

ILC-Japan Annual Activity Report 2014

1) Organization of ILC-Japan

President: Mr. Kunio Mizuta

Hon. President: Mr. Shigeo Morioka

Secretary-General: Ms. Yoko Shido

Project Manager: Mr. Shinichi Ogami

Deputy Secretary-General: Ms. Mamiko Kashima

Administrative assistant: Ms. Atsuko Tachibana

Research Collaborators:

National Center for Geriatrics and Gerontology, Institute for Health Economics and Policy, University of Tokyo, Seikei University, Tokyo Metropolitan Geriatric Hospital and Institute of Gerontology, etc.

Average life expectancy for Japanese people is currently over 83 years. Baby Boomers will be over 75 years old by 2025 which increases the portion of the elderly who are at least 65 years old to over 30% of the population. Significant changes in our rapidly aging society will have a major impact not only on our society but also on individual lives. Governments and private companies are foreseeing this situation and already starting new initiatives to wrestle with the issues.

During the next 10 years heading towards 2025, ILC-Japan hopes to present a new vision of seniors and suggest alternative lifestyles. Having been founded in 1990, ILC-Japan uses its established reputation and network for the dissemination and advocacy of “longevity literacy”. The following are ILC-Japan’s achievements for 2014.

2) Research

International Comparative Study on Productive Aging and Long-term Care

The Japanese government is projecting the increase in the elderly population and advocating the idea of the “Community-based Integrated Care System”. In order to help relatively healthy seniors to remain in the community as long as they are able (Aging in Place), municipal governments need to take initiatives to support the autonomy of the elderly. They can use local social capitals and seniors’ human resources effectively to serve this purpose.

ILC-Japan tried to find a model policy and activity in Europe. With the help

from ILC-Netherlands and ILC-UK, we conducted interview surveys in both countries, collected data for institution comparison and conducted a field study in Denmark. It provided us with valuable information regarding the future direction Japan should be taking on the way elderly people live in communities. Consequently we were able to propose effective policies to the government. Especially active use of volunteer organizations and rehabilitation oriented programs to bring out the ability of individuals to their fullest are effective ideas for policy initiatives.

This research was funded by the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, and the report has already been distributed.

3) Advocacy

1. Held a series of seminars “Longevity Society Lifestyle Workshop” for supporting member companies.
It is a workshop to help understand the current situation of the longevity society properly and seek new lifestyles not only for the elderly but also for the society as a whole.
2. Collaborated with companies for their clients and developing tools such as posters and booklets on longevity literacy.
3. Planned with companies and organizations and sent lecturers for speaking engagements, seminars and symposia.
Audiences included: professionals (doctors, nurses and care workers), bank clients, college students, researchers, labor unions, and local residents.
4. Promotion activities in collaboration with media
 - Cooperated on the seminar series organized by the daily newspaper “The Nikkei”
 - Interviewed by monthly magazine “Bungeishunju” on a special featured article
 - Appeared on the TV program of the NHK-Japan Broadcasting Corporation
5. Held the International Symposium “Productive Aging: Japan and the World” to present achievements from research activities
6. Held the Memorial Symposium for publishing “For a satisfactory life farewell”

4) Policy

- The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare is collaborating with NGOs on the “National campaign for building new community and seeking desirable ways of supporting seniors”. They used some of the research outcomes from our international study “International Comparative Study on Productive Aging and Long-term Care in the Netherlands, the U.K. and Denmark”.
- Organized study meetings for the policy makers at the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare which we believe was useful for producing effective policy proposals.
- There will be G7 Dementia Summit held in Tokyo in November. ILC-Japan was asked to submit international comparative data on dementia care to distribute at the summit.

5) Publications & Communication

- Published “For a satisfactory life farewell”
We published a magazine to educate and advocate the public about “death and dying”. It provides information on the process from onset of disease to death and its cost. We all want to have a satisfactory end-of-life. It is important to not leave medical decisions only to doctors but one needs to make decisions on her/his own and let the family know about her/his will. We believe that this will be a good handbook to serve that purpose.
- Published “Global Information Journal on Longevity and Society” special issue: “Productive Aging”
- Developed “Tips: Being Old & Healthy in Japan”
- Exchanged opinions and provided information for universities in Taiwan, China, and Singapore, research institutes, the United Nations Population Fund, HelpAge International, and the Parliamentary Association for Population Issues.