

# Introduction of ICF to the Educational Curriculum of the Certified Care Worker in Japan

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**Abstract** The educational curriculum of the Certified Care Worker has been drastically revised in 2009 in Japan, in which ICF were given much importance, as the basic concept for "Independence-oriented Care" and as the effective tool of the assessment. The background of the revision, the "Desirable Images of the Certified Care Worker" that shows the objectives of the revision, and the introduction of ICF into the curriculum as the means to achieve these objectives are discussed.

## Introduction

The Law for Long-Term Care Insurance was enforced in Japan in April 2000. This law provides long-term personal care (assistance) to all the persons with care needs who are aged 65 years or more. It provides care also to the persons aged 40 to 64 years who have care needs due to a defined group of "aging-related" diseases such as stroke, Alzheimer's Disease etc. The services provided by the Long-Term Care Insurance (LTC) have become an indispensable part of Social Security for the aged and aging population along with medical services supported by Public Medical Insurances. The Certified Care Worker (CCW), a profession for the care of the persons with care needs (including those with disabilities), with national licensure that started in 1988, is the core member of the care team in the LTC services, both at institution and home. The education of CCW is being done in colleges, junior colleges, vocational schools and high schools. The outlines of the educational curriculum are set jointly by both the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MECSST). The curriculum of CCW was drastically revised in 2009 following the amendment of LTC Law in 2008. The basic concepts of ICF are given much importance in the revised curriculum, particularly in the assessment of care needs.

## Background of the Revision

The background of this drastic revision is: A) Changes in care needs including, 1) The demographic changes in the last two decades leading to, (1) The rapid increase of aged population with care needs, (2) Aggravation of the needs, and (3) The decrease of family's capacity to provide traditional family care; and 2) The socio-ideological changes leading to more conscious-

ness of dignity, independence, self-determination and individualization of care, perceived by both the aged population themselves and general public; and B) The requirement of higher professional qualities of CCW to meet these changes in care needs.

## New Images of Certified Care Worker

The "Desirable Images of Certified Care Worker" exemplifying above-mentioned "higher professional qualities" are stated as following:

- 1) The practice of a "Dignity-supporting Care";
- 2) Practical capabilities necessary in the field;
- 3) Putting stress on "Supporting Independence" and being flexible for the changes in care needs and policy;
- 4) A universal capability fit to both institutional and community (home) care;
- 5) High regards for psychosocial support;
- 6) Being able to respond to changing situations of the client from prevention to rehabilitation and terminal care;
- 7) "Team Care" through multi-disciplinary collaboration;
- 8) Capability to make a necessary action even when working alone;
- 9) The practice of "Individualized Care";
- 10) The capabilities of communication to the client, family and team members, and of adequate recording and description;
- 11) Basic knowledge in the related fields; and
- 12) Maintenance of high ethics.

These images show the concrete objectives aimed by the revision.

## Introduction of ICF Concepts

The ICF was introduced to the new curriculum as both concept (an integrative model based on the "bio-psycho-social" approach) and an effective tool to achieve the above

stated "higher professional qualities" as exemplified in the "Desirable Images of Certified Care Worker." In the new curriculum, ICF is mentioned in many places including the following:

- 1) The section "**Independence-oriented Care**" as a part of "**Basic Principles of Care**" includes:
  - (1) Support to Independence;
  - (2) Individualized Care;
  - (3) **ICF**, which is subdivided to
    - (i) **ICF Concepts**,
    - (ii) **Assessment of the Client from the Viewpoint of ICF**; and
  - (4) Rehabilitation.
- 2) The section "**Programs and Technologies of Care**" includes:
  - (1) Support to the Living, including, among others, **Assessment for Support to Living from the Viewpoint of ICF**;
  - (2) Improvement of Living Environments, including, among others, **Assessment of the Whole Picture of the Client from the Viewpoint of ICF**;
  - (3) Care of the Dressing, including, among others, **Assessment from the Viewpoint of ICF**;
  - (4) Care of Moving around, including, among others, **Assessment from the Viewpoint of ICF**;
  - (5) Care toward Independence of Eating, including, among others, **Assessment from the Viewpoint of ICF**; and
  - (6)-(10) Similar items on the **Assessment from the Viewpoint of ICF** on Bathing, Toileting, Housework and Sleep; and finally
- 3) The Section on "**Concepts of Disability**" as a part of "**Mechanisms of Body and Mind**" includes, among others, **The Transition from ICIDH to ICF**.

## Conclusions

ICF was introduced to the educational curriculum of the Certified Care Worker in Japan as one of the guiding principles and an effective tool for comprehensive assessment of the client.