

An Analysis of the Role of Integrated Medical and Elderly Care in the Management of Chronic Diseases among the Elderly

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Abstract: In recent years, with the accelerating aging process of the population, China has entered an aging society, and the number of elderly patients with chronic diseases has been increasing. The traditional medical and elderly care service models can no longer fully meet their needs. The integrated medical and elderly care model has emerged as the times require. It organically combines medical resources with elderly care resources to provide comprehensive and continuous health management services for the elderly, becoming an important approach to solving the problems of chronic disease management among the elderly. In this regard, this paper first elaborates on the role of integrated medical and elderly care in the management of chronic diseases among the elderly, and then puts forward application strategies of integrated medical and elderly care in the management of chronic diseases among the elderly, in order to provide certain reference for relevant researchers.

Keywords: Integrated medical and elderly care; The elderly; Chronic disease management; Role

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1. Introduction

China's rapidly aging population has led to a growing number of older adults with chronic diseases, challenging the capacity of traditional healthcare and elderly care models. In response, the integrated medical and elderly care model has emerged as a critical approach. By combining medical and eldercare resources, it aims to provide continuous, comprehensive health management for the elderly. This paper examines the role of this integrated model in managing chronic diseases among the elderly and proposes practical application strategies, offering insights and references for researchers and practitioners in the field.

2. The role of integrated medical and elderly care in the management of chronic diseases among the elderly

2.1. Helps break down the barriers between medical and elderly care services

Under the traditional model, medical and elderly care services are not closely integrated. After elderly patients receive treatment in medical institutions and their conditions stabilize, they need to be followed up with care and rehabilitation training in elderly care institutions. However, this process faces shortcomings such as poor connection and information occlusion ^[1]. Integrated medical and elderly care can effectively make up for these shortcomings, promote the close integration of medical and elderly care services, and realize real-time sharing of various data through building an information sharing platform. Not only can doctors grasp the specific situation of the elderly in elderly care institutions in a timely manner, but elderly care institutions can also formulate professional care plans based on the elderly's past treatment records. For example, when caregivers in elderly care institutions find abnormalities in the elderly's health, they promptly feedback the abnormal data to doctors in medical institutions. Doctors provide professional suggestions, and caregivers conduct preliminary treatment in accordance with the suggestions, striving for time for further medical treatment ^[2].

2.2. Helps build a full-cycle health management system

In the management of chronic diseases among the elderly, building a full-cycle health management system is crucial, and integrated medical and elderly care plays a unique role in this regard. The integrated medical and elderly care model can provide the elderly with full-process services from disease prevention, diagnosis, treatment to rehabilitation and long-term care ^[3]. For example, in the disease prevention stage, integrated medical and elderly care institutions can use medical resources to conduct regular health check-ups and health assessments for the elderly, and formulate personalized health intervention plans such as dietary guidance and exercise suggestions based on the elderly's physical conditions and living habits, helping the elderly develop good living styles and reduce the risk of chronic diseases. In the links of disease diagnosis and treatment, relying on professional medical teams and advanced medical equipment, integrated medical and elderly care institutions can timely and accurately diagnose the elderly's diseases and provide scientific and effective treatment plans. At the same time, the close cooperation between elderly care institutions and medical institutions enables the elderly to be quickly transferred to higher-level hospitals when further specialist treatment is needed, ensuring timely medical treatment ^[4].

2.3. Helps improve service accuracy and efficiency

In the integrated medical and elderly care model, medical staff can collect and sort out comprehensive health information of the elderly with the help of information technology, including disease diagnosis and treatment records, periodic inspections and daily health management information, establish systematic and real-time health files, and conduct in-depth analysis of these data. This helps medical staff accurately grasp the elderly's health status and disease development changes, and provide more accurate and suitable diagnosis, treatment and care plans for the elderly ^[5]. At the same time, service efficiency will be further improved by effectively connecting medical treatment with elderly care services. Elderly care institutions are equipped with basic medical equipment and caregivers to timely address the elderly's basic diseases or emergency incidents, reducing the time and energy consumed in visiting hospitals. In addition, through cooperation with external medical institutions, timely referral can be made in case of intractable diseases, allowing the elderly to receive targeted treatment in the shortest possible time, further improving service levels and ensuring that the elderly obtain high-quality health

management services ^[6].

3. Application strategies of integrated medical and elderly care in the management of chronic diseases among the elderly

3.1. Attach importance to policy support and build a multi-level security system

Firstly, introduce corresponding policies. To promote the effective application of the integrated medical and elderly care model in the management of chronic diseases among the elderly, the government should introduce relevant policy measures, clarify the functional division of labor among various departments, and strengthen communication and contact between relevant departments. For example, the National Health Commission is responsible for formulating and supervising the implementation of service standards for integrated medical and elderly care, the civil affairs department is mainly responsible for the establishment and operation management of nursing homes, and the medical insurance department is mainly responsible for the formulation and implementation of medical insurance plans. Through policy guidance, medical and elderly care resources are integrated to promote the sustainable development of integrated medical and elderly care institutions ^[7].

Secondly, build a multi-level security system. Appropriately expand the scope of medical insurance reimbursement, include the medical services provided by integrated medical and elderly care institutions into the scope of medical insurance reimbursement, thereby reducing the elderly's expenditure on chronic disease management. Establish a long-term care insurance mechanism to provide long-term care security for disabled and semi-disabled elderly. At the same time, launch commercial insurance for the management of chronic diseases among the elderly to meet the special management needs of different elderly people, set up a fund specifically to support the construction and development of integrated medical and elderly care institutions, and provide certain subsidies for eligible elderly people.

Thirdly, strengthen supervision and evaluation. Regularly assess and evaluate the service quality of integrated medical and elderly care institutions and the expenditure of medical insurance funds to ensure the implementation of policies and the stable operation of the system. In addition, strengthen publicity and guidance, popularize the integrated medical and elderly care model and security policies among the elderly and their family members, and continuously improve the level of chronic disease management among the elderly ^[8].

3.2. Innovate service models to meet diversified needs

Firstly, implement home-based integrated medical and elderly care services. Establish specialized family doctor contract service teams to regularly provide medication guidance, home medical care and other services for elderly patients with chronic diseases. Through wearable intelligent devices and telemedicine technology, real-time obtain the elderly's physical data such as heart rate, blood pressure and blood glucose, and immediately transmit them to medical staff to adjust treatment and care plans. At the same time, provide rehabilitation care and daily care services for the elderly, enabling them to receive professional medical and nursing services in a familiar home environment ^[9].

Secondly, build an integrated medical and elderly care alliance. Integrate the resources of medical institutions and elderly care institutions in the region to establish a close-knit integrated medical and elderly care alliance. Medical institutions provide medical support for elderly care institutions, including regular ward rounds, consultations, emergency first aid and other services; elderly care institutions provide rehabilitation care and daily

care services for medical institutions. In this way, the sharing and optimal allocation of medical resources and elderly care resources are realized, and service efficiency and quality are improved.

Thirdly, carry out personalized services. Provide personalized integrated medical and elderly care plans according to the health status, economic level and personal needs of elderly patients with chronic diseases. For example, provide comprehensive daily care and health care services for elderly people with poor economic conditions, multiple chronic diseases and inability to take care of themselves; provide high-end professional health management and rehabilitation treatment services for elderly people with better economic conditions. In addition, pay attention to the psychological and cultural needs of the elderly, organize a variety of cultural and recreational activities to meet their spiritual needs and effectively improve their quality of life ^[10].

3.3. Apply cutting-edge technologies to improve the intelligent level of services

Firstly, use intelligent monitoring equipment to realize real-time health management. Through various wearable intelligent devices such as smart mattresses and smart bracelets, real-time monitor the elderly's sleep quality, heart rate, blood pressure, exercise and other data, and transmit these data to the cloud. Medical staff conduct dynamic health management of the elderly through mobile phones and computers. Once abnormal data is detected, the system issues an early warning immediately, and medical staff quickly formulate and adopt corresponding strategies ^[11].

Secondly, use artificial intelligence-assisted diagnosis to improve diagnostic accuracy. Use artificial intelligence technology to analyze medical images, test reports, etc., helping doctors diagnose diseases more accurately. Artificial intelligence algorithms can quickly identify lesion features in images and provide diagnostic references for doctors. For example, when diagnosing lung CT images of the elderly, artificial intelligence can quickly detect lung nodules, inflammation and other lesions, and provide information such as the size, location and nature of the lesions, assisting doctors in making more accurate diagnoses ^[12].

Thirdly, build an intelligent elderly care service platform to realize one-stop management. Adopt cutting-edge technologies to build a smart elderly care service platform, which includes modules such as service evaluation, information management, service appointment and health files. Medical staff can timely grasp the basic situation of elderly patients with chronic diseases, such as service needs and health status, by logging into the platform, and provide targeted medical and elderly care services for them. Family members can also use the platform to apply for medical care, elderly care, service history, service fees, etc., and give evaluations. In addition, the smart elderly care service platform can also promote information sharing and collaborative cooperation among various medical institutions and elderly care institutions, improving the overall quality of integrated medical and elderly care services ^[13].

3.4. Focus on talent training and strengthen professional service teams

Firstly, start from the source of education. Institutions of higher learning and vocational colleges can jointly offer relevant courses and majors, such as geriatrics, geriatric rehabilitation and geriatric nursing, to cultivate a group of excellent integrated medical and elderly care service talents. In addition, attach importance to the combination of theory and practice, focus on increasing the proportion of practical courses, and allow more students to obtain rich internship and training opportunities in medical institutions and elderly care service institutions, improving their problem-solving ability and practical ability ^[14].

Secondly, regularly carry out continuing education and training. The content of continuing education and

training needs to include cutting-edge integrated medical and elderly care service concepts, doctor-patient communication skills and medical and nursing technologies. Through a combination of online and offline training, expert seminars and experience sharing meetings, effectively improve the professional level and service ability of on-the-job medical staff^[15].

Thirdly, build a sound incentive mechanism. To attract excellent integrated medical and elderly care service talents, scientifically build a salary system, open up channels for post promotion and career development, continuously enhance the sense of achievement of medical staff, and broaden their career prospects. Establish relevant reward mechanisms to commend outstanding medical staff in the post from material and spiritual aspects, and fully stimulate their work enthusiasm. In this way, by gradually cultivating professional integrated medical and elderly care service talents, better services can be provided for the management of chronic diseases among the elderly.

3.5. Strengthen cultural construction and enrich the spiritual life of the elderly

Firstly, set up special cultural activity areas. Integrated medical and elderly care institutions should set up activity areas such as libraries, chess and card rooms, and calligraphy and painting rooms according to actual conditions, allowing the elderly to choose appropriate cultural and recreational activities based on their own interests. At the same time, integrated medical and elderly care institutions regularly organize a series of cultural and entertainment activities, such as intangible cultural heritage craft experience, knowledge lectures and art performances, to enrich the spiritual world of the elderly and further improve their sense of happiness.

Secondly, pay attention to the psychological care of the elderly. Integrated medical and elderly care institutions should set up psychological counseling teams to provide psychological support for the elderly. Elderly patients with chronic diseases are particularly prone to negative emotions such as depression and anxiety due to long-term illness, which is not conducive to their rehabilitation and may even further affect their health. Through face-to-face communication with the elderly, psychological counseling teams can accurately grasp and understand their mental health status and specific needs, and take effective measures to relieve negative emotions, enabling them to face diseases and life positively.

Thirdly, deepen the exchange and interaction activities of the elderly. Integrated medical and elderly care institutions can organize various social activities, such as elderly clubs and interest groups, allowing the elderly to share life experiences and enhance mutual affection through communication. This not only contributes to the mental health of the elderly, but also creates a warm and harmonious elderly care environment.

4. Conclusion

In summary, the integrated medical and elderly care model has shown significant roles and great application value in the management of chronic diseases among the elderly. It breaks down the barriers between medical and elderly care services, builds a full-cycle health management system, and effectively improves service accuracy and efficiency. In this regard, this study can further promote the in-depth development of integrated medical and elderly care in the management of chronic diseases among the elderly by attaching importance to policy support and building a multi-level security system; innovating service models to meet diversified needs; applying cutting-edge technologies to improve the intelligent level of services; and focusing on talent training and strengthening professional service teams. In the future, it is necessary to continuously pay attention to and study the integrated

medical and elderly care model, and constantly explore and improve relevant policies, services, technologies and talent systems. Only in this way can we better meet the needs of elderly patients with chronic diseases, improve their quality of life and health level, and allow every elderly person to enjoy a happy and healthy old age.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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