



HOME VISITING NURSE PROVIDES INFORMATION OF HEALTHY DIET AND EXERCISE

## COMMUNITY BASED HOME VISITING SERVICE IN KOREA: CITY OF GWANGMYEONG

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There has been growing interest in enhancing the quality of life of the economically vulnerable through programs aimed at improving the equality of and accessibility to public health services for these people.

One such program is the nationwide community-based home visiting care service operated by the Korean Ministry of Health and Welfare (KMHW) since 2007. This program targets economically vulnerable elderly. The goal of community-based home visiting care is to prevent complications of chronic diseases and enhance the quality of life of the economically vulnerable, especially the elderly, through managing health risk factors.

Community-based home visiting care services in Korea is provided by 254 community health centres run by local governments. One such centre is operated by Gwangmyeong, a city located near Seoul, which in 2014 had a population of 340,982 living in 18 towns (10.7% of the population is composed by the elderly of 65 years old or older).

There are 18 staff members working at the city's home visiting the care service centre. On staff are fifteen nurses, a physical therapist, a dental hygienist and a nutritionist. Each nurse has an assigned geographic area and where required the nurse refers patients to the other staff.

THE GOAL OF COMMUNITY-BASED HOME VISITING CARE IS TO PREVENT COMPLICATIONS OF CHRONIC DISEASES AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE ECONOMICALLY VULNERABLE, ESPECIALLY THE ELDERLY, THROUGH MANAGING HEALTH RISK FACTORS.

Services vary depending on the characteristics of each local community, but basic services include the following: regular services (blood pressure, blood glucose and cholesterol monitoring for those with hypertension and diabetes mellitus, physical therapy, joint exercise, oral assessment, registering cancer patients, emotional support), education service (medication error prevention, fall prevention, diet, exercise, stress management, smoking cessation, alcohol consumption restriction,

and prevention of chronic disease complications).

The frequency of visits were categorised according to the participants' health status and care plans were set accordingly. Each visit provided by each member of the team in addition to the participants' health status were collected across all the participating community health centres allowing longitudinal evaluations.

In 2014 the Gwangmyeong community-based home visiting care services had 7,261 households registered for the service and number of visits was 23,803. The number of the participants of the service was 10,456.

Conditions participants required care for included hypertension, arthritis, diabetes mellitus, stroke, cancer, psychiatric disorders and dementia. A service unique to the Gwangmyeong community-based home visiting care services is a cognition enhancement program which employs a nurse offering a program incorporating participants' favourite song and photos from their lives. Evaluation of the cognition enhancement program showed improvement in the participants' cognitive function and quality of life.

Evaluation of the community-based home visiting care service in Korea helped to decrease hospital readmission rates of the participants which served as a reduction in healthcare costs for the participants, increased access in public health services for the economically vulnerable, and improved the participants' quality of life.



### Reference

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