The Ageing Population Does Not Pose Any Challenges to The Health and Social Care System

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Opening Statement
Society always associates old age with rising medical expenditure and burden on health and social care. But we totally disagree because the proportion of older people who require social care at any given age has decreased. This means that a greater percentage of older people can now live independently.

In addition, they fulfil and enjoy childcare roles for their grandchildren and are becoming more appealing because of the experience and knowledge they are giving to the health and social care sector. They also contribute to free labour for both their communities and the government. (Andre, 2015)

Definition
There is no universally accepted definition of an elderly individual. It is 65 and over in some nations, pensionable age in others, and 60 and over in others. Because comparable data is accessible for all parts of the world, the latter will be used for the following tables. Table 1 indicates that 10% of the world's population was 60 or older in 1999, ranging from 19% in more developed regions to only 5% in the least developed. While forecasts should be treated with caution, the United Nations (UN) predicts that percentages will more than double by 2050. The percentages will triple in some areas, such as South America.
(Anthea, 2002)

Argument
The stereotypes of older people being a burden to society are not always true. The reasons why the aged are not always a burden to society include:

Volunteering: As the proportion of elderly people in the population grows, so does the economy's pool of volunteers. After retirement, the elderly contributes free labour to community and government projects, which has been identified as a global advantage. These elders are more financially secure and enjoy giving back to their communities and countries. (Andre, 2015)
Childcare roles for their grandchildren: Grandparents helped their sons and daughters return to the workforce in 2018 by providing an estimated 58 hours per week of free in-home care. They also helped reduce the cost of childcare for the family by providing a secure, caring atmosphere for their grandkids. Grandparents can provide the things that kids need the most. For instance, compassion, love, patience, humour, solace, and life teachings.
Experience and knowledge: They provide a wealth of experience and skills to the workplace. As we all know, knowledge is money. It is estimated that aged people contribute approximately 2.6 trillion to the European Union economy every year. (Chris, 2017)
Independence. Gives seniors a sense of purpose, and the ability to take care of themselves. They continue to engage in hobbies they had always enjoyed. They can use public transport and those who are disabled can still enjoy their independence through assistive technology from the council (Vintage, 2021)
Financial security. They are mostly monetarily comfortable and reasonably stable. They have lower debt levels and are more apt to own a house. They provide significant financial assistance to their families and are major contributors to aid/charity organizations.
Social activities. They also involve themselves in community organizations and join clubs. This activity theory makes one more satisfied with life, and happy and prevents loneliness, and isolation, and improves physical health. (NHS, 2017)
Decision-Making Role. Everywhere in the world, we sometimes need or rely on the aged for knowledge and experience for critical advice and decision-making processes that are of community and national importance. In my country (Sierra Leone) we refer to them as the Council of Elders.

Reflection
Reflecting on the debate, their submission, and arguments, they stated that:

1. Care of older persons with long-term conditions accounts for a large part of government health and social care expenditures.
2. Shortage of healthcare workforce due to old age or retirement
3. Increase in cost and financial burden.
4. High rate of doctor appointments, and increased demand for healthcare

As already stated in our argument, their assertion or points raised may be partially true but not in all cases. Due to medical technology/AI, a greater proportion of the aged are now having healthier and more productive lives by not only reducing health and social care expenses but also contributing to the economy.

In addition, associating old age as a factor for the shortage of the workforce is unfair. For instance, during the outbreak of Covid-19, thousands of aged doctors, nurses, and social care workers came out of retirement to help it was and still is outstanding support in the national effort to combat the virus.

Furthermore, The Elderly is never a total financial burden on healthcare and society. As stated in the above arguments, aged people are a financially viable group, and are contributing 2.6 trillion to the European Union economy every year and they are mostly financially independent.

Finally, they also argued that there is a high rate of doctor appointments, but with the advancement of medical technology/AI, they can now do their appointment remotely eliminating the need for an in-person appointment.

Recommendation
Physical and mental well-being is a priority public health should consider for older people. Physical activities such as gardening, dances, and walking group.

Promote the ability to make decisions and exert control
over one's life. This includes the ability to live independently, with or without assistance.

Continuity theory should be encouraged. Giving them the opportunity to practice the same lifestyle developed from a young age.

In order to reduce loneliness and isolation, they should encourage to socialize, have a good time, and help others benefit from their experience, knowledge, and skills.

Conclusion
Old age has never been a problem for society. They have been playing an important role in the community and society at large. Countries around the world are increasing the retirement age to integrate and bring back the aged into the workforce. This is proof that elderly people can still contribute and play a key role in national development

Rebuttal
We hope that the information above has convinced you beyond all reason that the aging population does not present a problem for the healthcare system.

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Appendix

Prifysgol Cymru
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The Ageing Population Does not Pose Any Challenges to The Health and Social Care System

Assessment 2: Debate and supporting paper

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Module: Living with Care: The Older person

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Introduction

The aging population does NOT pose any challenges to the health and social care system.

In this debate, we are going to support the standpoint that the aging population is not posing a significant challenge to the health and social care system.

Discussion outline:

- Open statement
- Definition
- Argument
- Recommendation
- Conclusion
- Rebuttal
- Reference

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Open statement (Against)

Society associates old age with rising medical expenses and the burden on health and social care

- However the aging population does not pose a challenge to the health and social care system: the living rate has risen greatly meaning a more independent lifespan

We disagree with this statement because old people now tend to live longer with a rate of independent life higher than before and are required less carer-dependent.

- The NHS works alongside independent practitioners in promoting older population dependency such as GP practice, dental practice, pharmacist
- Even if older persons may have mobility limitations this still does not stop them from carrying out daily activities such as getting involved with volunteer activities and physical activities like going swimming, getting fit, and picking up their medications

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Definition

The aging population is defined as the increase in the average age of the population and the increase in the proportion and number of older people living in society (University of Manchester, 2023).

(Bing images, 2023)

Arguments

- **Volunteering.** Providing free labour to the community and government through an inclusive approach (Andre, 2015)
- **Childcare roles for their grandchildren**. Allowing parents to go to work saves families significant money
- **Experience** and **knowledge**. Contributes 2.6tr to the EU every year (Chris, 2017)
- **Independence.** Gives seniors a sense of purpose, and ability to take care of themselves through assistive technology from the council (Vintage, 2021)
- **Financial security.** Through planning during young age and mid-life
- **Social activities.** Involvement in community organizations and joining clubs
- **Decision-Making Role.** To the community, national and international levels

Recommendations

- We recommend that Public Health keeps considering old people's physical and mental well-being as a priority. For example physical activity, such as dance classes, gardening, or walking group.
- Promote the ability to make decisions and exert control over one's life. This includes the ability to live independently, with or without assistance.
- They should be given the opportunity to practice the same lifestyle developed from a young age, which is also known as continuity theory.
- Encourage them to socialise, have a good time, and help others benefit from their experience, knowledge, and skills.

Conclusion

- On average the need for social care support has decreased as people are aging healthier. They are more focused on social engagements such as family life, and community activities, and are also financially stable. They have also shown more interest in their hygiene and diet (NHS, 2017).
- Blaming aging people for increasing healthcare expenses might be considered as unfair judgment.
- The plethora of availaible information on public health improvement of aging population has helped to drastically improve health conditions on one hand and reduced dependency rate on the other.

Rebuttal

Based on the above-mentioned points, We believe that we have been able to convince you beyond all reasonable doubt that the older population does not pose a challenge to the healthcare system.

WE ARE NOT CHANGING OUR MINDS

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