

China releases 5-year plan for elderly care services

China recently released the Healthy Ageing Plan (the Plan) in the 14th Five-Year period (2021-2025) to further address the ageing population. The Plan gives a brief overview of the major achievements during the 13th Five-Year period (2016-2020), and specifies major goals and tasks for the coming five-year period. This report makes a summary of the main relevant highlights in the Plan.

Achievements in the 13th Five-Year period

An elderly health service system has been initially established in the period of the 13th Five Year Plan. The system features with key elements including health education/advocacy, prevention and health care, disease diagnosis and treatment, rehabilitation care, long-term care, and palliative care.

As of the end of 2020, 1 national geriatrics center and 6 national clinical research centers for geriatric diseases have been established, and 2,642 hospitals have established geriatric medicine departments. There are 91 cities which are implementing pilots on palliative care. There are 5 857 integrated care (medical care + nursing) institutions, which provide 1.58 million beds. The expected life expectancy in 2020 was 77.9yrs.

Main goals for the 14th Five-Year period

Development goals in 9 aspects have been laid down for the 14th Five Year period, including:

1. To further promote the awareness of healthy ageing
2. To further develop a prevention & health care system with equal focus on physical and mental wellness. Following projects are laid out in the Plan for the system development:
 - Early screening, intervention, and management for hypertension, diabetes, coronary diseases, Alzheimer, Parkinson disease.
 - Early screening and treatment for high-prevalence cancers
 - Oral health
 - Nutrition improvement campaign
 - To formulate a national Action Plan for Dementia, to implement pilots for early screening, diagnosis and intervention on dementia
 - To establish an emergency plan for the elderly during public health outbreaks, and tighten the prevention & control of major communicable disease, including HIV AIDS and TB.
 - Accessibility adaption
 - AED installation
 - Mental health services- To establish grass root level mental health service platforms/network
3. To improve the quality of medical service to elderly people, with a focus on continual service, including:
 - Diagnosis & Treatment—transition from single disease oriented service model to multiple disciplinary service model

- To improve rehabilitation and nursing service
- To develop palliative service pilots
- 4. To improve the service system for disabled elderly people, with coordinated service from home care, community care and institutional care.
- 5. To further promote the quality development of the care institutions:
 - To guide private capita into this sector
 - To build quality and affordable franchised brands
- 6. To further promote the role of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) in health service for the elderly
- 7. To improve the development of geriatric medical institutions, including
 - national and regional geriatric medical centers,
 - rehabilitation hospitals, and nursing homes, etc.
- 8. To improve the capacity of elderly service:
 - Geriatric medicine training (online / offline): 10 000 medical professionals
 - Palliative training: 5000 professionals online, 2000 professionals offline
 - Capacity improvement training on line: 200 000 persons
 - Training to care givers, with focus on knowledge and skills of providing care to elderly with disabilities, including dementia care
- 9. To facilitate the development of relevant technology and industry:
 - To promote fundamental research on ageing, as well as relevant applied technology and appropriate technology
 - To promote the integration of healthy ageing with elderly wellness, culture, tourism, sport, and education, and encourage new business models.
 - To support the use & implementation of new material, AR, VR technology in healthy ageing sector
 - To support the development of smart products, including assistive, home caring, safety monitoring, supporting elderly with disabilities, emotion accompanying and rehabilitation devices, as well as wearable products.
 - Information network development for healthy ageing

Key Indicators and projects

Some key indicators are laid down in the Plan, including

	Indicators	2020 (%)	2025 (%)
1	General hospitals (level 2 and above) with geriatric department	31.8	≥60
2	Elderly friendly medical institutions	-	≥85
3	Traditional Chinese medicine hospitals with rehabilitation department	78	≥85

Key projects include establishing more rehabilitation hospitals, nursing homes, and piloting palliative projects.

Implementation governance

Local governments are requested to make local implementation measures according to the Plan, and put in financial budget and expand fund raising.