

RT. 1-1 Coping with Increasing Number of Japanese and Japanese American Seniors in New York

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New York has the 4th largest Japanese population followed by California, Hawaii and Washington States in U.S. (Census, 2000/2010). The prevalence of seniors in Japanese American community was about 5% in 2007, according to the findings of the Asian American Federation of New York (AAFNY). Since those who immigrated in U.S. after the World War II, became over 65 years old, the number of Japanese and Japanese American seniors has been increased. To cope with this issue, *the Committee of Aging issues* was established in 2005 with support of the Consulate General of Japan in New York, Japanese American Association of NY (JAANY), other Japanese community-based organizations (CBOs), and many individuals having various professional backgrounds. The purpose of the committee is to better understand the conditions that the seniors have faced, and to measure their future needs appropriately.

In 2006, the Committee conducted the first survey to 1) address awareness of aging issues, 2) describe demographic details of the targeted population, and 3) measure their future needs. The survey was mailed to about 8,200 Japanese and Japanese Americans who were over 50 years old, lived in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Pennsylvania. These samples were selected from directories of the CBOs.

The response rate was 30.3% (N=2,026). The analyses were performed with 1,882 responses answered the questions about age and sex. Descriptive statistics and Chi-square tests were used to analyze demographic data. Crosstabs were also used to analyze relationships between the demographic factors and other variables such as social service preferences and housing. Among the respondents, the average age was 63.3. About 90% were born in Japan. Over 60% of the respondents stated they would not go back to Japan. Their top

three issues they were worried were 1) they may not be able to take care of themselves (60.7%), 2) income and financial problems (34.5%), and 3) health problems such as Alzheimer (27%). The top 3 things they already prepared for their future were 1) preparation of wills (37%), 2) financial planning (33.7%) and 3) health care proxy (16.9%). Over 70% of the respondents preferred to receive assisted care services or visiting nursing services at their homes when they could not take care of themselves. However, the majority of the respondents did not know how to access information of the services they may need in future. The respondents in New York City were more likely to live alone than those in other states: Differences were clearly seen on housing issues between New York City and other areas. From the findings, the conclusions included four major summaries: 1) Helpful information related to social and health services, assisting care, nursing homes and others such as transportation services should be provided in Japanese, 2) Educating their family members about caring seniors is essential, 3) Community services such as home visiting, counseling and 24/7 hotline should be developed, 4) Further research studies are needed to address more details of the aging issues. Future discussion should include network development, outreach and better support systems.

We obtained a meaningful data for Japanese elderly population living in New York Tri-State areas. From the findings, we developed many community events and seminars to provide helpful information for them. This round table focuses on both the study findings and major community activities and services to assist them.

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