

Health and Welfare Bureau for the Elderly

Toward an aging society with security and hope

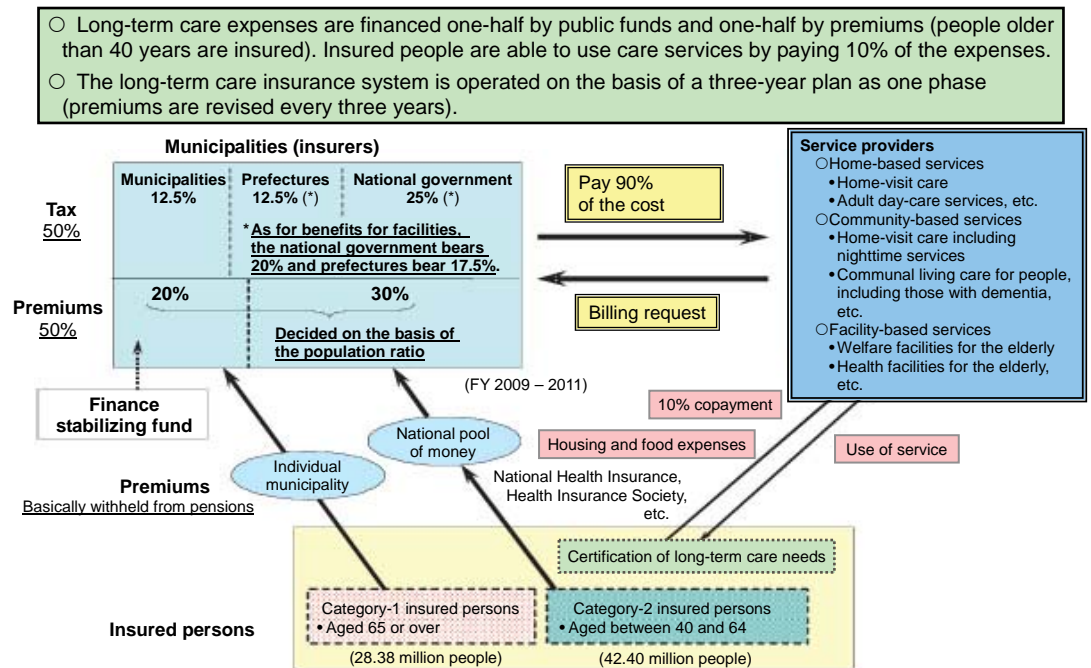
Japan will experience an unprecedented aging population in the future. The Health and Welfare Bureau for the Elderly promotes care and welfare services for the elderly, such as the long-term care insurance system, so that they can continue to live with a sense of security in an area familiar to them.

Long-term care insurance that supports the lives of elderly people

The basic principles of the long-term care insurance system are to support the independence of the elderly and maintain their dignity. It is a system to provide elderly people with the necessary care services in a comprehensive and unified manner when they are in conditions that require care, so that they can live an independent life at home or in their residential area.

Since the launch of the long-term care insurance system in April 2000, the number of service users (mainly home-based services) has significantly increased. It took root in society as a system that secures one's comfortable post-retirement years.

Structure of the long-term care insurance system



(Note) The number of Category-1 insured persons is derived from the Report on Long-Term Care Insurance Operation (provisional) (April 2009). The number of Category-2 insured persons is a monthly average for FY 2008, calculated from medical insurers' reports used by the Social Insurance Medical Fee Payment Fund in order to determine the amount of long-term care expenses.

Issues concerning long-term care insurance

The long-term care insurance system was revised in 2005 to include the promotion of care prevention and the establishment of the community care system, and it was revised again in 2008 to include the optimization of care service management.

Future issues concerning long-term care insurance are as follows:

- Further improvement of care and care prevention services in order to cope with the aging population and responses to the growing need for medical care.
- Promotion of medical and nursing care to cope with the increasing number of elderly people with dementia.
- Securing residences for the elderly to cope with the increasing number of elderly households.
- Improvement in the working conditions of workers engaged in care services.

The Ministry is working to address the above issues step by step, such as the revision of reward for nursing care that was carried out in April 2009.

Encouraging the elderly to have a meaningful, healthy life

In order to establish a bright, energetic aging society, it is very important for the elderly to have contacts with people and the society according to the level of their motivation and ability.

Through activities of the National Health and Welfare Festival for the Elderly (Nenrin-pic) and old people's clubs, the Bureau promotes meaningful and healthy lives of the elderly.



▲ Promotion of a meaningful post-retirement life



▲ An elderly person enjoying sports