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Review Article

Adult Day Care Services: Directions for Moving Forward

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SUMMARY

This paper aims to discuss Jordan's desperate need to establish adult day care services. More specifically it aims to address the benefits and social transformation that necessitate the establishment of adult day care services. In terms of background, the unprecedented social transformation and the deficient prioritization of social care services for older Jordanian adults have deleteriously impacted on the care provided for them. Despite versatile citations in multiple religious sources, the family support system for older adults in Jordan is inadequate and the duty of providing for their needs is left to governmental institutions. Regarding design, this is a discussion paper to clarify the importance of establishing adult day care services in Jordan. The implications mean that health care professionals are in a prime position to improve awareness about the importance and the benefits of adult day care services. Health care professionals are required to clarify their perspectives on social care issues and to be involved in prospective policies and legislations regarding planning, establishing and managing adult day care services. In conclusion, establishing adult day care services in Jordan needs an interdisciplinary collaborative approach among governmental and non-governmental organizations. These organizations need to contribute significantly in terms of offering the support needed to ensure quality of care for this vulnerable age group.

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1. Introduction

Late adulthood is an important stage of life that must receive special attention and care due to the associated changes that may affect the aged person's psychological and social health.¹ The number of older adults is increasing around the world. The statistics of 2010 presented by the United Nations indicated that aged people represent around 8% of the total population worldwide and this is expected to reach 16% by 2050, with the largest increase in developing countries.² As for the developing countries, the percentage of aged people is around 9% of the population and is expected to increase to 20% by 2050.²

In Jordan, as a middle income country with relatively high education and literacy rates compared with other countries with similar incomes,³ the number of elderly people aged 60 years old and above is 334,945 constituting 5.25% of the estimated population of 6.4 million. Approximately 172,000 of them are males and the rest are females⁴ (See Table 1). This increased percentage of older Jordanian adults is primarily attributed to various factors including improvements in health and economic conditions, reduced infertility and mortality rates, increased life expectancy and improved levels of education.^{4–6}

New concepts have emerged such as "Age Quake" and the

"New International Population Order" to characterize the astonishing growth of the elderly population around the world.^{7,8} The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article (25) emphasized the importance of older adults' right to adequate standards of living that include physical, psychological, social and even spiritual services.⁹ As the increased percentage of older adults becomes more visible, the developing countries started to pay more attention and provide various forms of care and services for the elderly to meet their rights and needs.^{2,10} This attention became clearly tangible in developing countries including the Arab World.^{11,12} A number of countries in the region have issued national policies regarding the care of the elderly and launched health and social care programmes for this age group.^{10,13} Jordan was one of the leading countries that paid attention to the elderly because the percentage of aged people has started to noticeably increase.⁴ This attention was attributed to Jordan's sense of humanity and high values derived from its Islamic faith; a faith that has instructed Muslims to cherish elders and to treat them with respect.¹⁴

Jordan launched many social services organizations such as the Ministry of Social Development and the Jordanian National Council for Family Affairs. It amended constitutional Articles that aimed to protect aged people from abuse and exploitation, looking after the elderly who are stranded, improving the quality of elderly lives and providing them with the best possible social and health care.^{5,6} Therefore, Jordan had established many social care services that include 11 nursing homes with a total capacity of approximately 800 beds, housing approximately 850 residents⁶ (See Table 2). Despite the presence of nursing homes in Jordan, the services provided by

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Table 1
Growth rates of geriatric population and social care services in Jordan.

Year	Geriatric population	Percentage	Number of nursing homes	Number of adult day care services	Annual cost for nursing home services
1994	100,050	2.41	3	0	\$226
2004	158,638	2.96	8	2	\$385
2014	328,793	4.92	11	4	\$750
2020 ^a	712,678	8.94	–	–	–
2030 ^a	1,107,186	11.7	–	–	–

^a Projected estimates of geriatric populations based on data presented by Jordan National Council of Family Affairs (2016).

these institutions are quantitatively and qualitatively insufficient and accessible only for those living in urban areas.⁶

Recent studies indicated that the majority of the residents of nursing homes had reported depressive symptoms, poor cognitive functions and poor health related-quality of life.^{15–17} These negative health outcomes were attributed to the increased morbidity and mortality rates among nursing homes residents.^{16,18} Moreover, nursing homes are considered as an economical burden in which the average annual cost per person is approximately 85,000 dollars.¹⁹ In contrast, the reviewed literature revealed that adult day care services are associated with positive health outcomes such as reduced hospitalization,²⁰ improved quality of life²¹ and lower health care costs.¹⁹ However, this kind of social service is not available for older adults in Jordan.²² Therefore, the overall goal of this paper was to discuss Jordan's desperate need to establish adult day care services. More specifically the paper aimed to address the benefits and the social transformation that necessitate the establishment of adult day care services.

2. Benefits of adult day care services

Touhy et al. (2014) addressed the changes and challenges that older adults experience and indicated that this age group faces great variation in their physical, mental and psychosocial health. However, older adults should remain functionally independent because aging does not inevitably lead to disability and dependence.

The physiological changes associated with aging are not always pathological processes, but they may make older adults more vulnerable to some common clinical conditions and diseases.¹ The increasing number of older adults in Jordan has revealed many health problems to the extent where the health care system has become overwhelmed with these problems.²³ Furthermore, some authors revealed that the increase in the number of older adults, due to the increase in life expectancy, is associated with substantial increments in their health care needs.

Many older adults experience different psychological changes in their roles and relationships, such as social isolation, that may increase with age.¹ Older adults who experience isolation are vulnerable to its consequences, especially if they have no support from others.²⁴ Although the ways that older adults adjust to these

Table 2
Geographical distribution of nursing homes as per to the governorate in Jordan.^a

Geographical area by governorate	Percentage of population	No. of nursing home	Total bed capacity
Amman (capital)	38.63	5	400
Irbid (Northern Jordan)	19.91	1	55
Zarqa & Salt (Middle of Jordan)	19.97	5	345
Total	78.51	11	800

^a The numbers are based on data presented by the National Council of Family Affairs (2016).

changes of aging are highly individualized, coping with aging changes may require the assistance of family, friends and community-based services.²⁴

The community-based services, specifically adult day care services, offer support in a variety of aspects such as adjusting to changes in physical condition and health, adjusting to retirement and the accompanying financial changes, finding strategies to maintain quality of life, recognizing the self as an aging person, redefining relationships with young adults and children, maintaining acceptable living arrangements, adjusting to the death of a spouse and providing a cost effective approach to help keep this population in their communities and out of institutions.²⁵

Adult day care services are considered part of community-based group programmes designed to maintain the independence of the elderly through supporting their social, physical and emotional well-being by implementing individualized plans.²⁶ These care plans encompass a variety of services that includes social events, health care-related activities, visiting services and onsite services such as bingo, arts crafts, hairdressing, podiatry and occupational therapy.²⁷ Day care centres maximize all opportunities for interactions between older people that use this service and those living or working in the surrounding area, thus promoting the idea of care as a public community service.²⁸ Adult day care centres provide formal and informal services that complement each other. The formal services help people with chronic illnesses to continue living in their homes. The informal services provide care during work hours, when the elderly person's family members are not able to look after them.²⁹

3. Western social transformation and adult day care services

Adult day care services started in England in the late 1940s as a result of the mental-health institutions being overwhelmed by high rates of elderly admissions. Since then, the adult day care services phenomenon has been dispersed throughout most European countries and reached North America in the 1970s.³⁰ Traditionally, care for the elderly in various cultures has been the responsibility of family members where the elderly live primarily with their sons in an extended family because of the belief in the male's filial responsibility toward their parents.³¹ However, various factors have affected and changed the equation in regard to elderly care, where family members started to live separately in their own homes and left their multigenerational home.¹⁴ This remarkable change has led to the reduction in extended families and the growth of nuclear families.³²

Furthermore, the historical changes in women's role as prime carers of older adults, the increased life expectancy of older adults and the geographical dispersion of families are considered substantial factors that have contributed to the negligence of the needs of the elderly.¹⁴ The changes and the conflicts in the family members' roles have driven the demand for more adult day care centres in Western culture; centres that recognize the numerous needs of older adults in a more safe and supportive environment compared to

that of long-term care settings.³⁰ In Jordan, the equation for elderly care does not appear to be any different from that of Western culture with regard to the need for day care services. These changes and conflicts indicate the urgent need for supportive social services such as adult day care services in Jordanian society.²³

4. Jordan’s social transformation and adult day care services

Cultural values, norms and social structures of a community, derived from religious beliefs, can greatly influence peoples’ attitudes.³³⁻³⁵ In Jordan, Islam is the dominant state religion and advocates for respecting and valuing older adults as demonstrated in many verses in the Holy Koran. In the Holy Koran, God says “And your lord has recommended that you shall not serve ‘any’ but him, and goodness to your parents. If either or both of them reached old age with you, say not to them so much as “Ugh” nor chide them, and speak to them generous word. And make yourself submissively gentle to them with compassion and say: oh my lord! Have compassion on them, as they brought me up (when I was little)”.³⁶

Jordanian culture, as a Middle Eastern country, is characterized by predomination of close family ties where the elderly live in a multigenerational extended family.^{37,38} Such living arrangements are predominant in many Middle Eastern countries such as the United Arab Emirates and Jordan where elders are viewed as someone to be respected and honoured.^{14,39}

Traditionally, Jordanian culture views older adults as a source of insight and guidance because of their experience in various aspects of life as advocated by religious and cultural norms and traditions.⁴⁰ Tremendous changes in Jordan have greatly influenced and urged the demand for elderly care social services; particularly adult day care services.²³ As Jordan moves toward modernization, Jordanian society has undergone major social changes that affect people’s perception of elders in terms of rejection of the values of the past and adoption of the current manifestations of modernization.¹⁴

As a result of a remarkable increase in living expenses, males started moving long distances searching for work and leaving females to take care of the elders creating an overburden on females who look after their own children as well. Such a burden may lead to

females developing negative attitudes toward older adults which negatively impacts on the quality of home care provided for older adults.^{14,41} Moreover, the remarkable growth of the employment rates amongst the females compromised the quality of home care provided to the elders.¹⁴ (See Fig. 1). So, the male’s responsibility for caring for their elders has been waived due to social and cultural transformations resulting in a lack of devotion in serving and caring for older adults.⁶ In addition, Jordanians tend to consider that admitting a parent to a long-term care institute is a shame and creates a social stigma towards the family members of such elders.^{14,41} Moreover, the literature indicated that the majority of older adults reject and do not prefer to be institutionalized in a long-term care setting.⁴² Thus, establishing adult day care services in Jordanian culture is an imperative need, as this phenomenon rarely exists there.

The social care services, particularly adult day care centres, provide an alternative and a solution to the issue of a lack of financial support that threatens the sustainability of nursing home services across Jordan. The estimated cost of each resident in nursing homes in Jordan is about \$500 per month where half of this cost is covered by the government and the rest is covered by private donations,²² whereas the cost of adult day care services is estimated to be one fifth of the cost of nursing homes.¹⁹ In other words, adult day care centres provide a cost effective approach where the governmental support alone can cover the cost of five adult day care service clients instead of covering the cost of two residents of a nursing home. In addition, nursing homes are characterized by high co-morbidity rates and lack of socialization between the residents which drives the need to establish smaller-scale social care services such as adult day care centres.²² These adult day care centres provide the opportunity for more socialization between the elders, provide a family atmosphere and reduce co-morbidity, thus enhancing their quality of life.²²

5. Implications

Raising public awareness of the importance of adult day care services represents a real challenge for health care professionals. Health care professionals play a substantial role in raising awareness about the importance and benefits of adult day services among the

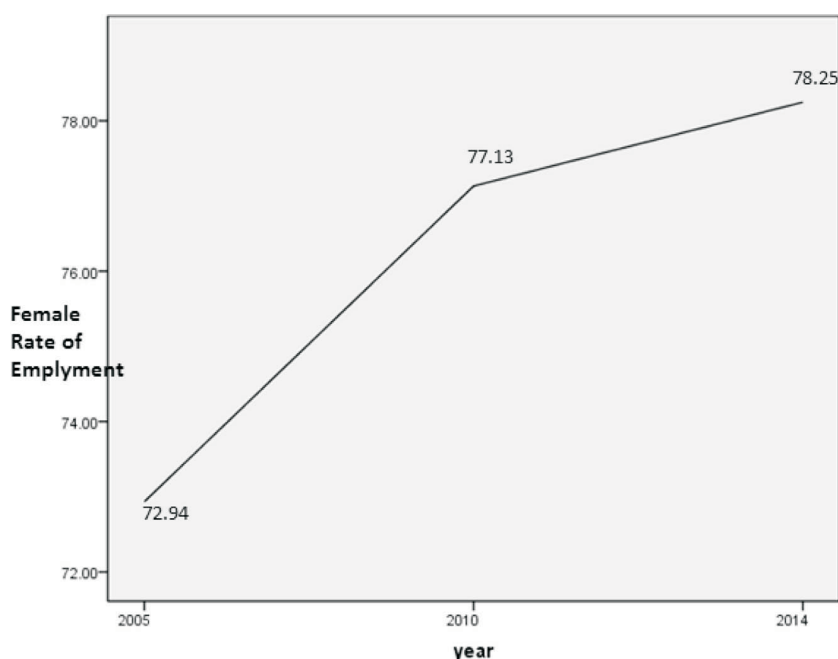


Figure 1. Growth of female’s employment rates in Jordan.

public in order to obtain proper investment and funding for such prospective efficient services. Moreover, health care professionals must be involved in setting up policies and legislations in planning, establishing and managing adult day services. This can be achieved through meeting with the legislators to request support to change current legislation governing social care services, and by establishing influential pressure groups to induce the legislative change in favour of adult day services. Establishing updated and validated adult day services could improve the quality of health care delivered to the potential target population with less role conflict and more self-confidence among the healthcare cadre.

Health care professionals need to conduct further research studies and develop policy papers that clarify the needs and explore the cost effectiveness of establishing adult day services in Jordan. This may help in passing health reform legislations that stress client-centred care and social services.

6. Conclusion

Providing quality care for older adults is considered an ongoing challenge to the health care system because they frequently have multiple social and health problems. The increased proportion of older people is considered a main concern in Jordan because of the recent fast growth in nuclear families and the unprecedented social transformation of family disintegration and prevalence of individualism. This group of people, known for their wisdom and who had made great contributions to their communities, came to be overlooked by family members and left to be cared for by national social care institutions, primarily nursing home services.

The tremendous societal transformations and the poor outcomes of the expensive nursing homes drive the demand to adopt national legislations and policies that manage the social and psychological needs of older people by establishing cost-effective adult day care services. These adult day care services aim to promote independence, maximizing all opportunities for interactions and supporting self-abilities among older Jordanian adults. In brief, Jordan is urgently required to start planning to establish adult day care services that promote the health and well-being of older adults and their families. An interdisciplinary collaborative approach among governmental and non-governmental sectors is essential for planning and establishing adult day care services in Jordan.

Authorship statement

We hereby confirm that all listed authors meet the authorship criteria and that all authors are in agreement with the content of the manuscript.

Conflicts of interest

All authors declare that have no conflict of interest.

Authorship credits

Paper conception & design: IH, BG; data collection: BG, IH, SA; data interpretation and integration: IH, BG, SA and manuscript preparation: IH; final approval of the manuscript version to be published: IH, BG, SA.

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