

# Promoting the Creation of an Active Senior Society

## Fukuoka Prefecture



### Background

The national average life expectancy has significantly extended since 1956, when the definition was “persons aged 65 and older are the elderly.”

Average life expectancy in 1956:

64 for men and 67 for women

Average life expectancy in 1956:

81 for men and 87 for women

Most elderly persons want to work or contribute to society.

If men and women aged 60 or older are asked “What age do you want to work until?” about 70% of them will answer “around 70,” “older than 70” or “as long as I can” (according to the Cabinet Office, “Attitude Survey on Participation in Local Communities by the Elderly,” 2013).

The number of elderly people aged 65 or older in our prefecture is projected to increase from 1.13million (22.3% of the prefecture population) in 2010 to 1.50 million (33.0%) in 2035. (The 2035 number is based on the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research’s, “Regional Population Projections for Japan (by prefecture),” estimated in March 2013.)

In addition, the population of productive age from 15 to 64 is projected to decrease by 20% from 3.23 million in 2010 to 2.57 million in 2035. In 2010, 2.9 persons supported 1 elderly person, while in 2035, 1.7 persons will have to support 1 elderly person.

To ensure sustainable economic development in a super-ageing and depopulating society, it is necessary to work on creating a new society where elderly peo-

ple can be active in work or participate socially, according to their own will and ability, irrespective of age.

### Purpose of Project

Fukuoka Prefecture aims to realise an Active Senior Society with multiple choices, in which elderly people can remain continuously active by working or participating in an NPO or taking part in volunteer activities, according to their own will and ability, irrespective of age.

### Outline of Project

#### 1. Fukuoka Senior Support Center

The Fukuoka Office of the centre was established in April 2012. To improve the convenience for users, the Kitakyushu Office was established in May 2013, with the Kurume Office and the Iizuka Office being established in June 2015.

[Performance of the Fukuoka Senior Support Center over 4 years and 7 months (as of 30th November 2016)]

#### (1) Expanding opportunities for elderly persons to be active

##### ■ Development of employment opportunities for elderly persons

The centre has expanded opportunities for the employment of elderly persons through its own development of employment opportunities. Employment opportunities for 3,948 persons (at 1,854 companies) have been newly developed.

- Increase in “companies where employees can work until the age of 70”

The centre staff visit companies in the prefecture to explain the advantages, best practices, subsidy systems, etc. regarding the employment of elderly people and encourage the companies to introduce a “system to allow employees to work until the age of 70.” As a result, 456 companies have now introduced it. Since FY2013, the prefecture has implemented an additional-points system in the screening of bidding qualifications for “companies where employees can work until the age of 70.”

(2) Support for working and social participation

Expert advisors carefully listen to the career details, skills and hopes of elderly persons in order to offer or act as an intermediate for a wide range of choices including second jobs which match their individual expectations and NPO or volunteer activities.

Number of consulters: 57,548 Number of registrants: 10,024 Number of those who decided their course: 4,454



Expert advisor carefully consulting with each elderly person and giving advice

(3) Change in society’s recognition

Corporate seminars are held for managers and human resources staff, and also seminars for middle-aged employees.

(4) Certification of “Fukuoka Childcare Meister”

To get experienced elderly persons to become active in the field of childcare in the local communities, training in up-to-date knowledge of childcare etc. (for 7 days) is provided in order to grant certification to those who finish. As of the end of March 2016, 1,121 elderly persons were certified as Masters, and are now active.



Childcare Meisters active in the nursery event space

2. Fukuoka Prefectural Council for Promotion of an Active Senior Society

This council is made up of 18 organisations, including governments, business groups, workers’ associations, and nonprofit or volunteer organisations, to make public-private partnership efforts in order to realize an Active Senior Society.

- (1) Deliberations and implementation of projects to create an Active Senior Society
- (2) Education to create an Active Senior Society
- (3) Suggestions and requests to the national government, aiming to create an Active Senior Society

3. Kyushu and Yamaguchi Council for Promotion of an Active Senior Society

Kyushu and Yamaguchi are ageing at a quicker pace than the rest of the country. In this area, countermeasures against the super-ageing society is now an urgent issue. Therefore, the “Kyushu and Yamaguchi Study Group for the Creation

of an Active Senior Society” was set up in April 2014 as an initiative by the policy alliance of the conference of governors in the Kyushu region, and compiled a report in March 2015. In order to promote the measures suggested in this report, the prefectural governments of Kyushu and Yamaguchi, business groups, and workers’ associations set up the “Kyushu and Yamaguchi Council for Promotion of an Active Senior Society” in June, so that Kyushu and Yamaguchi are now making a united effort to realize an Active Senior Society in Kyushu and Yamaguchi.

## Progress and Achievements

The creation of an Active Senior Society denotes a change in the recognition that “persons aged 65 and older are the elderly” and promotes reverse thinking in that elderly people who were “supported by society” can now serve as “supporters.”

The “Fukuoka Senior Support Center,” functioning as the core of this project, was set up as a total support centre for the elderly to offer a wide range of choices including second jobs, work through the silver human resources centre, and NPO or volunteer activities, by changing the vertically-divided functions of conventional job placement services, NPOs or volunteer centres, etc. and utilising the extensive network of the “Fukuoka Prefectural Council for Promotion of an Active Senior Society.”

Not only to provide support for employment or social participation but also to expand opportunities for elderly persons to be active, the centre staff visit companies and develop “companies where employees can work until the age of 70” while trying to raise the awareness of society as a whole through holding various seminars and conventions.



The Fukuoka Senior Support Center is always filled with elderly persons

## Effects of Project

- Changing “supported” elderly people into “supporters”
- Meeting the needs of elderly persons who want to be active
- Economic growth led by elderly people
- Rich ageing society led by Kyushu and Yamaguchi

## Problems and Responses

In this the fifth fiscal year, the “Project to Excavate and Create Job Categories for 70-year-olds” which matches elderly persons who want to work with understaffed companies or offices started with “nursing care services” being noticeably understaffed.

This project will expand its target industries into “retail,” “food manufacturing,” etc. to expand the number of opportunities for elderly persons to be active, and to further promote the creation of an Active Senior Society.

## Outlook

From the realisation of an Active Senior Society, the effects listed below can be comprehensively expected in terms of economics, social security and regional development.

(Economics)

- Increase in elderly persons’ entry into the labour market and halting the decrease in the workforce

- Increase in elderly persons' income resulting in stimulating consumption and economic revitalisation

(Social security)

- Change of elderly people into “supporters” of social security systems including healthcare and pensions
- Maintenance and promotion of motivation for life and health caused by elderly persons' working or conducting social activities

(Regional development)

- Activation or revitalisation of local communities by promoting elderly persons' participation in community activities
- Vitalisation of “community development” activities by utilising elderly people's wisdom, experience and skills

## **Reference URL**

<http://www.70-f.net/>

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