**S1 Appendix. Setting of the research; Mitsuse Village**

Mitsuse Village is located on the outskirts of Saga City in the northern part of Kyushu, the southernmost main island of the Japanese archipelago. This is a rural, highly depopulated, and super-aged village covering an area of 40.7 km2, with 433 households, a population of 1305, and a proportion of older people of 36.8% (As of 2015). The proportion of the older population in Japan, the highest super-aged society in the world, is estimated to be 32.8% in 2035 20. Thus, at the time of this study, Mitsuse Village had already surpassed the national proportion expected in 10 years’ time. The mean number of family members in each household of the village was 2.88, with many households consisting of a single older person or an older couple. Most residents are engaged in primary industries, mainly agriculture. There is only one integrated elementary and junior high school in the village. The distance to downtown Saga City, the closest regional city, is approximately 30 km, which takes 40–50 minutes by car. Transport in the village is often paralyzed in winter because of heavy snowfall in the mountainous terrain. The community bus run by the village government is the only public transportation; there are no trains. The bus transport systems run by Saga City or private taxis are not routinely deployed to the village. The medical system in the village is also inadequate, with only one outpatient clinic where inpatient service is unavailable, and one long-term care facility where end-of-life care is not available. At the time of this study, there was no home-visit nursing station in the village, which prevented older people from receiving care services by a nurse who visited their home. Home nursing services are ordered by a primary care physician belonging to any medical facility. The nearest medical facilities providing in-patient care for older people are located 10 km from Mitsuse Village; these include a small chronic care hospital with 44 beds and a 55-bed long-term care facility dedicated to older patients.