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The elderly's community needs in China: A survey promoting aging in place

Mei Juan Cao

Hangzhou Normal University, China

Background: Globally demographic changes are creating an urgent task to promote aging in place strategy and it is imperative to determine the older people's needs to support aging in place.

Aim: To investigate older people's needs to provide reference for promoting the aging in place practice.

Methods: A total of 568 elderly people in Xiacheng district, Hangzhou, China, were recruited by stratified sampling in this cross-sectional survey in 2009-2011. A questionnaire from an Idaho study, the US, was adopted..

Results: We found that 88.9% of the elderly were satisfied with their community and 97.2% satisfied with their life quality. Health problems and difficulties in seeking health care increased with age and were serious in the past 12 months. In daily living, house repairing and housework services were the top 2 troubling things. It was also found that the social and health promoting service needs were high in the elderly and varied in different age groups.

Limitations: The adaptation of questionnaire could have been influenced by distinctive socioeconomic and cultural factors, so further validation is needed. The disabled who were bed-ridden and those who could not verbally communicate were excluded, which might have affected the findings.

Conclusion: A majority of the elderly surveyed lived in a healthy life while aging at home, but they needed more supportive health insurance to take care of their long term health problems, assistant programs to help with heavy house chores, and more recreational programs to maintain their health. The culturally-adapted questionnaire might have objectively and comprehensively identified the community services needs of the local elderly and thus could be referred to for other studies.

Biography

Cao Mei Juan has completed her PhD from The Second Military Medical University of P.R China. She is the vice dean of Hangzhou Normal University School of Medicine, a professor of nursing science. She has published more than 80 papers in reputed journals and has been serving as an editorial board member of repute.

793442735@qq.com

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