

The Development of Home-Based Long Term Care Model among Thai Elderly Dependent

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Abstract : Background and significance: The population is aging in Thai society, the elderly dependent is at great risk of various functional, psychological, and socio-economic problems as well as less access to health care. They may require long term care at home to maximize their functional abilities and activities of daily living and to improve their quality of life during their own age. Therefore, there is a need to develop a home-based long term care to meet the long term care needs of elders dependent. Methods: The research purpose was to develop long term care model among the elderly dependent in Chaiyaphum province in Northeast region of Thailand. Action Research which is composing of planning, action, observation, and reflection phases was used. Research was carried out for 12 months in all sub-districts of 6 districts in Chaiyaphum province. Participants (N = 1,010) participating in the processes of model development were comprised of 3 groups: a) a total of 110 health care professionals, b) a total of 600 health volunteers and family caregivers and c) a total of 300 the elderly dependent with chronically medical illnesses or disabilities. Descriptive statistics and content analysis were used to analyze data. Findings: Results have shown that the most common health problems among elders dependent with physical disabilities to function independently were cardiovascular disease, dementia, and traffic injuries. The development of home-based long term care model among elders dependent in Chaiyaphum province was composed of six key steps. They are: a) initiating policies supporting formal and informal caregivers for the elder dependent in all sub-districts, b) building network and multidisciplinary team, c) developing 3-day care manager training program and 3-day care provider training program d) training case managers and care providers for the elderly dependent through team and action learning, e) assessing, planning and providing care based on care individual's needs of the elderly dependent, and f) sharing experiences for good practice and innovation for long term care at homes in district urban and rural areas. Among all care managers and care providers, the satisfaction level for training programs was high with a mean score of 3.98 out of 5. The elders dependent and family caregivers addressed that long term care at home could contribute to improving life's daily activities, family relationship, health status, and quality of life. Family caregivers and volunteers have feeling a sense of personal satisfaction and experiencing providing meaningful care and support for elders dependent. Conclusion: In conclusion, a home-based long term care is important to Thai elders dependent. Care managers and care providers play a large role and responsibility to provide appropriate care to meet the elders' needs in both urban and rural areas in Thai society. Further research could be rigorously studied with a larger group of populations in similar socio-economic and cultural contexts.

Keywords : elderly people, care manager, care provider, long term care

Conference Title : ICPEHSS 2016 : International Conference on Psychological, Educational, Health and Social Sciences

Conference Location : Vienna, Austria

Conference Dates : June 16-17, 2016