serve as a place where such cases are treated. It also provides support to facilitate smooth transitions back to community living through collaboration with the Integrated Community Support Center and other healthcare, long-term care, and welfare services in the area.

Providing face-to-face support centered around people with dementia for cases with no instruction manual

To deliver suitable support, it is essential to respect the needs of the individual. For example, when a patient cannot be accepted for hospitalization because there are no open care beds, Oouchi Hospital does not just follow the manual and turn them away. Instead, they may consider which in-home services can provide medical support as close to hospitalization as possible, or guide them to another facility that can accommodate them. In this manner, they do their utmost to respond to patients in a way that meets the individual needs of the person with dementia or their family.

Securing open care beds to meet the needs of the community in a flexible manner

In addition to responding to individual needs face-to-face, in cases where it will be difficult for people to return to their normal lifestyles at home or in a long-term care facility due to changes in their physical or mental condition, if they give consent, people can be admitted to Oouchi Hospital on a voluntary basis. Responding to these sudden needs in a flexible manner requires efforts to secure care beds, and from the perspective of hospital administration, this results in losses. Utilizing financial resources like subsidies from the Project for Establishing an Emergency Psychiatric Care System, Oouchi Hospital is making every effort to build a system that can meet the community's needs.



医療法人社団 大和会
大内病院
OUCHI HOSPITAL

大内病院併設 高齢期外来

デイケアはなみずき

『住み慣れた地域で・自分らしく・豊かに』

周辺症状の緩和や心身機能の回復・維持を目的とした
医療保険によるデイケアです

当院デイケアの特徴

- 1 作業療法士が創作やレクリエーションゲームなどの活動を毎日実施
- 2 看護師が毎日の健康をチェック
- 3 精神保健福祉士が医療と介護サービスの連携

このような方におすすめです

- ・物忘れがある
- ・怒りっぽくなった
- ・幻覚や妄想がある
- ・最近意欲がない
- ・不安が強い
- ・家族以外との交流がない

(迎え9:30～・送り15:00～/送迎を含む6時間以上/昼食付)
介護保険デイサービスの併用が可能です。デイサービスがない日にご利用ください。
在宅療養を続けていく上で、ご家族様の負担軽減も可能となります。

施設環境

- 窓が大きなデイルーム
- 疲れたらソファで休憩
- 病院の屋上で園芸活動

Oouchi Hospital's day care program using the System of Medical Payment for Services and Supports for Persons with Disabilities

Establishing collaborative systems with health and medical care, long-term care, and welfare services in the community

To help people with dementia and other complex needs continue living in their homes and communities, expectations are high for health and medical care, long-term care, and welfare services to work together in an organic manner to disentangle the needs of the person most affected and combine various measures, projects, and services to design plans for their daily lives. In areas where many older adults live alone, it can be especially difficult at times for the person in question to obtain an accurate grasp of their own needs and submit requests for help to the right places, so outreach activities must be undertaken together with the government and comprehensive healthcare, long-term care, and welfare services must be provided. Through its involvement with various stakeholders in in-home care and the efforts of its staff members serving in concurrent roles at other facilities, Oouchi Hospital acts as a hub in a system for providing multidisciplinary, comprehensive support in the community.

Using the Iki Iki Brain Health Checkup for all residents ages 65 and older to promote early detection, intervention, and support through collaborative efforts involving health institutions and survey research from a university (Department of Neurology, Graduate School of Medical Sciences, Kanazawa University)

Key points of this example

Since FY2010, the Department of Neurology at the Kanazawa University Graduate School of Medical Sciences has been conducting a community-based research program for early detection, intervention, and support for dementia that administers the Iki Iki Brain Health Checkup to all community members ages 65 years and older. In addition to leading to early detection of dementia for participants, the program also helps guide participants to appropriate support, thus contributing to the promotion of early detection, intervention, and support as part of its research activities. In addition, studies that include every community member in an area are rare, so as an initiative with broad coverage, it also serves as a cohort that provides a foundation for dementia R&D.

Contributing to early detection, intervention, and support by providing the Iki Iki Brain Health Checkup to all community members ages 65 years and older

Iki Iki Brain Health Checkups are administered to people ages 65 years and to almost 800 residents in specific districts every year and, over the course of several years, to around 2,400 residents throughout Yokohama City’s Nakajima district. As a result of outreach activities including publicizing the checkups and making door-to-door visits to people who have not taken one, over 90% of community members are now participating in this initiative. When an abnormality is detected during the checkups, residents are referred to local health institutions, so the checkups serve to reinforce early response.



A home visit in Yokohama City’s Nakajima district

Giving back to communities that collaborate, building awareness, and generating research results

This ongoing study is called the Ishikawa Health and Longevity Project and it has been conducted among all community members ages 65 years and over for over fifteen years. In addition to contributing to early detection, intervention, and support for dementia among participants, it also provides a foundation for various studies on prevention, diagnosis, and treatment that aim to support people living with dementia. Because of this broad coverage, the study has generated findings that suggest less inclusive studies may have underestimated the prevalence of mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and dementia. Also, because dementia progresses over extremely long periods of time, it is essential for studies aiming to gauge the effectiveness, safety, and suitability of measures to prevent, diagnose, or treat dementia to be conducted over long periods, as well. In the Ishikawa Health and Longevity Project, data and samples have been gathered for over fifteen years and the Project is currently advancing efforts to build a world-class research infrastructure that will be applicable to a variety of studies in the future.

Finding ways community members can feel the benefits of health checkups

Although over 90% of community members have participated in the health checkup initiative, the participation rate was not so high at the start of the project. This high participation rate was achieved thanks to the project team making concentrated efforts to find methods to help community members feel the benefits of participating. Specific methods of doing so include providing participants with feedback regarding the results of the checkups; conducting awareness-building for dementia through public lectures; using a mobile MRI to provide MRI scans, which are usually expensive, for free; and providing referrals to suitable health institutions when abnormalities have been found. Their continued pursuit of such efforts has helped build understanding among community members.

Building trust with multi-stakeholders to advance large-scale, long-term initiatives

To carry out such a large-scale initiative that includes an entire district, it is essential that the team collaborate with various stakeholders. Several situations require cooperation from multi-stakeholders to advance in an effective and efficient manner. For example, these include working with welfare commissioners to conduct door-to-door visits, or collaborating with health institutions to carry out health checkups or to make referrals after health checkups. On top of this, to continue carrying out the initiative over many years, it must be organized in a manner that it is not affected when key people leave or join. By implementing a collaborative structure that involves various stakeholders starting with the mayors, neighborhood association leaders, health officials at local governments, welfare commissioners, local medical associations, and health institutions, the team has built a system that makes the initiative sustainable even when there are staff changes among the people serving in key roles.

Collaborating with various projects and subsidy programs to secure funding and building a collaborative structure for the research team

Continuing surveys and research requires efforts to secure funding and human resources. Despite the need to conduct research over long periods of time in the field of dementia, research grants and other sources of funding are generally provided on an yearly basis. Due to this, the team worked continuously to have the project adopted by various initiatives and to qualify for various grants since its planning stages in 2001. This has helped the team continue this project for over fifteen years. Furthermore, given the university's system for conducting research in recent years, the limited human resources who form research teams must strike a balance between teaching at the School of Medicine, engaging in clinical duties, and conducting research. As routine clinical duties at university hospitals generate heavy workloads, the University is devoting efforts to provide team management in a manner that secures equal opportunities for staff members to conduct research while building momentum for them to cooperate.

Fostering early detection, intervention, and support through public-private partnerships by utilizing tools for brain health assessment and other solutions developed by the private sector (Eisai Co., Ltd.)

Key points of this example

In addition to developing pharmaceuticals, Eisai Co., Ltd. is working to address various issues surrounding dementia by creating a system for early detection, intervention, and support for dementia through partnerships with local governments. The company has also launched a number of solutions for early detection, intervention, and support, such as a digital tool called NouKNOW[®] that people can use to check their brain health and test themselves for cognitive decline. NouKNOW[®] creates opportunities for people who have not yet been diagnosed with dementia and other healthy people to take active steps to learn about their brain health. Many local governments are now using NouKNOW[®] as an evaluation tool to make their measures for dementia more effective by identifying people who need support.

Building a system for public-private partnerships through partnership agreements with local governments to promote early detection, intervention, and support

The need to mount early or advance responses to dementia is a subject that has been continuously emphasized since Five-Year Plan for the Promotion of Dementia Measures (the Orange Plan) in 2012; the Comprehensive Strategy to Accelerate Dementia Measures (the New Orange Plan) in 2015; and the National Framework for Promotion of Dementia Policies in 2019. As such, local governments have advanced various measures and projects to improve their systems for doing so. As of February 2023, Eisai Co., Ltd. has formed agreements to cooperate with 167 local governments throughout the country. Through these public-private partnerships, the company is working to effectively utilize new solutions and create systems for early detection, intervention, and support. Suitable methods of identifying people who can take part in those projects are essential for effectively conducting projects for dementia in the early stages. Namely, these methods must be able to assess cognitive decline early. Eisai, Co. Ltd.'s tool for conducting self-checks on brain performance and health NouKNOW[®] was designed to help assess cognitive function. NouKNOW[®] is also used by health checkup programs operated by local governments, brain health examinations, and other health examination programs to visualize the brain health of community members and contribute to the effective promotion of measures for early detection, intervention, and support.



A simple, highly accurate evaluation tool designed for continuously assessing brain health prior to medical care

While the tools used in general clinical psychological assessments mainly measure cognitive decline as part of differential diagnosis after it has progressed to a certain degree, NouKNOW[®] was developed to assess brain health prior to diagnosis. Detecting changes in cognitive function and brain health through continuous assessment is an essential element in accurately assessing minor changes, but because such assessments only target people without apparent symptoms, participation depends on the individual's interest in brain health. This is why NouKNOW[®] was designed with an emphasis on making assessment as easy and accurate as possible. Another tool for conducting such assessments called the Cognigram was developed based on the Cogstate Brief Battery (CBB) from Cogstate Ltd. and is considered a medical device in the U.S. and other countries. In Japan, however, Eisai Co., Ltd. partially refined parts of the CBB to develop NouKNOW[®] to serve as a highly-versatile, non-medical device, and it is now in wide use.

Bridging gaps through collaboration among municipalities to share best practices

While efforts to promote early detection, intervention, and support are being undertaken in every municipality, there are, unfortunately, disparities among regions in human, financial, or other resources. This means that in practice, such initiatives must be planned and carried out in a manner that reflects the circumstances in each municipality. It is possible to develop more effective, efficient systems if municipalities refer to initiatives from other municipalities that can be seen as innovative examples. In addition to being gathered and shared by the MHLW, those innovative examples are also the subject of various surveys and research. In addition to collaborating with each of its partner municipalities on an individual basis, Eisai Co., Ltd. shares case studies on the use of NouKNOW® through online lectures or by compiling innovative examples in pamphlets to provide information to various local governments

* Please note that NouKNOW® was designed to improve health awareness, not for preventing diseases or providing diagnoses.

Creating opportunities in everyday life for awareness toward health management and for noticing decline in cognitive function (the Nippontect Systems Co., Ltd. ONSEI application)

Key points of this example

ONSEI is a smartphone application from Nippontect Systems Co., Ltd. It allows users to evaluate the state of their cognitive function through voice input. By aggregating results and through continuous monitoring, it enables users to accurately grasp changes in cognitive function on their own. By developing products that enable people to monitor health conditions on their own without having to visit health institutions, the company aims to contribute to detecting changes in cognitive function early. When developing ONSEI, Nippontect Systems Co, Ltd. president and representative director Mr. Tadashi Masuoka participated in home visits, where he talked to hundreds of people living with dementia, and he continues to serve as a counselor at a dementia clinic. This has given him a strong sense of the needs and feelings of people living with dementia and a keen awareness of issues facing those in real-world care settings. Mr. Matsuoka's vision is for people to make a habit of regularly checking their own health status using ONSEI so they can spot changes in their own conditions at early stages and receive guidance to the right support.

The benefits of utilizing ONSEI at Silver Human Resources Centers, construction sites, and local governments

One of ONSEI's unique features is high accuracy, which can rapidly detect extremely small changes in voice data after approximately 20 seconds of input. A growing number of older adults are continuing to stay active in working roles in recent years, and more and more of them are working in hazardous settings such as outdoors or at heights. Such work environments require them to always maintain good physical and mental capabilities, so ONSEI is also being utilized to conduct regular checks for such people before their workday begins. It has already been adopted for use at Silver Human Resources Center, where administrators refer to results from ONSEI tests and other health conditions when making decisions as to whether it is safe for people to work.

At local governments, in addition to letting visitors try ONSEI at events aimed at health promotion, there are also cases where it has been introduced as part of specified health checkups or for regular users of health seminars, exercise classes, and other preventive long-term care programs. Nippontect Systems Co., Ltd. also has its sights set on allowing individuals to purchase ONSEI to conduct daily health monitoring in the future. The range of applications for ONSEI is not limited to those targeting older people. One construction company has introduced an initiative in which employees use the app to test themselves at the entrances of construction sites before starting work to check for changes in cognitive function caused by factors like alcohol consumption, stress, or lack of sleep.

Forming an ecosystem for supporting all aspects of social life

Other products being developed by Nippontect Systems Co., Ltd. include:

1. MRI-TAISKI, a medical device for diagnostic imaging
2. SHINRI-ADAS, a device for neuropsychological tests (a support system using the Alzheimer's Disease Assessment Scale-cognitive component-Japanese version (ADAS-Jcog))
3. ONSEI Plus, which provides cognitive function evaluation and monitoring as well as games, a memo pad, and graphing features to track medications
4. MENKYO, a cognitive function test for renewing driver's licenses for people ages 75 years and over

In the future, Nippontect Systems Co., Ltd. plans to provide a number of other products focusing on cognitive function for use in settings other than health institutions to build an ecosystem for supporting all aspects of social life. These include healthcare products that will help people maintain and improve health at the individual level, devices for conducting cognitive function tests at driver's license renewals, and a product lineup that focuses on cognitive function and can be provided to financial institutions, local governments, and similar parties.

For example, at financial institutions, controls are sometimes placed on transactions when it is determined that the decision-making ability of an account holder has been impaired due to the effects of a condition like dementia. When that happens, they are usually required to use the adult guardianship system. When determining whether someone "has impaired decision-making ability," however, the criteria for making such decisions are based on their responses at the counter. Such decisions are not based on objective indicators. Using ONSEI allows those serving at financial institutions to respond to the needs of account holders using an objective evaluation without the need to check cognitive function at the counter. This is likely to lead to the provision of services that satisfy both financial institutions and their customers.

The ability to grasp changes in cognitive function in an objective manner is significant for both individual health management and for society as a whole. Such tools will not only detect when someone's cognitive function has declined and help guide them to healthcare or long-term care. In addition to these benefits, by visualizing health status for each person, such tools will help protect important things like the physical and mental health of the person in question as well as their assets.

Community-led efforts to promote multidisciplinary early detection, intervention, and support through ICT (Integrated Community Support Center, Support Office for Children and Elderly People, Health and Welfare Department, Nayoro City, Hokkaido)

Key points of this example

In 2021, Nayoro City, Hokkaido built an infrastructure for information coordination across healthcare, long-term care, and welfare that facilitates coordination among specialists responsible for those services and has established an integrated system for early detection, intervention, and support for dementia. As part of a long-term care project for prevention, Nayoro City has also continuously hosted workshops where community members lead efforts to think of solutions. Dementia is one theme of those workshops. By creating opportunities for citizens to hold conversations about what actions they can take in their communities, Nayoro City is strengthening citizen-centered efforts for early detection, intervention, and support for dementia.

Making effective use of ICT for coordination across healthcare and long-term care as a foundation for cooperation across multiple specialties and institutions

Vital elements for early detection, intervention, and support for dementia include creating as many opportunities for people to recognize dementia as possible and connecting people to diagnosis and suitable support when dementia is suspected. These forms of support often cannot be fully delivered through healthcare services alone; they require collaboration across a broad range of stakeholders who are responsible for medicine, long-term care, health and welfare, informal care, and other forms of support. Many regions are currently advancing efforts to encourage multidisciplinary communication across multiple health institutions and other institutions regarding their users and to provide seamless healthcare and long-term care services. To this end, they are building networks for linking health data to serve as the foundation for those objectives as well as creating collaborative links among local healthcare and long-term care institutions. In July 2021, Nayoro City launched a network called the Nayoro City ICT Network for Medical and Long-term Care Collaboration (also known as Polaris Network 2.0). That network serves as an information-sharing and communication platform across a broad range of disciplines and facilities including dental facilities, pharmacies, and other health facilities; long-term care providers; the Integrated Community Support Center; and care managers. That network is making great contributions to early detection, intervention, and support for dementia. For example, long-term care providers are utilizing that network to share information and consult with the Integrated Community Support Center for the early detection of memory loss among users. It is also being used for collaboration among health institutions, the Integrated Community Support Center, and long-term care facilities to respond to user needs rapidly after they are diagnosed with dementia or certified as requiring long-term care.

Achieving high attachment rates through a carefully-designed ICT implementation process that reflects opinions from those serving in real-world care settings

Having high retention rates for the system throughout the region – in other words, getting many facilities in the region to adopt the system and to use it in everyday operations – has been essential for successfully encouraging multidisciplinary coordination and for providing broad and comprehensive support through the implementation of ICT. Reasons that Nayoro City has been able to achieve a high retention rate include the fact that the system of the process used to implement it was created together with various local stakeholders and with leadership from the government. Dating back to the period before steps were taken to consider implementing ICT, Nayoro City had already fostered understanding toward the need to reinforce in-home healthcare and to promote multidisciplinary collaboration. The effort was also given a tailwind from the fact that because the mayor wanted to introduce ICT, the introduction of ICT for healthcare and long-term care collaboration was included in the budget from FY2020. The effort also involved various people serving in roles in healthcare, long-term care, and welfare settings to make repeated improvements from the bottom up. These included hearings to gather various opinions from the frontlines of care conducted by the administrative staff in charge of the project, case study meetings attended by multidisciplinary specialists, and preliminary trials and reviews. Using this introduction process that emphasized the perspectives of those serving in real-world care settings resulted in the creation of a system that meets the needs of various occupations and facilities. As a result, the system is now being used on a daily basis by many related parties. In addition to healthcare facilities, the Integrated Community Support Center, and care managers, this includes over 90% of long-term care facilities in the region.



A workshop on Nayoro City ICT Network for Medical and Long-term Care Collaboration with long-term care facility and Nayoro City representatives

Citizen-led efforts for dementia prevention and conducting supporter training courses to promote early detection, intervention, and support

Making effective and efficient use of limited human and financial resources and promoting early detection, intervention, and support requires systems that span entire communities and avoid relying on the efforts or resources of specific stakeholders. A program called the Long-Term Care and Prevention Supporter Training Program provided by Nayoro City’s Integrated Community Support Center covers dementia and other various themes related to the health issues facing an aging society such as nutrition, oral frailty, sarcopenia, and social frailty. Community members who complete the program and become Long-Term Care and Prevention Supporters lead efforts to develop initiatives that contribute to health in the community. For dementia, Long-Term Care and Prevention Supporters form groups with Dementia Supporters to consider what can be done in the community for people living with dementia. These discussions have resulted in community member-led efforts to promote early detection, intervention, and support for dementia, such as by expanding dementia cafés.

Fostering citizen-centered activities through ongoing projects for preventive long-term care

Centered around the Integrated Community Support Center operated by the local government, efforts for preventive long-term care and for dementia have been undertaken continuously in Nayoro City. There, a number of events are held together with universities in the region where programs include lectures and workshops that provide participants opportunities to guide activities. For example, as part of a program for helping older adults improve their dietary habits in an enjoyable manner called the “Happy, Healthy, and Fun Dining Course,” a specialist in nutrition gives a lecture on frailty and works together with participants to consider recipes that will help prevent it. Then, they go shopping and cook together. The recipes they create are posted on the Nayoro City website. By conducting such projects that aim to address issues in the community with community members on an ongoing basis, Nayoro City is providing opportunities for participating citizens to take part in actively considering long-term care, dementia, and other issues related to welfare for older adults.



A “Happy, Healthy, and Fun Dining Course” event

Creating an environment where people can live in familiar settings with peace of mind even when dementia progresses (Center for In-Home Support for Daily Living With Dementia, Division for Long-term Care, Prevention, and Community Support, Department of Welfare Services for the Elderly, Setagaya City, Tokyo)

Key points of this example

Setagaya City's Center for In-Home Support for Daily Living With Dementia serves as a core center providing specialized support for advancing the establishment of a dementia care model throughout Setagaya City. Its activities include providing a system for early response to dementia, promoting cooperation between healthcare and welfare services, helping specialists in healthcare and long-term care improve their ability to provide practical support, and enhancing family support. It also backs up the Integrated Community Support Center by assigning staff members to each individual case. This backup system in which staff members are assigned to accompany people on each case and help manage progress has enhanced the case assessment and response capabilities of the Integrated Community Support Center.

The establishment of Setagaya City's Center for In-Home Support for Daily Living With Dementia and filling the intended role of Initial-Phase Intensive Support Teams

Setagaya City's Center for In-Home Support for Daily Living With Dementia has been operating since April 2020 under its stated mission of "Making Setagaya City a place where people can live with peace of mind in familiar settings even if they develop dementia." Their process of providing support begins when the Center receives a consultation from the Integrated Community Support Center. After staff at the Integrated Community Support Center conduct a primary assessment of the content of the consultation, the responsible party at Setagaya City conducts a secondary assessment to determine if the consultation is to be addressed through the Initial-Phase Intensive Support Team Project or by a physician through the Project for Specialized Consultations on Dementia. At the same time, it is determined if the case in question will require special attention, such as if it requires an emergency response for elder abuse. Such cases are reported to the appropriate Health and Welfare Divisions among Setagaya City's general branch offices. Due to the high level of expertise required, the Initial-Phase Intensive Support Teams for dementia in many municipalities (which include specialists in healthcare, long-term care, and welfare) are overwhelmed with cases like these that require special attention. However, Setagaya City has established a system in which authorities with jurisdiction over the area serve in intermediate roles in which they sort cases requiring early response and difficult cases. This helps Initial-Phase Intensive Support Teams fulfill their intended role as early responders for dementia. Combined with updated perceptions of dementia (described below), a growing number of the people whose cases are handled by Initial-Phase Intensive Support Teams are able to continue living at home, and that rate is around 90% for community members who receive Initial-Phase Intensive Support interventions provided by the Center for In-Home Support for Daily Living With Dementia. (Among the 10% of cases in which support efforts are suspended, most are not due to community members being admitted to care facilities; instead, support is suspended because of comorbidities or because the person receiving support has moved out of Setagaya City.)



A team meeting

Enacting a local regulation to foster a new perception of dementia

In October 2020, Setagaya City enacted a local regulation called the Ordinance for Living Alongside Dementia with Hope (which we will refer to as the “Ordinance”). Prior to Ordinance’s enactment, most support cases were handled by the Integrated Community Support Center, which mainly provided consultations for the family members of people whose dementia was moderate to severe. By communicating the message that dementia is something close to us that anyone can develop and that anyone can continue living with hope even if they develop dementia, perceptions toward dementia have started to change among both Setagaya City residents and its personnel. Since its enactment, the number of requests made for support in the initial stages has increased, which is one of the Integrated Community Support Center’s main targets for the provision of decision-making support. This increase is likely to have occurred due to a change in perceptions of dementia and better understanding toward the efforts of support providers, including those at the Integrated Community Support Center.

As for efforts to undertake moving forward, Setagaya City aims to conduct awareness-building so information on its measures for dementia will reach community members who do not search for such information on their own. In the future, Setagaya City is also considering creating plans to expand its post-diagnostic peer support system.



Support being provided in a home

Utilizing a base for promoting dementia care to deepen understand toward dementia (Office of In-Home Health and Long-Term Care Coordination Promotion, Department for the Promotion of Integrated Community Care, Bureau of Health, Welfare, and Longevity, Shizuoka City, Shizuoka Prefecture)

Key points of this example

According to the basic goals set in Shizuoka City's "Community Development Plan for Health and Longevity," it is advancing a project with the mission, "Make Shizuoka City a place where citizens can enjoy living in good health as long as possible, and lead lives that are true to themselves while staying in their own, familiar homes, forever." As part of that initiative, in 2020, Shizuoka City established a base for activities for promoting dementia care located at Shichikencho Street in Shizuoka City's Aoi ward called the "Shizuoka City Kakekomachi Shichikencho Dementia Care Center." Through efforts at that center, Shizuoka City aims to create an environment for early detection, intervention, and support that facilitates efforts from citizens to check brain health or seek consultations on dementia. In addition, the Center is making efforts to eliminate prejudice and spread accurate knowledge for dementia by encouraging its use among people of various generations including young people who are not familiar with dementia.

Making the Kakekomachi facility into a place more citizens visit

Alongside providing support for people living with dementia and their family members, Kakekomachi (whose name combines "gather everyone" and "Omachi," a local nickname for the central area of Shizuoka City) provides a base for activities aimed at promoting dementia care by expanding projects targeting all generations for dementia prevention and building understanding of dementia. Kakekomachi serves to fulfill three main functions: providing individual consultation support and collaboration with related organizations, conducting R&D and human resource development, and spreading awareness and promoting understanding. The Shizuoka City Department for the Promotion of Integrated Community Care operates the Center through the Long-Term Care Insurance System's community support project and rents the space from a private owner.

To make it easier for more people to visit the center, Kakekomachi is located in a shopping district in the center of the city. In addition to providing good access, efforts have also been devoted to ensuring it has a welcoming atmosphere, such as by decorating the interior space to look like a modern café. This is meant to make it easier to use for more people. Attention has also been given to publicity efforts so people hear about the facility. Guided tours from welfare commissioners are available for community members to help inform people about it through word-of-mouth. In addition to providing a facility where professionals like nurses, social workers, and certified care workers who can serve as consultants are posted regularly to provide consultations in the event of a problem, it is also meant to be a place that citizens can visit and use as part of daily life by providing brain health checks or information related to dementia. The intent of making Kakekomachi a familiar place that citizens visit regularly is to make it easier for them to visit in the event of a problem.

In the future, by dispatching staff from Kakekomachi to communities to give on-site consultations and provide opportunities for people to try Kakekomachi services, Shizuoka City has plans to further strengthen its ability to respond to citizens for whom visiting Kakekomachi is difficult.



Inside Kakekomachi

Implementing approaches for three target groups to build awareness and pursue early detection, intervention, and support

For people who have not yet recognized dementia as an issue that may affect them, Kakekomachi creates opportunities to visit the facility by opening its space to the public and by holding concerts, origami lectures, and other welcoming events. These visits also provide community members with opportunities to be exposed to information on dementia through its information corner, which ties into Kakekomachi's activities for building awareness.

The second group they aim to approach are people who possess a high degree of interest in health. Digital devices for measuring brain health that were developed by a private company are permanently installed at Kakekomachi. While those sorts of devices are generally only set up for events, Kakekomachi provides an environment where anyone can use them at any time. This is done with the objective of heightening interest in maintaining cognitive function and detecting changes early.

The third group is people who are somewhat concerned about cognitive function but feel reluctant toward undergoing examinations at a hospital. Instead of making such people attend formal consultations, Kakekomachi's location was selected and its interior has been designed to make it easy for people to stop by while running errands in downtown Shizuoka City so their concerns can be drawn out through casual conversations. Over the course of conversations between visitors and staff members, many of them include statements like, "Actually, my family member has this," or "Actually, I have been experiencing that lately," which helps Kakekomachi connect people to early detection and intervention.



An origami lecture

In the future, Shizuoka City aims to intensify activities for raising awareness and for early detection, intervention, and support by installing virtual reality equipment that will allow visitors to learn about dementia and by implementing an improvement program for MCI that it developed in FY2022.

Leveraging welfare commissioners and Dementia Supporters to reinforce cooperation (Longevity and Long-term Care Section, Welfare Department, Miyoshi City, Aichi Prefecture)

Key points of this example

Aichi Prefecture’s Miyoshi City is building a system for establishing organic connections based on community resources in the city and its neighboring areas to improve its system for early detection, intervention, and support for dementia. To promote early detection, efforts to get people to notice dementia more easily over the course of everyday community living are being made by providing community members with information on dementia and through collaboration with local welfare commissioners, police stations, and the Integrated Community Support Center. For early intervention and support, Miyoshi City is having Initial-Phase Intensive Support Teams for Dementia provide the Integrated Community Support Center with effective backup. They help handle difficult cases that the Integrated Community Support Center cannot and contribute to better response capabilities for the Integrated Community Support Center.

Building a system to concentrate dementia-related consultations from citizens and information at the Integrated Community

Increasing opportunities for people to notice dementia in the community is an important aspect for detecting dementia early. In an effort to do that, Miyoshi City in Aichi Prefecture is building organic connections using community resources like its Dementia Supporter Training Program or through collaboration with local welfare commissioners and police stations. In addition to conducting the Dementia Supporter Training Program at local businesses and neighborhood associations like other municipal governments, Miyoshi City also actively provides it at schools. Miyoshi City is home to a total of 19,236 Dementia Supporters and Caravan Mates (who are lecturers in the program; hereinafter both will be referred to as “Supporters”), meaning it has one supporter per 0.6 older adults (as of December 31, 2020). This is much higher than the national average ratio of 1:2.9, so Miyoshi City has made excellent progress in training Supporters. The City also frequently receives dementia-related consultations and information from its police departments and welfare commissioners through training sessions held when new commissioners are appointed as well as through an agreement with the Toyota Police Department called the “Cooperation Agreement for the Rapid Detection of Wandering Older Adults and Similar Occurrences.” Their system has been particularly effective at finding households where older adults live alone through the efforts of welfare commissioners. This has helped advance activities for watching over such households and identifying community members who are at high risk. Furthermore, stronger efforts to cooperate with the police have resulted in cases in which community members who were suspected of having dementia were identified using information shared by the Community Safety Section. By utilizing various local resources in this manner, Miyoshi City has established a system for rapidly identifying and responding to citizens who may have dementia.



A Dementia Supporter Training Program at an elementary school

Using Initial-Phase Intensive Support Teams for Dementia in line with user needs and having them collaborate with the Integrated Community Support Center

When the Project for the Promotion of Initial-Phase Intensive Support for Dementia launched in FY2015, it provided a framework for Initial-Phase Intensive Support Teams for Dementia. These teams are responsible for conducting collaborative, multidisciplinary outreach activities targeting the early stages of dementia in which they provide people with their initial points of contact to healthcare and long-term care services. Miyoshi City established Initial-Phase Intensive Support Teams for Dementia in 2018 to facilitate collaboration between the Integrated Community Support Center and healthcare institutions, which was an issue at the time. They were also tasked with promoting early diagnosis, intervention, and support for dementia. Specific criteria have not been established to determine when it is necessary to use the Initial-Phase Intensive Support Teams for Dementia to respond to each case. Rather, the Integrated Community Support Center examines each case individually and decides whether to use the team on a case-by-case basis. These include cases that are difficult for the Integrated Community Support Center to handle as well as cases that the Center can handle, but for which it is deemed preferable to provide multidisciplinary support through an Initial-Phase Intensive Support Team. As such, Miyoshi City is using Initial-Phase Intensive Support Teams for Dementia according to the individual needs of each user.

Establishing a system in which the Initial-Phase Intensive Support Teams for Dementia back up the Integrated Community Support Center has helped the Integrated Community Support Center improve its capabilities to provide consultations to respond to dementia. This means it can handle a growing number of cases without relying on the Initial-Phase Intensive Support Teams for Dementia. By leveraging the strengths of the Initial-Phase Intensive Support Teams rooted in their multidisciplinary nature to respond to the cases that are difficult for the Integrated Community Support Center to handle, Miyoshi City has established an effective and efficient system for responding to the entire community.

Establishing a system to watch over the community through community ties (Longevity and Social Welfare Division, Welfare and Health Policy Bureau, Welfare and Health Department, Wakayama Prefecture)

Key points of this example

As of January 2022, 33.2% of people in Wakayama Prefecture were 65 years of age or older, making it the leader in population aging for the Kinki region. Due to population aging and a declining birthrate, the total population of Wakayama Prefecture is decreasing, and there is increasing polarization between urban areas and depopulated rural areas. The government of Wakayama Prefecture thinks weaker ties among community members are causing them to experience increased concern in daily life. To address this, it has created a system for watching over community members that can appoint community members to serve as “Volunteer Community Minders” and by seeking cooperation from private businesses and forming agreements with them.

Building a system to leverage the strengths of existing communities

The government of Wakayama Prefecture is driving efforts to promote mutual support among community members to build a society where everyone can continue living in their communities with safety and peace of mind. It launched a system in which citizens watch over their communities called the “Volunteer Community Minder” system in 2009. In that system, volunteers are appointed through recommendations from municipal governments who then watch over and keep in touch with other community members over the course of daily life. Through the municipal governments, the prefectural government provides funding for volunteer activities, preparations, and expenses and covers the costs of various expenses like consumables, printing, and insurance.

In that system, municipal governments select welfare commissioners or people from senior citizens’ clubs, day care centers, and social welfare councils to participate in the program and recommend them to the prefectural government. The program currently has around 2,000 participants. The program aims to rebuild and strengthen ties in communities with cooperation from people who played central roles in their communities in the past or are currently serving in such roles. It has already found cases in which older community members were in need of assistance and the number of participants in the program is gradually increasing.

Establishing a system through cooperation with the private sector

In addition to having private companies train Dementia Supporters and Caravan Mates, Wakayama Prefecture forms agreements with private companies that are in frequent contact with older community members called the “Agreement to Cooperate in Watching Over Older Adults and Other Community Members in Wakayama Prefecture.” For example, companies that offer home delivery services (packages, newspapers, mail, etc.) are asked to contact the consultation desk at their municipal government if they notice anything out of the ordinary when making a delivery. Items might include laundry being left out or mail piling up. For urgent situations, they are asked to contact the police or fire department.

Although these agreements only provide a way for companies to make social contributions and do not come with any particular incentives, many companies have agreed to take part. As of July 2022, 12 such agreements had been formed with businesses. There have been cases in which reports from businesses made through this initiative have linked community members to support. For example, cases in which reports were made after there was no response during a delivery or when newspapers were piled up led to the discovery of older adults who had collapsed inside their homes.

Health and Global Policy Institute: Guidelines on Grants and Contributions

As an independent, non-profit, non-partisan private think tank, Health and Global Policy Institute, (the Institute) complies with the following guidelines relating to the receipt of grants and contributions.

1. **Approval of Mission**

The mission of HGPI is to improve the civic mind and individuals' well-being, and to foster a sustainable healthy community by shaping ideas and values, reaching out to global needs, and catalyzing society for impact. The activities of the Institute are supported by organizations and individuals who agree with this mission.

2. **Political Neutrality**

The Institute is a private, non-profit corporation independent of the government. Moreover, the Institute receives no support from any political party or other organization whose primary purpose is political activity of any nature.

3. **Independence of Project Planning and Implementation**

The Institute makes independent decisions on the course and content of its projects after gathering the opinions of a broad diversity of interested parties. The opinions of benefactors are solicited, but the Institute exercises independent judgment in determining whether any such opinions are reflected in its activities.

4. **Diverse Sources of Funding**

In order to secure its independence and neutrality, the Institute will seek to procure the funding necessary for its operation from a broad diversity of foundations, corporations, individuals, and other such sources. Moreover, as a general rule, funding for specific divisions and activities of the Institute will also be sought from multiple sources.

5. **Exclusion of Promotional Activity**

The Institute will not partake in any activity of which the primary objective is to promote or raise the image or awareness of the products, services or other such like of its benefactors.

6. **Written Agreement**

Submission of this document will be taken to represent the benefactor's written agreement with the Institute's compliance with the above guidelines.

About Health and Global Policy Institute

Health and Global Policy Institute (HGPI) is a non-profit, independent, non-partisan health policy think tank established in 2004. In its capacity as a neutral think-tank, HGPI involves stakeholders from wide-ranging fields of expertise to provide policy options to the public to successfully create citizen-focused healthcare policies. Looking to the future, HGPI produces novel ideas and values from a standpoint that offers a wide perspective. It aims to realize a healthy and fair society while holding fast to its independence to avoid being bound to the specific interests of political parties and other organizations. HGPI intends for its policy options to be effective not only in Japan, but also in the wider world, and in this vein the institute will continue to be very active in creating policies for resolving global health challenges. HGPI's activities have received global recognition. It was ranked second in the "Domestic Health Policy Think Tanks" category and third in the "Global Health Policy Think Tanks" category in the Global Go To Think Tank Index Report presented by the University of Pennsylvania (as of January 2021, the most recent report).

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