

# Measures for the Aging Society

**FY 2012**

## **1 Measures for the Aging Society in FY 2012**

### **Promotion of Measures for the Aging Society**

The main policies in FY 2012 are listed below.

#### **(1) Comprehensive Promotion Initiatives**

##### **○About the social security and tax integrated reform**

Together with the aim to build the "support for all generations" social security system which will ensure the security of people's lives through all generations, and to make a more caring social security for the first half of life, such as enhancing support for children and child care, as a first step to the simultaneous achievement of fiscal soundness and ensuring stability of financial resources of social security, the "Outline of social security and tax integrated reform" was approved by the Cabinet in February 2012, which includes such measures as raising the consumption tax(national and local) stepwise to 10%.

According to the steps listed in the same outline, the social security reform bill and tax system reform bill were submitted during a regular session of the Diet in 2012, and it was decided to continue promoting reforming based on the same outline and the steps on the social security reform that was approved by the Cabinet in March. The points of the measures for elderly persons that have been incorporated in this outline are as follows: 1) to build the " Integrated Community Care System" in order to do everything possible to let elderly people continue their living based on home in areas where they get used to live, 2) for solving problems concerning low pensions or no pensions at all, to shorten the eligibility period or add pensions to such low-income earners, in order to strengthen minimum guaranteed features of the pension system, 3) as an employment policy for elderly persons, to ensure a firm connection between pensions and employment and develop a legal system about standards concerning the continued employment system to prevent occurrence of non-income aged households.

In addition, as far as the number system for social security and tax goes, together with promoting activities according to the schedule shown in the social security and tax number outline, it is decided to hold a "My number symposium" across the country again in fiscal 2011.

## **(2) Employment/income**

### **○ Promotion and assistance for middle-aged and elderly people with re-employment**

To strengthen smooth labor mobility of elderly persons who have difficulty with re-employment, we expand subsidies to support labor mobility for small and medium enterprises entrusting re-employment support to private employment agencies, providing at least one day of vacation for job hunting and paying the amount which is equal to or more than the amount of usual wages for the vacation, when elderly people's re-employment is realized.

### **○ Establishment of subsidies for companies accepting elderly people's labour mobility**

We will promote smooth labour mobility of elderly people by establishing new grants for companies accepting elderly people labour mobility, and by subsidizing employers hiring elderly people, introduced by employment placement business providers, who are close to retirement age, but willing to be employed in other companies that can take advantage of their knowledge and experience.

### **○ Appropriate operation by the Japan Pension Service and dealing with the pension record problem**

In relation to the affairs for enrollment in the National Pension, we will steadily implement the affairs in encouraging persons who reach 20, 34 and 44 years old identified by the resident registry network system to undertake the notification procedures for enrollment in the National Pension and enrolling by our own authority persons, who have not undertaken the notification procedures.

In relation to the affairs for collection or receipt of the National Pension Premiums, we will enhance the procedures for collection of the delinquent Premiums and strengthen collaboration with the entrusted institutions of the affairs for receipt of the Premiums, with the goal of ensuring the higher payment rate of insured persons paying the Premiums within the fiscal year in fiscal 2012 than in fiscal 2009 and returning the payment rate in fiscal 2012 to the 60.0% level.

## **(3) Health and Welfare**

### **○ Elderly Persons' Physical Fitness Building Support Project**

In Japan which has a super-aged society with the proportion of the population over the

age of 65 to the total population being more than 23%, supporting the maintenance and promotion of physical fitness and physical and mental health of the elderly is an important responsibility of the country, but regular exercise and sports are also essential for elderly people to live a healthy and vibrant life with a reason for living. Therefore it is necessary to conduct support projects for elderly people who are changing the basis for their livelihood from work to local communities by dissemination and awareness raising concerning exercise and sports programs that can be continued without difficulty, depending on the health and fitness of each elderly person, and by holding symposiums related to elderly people's physical fitness to contribute to the realization of a society of people with a long, healthy and dynamic life.

○ **Ensuring necessary long-term care services**

In 2012 in order to realize the system (Integrated Community Care System) which allow local people to receive continuous and integral long-term care services in the area where they have been living as long as possible, improvement of elderly people's housing will be promoted such as enhancing housing with services for the elderly and home-service base with "combined multiple-service offices" which have combined functions of home- visit nursing and multifunctional long-term care in a small group home, or "regular visiting/ on-demand response services" that work closely with home- visit long-term and home- visit nursing.

○ **Improving the quality of care services**

Concerning measures for the system of sputum suction and tube feeding implementation by care workers, after discussions and trial projects by the "Study Group on measures for system of sputum suction and tube feeding implementation by care workers", the "Bill for partial revision of the long-term care insurance act, etc., in order to strengthen long-term care service infrastructure" was submitted to the 177<sup>th</sup> Diet session, which was approved and promulgated in June 2011, and enforced in April 2012.

○ **Promotion of life support through mutual support in the region**

As measures to prevent the so-called "solitary death", we are going to continue supporting comprehensive efforts performed by regions and to furnish people with much information only about efforts in other regions, by introducing cases of regions with advanced implementation of efforts in addition to emphasizing the handling of personal information.

Also, in order to promote mutual support in region, we will provide assistance for local

governments who carry out pioneering and experimental efforts aiming at solving current problems of elderly people's local communities by projects on promoting special support for local welfare, etc.

Furthermore, in order to let one-person only households, including elderly people, live with confidence, promotion of safe life building projects is planned by providing support to watching and other activities.

○ **Provision of comprehensive and continuous home care in the region**

Concerning the home healthcare cooperation base project, which has been operated since fiscal 2011, while expanding the number of implementation places, we will continue to make efforts for expanding public awareness and developing human resources. In addition, it was decided to list home care achievement goals or healthcare collaboration systems in the new Healthcare Plans (which will be implemented in fiscal 2013) which will be formulated by each prefecture, and regional home care will continue to be systematically promoted.

**(4) Study/social participation**

○ **Development of the basis for lifelong learning**

We will hold a “National Lifelong Learning Network Forum”. It will help to gather people from administrative institutions, universities, NPOs or other organizations, and business people who are working on solving social issues by utilizing the results of the lifelong learning activities (community-building by the “New public”). Along with disseminating the information about results of the conducted research meetings concerning those issues, we will promote expanding the networks of the relevant parties across various fields so that mutual information exchange of interested parties can be done daily for enhancing the ongoing activities.

In addition, in order to contribute to the enhancement of social education administration in prefectural and municipal governments, nurturing of social education leaders with excellent qualities and professional competence is planned.

○ **Elderly persons' social participation and making life worth living**

Research meetings will be held to promote elderly persons' social participation and making life worth living by promoting lifelong learning for the elderly, which is one of the principle regional efforts.

In addition, we will support for creating the environment that fosters children across the whole community through participation of local residents of all ages, including the

elderly by integrally and comprehensively providing such activities as the "School Support Regional Headquarter" that supports the educational activities in schools, "After School Classes for Children" that offers experience and exchange activities by utilizing classrooms of elementary schools on weekends or after school, and "Support of education at home " that provides learning opportunities , etc for education at home. We will launch a "Universal Tourism implementation project" which will provide indirect support for efforts of local governments and NPOs by modeling pioneering cases of Universal tourism, to promote the creation of an environment where everyone can easily participate in travelling by expanding opportunities for travelling of mobility constrained people.

#### **(5) Living conditions**

##### **○ Promotion of the supply of high-quality private rental housing**

To build a private rental housing safety net, while promoting coordination with local governments, we will establish a system to support businesses that rent and remodel tending to increase vacant private houses, based on the proper contracts and management aimed at persons requiring special assistance in securing housing such as parenting households and households with persons with disabilities.

##### **○ General improvement of the housing market**

Based on the "Comprehensive Plan for Renovation and Distribution of Existing Homes" (established March 2012), following measures are promoted to improve market conditions for expanding markets for existing homes and renovation; (1) increasing consumer information pertaining to existing homes and renovation through the use of internet, (2) preparing a guideline to promote home inspection, (3) advancing Defect Warranty Liability Insurance and (4) offering subsidies for renovations on private rental houses given elderly and/or households with young children are to be the tenants immediately following the renovation are promoted to expand.

##### **○ Support for leading house building for the elderly**

Through promotion of residence stabilization for the elderly, etc., we will solicit proposals of the projects about house building and community planning that will contribute to ensure residential stability of the elderly, etc., and give subsidies to projects superior in terms of dissemination and leadership.

##### **○ Protection from fraudulent practices**

Moneymaking invitation criminals and `Furikome` fraud (a type of fraud in which tools such as mobile phones and savings accounts are used under fictitious or other peoples' names to defraud a large number of people of their money) criminal groups use the so-called "black list" with the names of potential or actual victims. Many of the listed people are elderly people, and because it is thought that they are even more likely to become victims in future, we will take prevention measures that include calling and warning by operators of companies entrusted by prefectural police, using names from the data obtained by police in the process of investigation.

○ **Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake**

Concerning long-term care insurance, from the viewpoint of financial assistance to people affected by the disaster, for the residents of the evacuation zone around the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, the financial support for insurance premium reduction and exemption of its copayments will continue to be provided up to one year, but also for residents of non-evacuation areas, the state financial support will be provided until September 2012 by using special adjusting subsidies to local governments for victims to reduce insurance premiums and exempt the copayment.

In order to support victims having mentally or economically unstable situations or having legal troubles after the earthquake, the Japan Legal Support Center (Houterasu) continues its efforts after the earthquake, and provides civil legal aid and information services about legal systems which are helpful in living reconstruction, and carries out "Shinsai Houterasu dial" and operates branch offices in affected areas. In addition, based on the act on Special Provisions of the business of the Japan Legal Support Center for supporting disaster victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake (effective from April 1, 2012) regarding support for victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake, the Great East Japan Earthquake Legal Aid Project will be carried out (as for disputes caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake among those who during the Great East Japan Earthquake on 11 March, 2011 had the address in the municipal area (except Tokyo.) to which The Disaster Relief Act is applied, regardless of the financial capacity situation of those people, assistance is provided for lawsuit representation, documents preparation, legal advice, etc.)

○ **Formation of vibrant rural communities**

In recent years, due to changes in the social and economic structure, such as progressing of aging or decrease in the number of retail outlets, eateries and grocery, even in urban areas, as well as intermediate and mountainous areas, "food access problems" have

occurred caused by inconvenience and difficulties for residents to buy groceries and food, that is why improvement of effective access to food in accordance with the local actual conditions has become an urgent issue. Therefore, in order to enhance smooth food provision to the elderly in areas with difficulty in food access, we will support the efforts by private businessmen performed in cooperation with municipal areas, which have "food accessing problems", taking into consideration the actual situation in the region.

#### **(6) Promotion of Research and Studies**

##### ○Development of Equipment for Long-Term Care Covered by Public Aid Research

According to the “Basic policies regarding measures for promoting research and propagation of welfare tools” (Ministry of Health and Welfare and Ministry of International Trade and Industry Notification and No.4, 1993) based on the “Act on Promoting Research, Development and Propagations of Welfare Tools ” (Act No. 38 of 1993), we will collect, analyze and provide information necessary for performing research development and giving grants to companies which enhance the development and commercialization of equipment for long-term care covered by public aid. Regarding service robots that can be helpful in long-term care and other fields, in order to overcome interpersonal safety problems occurring during practical application, we will continue to promote efforts aimed to contribute to demonstration in the actual environment, establishment of safety verification methods, development of safety certification systems, and international standardization debates.

##### ○ **Promotion of the development of the brain structure utilizing technologies**

We will continue to promote development of the research on the brain structure utilizing technologies that make it possible to convey simple movements, directions, emotions, necessary for behavior and communication support in everyday life, to mobility support devices and communication support devices by “one’s deep desire”.