



1. Early beginning of advanced training for caregivers

The Sophia School of Social Welfare provides a two-year course in nursing care,



Mid-level training course

which authorizes students to become certified care workers upon completion. In addition, the school offers courses for care workers, both certified and uncertified, who are already working at nursing homes or other welfare facilities. Both are taught based on the school's founding spirit of respecting human dignity.

The government is planning to introduce a new certification system for experienced caregivers as Japan's population is aging rapidly and needs for care more diversified. Sophia's welfare school is ahead of the general trend in continuing training for caregivers and is ready to respond speedily to Japan's evolving care systems.

The Sophia School of Social Welfare started a half-year training course for mid-level caregivers (who have about five years experience) in April 2005. This was four years before the Japan Association of Certified Care Workers announced its guideline for a similar training program.



Mid-level care givers learning how to respond to a disaster.

From 2009, the Tokyo government's office for welfare personnel training has been co-sponsoring this mid-level career program of Sophia.

The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare announced in March 2012 its panel report which proposed setting up a new

certification system for mid-career caregivers (with more than seven years experience) who can take leadership and management positions in care facilities. Sophia's welfare school is planning to modify its programs according to the new system.

2. Courses for uncertified caregivers

Under the current Japanese system, it's possible for someone who hasn't passed a national examination or completed a two-year post-high school course to work at a care facility. The Sophia School of Social Welfare provides two kinds of courses for them, one for passing a national written exam and another one for practical skills.

The exam preparation course teaches students how to pass the written test. In 2011, half of the examinees passed this national exam. Sophia University professors and care specialists teach a three-day course on weekends based on the latest trends in caregiver's education.



Lecture on practical skill training.

Another course is for care workers to learn practical skills such as how to communicate with care receivers, how to help them eat, bathe and move around in a four-day program. This course was launched in 2008, after the government exempted in 2005 those who completed this kind of program from the practical part of the national certification exam.

The Japanese government is planning to require everybody to pass a national examination to become a certified caregiver from fiscal 2015. The Sophia School of Social Welfare is planning to respond to the new system.