



Kobe Dementia Project: Devising new strategies to strengthen health systems

Lead Research Institution: Kobe University

Principal Investigator (PI): Dr Yoji Nagai, Professor, Clinical & Translational Research Center

Budget: US\$ 600,000

Start of Project: August 2017; **Data collection, Program evaluations & adjustments:** November 2017- June 2020; **Data Analysis:** January 2020- July 2020; **Completion of Research Report:** July 2020

Overview

Globally, there has been a steady increase in life expectancy, population ageing, and a rapid upsurge in the number of people living with dementia. Japan has the highest proportion of people over 65 years of age in the world. More than 8 million Japanese have cognitive problems, with over 4.5 million people suffering from dementia. Currently no cure for dementia exists; therefore, the immediate goal is early detection and management to help slow cognitive decline and delay the progress of dementia. Evidence-based methods will help identify best practices for the early identification of symptoms and subsequent coping interventions. Such evidence can be used to devise pragmatic novel initiatives that support older adults in their communities as well as reduce the growing social losses caused by dementia.

Research Background

In cooperation with Kobe University and Kobe City, the WHO Kobe Centre initiated a joint research venture entitled, “Kobe Project for the Exploration of New Strategies to Reduce the Social Burden of Dementia”. This 3-year project aims to support the creation of an innovative “Kobe Model” for the early detection and management of dementia, to minimize societal impact, by using data from the Kihon Checklist (KCL) conducted by Kobe City on lifestyles of the elderly as well as data from the Frailty Check-up program started by Kobe City in 2017.

Research Outline

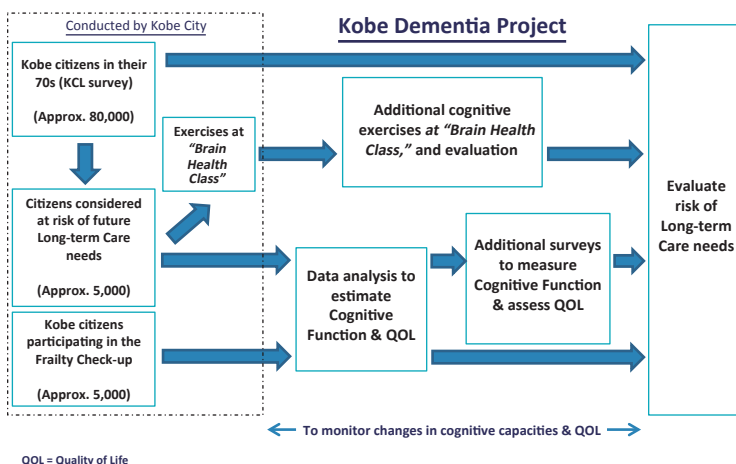
1. Analyze the health data of 80,000 Kobe citizens in their 70s collected via the KCL.
2. From the KCL, analyze data from approximately 5000 people who are at risk for dementia-related problems to measure cognitive function and evaluate quality of life.
3. Analyze data from approximately 5000 participants in the Frailty Check-up program to measure cognitive function and evaluate quality of life.
4. Study the impact of additional long-term cognitive training on approximately 100 participants from the “Brain Health Class” program administered by Kobe City.

Goals

The project will:

- ✓ Clarify the association between cognitive function and the likelihood of requiring specialized long-term nursing care.
- ✓ Identify evidence related to effective methods for the management of dementia, especially those that can slow decline in cognitive function.
- ✓ Develop a community-based model for the early detection and management of dementia, and
- ✓ Propose evidence-based policy options that can be evaluated within Japan and globally.

Research Overview Diagram



Research Team

Lead Institution: Kobe University

Yoji Nagai (PI): Professor & Director, Clinical & Translational Research Center, Kobe University Hospital;

Hisatomo Kowa, Professor, Graduate School of Health Sciences; and Yasuji Yamamoto, Associate Professor, Graduate School of Medicine Translational Research Informatics Center

Shinsuke Kojima, Medical Science Group, Division of Medical Innovation

Kobe Gakuin University

Kiyoshi Maeda, Professor, School of Rehabilitation

WHO Kobe Centre

Ryoma Kayano, Technical Officer

QOL = Quality of Life