

A Study into Supporting Safe Driving and Active Life for the Elderly (4)

Awareness of care managers and neighborhood councilors regarding car driving of elderly persons with lowered cognitive functions

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Purpose

Purpose of this study is to examine the difference in awareness between care managers and neighborhood councilors regarding driving cessation of elderly persons with lowered cognitive functions.

Methods

Survey period: August 2010.
Subjects: Care managers and neighborhood councilors in "A" town, Shikoku, Japan.
Survey methods: Local comprehensive support center and local Department of care welfare in "A" town were asked for cooperation. Purpose of the study, survey methods, voluntariness for cooperation, privacy protection, and publication of the results were verbally explained to the subjects. That data obtained by this survey are used for only this study and that data are immediately deleted when the study is completed were also mentioned. The survey was conducted using a self-administered anonymous questionnaire developed for our own study. Return of the questionnaire was considered as a consent to participate in our study.
 This study was approved by the Ethical Review Board of the author's organization.

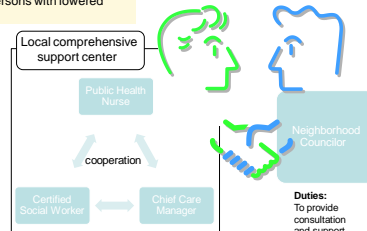
Local comprehensive support center

Public Health Nurse

cooperation

Certified Social Worker

Chief Care Manager



Neighborhood Councilor

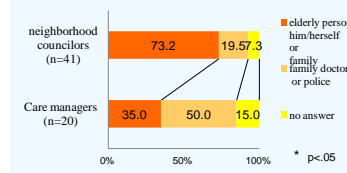
Duties:
To provide consultation and support including advises about life/ To provide information / To collaborate with services care management.

Establishing organizations: Municipalities
Functions and operation: Advocacy works including comprehensive consultation and support, and early detection and prevention of mistreatment; comprehensive and continuous management; and nursing care and preventive care management.

Results

Result1. Who should make a judgment about driving cessation when an elderly individual is diagnosed as dementia?
 -- Differences in awareness between occupations --

Care managers answered that the family doctor or the police should do it.
 Neighborhood councilors answered that the elderly person him/herself or the family should do it. (p < .05) (Figure 1)



■ elderly person him/herself or family

■ family doctor or police

■ no answer

* p < .05

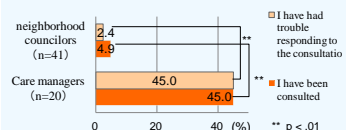
Figure1 Who should make a judgment about driving cessation?

Result2. Have you ever been consulted about car driving of elderly persons with dementia (including suspected cases) and had trouble responding to it?
 -- Differences in awareness between occupations --

Experience of being consulted
 [Yes] Care managers: 45%
 Neighborhood councilors: 4.9% (p < .01)

Experience of having trouble responding to the consultation
 [Yes] Care managers: 45%
 Neighborhood councilors: 2.4% (p < .01) (Figure 2)

All the care managers had trouble responding to the consultation.



■ I have had trouble responding to the consultatio

■ I have been consulted

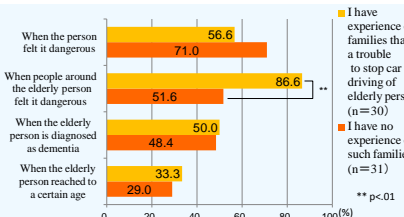
** p < .01

Figure2 Have you ever been consulted about car driving of elderly persons with dementia(including suspected case)?

In addition, 75% of the care managers know someone who has had trouble with giving up driving of elderly persons. Especially, all the care managers with three years and longer experience answered that they experienced such cases, while 36.6% of the neighborhood councilors do. (p < .05)

Result3. When should the driving be stopped?
 -- Difference in awareness between those who know someone having trouble stopping car driving of elderly persons with dementia (including suspected cases) and those who don't --

People who know elderly persons having trouble with giving up driving were more likely to answer that elderly persons should stop driving when people around them feel it dangerous than those who don't. (p < .01) (Figure 3)



■ I have experience of families that had a trouble to stop car driving of elderly person (n=30)

■ I have no experience of such families (n=31)

** p < .01

Figure3 When should the driving be stopped?

Discussion

It is presumed that care managers have more chances to meet families or neighbors who have had trouble with driving cessation of elderly persons with dementia than neighborhood councilors because care managers directly take care of people who received Certification of Needed Support or Certification of Needed Long-Term Care in the care insurance system.

It is necessary for the elderly who have been dependent on a car in their everyday life to drive a car in order to maintain their self-supporting life. Currently, elderly drivers are obligated to attend an educational course (at renewal of a license for drivers of 70 years old and over since 2002) and preliminary examination (at renewal of a license for drivers of 75 years old and over since 2009). In 2009, the preliminary examination for elderly drivers was conducted for 339,401 elderly drivers¹⁾; however, 203 returned their driver's license as a result of the examination.

It would become difficult for the elderly with dementia to drive a car ensuring public safety. When care managers think it is dangerous for the elderly persons to drive a car, they begin to feel emotional turmoil and have difficulty in dealing with the situation. Knowing how difficult it is for the people around the elderly to make them stop driving, care managers expect that the final decision about driving cessation should be followed under publicly-provided system.

Reference

1) National Police Agency of Japan (March 3, 2011): Driver's License Statistics, 2009