

Exploration and Research on Innovation of Current Geriatric Nursing in China

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Abstract: The demand for geriatric nursing in China continues to grow in the context of aging, and the policy support system is gradually improving. However, it still faces challenges such as insufficient service supply and low professionalization. To this end, China is actively exploring innovative methods such as the integrated medical and nursing care model and "Internet + nursing services", and is strengthening talent training and team building to meet the challenges of an aging society.

Keywords: geriatric nursing, existing problems, innovative methods

By the end of 2023, the number of elderly people aged 60 and above in China will reach 267.36 million, accounting for 18.9% of the total population. Among them, the elderly population aged 65 and above is 200.56 million, accounting for 14.2% of the total population[1]. This shows that China has entered a deep aging society, and the degree of aging is deepening. According to the sample survey data, in 2021, 42.7% of the elderly in China rated their self-rated health status as very good or relatively good, a significant increase of 18.8 percentage points from 2010. However, 16.4 per cent of the self-rated health status was relatively poor or very poor. The incidence of chronic diseases such as hypertension and diabetes remains high among the elderly. In addition, the incidence of cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases is also high, which seriously affects the quality of life and life expectancy of the elderly. A study by the Chinese Academy of Sciences shows that the mental health rate of the elderly in urban areas is 30.3%, while the mental health rate of the elderly in rural areas is only 26.8%. This shows that the elderly in China have great problems in mental health. The incidence of depression and anxiety is higher in the older population, which is associated with loneliness, loss of family and friends, and decreased physical health. In addition, the risk of cognitive impairment and dementia also increases with age.

In view of these characteristics, the government and all sectors of society should work together to provide better living conditions and guarantees for the elderly, and the task of studying geriatric nursing is heavy and long.

1. The current situation of geriatric nursing in China

1.1. Policy support and system construction

In the face of the challenges of aging, the Chinese government attaches great importance to it and has introduced a series of policies to support the development of the silver economy and the elderly care

industry. From encouraging social capital to participate in pension services in 2013, to proposing the "silver economy" for the first time in 2021, and then clearly proposing to cultivate seven potential industries, including pension finance, in 2024, the policy system has been continuously improved. In particular, the pilot and promotion of the long-term care insurance system (long-term care insurance) has provided basic life care and medical care services or financial guarantee for the disabled, effectively alleviating the pressure of family care. At present, long-term care insurance has been piloted in 49 cities, with more than 180 million people insured.

1.2. Insufficient service supply and professional challenges

Despite increased policy support, the supply of aged care services is still unable to meet current demand. On the one hand, there is a huge gap in the number of elderly care workers[2], the overall level of specialization is low, the structure is unreasonable, and the turnover rate is high. According to statistics, there will be more than 42 million disabled elderly people in China in 2023, and about 10 million nursing staff will be needed, while the current number of elderly care workers is less than one million. On the other hand, the development and supply of smart hardware, rehabilitation aids, medical devices, age-appropriate foods, health care products and other pension products are also seriously insufficient, and there is a large gap compared with developed countries such as Japan.

1.3. Exploration and practice of the integration of medical care and elderly care

In order to solve the problem of insufficient supply of elderly care services, China is actively exploring the integration of medical care and elderly care. Through the organic integration of elderly care and medical resources, it provides a series of professional and continuous health care services for the elderly, such as examination and diagnosis, medical care, rehabilitation, health management and health education. By the end of 2022, there were 6,492 institutions with complete medical and elderly care certificates, with a total of 1.75 million institutional beds and nearly 79,000 pairs of medical and elderly care contracts. At the same time, the National Health Commission has also increased the number of nursing homes, nursing centers, nursing stations and other institutions through transformation or social forces, and innovated diversified geriatric medical care service models.

1.4. The rise of Internet + nursing services

With the development of Internet technology, "Internet + nursing service" has gradually become a new trend in the field of elderly care. By extending professional nursing services from institutions to the community and at home, we provide convenient home care services for seniors with limited mobility[3]. At present, all provinces across the country have carried out "Internet + nursing services", and a total of more than 3,000 medical institutions provide more than 60 basic nursing, rehabilitation nursing, psychological nursing and other services in 7 categories.

1.5. Talent training and team building

In response to the shortage of elderly care talents, the National Health Commission and other departments have increased talent training. Through the implementation of the geriatric nursing professional nurse competency training action, we strive to achieve that by 2025, the proportion of geriatric nursing professional nurses in all regions participating in the training will not be less than 90%[4]. At the same time, encourage social capital to participate in the training and education of elderly care services, and improve the professional quality and service level of elderly care personnel.

1.6. Changes in social cognition and consumption concepts

With the development of the economy and the progress of society, the consumption concept and lifestyle of the elderly are also changing. The new generation of retired seniors has more disposable assets, and their needs for elderly care services are more diversified and personalized. They focus not only on basic life care and medical care, but also on high-quality life experiences and emotional care. This change provides new impetus and opportunities for the development of the aged care industry.

1.7. Challenges and Future Prospects

Although some progress has been made in geriatric nursing in China, there are still many challenges. These include the deepening of the aging population, the uneven distribution of elderly care resources, and the uneven quality of services. In the future, it is necessary to further improve the policy system, strengthen the supply of services, improve the level of specialization, and promote innovation and development to meet the growing demand for health care services for the elderly.

2. Problems in geriatric nursing in China today

2.1. Insufficient supply of services and uneven allocation of resources

The severe shortage of aged care services is one of the most prominent problems at present. With the rapid growth of the number of elderly people[5], especially the expansion of the disabled and semi-disabled elderly population, the demand for elderly care services has increased dramatically. However, the number of existing nursing and nursing facilities is far from meeting this demand, resulting in many elderly people not being able to receive timely and professional care services. At the same time, the problem is exacerbated by uneven resource allocation. In some large cities and economically developed areas, elderly care services are relatively perfect, while in rural and remote areas, they face difficulties such as service shortages and backward facilities.

2.2. The degree of specialization is not high and there is a shortage of talents

The low degree of specialization in geriatric nursing is another important issue at present. Although the state has increased the training of elderly nursing talents in recent years, there are still problems such as talent shortage, low professional quality, and uneven skill levels. As a result, it is difficult to ensure the overall quality of elderly care services, and it is unable to meet the growing diversified and personalized needs of the elderly. In addition, many young people are reluctant to pursue this profession due to the hardships and relatively low pay of nursing work, further exacerbating the problem of talent shortage.

2.3. Single service model and lack of innovation

At present, China's geriatric care service model is still relatively simple, mainly based on institutional care and home care. However, both models have some drawbacks. Although institutional elderly care can provide more comprehensive services, it often lacks personalized and humanized care; Home care for the elderly faces problems such as insufficient services and lack of professional guidance. At the same time, with the development of science and technology.

2.4. Imperfect policy system and lack of supervision

The healthy development of geriatric nursing is inseparable from a sound policy system and an effective regulatory mechanism. However, at present, China's geriatric care policy system is not

perfect enough, and there are problems such as policy gaps and poor policy implementation. At the same time, the lack of regulatory mechanisms has also led to the emergence of some undesirable phenomena, such as low service quality and price confusion. The existence of these problems not only damages the rights and interests of the elderly, but also affects the overall image and reputation of geriatric nursing.

2.5. Low knowledge and backward concepts

As an emerging discipline, geriatric nursing is still low in social awareness. Many people's understanding of geriatric nursing is still stuck in the traditional concept of "serving the elderly", and there is a lack of understanding of the professionalism and complexity of geriatric nursing. This backwardness not only affects the social status and influence of geriatric nursing, but also hinders its healthy development and the process of talent training.

2.6. Insufficient capital investment and sustainable development

The healthy development of geriatric nursing requires a large amount of financial investment. However, the current funding for elderly care in China is still insufficient to meet the actual demand for elderly care services. As a result, some aged care facilities are facing operational difficulties and deteriorating service quality. At the same time, due to the long-term and continuous nature of elderly care services, their sustainable development is also facing great challenges. How to ensure the continuity and stability of elderly care services is one of the problems that need to be solved urgently.

There are some problems in geriatric nursing in China, such as insufficient service supply, low degree of specialization, single service model, imperfect policy system, low social awareness and insufficient capital investment. In order to promote the healthy development of geriatric nursing, it is necessary to work together and collaborate among the government, society, and enterprises. By increasing investment, improving policies, cultivating talents, innovating service models and other measures, we will gradually solve these problems and provide more high-quality and professional nursing services for the elderly.

3. Research on innovative methods of geriatric nursing in China today

3.1. Promotion of telemedicine services

Telehealth services provide a new and convenient way of care for the elderly. Through technological means such as online medical consultations, electronic health records, and online appointments, seniors can make video calls with doctors at home to consult and diagnose diseases. This not only solves the problem of difficult travel for the elderly, but also greatly improves the accessibility and quality of medical services. Electronic health record technology helps the elderly record and manage personal health data, such as blood sugar, blood pressure, etc., providing doctors with the convenience of understanding the condition, and also providing an efficient self-management tool for the elderly[6]. Service models such as intelligence and Internet + in the field of elderly care is not extensive enough, and there is a lack of innovation and breakthroughs.

3.2. Application of intelligent elderly care solutions

Smart Aging solutions leverage advanced technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI), remote monitoring, and wearables to deliver personalized health and care services. These technologies not only improve the health of the elderly, but also improve their quality of life and independence. For example, intelligent nursing robots can facilitate the daily needs of the elderly, and psychological counseling robots provide personalized spiritual care. With the proliferation of IoT

devices, family members and caregivers can monitor the health status of the elderly in real-time and develop personalized care plans.

3.3. The application of the software of the integration system of elderly care and nursing

By building an online and offline integrated elderly care platform, the elderly care and nursing integration system software closely connects the elderly, family members, nursing staff, medical institutions and other parties to form an elderly care ecosystem. This kind of software provides functions such as health management, life care, medical services, social interaction and safety assurance, and realizes the intelligence, convenience and personalization of elderly care. Family members can understand the health status and living needs of the elderly in real time through the software, and provide convenient elderly care services. At the same time, the elderly can also actively participate in social interactions on social platforms, alleviate loneliness and improve mental health.

3.4. Diversified geriatric medical care service model

The pilot provinces have increased the number of nursing homes, nursing centers, nursing stations and other institutions through transformation or social forces. Jiangsu Province, Shandong Province and other places have expanded the number of beds in primary medical institutions to provide elderly care, and added nursing home signs to community service centers to provide better nursing services for the disabled, dementia, and the elderly who cannot take care of themselves. In addition, various localities are also actively exploring ways to extend in-hospital nursing services to communities and families by setting up day care centers, "call centers" or family beds, making nursing services more convenient and accessible.

3.5. Strengthening interdisciplinary cooperation

The development of geriatric nursing is inseparable from interdisciplinary collaboration. Strengthening the integration with medicine, sociology, psychology and other disciplines can provide an in-depth understanding of the physiological, psychological and social needs of the elderly and provide more comprehensive care services. For example, psychological care is carried out in combination with the theory of traditional Chinese medicine health preservation, big data analysis is used to predict the health status of the elderly, and rehabilitation medicine is used to promote the recovery of physical functions of the elderly.

3.6. Policy support and capital investment

The national and local governments have issued a series of policies and regulations to support the development of elderly care. For example, expand the pilot of the long-term care insurance system, develop commercial nursing insurance linked to long-term care insurance, and provide supporting policy guarantees for elderly care services. At the same time, the government and all sectors of society have increased investment in the cause of elderly care and promoted the construction and improvement of the elderly care service system.

4. Conclusion

At present, geriatric nursing in China covers many aspects such as telemedicine services, intelligent geriatric care solutions, elderly care and nursing integration system software, diversified service models, interdisciplinary cooperation, policy support and capital investment. These approaches not only improve the quality of life of older people, but also provide strong support for addressing the

challenges of an ageing society. In the future, with the continuous progress of technology and the joint efforts of all sectors of society, geriatric nursing will usher in a broader development prospect.

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