Reviewer's report

Title: Should the provision of home help services be contained? : Validation of the new preventive care programme in Japan

Version: 2 Date: 23 April 2010

Reviewer: GOHEI KATO

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript presents an important topic. Discussion which comparing the occurrence of declining between users who consume the home help services and preventive service in daycare centre is interesting. Those services have different role not only as a preventive service for LTCI service users, but also as a care service to support their daily life. Therefore policy change cause impact not only for their physical functioning but also their daily life, and this is important from the health service perspective. However, this reviewer think there need some revisions.

Minor essential revision

1) Please consider to describe the “conclusion” in more limited way, particularly about the description of “daycare services”.

This reviewer think this study evaluate the effectiveness of the preventive service in daycare centre for the lightest eligibility level LTCI users, not daycare service for all LTCI service users.

2) Please consider to describe the study design in more detail.

- P8, line 2, “834 older people” need to be describe how old they are.
- P8, line 11, “excluding those who used both” need to be describe the number how many people were excluded.

3) Please consider to describe in more detail about the difference between the preventive care services and the regular LTCI service concerning to the services which might relate to the physical functioning. e.g. eligibility level 1 & 2 might be able to receive the insurance payment for the use of preventive service, but not individual rehabilitation service which is available for eligibility level 3 to 7.

4) P12, line 12, please consider to describe the actual number of how many people were declined or not.

5) The outcome is different to this study, but there is positive effect of day care service in the past study in Japan (Kuzuya, 2006), so this reviewer think it might be necessary why there shows a difference between this study and past study. The reference detail is as follows.


Discretion revisions

1) To make clear the target population of this study, please consider to describe in the “Introduction”, how many people were receiving the LTCI service and how much % were eligible level1 in Japan.

2) P25, table 3, “Economic status” in bold font might be better.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.