



A Study into Supporting Safe Driving and Active Life for the Elderly (3)
Awareness regarding elderly drivers by care managers and neighborhood councilors



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Introduction

Nomura *et al.* have been continuously supported individuals with dementia who was advised to stop driving from a doctor in a Health and Labour Sciences Research (Representative: Manabu Ikeda 2005 - 2007). Return of a driver's license due to aging and decrease of cognitive function could lower independence in the elderly. In addition, this issue associated with threat to public safety brings conflict with their family, relatives, and neighborhood; to aggravate relationship between the person and his/her caregiver; and to increase care burden.

Purpose

To identify awareness of care managers' and neighborhood councilors' regarding safe driving by the elderly.

Methods

An anonymous self-administered questionnaire survey was conducted in August 2010. This study was approved by the Ethical Review Board of the author's organization. Answers to a question about "what are your feelings about driving car or riding motorcycle by the elderly" in the survey questionnaire were analyzed qualitatively and inductively.

* Care manager:
Care manager is a specialist who provides consultation provides necessary assistance for Person Requiring Support and Person Requiring Long-Term Care according to the Long-Term Care Insurance Act.

* Neighborhood councilor:
Neighborhood councilor is a volunteer in the private sector staffed in a district of a municipality who provides consultation with always coming down on the side of residents and provides necessary assistance, and is assigned to ensure enhancement of social welfare with the spirit of public service according to the Commissioned Welfare Volunteers Law.

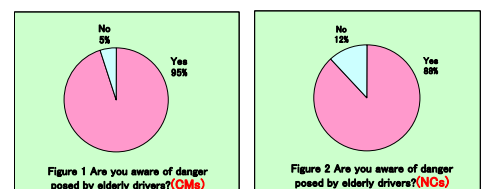
Attribution of subjects

Answers were obtained from 20 care managers (CMs) and 41 neighborhood councilors (NCs) in "A" town
The response rate was 100%.
The CMs consisted of 3 men and 17 women, and their age ranged from 25 to 49 years old. The NCs consisted of 22 men and 19 women, and their age ranged from 53 to 73 (66.9 ± 6.4) years old.

Results

Result 1 Awareness of the danger posed by elderly drivers

Ninety-five(%) of the CMs and 88(%) of the NCs acknowledge the danger posed by elderly drivers



Result 2 Awareness of Care manager and Neighborhood councilor regarding safety driving in the elderly (Figure3)

Both Care managers (CMs) and Neighborhood councilors (NCs) 'aware of the danger posed by elderly drivers', but 'feel hesitant to intervene' and were 'hoping for the creation of a support framework'. Some described the situations of the elderly, having to drive even at an advanced age.
Three categories were extracted from the NCs only that were: 'hope to see the elderly having more self-awareness', 'hope to see the people around the elderly more interested in the issue' and 'an ideal way to stop the elderly from continuing to drive'.

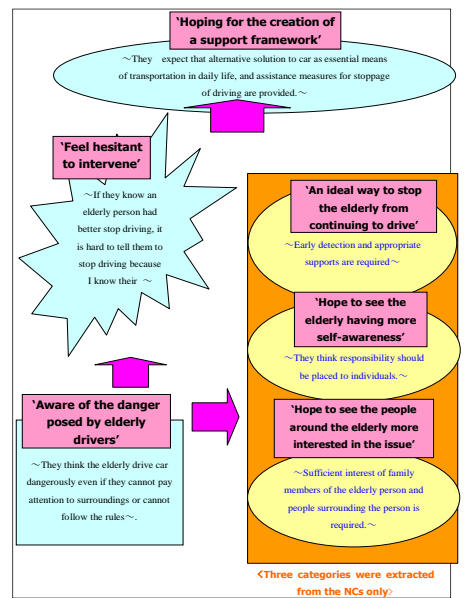


Figure 3 Awareness of Care manager and Neighborhood councilor regarding safety driving in the elderly

Discussion

CMs and NCs have a good grasp of the everyday life of the elderly and are aware of the danger posed by elderly drivers, but are hesitant to tell them to stop. As well as some measures to ensure safe driving of the elderly they are hoping for public support to secure a comfortable life for the elderly after giving up driving. The NCs are hoping that the elderly themselves will be more aware of safe driving, that the elderly and their families will solve the problems and the communities will be more interested in the topic and offer help. These show the role awareness of the NCs, who are volunteers promoting the welfare of local communities.

Setting



A rural town in Japan with a population of 22,000, 21.1% of whom were elderly (≥65 years old)