

As a result of these conditions, the Japanese Government has in the last ten years become actively involved in welfare measures for the aged. Emphasis has been shifted from providing care to those requiring institutionalization to providing services to the elderly in their homes. Pensions have been increased, the retirement age extended, housing for the elderly is being built and education for the elderly as part of general social education is provided. However, there is still a lack of coordination among the different levels of government and comprehensive welfare programs for the aged do not yet exist.

In Japan, home welfare services are provided by public organizations rather than by private or voluntary groups. Such services include home assistance projects, provision or loan of articles for daily use (such as special beds), dispatch of companions or nurses, emergency call devices (such as bells and buzzers), mobile bath wagons, meal delivery, telephone consultation and the like. The author feels the range of services still falls behind those offered in Europe, for example.

For the future Dr. Kinoshita proposes that societal goals for the elderly should focus on 1) attainment of independence for the aged; and 2) inclusion of the elderly in society. A basic shift in attitude is required in order to view the elderly as active, healthy people rather than lonely and bed-ridden. This would result in a much wider range of social programs in addition to current pension and medical care provisions. Such measures would include retirement and work programs, programs for practical applications of leisure and cultural-social activities, and programs for improving the living environments of the aged. "Efforts should therefore be constantly directed towards an overall plan to cover the diversified needs of the elderly without confining these needs to the framework of a single stereotyped policy."

PUBLICATIONS

YOURS, a new monthly illustrated publication for elderly people produced by the national charity, Help the Aged, started publication in London in August, 1973. It is supported by contributions and advertising revenue and is distributed free to the elderly by volunteers from churches, elderly groups and school children. Special local editions of 10,000 copies or more are being financed by several departments of social services, which are arranging distribution to every elderly person in their boroughs. Although it had targeted 160,000 readers for the first year, YOURS reached 1,000,000 in only its fifth month of publication. YOURS address is 8-10, Denman Street, London W1A 2AP, England.

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