

SUMMARY

Comparative Research between Australia and Japan Concerning Nursing Care in Long-term Care Facilities

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With aging advancing at a globally unprecedented rate in Japan, there is a great need for advanced nursing care techniques for the elderly such as Therapeutic Recreation, or the Japanese equivalent of *fukushi* (welfare) recreation. Therapeutic Recreation (TR) opportunities, however, have not been fully explored in Japan, due in part to a lack of awareness of the role of qualified *fukushi* recreation workers. In contrast, TR in the Australian context (locally known as Diversional Therapy), where rapid enhancement of the aged care system was accomplished with the Aged Care Reform Strategy implemented in 1985, has seen Diversional Therapy (DT) services develop to the point of playing a major supporting role in care and health fields. In Australia, an advanced country in the field of nursing care, emphasis is placed on preventative approaches and cognitive rehabilitation with activities offered at nursing care facilities focusing on resident care needs and the promotion of independence.

In this research, sleep-wake assessments using actigraphTM were conducted on 2 groups. The subjects consisted of 2 groups of aged persons having different environments; nursing facility residents in Australia where DT is practiced (A), nursing facility residents in Japan where DT is not practiced (J). Nursing facilities were visited to verbally explain the actigraph measurements, research and research prospectus to the respective aged persons. Having acquired the agreement of volunteers and families, a record was compiled of daily activities (caregivers were interviewed in the case of dementia) and an actigraph (Ambulatory Monitoring, Inc.) attached to their non-dominant hand for 3 days.

The most active time period was the (A) 13-14 slot which was significantly high compared to (J) where ($p=0.001$). It became clear that Diversional therapy raised the activity of aged persons during the day. The results of these activities as borne out by this research have been revealed. From the authoritative assessment of aged persons' lifestyle evaluations and hobbies et cetera, it is thought that an environment where activities are provided improves the quality of life for aged persons by enhancing independent abilities which is similarly linked to preventative approaches.

Individual endeavours in regard to the maintenance and promotion of health differ between the two countries due to different climates and cultures. However, keeping in mind education and awareness of leisure and health, and the disposition of Japanese aged persons, Japan should draw extensively on Australia' s public health initiatives to promote healthy aging.