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Assessment 1

Supporting Paper

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INTRODUCTION

The position of my group supporting the statement that population aging poses challenges to health and social care systems will be discussed in this support paper. My focus was on the increased demand for health care as a direct result of aging. I spoke about the increased risk of developing illnesses because of aging, the global statistics that back up the fact that we have more older people, increases in life expectancy (ONS, 2019), the susceptibility of the older person to have different conditions that warrant specialist treatment and length of hospitalization of older people. My group members points were the impact of covid 19 and the increase in the surgical waiting list, improving health, and reducing welfare payments, less revenue and employment and the general impact of aging. The opposing statements were that aging did not represent a burden on the care system.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

As people grow older the risk of developing illnesses and becoming frail also increases (Kojima, Liljas, and Iliffe, 2019), this puts demand on the health care system because they need healthcare. Records indicate that health services are utilized more by elderly persons than younger people because they suffer more ill-health. They tend to be hospitalized frequently and spend more time than young people (Age UK, 2017). The health care needs of the elderly tend to be different in comparison with other age groups, this puts pressure on the healthcare system.

Older persons use multiple healthcare services, and the quality and capacity of care can be insufficient because of the pressures on the healthcare system (National Institute For Health and Care Excellence, 2015). A high percentage suffer more from chronic illnesses such as cancer, heart disease, and diabetes which leads them to hospitalization and poses further challenges von the health and social care services (Jaul and Barron, 2017). According to the NHS, older people are more vulnerable to falls and being hospitalized especially if they have conditions that are long-term (NHS, 2019).

The statistics are staggering, according to a report, the sum total of people that are 65 years and over increased by about 23% from 2009 to 2019, this was in a period when the total UK

population grew by 7% (UK Parliament, 2015). The world is facing a situation that has been described as without precedent, it is facing a situation where we will soon have more older people than children and this is posing challenges to the health and social care system worldwide (WHO, 2021). Because people are living longer, it affects the ability of governments and communities in providing the right number of resources for them because of the prevalence of chronic diseases and disabilities (NIH, 2022). Plans must be redesigned to cater to them. According to the office for budget and responsibility (OBR), the cost of caring for older people increases with age because more hospitals and community health services will need to be built (Government Office for Science, 2016)

EVALUATION.

The government has in place several policies and benefits to support the elderly in the UK such as cold weather payments given for falls in average temperature to certain degrees consecutively, pension credit which is extra money to assist living costs for those over the state pension age, personal independence payment to help with living costs, attendance allowance that helps to pay for personal care for those over the pension age who are disabled, carer's allowance, bereavement and attendance allowance and disability living allowance (Katie, 2021). Winter fuel payment of approximately £300 for paying gas and electric bills in winter (GOV.UK, 2012); Tv license concessions, public transport concessions such as free bus passes for the elderly, rail card for seniors, London freedom pass etc are all transport concessions to help older people in the UK. (Age UK, 2018). Those over the state pension age can also get the industrial injuries disablement benefit, and council tax reduction (NHS, 2018).

Several agencies and voluntary organizations render services to assist the elderly such as cafes and restaurants to relax, exercise classes, handyperson services, day centres to help them be independent, IT training to help them get online, footcare like toenail cutting, home helps to assist in day-to-day domestic tasks and a variety of social activities for the elderly (Age UK, 2018). Local councils also provide services such as luncheon clubs, home security checks, meals on wheels, sheltered and supported homes, activity centres, disabled parking badges, etc. (Basildon council, 2022). Although older people assist by rendering services such as helping their children and taking care of functions, taking part in household tasks, giving valuable advice, and volunteering, these do not take away the fact of the increased cost of the aging population as regards pensions, welfare, health care, etc.

The Covid 19 pandemic has had a far-reaching effect on the lives of the elderly in the UK (Bell et al., 2020). Older people are suffering from increased levels of anxiety and muscle weakness from being inactive and cooped indoors, a reduction in their sense of balance which increases the probability of falls, moreover, there is evidence of new and emerging cognitive decline. There is also increased depression, low mood, loss of hope, physical health deterioration, and increased pain because of conditions that were left untreated (Age UK, 2020). services have suffered delays in surgeries, disruptions and chaos during the pandemic which have led to deaths (Maringe et al., 2020)

Recommendations to improve the lives of older people include housing improvements. Social isolation should be discouraged and monitored, and health-friendly communities should be encouraged. The promotion of a healthy lifestyle should continue to be encouraged. Planning for cold weather should be done in advance and improved. Older people should be assisted to live well and avoid crisis situations that can harm their health. They should be involved in planning their own care along with their families. Telehealth should be encouraged. Care and treatment for common conditions associated with aging should be improved.

CONCLUSION

The pressure placed on the health and social care system through aging is clear and undisputable based on the evidence analysed. The need to build more hospitals, pay more staff, and the huge financial burden on governments and local authorities is a clear demonstration that older people pose a challenge to health and social care systems in the UK and around the world. Statistics do not lie, we will soon have more older people than young children, they will need to be catered for. Studies and statistics have proved that they spend longer in hospitals and suffer often from chronic diseases, all of these represent a challenge to the organisation, planning and implementation of health and social care.

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