

The Situation of Long-term Care Service Programs under the Long-term Care Insurance (LTCI) System : A Comparative Study on Urban and Rural Areas

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Summary

This paper examines differences in long-term care service programs under the Long-term Care Insurance (LTCI) System, between urban and rural areas. Six areas were chosen as survey sites : Kashiwa, in Chiba Prefecture (urban area) and five rural municipalities in northern Kyushu. It was observed that the use of home-visit nursing and adult day services was much greater in Kashiwa, before the introduction of the LTCI System. However no regional differences were observed in short stay. After the LTCI System was introduced however, the use of long-term care services greatly increased in Kashiwa, eliminating the regional gaps in home-visit nursing services.

Under the LTCI System, a variety of entities are permitted to offer long-term care services. Many profit-making corporations entered this business in Kashiwa, but this phenomenon did not occur in the five municipalities in northern Kyushu. About 30% of the employees belonging to these corporations, have no previous work experience. The LTCI System is supposed to provide new employment opportunities.

The long-term care establishments are running 2.4 home care service offices on average, and 50% of them are established in other facilities. Many medical institutions and welfare facilities are attempting to diversify their business, by starting up home care service businesses. The ratio of establishments which made a loss, was 56% in Kashiwa and 12% in the five municipalities. It was possible to the extent of 75% only by two factors (urban or rural areas, and whether the establishment is an independent one or part of other facilities) to examine whether the establishments were profitable or not.