

Research on the Application Strategy of the Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) Model in Community Elderly Care in China

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Abstract

This paper explores the application strategy of the Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) model in community elderly care in China. With the intensification of aging in China, community elderly care faces numerous challenges, and the CCRC model, with its comprehensive elderly care service system, has become an essential solution to these problems. The article first analyzes the development of the CCRC model domestically and internationally and the current state of community elderly care in China, emphasizing the necessity of integrating community elderly care with the CCRC model. Five key measures are proposed for application strategies: community environment transformation and age-friendly design, constructing an integrated medical and elderly care service system, providing multi-level elderly care services, implementing intelligent management systems, and promoting community participation and intergenerational interaction. Although the CCRC model has broad application prospects in community elderly care, its implementation still faces challenges such as policy support and legal guarantees, funding and operation management, talent cultivation and team building, and service quality control and evaluation systems, with corresponding countermeasures proposed.

Keywords: Continuing Care Retirement Community, Community Medicine, Health Care.

Introduction

With the acceleration of the aging population in China, community elderly care has become a social focus. However, the existing community elderly care system faces numerous challenges, including insufficient facilities, uneven service quality, and a shortage of professional personnel. The Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) model has matured in Western countries, effectively addressing the needs of older adults at different stages by providing multi-level, comprehensive elderly care services. Therefore, exploring the application of the CCRC model in Chinese community elderly care is of significant practical importance. This study aims to analyze the development of the CCRC model domestically and internationally, combining the current situation of community elderly care in China to propose the necessity of integrating the CCRC model with community elderly care and to develop corresponding application strategies. This is expected to provide a theoretical basis and practical guidance for optimizing and improving the community elderly care service system in China.

Development of the CCRC Model

The Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) model has a long history of development internationally, especially in developed countries such as the United States and Europe, where this model has matured. The CCRC model provides multi-level, comprehensive elderly care services, allowing the elderly to receive services from independent living to professional care within the same community, meeting their needs at different stages of aging. In the United States, the CCRC model not only focuses on the daily care of the elderly but also integrates rich social activities and health management services, forming a self-sufficient, mutual aid elderly community system. In Europe, the CCRC model emphasizes community and family, ensuring continuous health care and life support for the elderly through services provided by family doctors and community nurses. In contrast, the CCRC model in China started relatively late but has gradually emerged in some large cities in recent years. Some forward-thinking enterprises and institutions have

begun to explore and practice the CCRC model, achieving specific results. However, due to policy, funding, and conceptual limitations, the promotion and popularization of the CCRC model in China still needs improvement.

Application Strategies of the CCRC Model in Community Elderly Care

1. Community Environment Renovation and Age-Friendly Design

The renovation and age-friendly design of the community environment are the primary strategies for applying the CCRC model in community elderly care. An age-friendly community environment should focus on safety, convenience, and comfort to meet the living needs of the elderly. First, the infrastructure within the community needs to be made accessible, including the installation of barrier-free passages, handrails, elevators, and other facilities to ensure safe and convenient movement for the elderly. Second, the design of greenery and recreational areas within the community should consider the physical condition of the elderly, providing appropriate resting benches, sunshades, and fitness equipment to create a pleasant living environment. Additionally, the residences' interiors should be renovated to be age-friendly, such as installing non-slip flooring, improving bathroom designs, and adding emergency call systems to ensure the safety and convenience of elderly residents at home. Through these renovation measures, the community environment can better meet the needs of the elderly, improving their quality of life and happiness.

2. Constructing an Integrated Medical and Elderly Care Service System

Constructing an integrated medical and elderly care service system is crucial to the CCRC model. The core of this system lies in the organic integration of medical and elderly care services, providing holistic health management and life care. First, the community should have basic medical facilities and professional medical staff to provide timely daily medical care, chronic disease management, and rehabilitation training for the elderly. The community should have clinics, rehabilitation centers, and care stations to facilitate nearby medical treatment and rehabilitation for the elderly. Second, the integrated medical and elderly care service system should also focus on health monitoring and preventive care for the elderly, enhancing their health awareness and self-management capabilities through regular health check-ups, establishing health records, and providing health education. Moreover, the community should establish a cooperation mechanism with nearby hospitals to ensure that elderly residents receive rapid referrals and treatment when needed. By constructing an integrated medical and elderly care service system, the community can provide continuous and comprehensive health services, ensuring the physical and mental health of the elderly.

3. Providing Multi-Level Elderly Care Services

Providing multi-level elderly care services is a crucial strategy of the CCRC model in community elderly care. The needs of the elderly are diverse and dynamic, and community elderly care services should be flexible enough to respond to these needs. First, the community should offer essential life care services, including daily living assistance, meal provision, and hygiene maintenance, to help the elderly solve daily life difficulties. Second, the community should provide rehabilitation and nursing services to meet the particular needs of elderly individuals requiring rehabilitation and nursing care. These services include rehabilitation training, professional nursing, and long-term care. Additionally, the community should offer a variety of cultural and recreational activities to meet the spiritual and cultural needs of the elderly, such as organizing cultural performances, interest groups, and volunteer services to enrich their spiritual lives. By providing multi-level elderly care services, the community can better meet the diverse needs of elderly individuals, enhancing their quality of life and happiness.

4. Application of Intelligent Management Systems

Intelligent management systems are essential to improving the efficiency and quality of CCRC model community elderly care services. Intelligent management systems utilize information technology to achieve comprehensive management and efficient operation of community elderly care services. First, intelligent management systems can monitor and record the health status of the elderly in real-time, collecting health data through smart devices like health bracelets and innovative mattresses and analyzing and warning potential health issues for timely intervention. Second, intelligent management systems can optimize community resource allocation and service processes, enhancing service efficiency and accuracy through intelligent scheduling, online appointments, and electronic records. Additionally, intelligent management systems can strengthen community safety management through smart monitoring, emergency call systems, and electronic fences, ensuring the personal safety of the elderly. Through intelligent management systems, community elderly care services can become more precise, efficient, and convenient, increasing the satisfaction and happiness of the elderly.

5. Promoting Community Participation and Intergenerational Interaction

Promoting community participation and intergenerational interaction is an essential strategy of the CCRC model in community elderly care. Community participation can enhance the social belonging and activeness of the elderly. At the same time, intergenerational interaction helps build a harmonious community atmosphere, fostering mutual assistance and understanding among residents of different ages. First, the community should encourage the elderly to actively participate in community affairs and activities, enhancing their sense of involvement and ownership by establishing elderly committees, volunteer services, and community activities. Second, the community should promote interaction

between the elderly and the younger generation by organizing intergenerational exchange activities such as parent-child activities and intergenerational mutual aid projects, enhancing emotional exchange and understanding between residents of different ages. Additionally, the community should strengthen the connection between families and the community through family visits and family support programs to increase family care and support for the elderly. By promoting community participation and intergenerational interaction, the community can create a harmonious and mutually supportive social environment, enhancing the quality of life and happiness of the elderly.

Challenges and Countermeasures in the Application of the CCRC Model in Community Elderly Care

1. Policy Support and Legal Guarantees

Policy support and legal guarantees are crucial foundations for promoting and applying the CCRC model. Currently, China's elderly care policies and legal systems are not yet complete and cannot fully support the implementation and development of the CCRC model. First, the government should formulate and improve relevant policies and regulations, clarifying the positioning and standards of the CCRC model and providing policy guidance and legal guarantees. Specific measures include establishing standards and norms for the construction and operation of CCRC communities, ensuring that services and facilities meet specified requirements, and providing tax incentives, subsidies, and other policy support to encourage enterprises and social organizations to participate in the construction and operation of CCRC communities. Additionally, the government should strengthen the supervision of CCRC communities, establishing a sound monitoring mechanism to ensure lawful and compliant operations and protect the rights and interests of the elderly. With policy and legal support, the CCRC model can develop within a clear and stable framework, providing solid guarantees for community elderly care.

2. Funding and Operation Management

Funding and operation management are other significant challenges in applying the CCRC model. The construction and operation of CCRC communities require significant capital investment. Currently, the funding sources for China's elderly care service market are relatively single, mainly relying on government financial support and a small amount of social capital. To effectively promote the CCRC model, funding channels must be broadened. First, the government should increase financial support for CCRC communities, providing special funds and subsidies to reduce investment risks for enterprises and social organizations. Second, diversified financing methods should be encouraged, such as introducing social capital, public-private partnerships, and issuing elderly care bonds to attract more funds into the construction and operation of CCRC communities.

Additionally, the operation management of CCRC communities needs to be professional and standardized. Communities should establish sound financial management systems to ensure transparent and efficient use of funds and focus on cost control and revenue management to achieve sustainable development. The CCRC model can obtain stable funding support and efficient operational guarantees through diversified financing and professional management.

3. Talent Cultivation and Team Building

Talent cultivation and team building are critical factors for successfully applying the CCRC model. The service quality and operational effectiveness of CCRC communities directly depend on the staff's professional quality and service capabilities. However, there is a general talent shortage and low professional levels in China's elderly care industry. To enhance the service level of the CCRC model, talent cultivation and team building must be strengthened. First, a comprehensive training system for elderly care service personnel should be established, providing systematic vocational education and skills training to improve practitioners' professional quality and service capabilities. The training content should include elderly care, medical care, psychological counseling, rehabilitation training, and other aspects to ensure practitioners have comprehensive service capabilities. Second, the professional development system for elderly care services should be improved, providing clear career advancement paths and incentive mechanisms to attract and retain outstanding talent. Additionally, the government and social organizations should jointly promote the professional recognition and social acceptance of the elderly care service industry, enhancing practitioners' social status and professional honor. Through systematic training and professional development support, CCRC communities can have a professional and high-quality service team to provide quality elderly care services.

4. Service Quality Control and Evaluation System

Service quality control and evaluation systems are important links to ensure the efficient operation of the CCRC model. To ensure that CCRC communities can continuously provide high-quality elderly care services, a sound service quality control and evaluation system must be established. First, communities should establish clear service standards and operational norms covering various aspects such as daily care, medical care, rehabilitation training, and cultural entertainment to ensure standardized service processes. Second, a regular service evaluation mechanism should be established, comprehensively monitoring and evaluating service quality through elderly satisfaction surveys, third-party evaluations, and internal audits, promptly identifying and improving service issues. Additionally, a reward and punishment mechanism should be established, recognizing and rewarding outstanding service personnel and teams and

rectifying and holding accountable those with substandard service quality. The government and social organizations should also strengthen the supervision and guidance of CCRC communities to ensure that their service quality meets standards. Through strict quality control and evaluation systems, CCRC communities can continuously improve service levels, ensuring the quality of life and satisfaction of the elderly.

Conclusion

This study explores the application strategies and challenges of the CCRC model in community elderly care in China. Through the renovation of community environments, the construction of integrated medical and elderly care service systems, the provision of multi-level elderly care services, the application of intelligent management systems, and the promotion of community participation and intergenerational interaction, the level of community elderly care services can be effectively improved. However, promoting the CCRC model still needs to improve in terms of policy support.

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