

DAY CARE CENTER FOR THE ELDERLY AS A TOOL FOR ACTIVE LONGEVITY LIFE

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Abstract. This study examines the role of daycare centers for the elderly in the context of active aging strategies. Given the global trend of population aging and the increasing need to ensure a high quality of life in old age, this research aims to assess the impact of daycare centers on the functional status, social activity, and overall well-being of older adults. The study was conducted at a daycare center with the participation of 150 elderly citizens (93 women and 57 men). Methods included questionnaires, analysis, synthesis, and data generalization. The results revealed a predominance of positive attitudes towards retirement age (96.67% of respondents), as well as high engagement in various leisure activities, including attendance at entertainment and social events (95.33%), socializing with family and friends (83.33%), and participation in physical activities (64%). The main motives for visiting the daytime center are maintaining health (88%), spending leisure time interestingly and beneficially (73.33%), and the need for communication (71.33%). Based on the data obtained, the conclusion is made that daycare centers are an effective tool for implementing active longevity strategies, providing opportunities for social integration, physical activity, skill development, and participation in social life. The research results contribute to understanding the importance of developing a system of social services for elderly people aimed at maintaining their health, well-being, and active participation in society. Further research is needed to further analyze the impact of daycare centers on the cognitive functions and life expectancy of elderly people, as well as to develop more effective programs and methods of work, taking into account the individual needs and characteristics of the aging population.

Currently, the observed global trend of population aging requires profound changes in the formation of service policies for the aging generation, which should take into account the diversity of interests, needs, and capabilities of older citizens, promote the development and maintenance of functional capacity, create conditions for active longevity, and utilize their resource potential.

Key words: Active ageing, population ageing, day care center, elderly, quality of life, social isolation, social services, gerontology, volunteering, physical activity, health.

Materials and methods. The research was conducted in the daycare center for the elderly. 150 elderly citizens participated in the survey, of which 93 were women and 57 were men. Analysis, synthesis, generalization, and questionnaires were used.

Results and their discussion. The question of attitude towards retirement age is important. Respondents were offered certain positions regarding retirement age. It should be noted that the majority of respondents agreed with the statement that "pension is one of the happiest times in our lives: a person can finally rest from work, there is a lot of free time for family, favorite activities, wisdom, invaluable life experience comes" (96.67%). Only 3.33% believe that "pension is one of the most difficult periods of our lives: a person is excluded from active life, sharply loses income, their circle of communication is narrowed, the list of available activities is reduced."

The obtained data demonstrate the predominance of a positive assessment of retirement age, despite the fact that most elderly people will eventually have numerous social, medical, and psychological problems. Therefore, it is crucial to combat outdated stereotypes regarding elderly people by conducting awareness-raising campaigns in the mass media, among the general public, and fostering an understanding of the aging process.

The goals of leisure time spent by elderly people are quite diverse, and in the order of their popularity in the total sample of respondents, they are presented as follows: attending events and entertainment clubs (95.33%), communicating with family, friends (83.33%), engaging in physical education (64%), attending cultural and mass events and sports events (66%), engaging in household chores (57.33%), communicating with the help of a computer, smartphone (49.33%), engaging in hobbies (44%), watching television (45.33%), reading books, newspapers, magazines (42%), visiting parks, traveling (16%), participating in the work of public councils, associations, parties (6.67%), going to stores (5.33%).

According to the results presented above, the need for elderly citizens to spend their leisure time actively is dominant. Participation in leisure and social activities motivates elderly people to remain mobile and maintain social relationships, and also contributes to increasing individual vitality.

What compels elderly people to visit daytime departments for elderly citizens? 88% of respondents answered that they care about their health, 73.33% - the desire to spend their free time interestingly and beneficially, 71.33% - the need for sociability, the opportunity to meet people close to their interests, 64.67% - the desire to learn something new, 52.67% - the desire to share their knowledge and skills, 20% - to show their abilities and talents to others.

Thus, the research results showed that the motivation for visiting day care facilities for elderly citizens corresponds to the tasks of healthy aging: satisfying their basic needs, learning, developing and making decisions, maintaining mobility, building and maintaining relationships, and contributing to society.

The day center for the elderly has 25 clubs and 4 interest clubs. It should be noted that the majority of respondents attend more than two interest-based clubs simultaneously. The conducted research showed that the following areas of work are most popular among elderly citizens: physical education and sports (83.33%), dance (76.67%), education (66.67%), theatrical and artistic (64%), decorative and applied arts (62.67%), drawing (59.33%). Understanding the role of physical activity in maintaining mobility and healthy aging, elderly people choose physical activity programs focused on joint flexibility, movement coordination, muscle strength development, and balance: therapeutic exercises, joint gymnastics, Nordic walking, callanetics, cam-foot, and Nishi gymnastics.

Respondents' opinions on the improvement of mood, general well-being (96.67%), expansion of the circle of acquaintances, the emergence of new friends (95.33%), the opportunity to engage in a favorite hobby (92.67%) when regularly visiting the daycare center for the elderly coincide. As the research results show, for elderly citizens, relationships with family members, friends, colleagues, and acquaintances are very important, which is a stimulus for maintaining activity and continuing social interaction. Solving the problem of loneliness and social isolation,

the space of the day center for the elderly is a place where they can meet, establish and maintain relationships, as well as benefit from their various professional knowledge, experience, and interests.

30% of the surveyed elderly citizens are ready to participate in volunteer activities. The survey results indicate that voluntary work helps them feel significant (66.67%), gain opportunities to learn and contribute to society's development (22.22%), and acquire a purpose in life (17.78%). Since the participation of elderly citizens in volunteer activities positively affects their health and social well-being, social services should implement measures to support elderly volunteers. These include: encouraging self-confidence for volunteer work, ensuring satisfaction with the type and nature of tasks performed, aligning the volunteer's motivation with their role, and establishing methods for communication, selection, training, and supervision of volunteers.

Thus, the wide diversity among the elderly population requires the adaptation of state and social institutions to the problem of population aging and the development of services that meet the needs of elderly people, contributing to the achievement of active longevity goals.

Conclusion. This study provides compelling evidence for the significant role of day care centers for the elderly in promoting the concept of active aging. The research findings demonstrate that participation in such centers is associated with a positive attitude towards the aging process, active engagement in various leisure activities, and a strong motivation to maintain health and social connections. The observed benefits of attending day care centers, such as improved mood and overall well-being (96.67%), expanded social contacts (95.33%), and the opportunity to pursue favorite hobbies (92.67%), underscore their effectiveness in addressing social isolation and fostering a sense of purpose among older adults. The study's results contribute to the existing knowledge base by providing empirical confirmation of the effectiveness of day care centers in meeting the needs of the aging population. This is especially important in the context of the growing need to develop accessible and effective active longevity strategies aimed at maintaining functional independence and high quality of life in old age. Further research is recommended to study the long-term impact of visiting day care centers on the physical and cognitive health of elderly people, as well as to assess the economic efficiency of these services. In particular, future research could focus on long-term monitoring of health indicators, comparing the effects of various types of proposed activities, and studying the experience of different subgroups of elderly people. These studies will contribute to further improving the programs of daycare centers to maximize their benefits for the elderly and promote successful aging.

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