

# Annual Health, Labour and Welfare Report 2024

- Build a Society Where People Can Face Mental Health Challenges and Live Healthy Lives -

## [Summary]

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

ひと、くらし、みらいのために



厚生労働省  
Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

# Overview of the 2024 Edition Annual Health, Labour and Welfare Report

## **Part 1 (Theme Part \*) “Build a Society Where People Can Face Mental Health Challenges and Live Healthy Lives”**

\* This annual report focuses on specific themes related to health, labour and welfare, analyzes the current situation and introduces relevant measures taken by the government in order to help people to deepen their understanding of the themes.

## **Part 2 (Annual Administrative Report) “Response to Current Policy Challenges”**

- In this annual administrative report, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare explains how it deals with a wide variety of policy challenges.
- The report includes a feature article about MHLW’s responses to the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake.

# 2024 Edition Annual Health, Labour and Welfare Report Part 1 (Theme)

## Table of Contents

### Part 1 (Theme) “Build a Society Where People Can Face Mental Health Challenges and Live Healthy Lives”

#### Introduction

“Mental Health” and “mental health conditions”

#### **Chapter 1 Environment Surrounding Mental Health and its Current State**

##### Section 1 Social Environment that Affects Mental Health and Its Changes

- 1 Stress at Different Stages of Life
- 2 Working Environment
- 3 Circumstances in Modern Society
- 4 Social Barriers and an Inclusive Society

##### Section 2 Mental Illnesses today

- 1 Common Mental Illnesses
- 2 Importance of Early Detection

##### Section 3 Effects of Damage to Mental Health

- 1 In Communities
- 2 In the Workplace
- 3 Facts about Suicide

##### Section 4 Awareness of Mental Health

- 1 Awareness of Healthy Body and Mind
- 2 Awareness of the Mental Health Conditions
- 3 Differences between Awareness of Mental Health and That of Physical Health

#### **Chapter 2 Efforts for Tackling Mental Health Challenges**

##### Section 1 Efforts to Tackle Mental Health Challenges at Every Stage of Life

- 1 Community-based and School-based Efforts
- 2 Efforts Taken in the Workplace

##### Section 2 Whole-of-society Efforts

- 1 Digitalization and a Growing Sense of Loneliness and Isolation Accompanying Digitalization
- 2 Efforts to Create an Inclusive Society

#### **Chapter 3 Build a Society Where People Can Face Mental Health Challenges and Live Healthy Lives**

##### Section 1 Respect opinions of people with mental health conditions and promote their participation in society

##### Section 2 Boost Mental Health in a Community and the Workplace

- 1 Allow for Early Intervention and Build a Community Healthcare System
- 2 Promote Strategies to Prevent Mental Health Conditions

##### Section 3 Changes in Awareness in Society

- 1 Promote efforts to help the public better understand and learn about mental health conditions and carry out programs for supporting people with mental health conditions
- 2 Necessity to Change Public Attitudes toward Gender Division of Labour

##### Section 4 Efforts of Each Individual to Care for Mental Health

- 1 Maintain a Healthy Lifestyle
- 2 Seek Advice If You Have Any Concerns about Your Mental Health

#### Conclusion

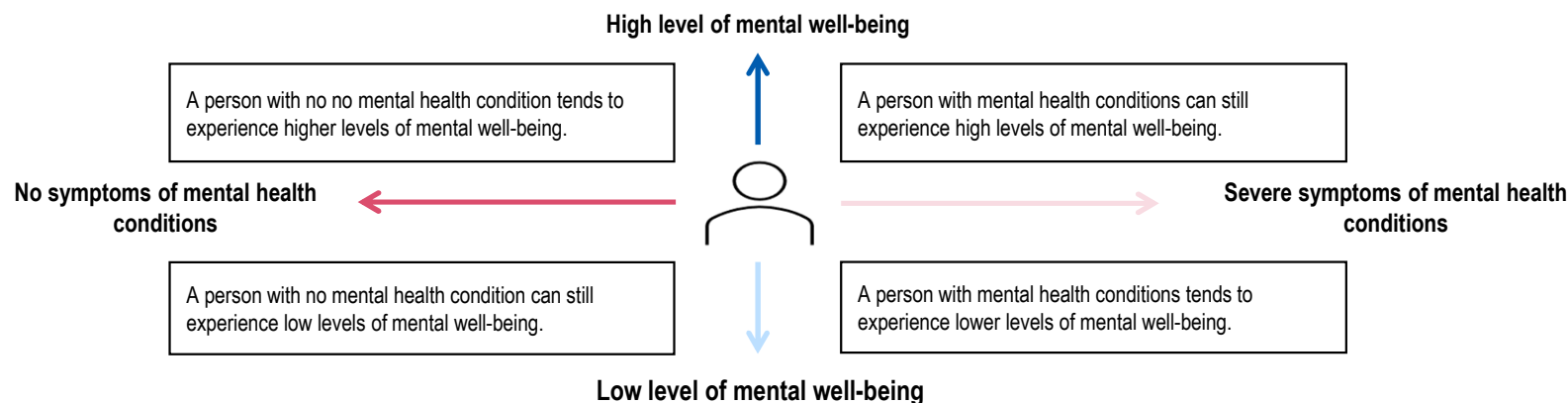
## Part 1 “Build a Society Where People Can Face Mental Health Challenges and Live Healthy Lives” - Introduction -

- The World Health Organization (WHO) defines **mental health** as “a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community.” The organization also states that **mental health is an integral and essential component of health and well-being of all people and is not merely defined by the presence or absence of mental disorders.**
- Part 1 **explains the environment surrounding mental health and its current state and introduces ongoing efforts while looking at strategies to build a society where people can face mental health challenges and live healthy lives.**

Mental health conditions refer to situations in which mental disorders or social barriers\*poses continuous and serious limitations on social or daily living of people, including mental status associated with significant distress, impairment in functioning, and risk of self-harm.

(※) Social barriers are the obstacles that hinder people with mental disorders from leading social or daily lives, including social systems, customs, ideology and all others.

### ★The Relationship between “Mental Well-being” and “Mental Health Conditions”



※ “Mental health”: The term is defined based on the *World mental health report: Transforming mental health for all* released by WHO in 2022.

“Mental health condition”: The term is defined in reference of the definitions of “persons with disabilities” and “social barriers” in Basic Act for Persons with Disabilities and the “mental health condition,” a word in WHO (2022).

The figure above: Created by the Office of Counsellor for Policy Planning Support and Evaluation of the MHLW Director-General for Policy Planning.

# Chapter 1 The Environment Surrounding Mental Health and its Current State

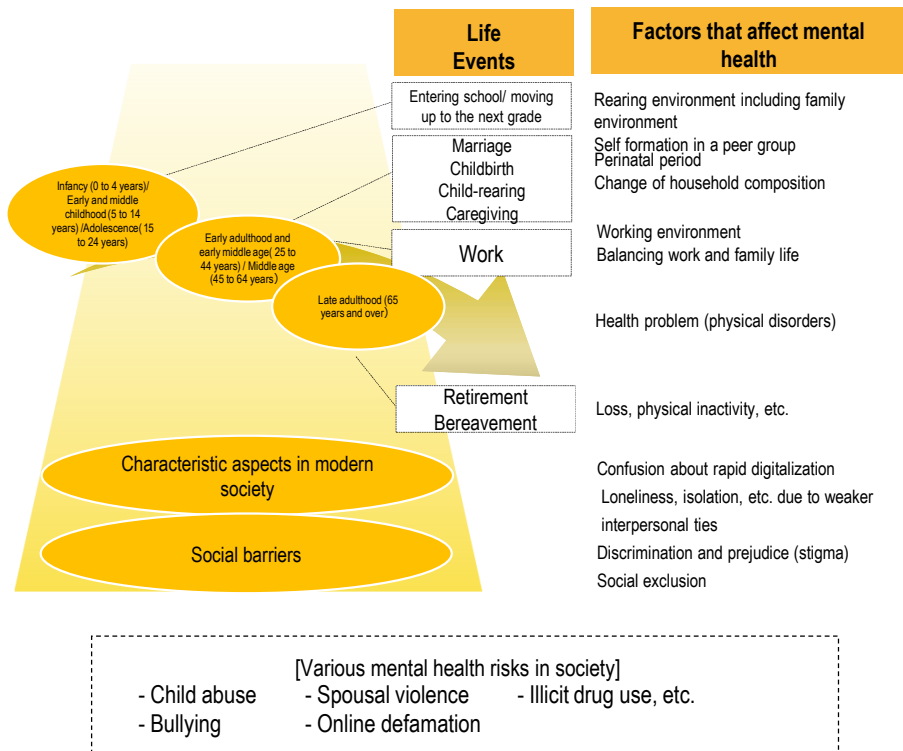
This chapter

- focuses on various stressors based on the idea that psychological stress caused by environmental factors is associated with the development of mental disorders while noting that people living with mental health conditions face different challenges and the circumstances surrounding them vary.
- looks at stressor diversity in modern society from the aspect of life events\*\* at every stage of life\*, things that can be experienced in daily life, different mental health risks and social barriers.

\* Different phases that all individuals pass through as they grow

\*\* Events that result in changes in a person's life such as getting a job, getting married and starting school

## 1 Stressors in Modern Society



## 2 Facts about Mental Illnesses

- Introduction of major mental illnesses  
(Depression, bipolar disorder, adjustment disorder, schizophrenia, PTSD, eating disorder, and dependence)
- Importance of early detection

## 3 Effects of Damage to Mental Health

### ※ Major effects that are possibly associated with mental health

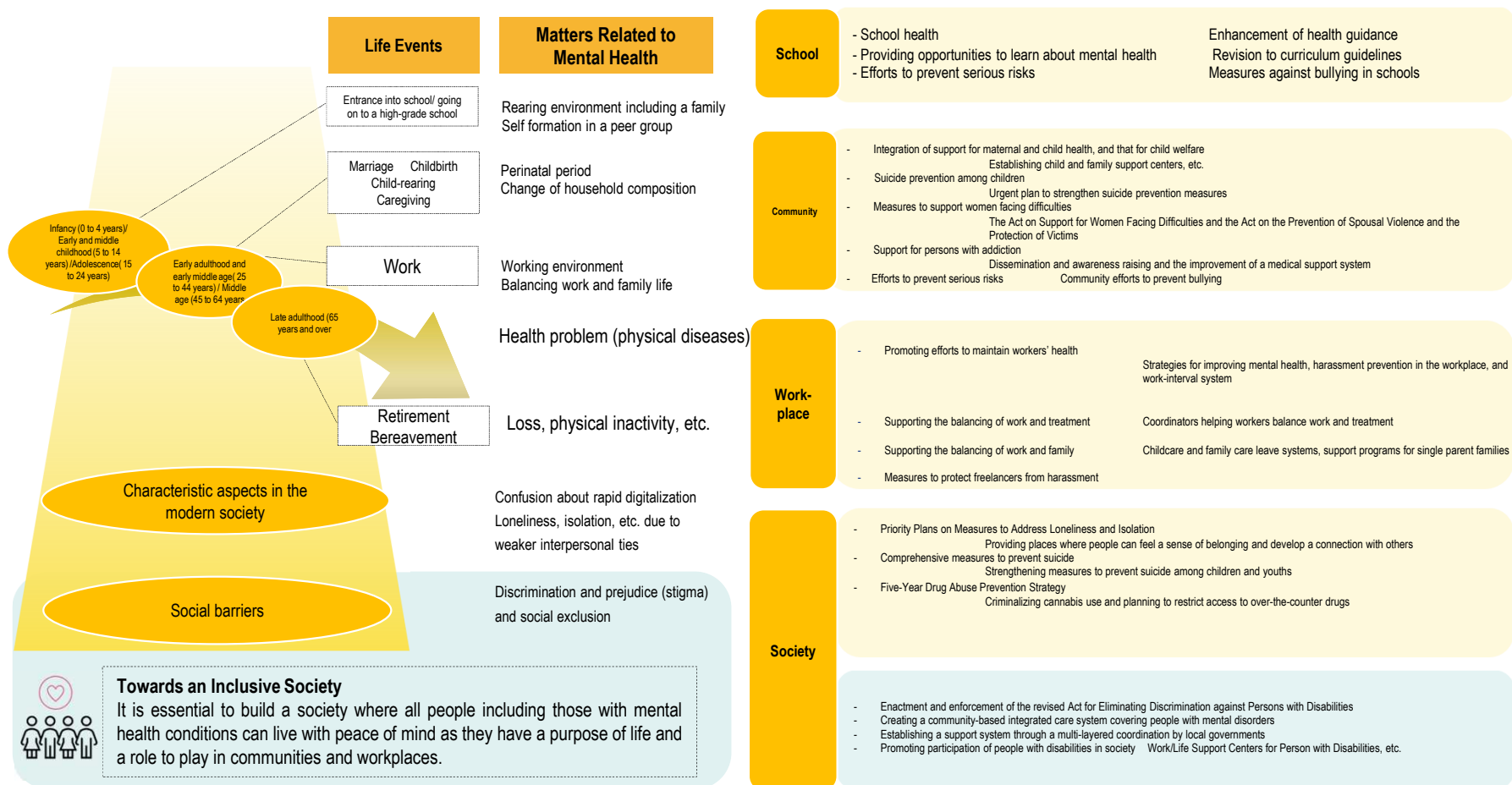
- An increase in the number of Industrial Accident Compensation Insurance claims for mental disorders
  - A record high of 710 approved cases in 2022
- Suicides
  - There were 21,837 suicide deaths reported in 2023.
  - The number of suicides among elementary, junior high and senior high school students stood at 513 in 2023, the second highest level since the MHLW started tracking the statistic.

Reference: Comparison with G-7 Countries

- Japan has the highest suicide rate among the G7 countries.
- By gender, the rate for men in Japan is the second highest while that for Japanese women the highest.

## Chapter 2 Efforts for Tackling Mental Health Challenges

- This chapter introduces efforts to prevent life and related events that everybody can experience **from causing mental health conditions, approaches to characteristic aspects in modern society and social barriers, and attempts to realize an inclusive society.**





## Chapter 3 Build a Society Where People can Face up to Mental Health Challenges and Live Healthy lives

- This chapter discusses how important it is to face up to mental health challenges at every stage of life.
- The chapter states that “respecting opinions of people with mental health conditions and promoting their participation in society” is a common philosophy about initiatives for people having mental health conditions at each stage of their lives.
- The chapter also outlines the future directions of initiatives to promote mental health in communities and workplaces, transformation of social awareness and each individual's efforts to care for mental health. The last part of this annual report cites the need to pay attention to mental health of neighbors and broaden the range of opportunities for self-determination by people with mental health conditions.

### Future Course of Action toward a Society Where People can Face up to Mental Health Challenges and Live Healthy lives

#### <Respecting opinions of people with mental health conditions and promoting their participation in society>

- The government of Japan aims to establish a system that makes sure that everyone including people with mental health conditions can have a purpose of life and a role to play, help each other in their community as a member.
- **Participation of people with mental health conditions in society is important in promoting peer support, fostering an understanding of mental health conditions among community residents and implementing efforts to reducing stigma (discrimination and prejudice).**

#### Promoting Mental Health in Communities and Workplaces

- Improve a mental health support system in municipalities  
Improving a support system to satisfy various needs and expanding the eligibility for the system based on the enforcement of the revised Act on Mental Health and Welfare for Persons with Mental Disorders or Disabilities
- Improve a system to provide mental health services  
Strengthening the functions of medical institutions to provide outpatient care, an appropriate and wider application of online psychotherapy, transitions from hospital care to community-based care for patients staying in a hospital for a long period of time
- Build a community-based integrated care system covering people with mental disorders  
Planned improvement in community infrastructure, multilayered cooperation with related organizations and people involved through discussions
- Promote measures to address loneliness and isolation  
Promoting the setting of a public-private partnership platform to detect persons who are feeling lonely or isolated early on and encourage social participation
- Measures to improve mental health in the workplace and supporting the balance between work and treatment for workers with mental health conditions  
Incorporating workers' mental health into business strategies and providing support to small and medium-sized businesses taking steps for employee mental health

#### Transformation of Social Awareness

- Promote the Mental Health Supporter Training Program  
Planning to train one million people for mental health supporters over the 10 years from fiscal 2024
- Help younger generations apply their new philosophy of life in everyday life  
Building a society where younger generations recognize that child-rearing and doing household chores are shared responsibilities as they apply their new philosophy of life in everyday life

#### Support Each Individual's Efforts to Care for Mental Health

- *Guide to Good Sleep for Good Health 2023*  
Recommend using the guide to help people improve the quality of sleep
- Cognitive behavioral therapy  
Recommend using cognitive behavioral therapy techniques for management of daily stress and self-care
- Consulting service counter  
Suggest looking at the MHLW's website for mental health among young people “*Kokoro mo mente siyou*” (Care for your mental health), searching for a nearby consulting service counter and visiting it

## Column: Examples of Best Practices

### <Efforts in School and Community>

#### <Consulting service counter for young people with mental health conditions> (Adachi Youth Support Terrace SODA)

- ◆ The medical corporation has opened a consulting service counter in Kita Senju, a college town that has good access to public transportation.
- ◆ The counter offers one-stop services and refer young people seeking help to a clinic or a specialized institution.



Exterior photo of the building of Adachi youth support terrace SODA

#### <Supporting individuals struggling with addiction in their recovery and personal growth> (Nonprofit Organization Japan Mac Fukuoka)

- ◆ Persons having an addiction, their family members and the organization staff work together aiming for full recovery from addiction.
- ◆ The organization cooperates with prefectural and municipal governments and related agencies. It also offers workshops in communities and at related agencies and dispatches instructors to them to help community residents and officials at those agencies acquire accurate knowledge of addiction.



Workshops for families

### < Towards an Inclusive Society>

#### <Employment support for persons with disabilities who wish to work at private companies> (LITALICO Works Akabane)

- ◆ The employment support office cooperates with primary care physicians of service users and local welfare institutions based on a belief that it is important to improve users' lifestyles.
- ◆ The employment support office uses a handbook on reasonable accommodations in the workplace to list up difficulties that service users may face after starting to work.



Encourage service users to exchange information without having psychological barriers in spaces with a flexible seating arrangement

### <Respect Opinions of Persons Having a Drug Addiction and Their Participation in Community and Society>

#### <Support for Recovery from Drug Addiction>

(Approved Corporation Engaging in Specified Non-profit Activities Kyoto DARC)

- ◆ The corporation offers a program designed for drug addicts to learn how to develop a human relationship with others to remove a feeling of isolation from them as it aims to help them recover from the addiction.
- ◆ It participates in events such as a local festival and actively communicates with community residents.



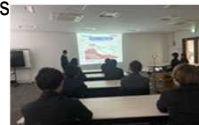
An addiction treatment center in a local community

### < Promotion of Measures to Prevent Mental Health Conditions>

#### <Pay attention to employees' health to create a healthy workplace>

(Akitsu Co., Ltd.)

- ◆ Once a month, the company organizes a workshop on industrial health and safety led by an instructor who is its employee.
- ◆ It pays employees ages 35 or older up to 100,000 yen per a comprehensive medical checkup as part of the checkup costs



Workshop

#### <Efforts to support mental health of employees working remotely>

(JOYZO, Inc.)

- ◆ To deal with issues arising from remote work, the company has adopted a virtual office and conducts one-on-one meetings.
- ◆ It also uses a satellite office to offer workcations that serve as employee training.



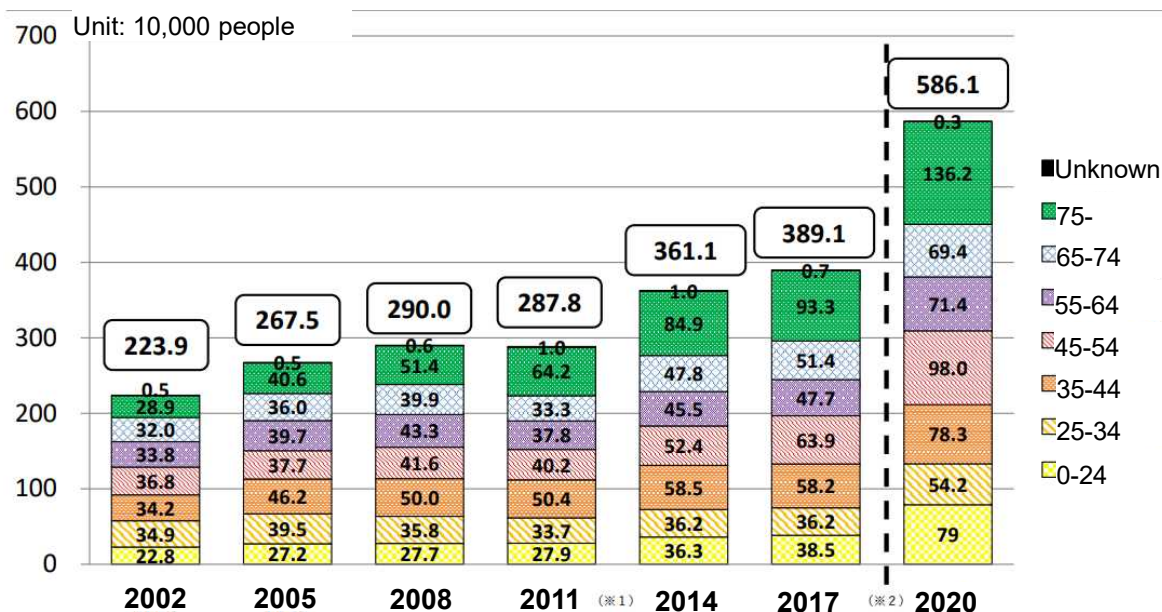
A common space in the office



(References)

## <Reference 1> The Environment Surrounding Mental Health and its Current State

- The number of outpatients with mental illnesses was about 5.86 million in 2020.



### Numerical examples related to mental health conditions

- Number of mental disorders approved as industrial accidents  
→ 710 (2022), highest ever

### Suicides in Japan

- Number of suicides (2023)  
→ 21,837  
Of them, the number of suicides among school age youths aged 7 to 18  
→ 513, the second highest recorded
- Suicides in G7 countries
  - Japan has the highest suicide mortality among the G7 countries.
  - By gender, Japan's suicide rate among men is the second highest while the rate among females the highest.

※1) The 2011 survey excludes data for part of Miyagi prefecture and the figures for Fukushima prefecture.

※2) The MHLW changed the method of estimating the number of outpatients used for estimating the total number of patients in 2020. More specifically, it changed the method for calculating the average revisit interval (the period between one visit and the survey date), which is used for estimating the number of outpatients. Until 2017, the revisit interval exceeding 30 days was excluded from the calculation. However, since 2020, the interval exceeding 98 days has been excluded.

(Materials) Prepared by the Department of Health and Welfare for Persons with Disabilities, Social Welfare and War Victims' Relief Bureau, MHLW, based on MHLW "Patient Survey."

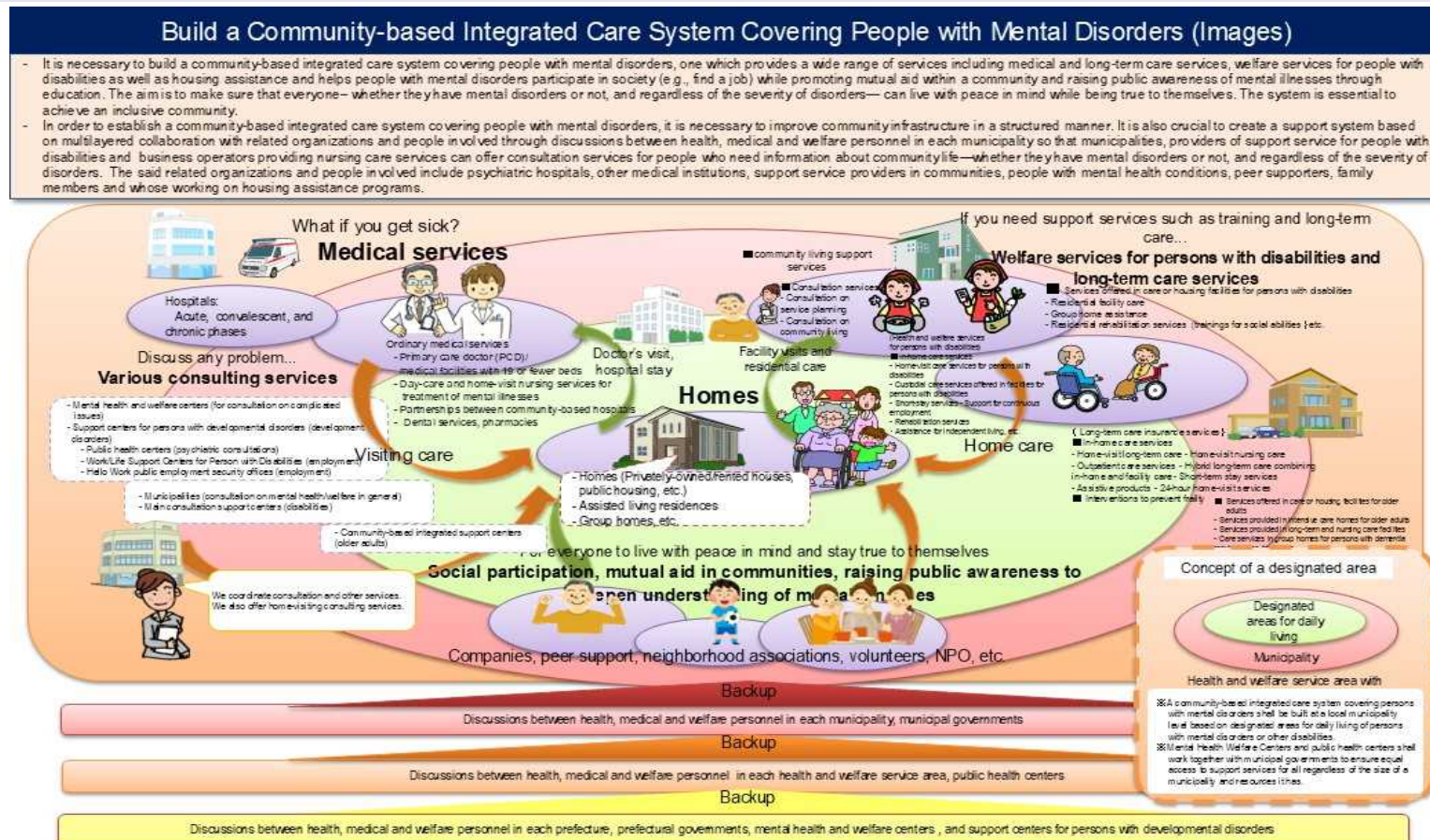
### ● Major mental illnesses discussed in this report

- Depression - Bipolar disorder (cyclophrenia) - Adjustment disorder, - Schizophrenia - Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) - Eating disorder
- Dependence

Note: The list of mental illnesses noted in this report refers to the current statistical classification of diseases, injuries, and causes of death which complies with the 10th revision of the International Classification of Diseases, or ICD-10, published by WHO. The International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD) is a classification list of diseases and causes of death defined by internationally uniform standards based on the recommendation by WHO. ICD 11 came into effect in 2022, and Japan has been working on applying it to the country's statistical classification.

## <Reference 2> Efforts for Tackling Mental Health Challenges

- A community-based integrated care system covering people with mental disorders is essential to build an inclusive community, one in which people connect with each other and with society, have a purpose of life or a role to play and help each other regardless the relationship between people who support others and those receiving assistance through cross-sector collaboration beyond institutional frameworks.

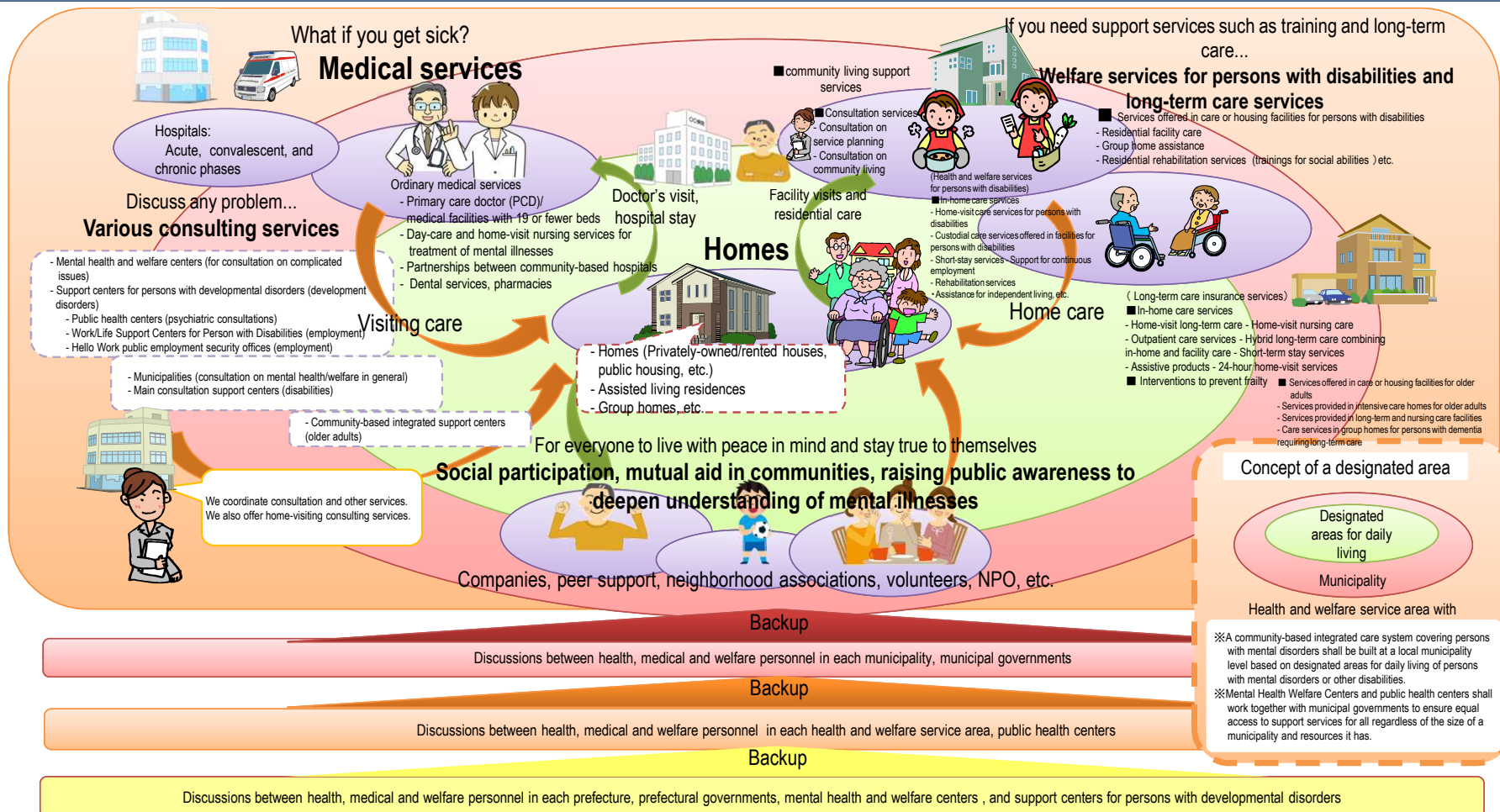


Source: Department of Insurance and Welfare for Persons with Disabilities, Social Welfare and War Victims' Relief Bureau, MHLW



## Build a Community-based Integrated Care System Covering People with Mental Disorders (Images)

- It is necessary to build a community-based integrated care system covering people with mental disorders, one which provides a wide range of services including medical and long-term care services, welfare services for people with disabilities as well as housing assistance and helps people with mental disorders participate in society (e.g., find a job) while promoting mutual aid within a community and raising public awareness of mental illnesses through education. The aim is to make sure that everyone— whether they have mental disorders or not, and regardless of the severity of disorders— can live with peace in mind while being true to themselves. The system is essential to achieve an inclusive community.
- In order to establish a community-based integrated care system covering people with mental disorders, it is necessary to improve community infrastructure in a structured manner. It is also crucial to create a support system based on multilayered collaboration with related organizations and people involved through discussions between health, medical and welfare personnel in each municipality so that municipalities, providers of support service for people with disabilities and business operators providing nursing care services can offer consultation services for people who need information about community life—whether they have mental disorders or not, and regardless of the severity of disorders. The said related organizations and people involved include psychiatric hospitals, other medical institutions, support service providers in communities, people with mental health conditions, peer supporters, family members and those working on housing assistance programs.



## <Reference 2> > Efforts for Tackling Mental Health Challenges\* (Definition of terms used on page 10)

- Consultation on service planning: consultation services for people with disabilities who need assistance for the arrangement and the writing of care plans
- Consultation on community living: consultation services for people with disabilities transitioning from institutional settings into the community and those who have settled down in the community
- Home-visit care services for persons with disabilities: custodial care services for persons with disabilities provided at their home
- Residential facility care: services to help persons with disabilities housed in a facility with their activities of daily living such as eating, bathing and using the toilet, and other services prescribed by Order of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare mainly at night-time
- Group home assistance: services to help persons with disabilities living in group homes with their activities of daily living such as eating, bathing and using the toilet primarily at night-time and offer consultations about challenges associated with daily living
- Residential rehabilitation services (trainings for social abilities) : services to provide training at night-time for a certain period of time at accommodations to help people with disabilities improve their physical functioning or social abilities so that they can lead their lives in an independent manner
- Long-term care insurance services: services provided to persons aged 65 and over requiring care or support
- Home-visit long-term care: custodial care services provided at homes of older adults requiring in-home care
- Home-visit nursing care: medical care services provided by nurses or healthcare professionals at homes of older adults requiring in-home care
- Outpatient care services : functional training and custodial care provided in an outpatient setting for older adults requiring in-home care
- Hybrid long-term care combining in-home and facility care: functional training and care services for older adults requiring in-home care provided in small care facilities offering short- term stay options or at their home based on their mental and physical conditions, surroundings and preference
- Short-term stay services: functional training and custodial care for older adults requiring in-home care provided in long-term care facilities that offer short- term stay options
- Services provided in intensive care homes for older adults: custodial care, or nonmedical help with daily functioning
- Services provided in long-term and nursing care facilities: rehabilitation and long-term and nursing-care services to help facility residents whose medical condition is stable and does not require hospital treatment, but requires rehabilitation or nursing care return home
- Care services in group homes for persons with dementia requiring long-term care: functional training, and custodial and other care services provided in group homes for persons with dementia
- Health and welfare service area: areas designated for the provision of a wider range of public health and welfare services for persons with disabilities

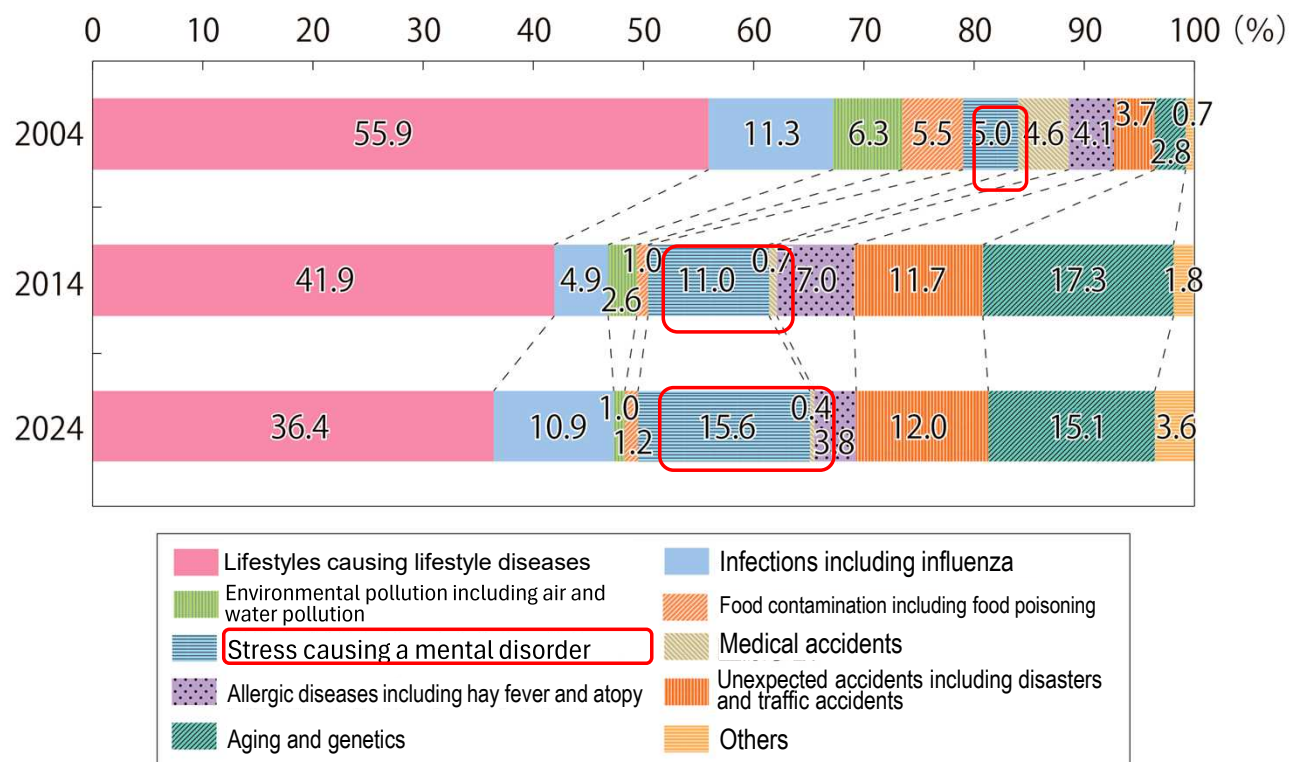


## <Reference 3> People's Awareness of Mental Health (1)

- A growing number of people think that risks to mental health are more important than those to physical health when asked about risks to their mental and physical health.

The percentage of people who chose "stress that may cause a mental illness" as an answer when asked what the greatest risk to their health overall health status:

5.0 % (in the 2004 survey) → 11.0 % (in the 2014 survey) → 15.6 % (in the 2024 survey) >> 3 times increase in the past 20 years



(Note) The survey methods including allocation and data weighting used for the 2004 and 2014 surveys are different from those used for the 2024 survey.

(Source)

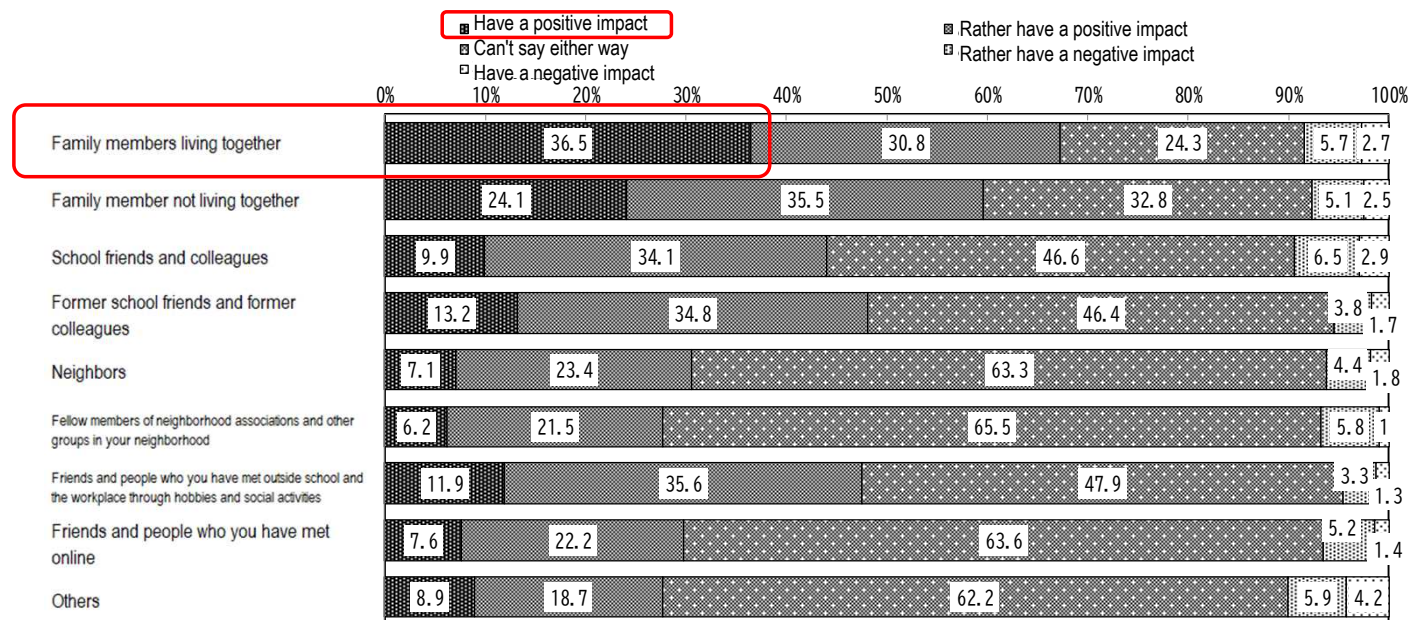
Data in 2004: "Attitude Survey Concerning Life and Health Risk" entrusted by the Counsellor Office for Policy Evaluation to Director-General for General Policy and Evaluation, the MHLW

Data in 2014, "Investigation Concerning Health Consciousness Survey" entrusted by the Counsellor Office for Policy Evaluation to Director-General for General Policy and Evaluation, the MHLW

Data in 2024, "Research and Examination Report on Aging Society with Fewer Children" prepared by MHLW in 2023

## <Reference 3> People's Awareness of Mental Health (2)

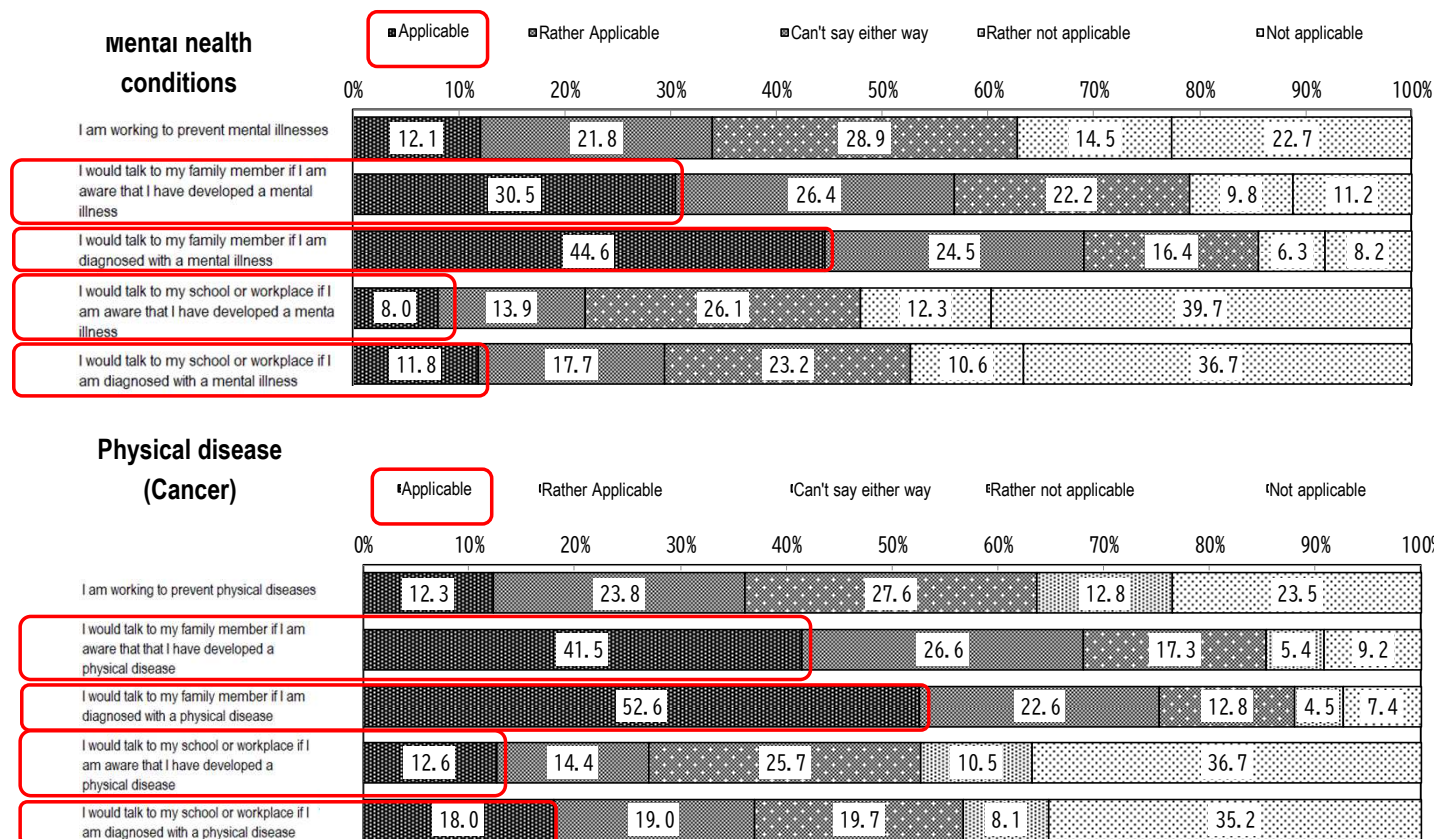
- Family members living together are the most common response to a question about who has a positive impact on mental health in a survey on the influence of human relationships on mental health



※A survey result implies that persons living alone without a family member living together with may maintain a connection with people who have a positive effect on their mental health by building trust personally and privately in relationship with friends and other people.

## <Reference 3> People's Awareness of Mental Health (3)

- A survey on awareness of mental health conditions and physical illnesses suggests that many people think they would be more hesitant to talk to their family member, school or workplace when they experience mental health conditions than when they have developed a physical disease such as cancer.

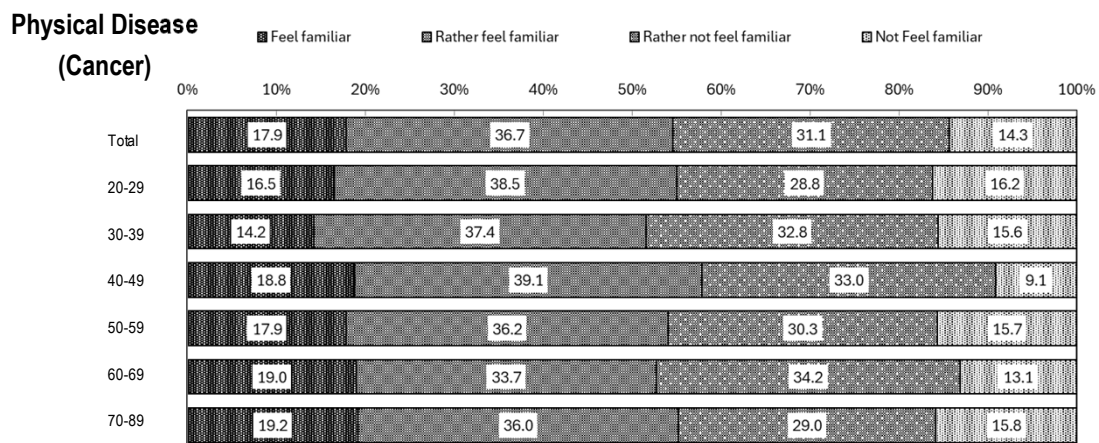
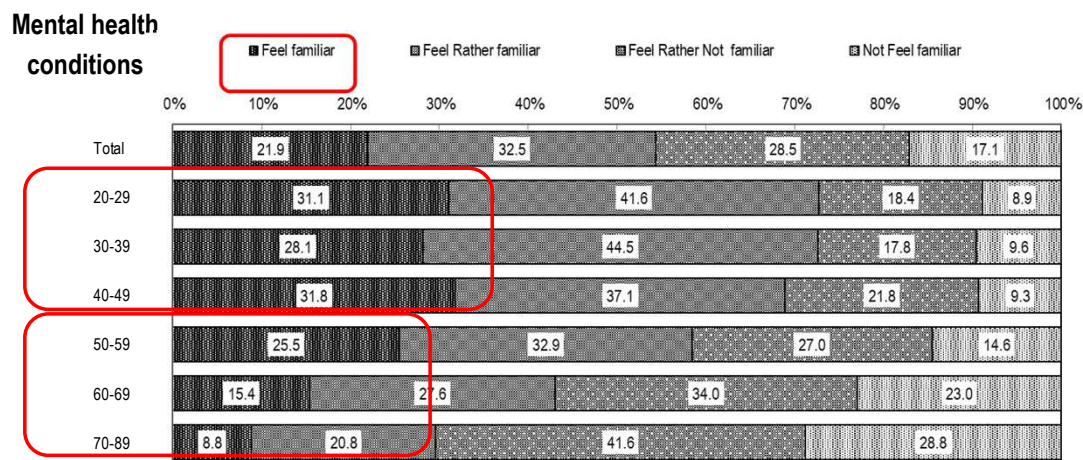


Source: FY 2023 Report on the Project for Surveying and Examining the Aging Society with a Declining Birthrate in Japan, MHLW



## <Reference 3> People's Awareness of Mental Health (4)

- Younger generations are more likely to feel familiar with mental health conditions than people in older generations.



Source: FY 2023 Report on the Project for Surveying and Examining the Aging Society with a Declining Birthrate in Japan, MHLW

## <Reference 4> Feature Article: MHLW's Responses to the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake

- Due to geographic characteristics of the peninsula, the earthquake caused enormous damage to infrastructure including roads, making it difficult to reach part of the affected area while essential utility services such as water and electricity were suspended. In addition, the area hit by the earthquake has a larger share of older population, and therefore, the importance of efforts to protect lives and health of those affected increased. Here are major steps that the MHLW took for about three months after the earthquake.

The MHLW has

- (1) Helped evacuees, mainly those requiring special care, move into secondary evacuation sites such as hotels and Japanese inns to prevent disaster-related deaths, provided transportation to patients with the help of medical teams and improved the conditions of secondary evacuation shelters through personnel and material assistance; and
- (2) Dispatched disaster relief teams such as Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMATs) and Disaster Health Emergency Assistance Teams (DHEATs) from across the country to provide local governments in the affected area, people staying temporarily in evacuation shelters and those remaining in their home with health, medical and welfare services and delivered medical supplies by using mobile pharmacy vehicles.

### Initial Responses and Emergency Measures (Major Activities)

#### <Medical services >

- ◆ Dispatched DMATs and other disaster relief teams
- ◆ Dispatched nursing staff, pharmacists, etc.
- ◆ Provided services by using mobile medical containers and pharmacies

#### <Healthcare and Welfare Services, etc. in Affected Areas>

- ◆ Dispatched DHEATs and teams of public health nurses and others
- ◆ Used the Disaster/Digital Information System for Health and Well-being (D24H) to improve sanitary and other conditions in evacuation shelters
- ◆ Worked together with Disaster Infection Control Teams (DICTs) to prevent and control infections in evacuation shelters
- ◆ Provided nutrition and dietary habit support
- ◆ Dispatched Disaster Welfare Assistance Teams (DWATs) to provide support in evacuation shelter and sent care workers to social welfare facilities as temporary support staff



#### <Water Supply Restoration>

- ◆ Provided emergency water supply with the support of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism and the Self-Defense Forces as well as water suppliers across the country which are under the framework of Japan Water Works Association
- ◆ Built a support system organized by Japan Water Works Association and related bodies and dispatched engineers for emergency restoration work

#### <Material Assistance>

- ◆ Delivered medicine and sanitary supplies

#### <Special Measures for Health Insurance >

- ◆ Allowed people in the affected area to receive medical treatment, long-term care services and welfare services for persons with disabilities without their insurance card
- ◆ Granted extensions and exemptions for payment to people who have difficulty paying costs for services above

### Support for Rebuilding and Recovering (Major Activities)

#### <Financial assistance for rebuilding people's lives>

- ◆ Special measures taken by prefectural Councils of Social Welfare to grant a loan to people in the affected areas to cover their living expenses
- ◆ Established a new subsidy system (temporary special benefits to promote the welfare of people in the affected regions)

#### <Restoration of Medical Facilities, Social Welfare Facilities, etc.>

- ◆ Took special measures including those for eliminating the upper limit of the base amount of subsidy and raising the percentage of subsidies in the total cost of restoration projects after the designation of the earthquake as a disaster of extreme severity

#### <Measures related to employment and work>

- ◆ Took initiatives for employment in the affected areas such as special measures for employment adjustment subsidies and those for unemployment benefits
- ◆ Provided support to small and medium-sized enterprises
- ◆ Took steps to ensure workers' safety and health, for instance, by conducting patrols to maintain safety and health of workers at restoration work sites