

Foreword

Creating skilled long-term care workers is key to coping with population ageing, which is taking place at an unprecedented pace around the world. Japan, which has the most aged population in the world, has developed a qualification system for long-term care workers and created millions of certified care workers, particularly since the long-term care insurance system was introduced in 2000 as a public insurance system.

Keishin-Gakuen Educational Group is one of the pioneers of creating long-term care workers in Japan. Just after the launch of the government certification system for long-term care workers in Japan, Keishin-Gakuen established a training course for certified care workers in 1989. Since then, Keishin-Gakuen has created over 3,000 certified care workers, and these workers have played crucial roles as practitioners and even leaders in long-term care services.

Japan had applied its conservative policy regarding the foreign workforce to the long-term care labour market, but the shrinking population of those of a productive age prevented Japan from continuing the policy. Led by the Cabinet Secretariat of the Government of Japan, the Asia Health and Wellbeing Initiative (AHWIN) was launched in 2016. Promoting the circulation of cross-border care workers is one of AHWIN's main objectives, and Keishin-Gakuen was proudly invited to participate in the initiative and agreed to launch a joint research project with the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia. This study was initially designed to test and review the education system for potential care workers in India and the Philippines, which was developed by Keishin-Gakuen, but because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the pilot education courses that were planned in both countries were suspended. Instead, this study focuses on the comparison of the qualifications frameworks for long-term care workers in India, Japan, and the Philippines so that the international circulation of cross-border care workers can be promoted after the COVID-19 pandemic, and their skills and knowledge can be greater utilised in those countries.

No country in the world can be free from population ageing. It is true that population ageing poses a heavy burden on our social and economic systems, but at the same time, we must not forget that population ageing is a sign of the great success that human beings have long been seeking. All of us should think and work together to cope with population ageing for the bright future of our children. This study discusses qualifications frameworks for long-term care workers,

but I believe this study will also surely contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of older people as well as younger generations who are the main providers of long-term care.

Finally, I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to Professor Takeo Ogawa for his leadership in this project, particularly under the difficult circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. I would like to also express my appreciation for the great advice and insights provided by the experts from Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand, and the United States who participated in the conference organised under this project in November 2019. Of course, I will never forget the dedicated work of our colleagues from Keishin-Gakuen for this study.

Thank you.

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