



The Role of the Family in Active Aging, Letter to Editor

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Abstract

With the increase in life expectancy and the increase in health care services, the elderly population is increasing all over the world, so many countries are facing problems caused by the increase in the elderly population. On the other hand, due to the special conditions of the elderly and the multiplicity of ailments and lifestyle changes in families, some elderly people who get sick are entrusted to care centers and may move away from the path of a healthy and active old age. Among them, are elderly people who actively live with their families and realize the concept of active aging. In this manuscript, the researcher aims to examine the role of the family in active aging.

Keywords: Elderly; Active Aging; Healthy Aging

In today's modern and advanced world, social, economic and health developments have led to an increase in population growth and an increase in life expectancy at the global level. It is estimated that the world's elderly population will reach one and a half billion people by 2050 [1]. On the other hand, the elderly population has its own needs, and due to the presence of chronic diseases such as hypertension and diabetes and the susceptibility to more diseases compared to other age groups, the number of ailments in the elderly is higher [2]. And many of these elderly may be separated from their families and placed in long-term care centers due to the heavy burden of care. Until 2010, the World Health Organization expressed the concept of healthy and active aging [3].

Active aging and family

Active aging is a process of converting opportunities into health, participation and security in order to increase the quality of life for the elderly [4]. Research has shown that the family is the main center of maintaining health, interaction and security for the elderly. The elderly who live with families have better mental

health and a higher quality of life than their counterparts in nursing home [5].

Sometimes families themselves can improve the health of the elderly by creating opportunities, such as recreational programs that other members prepare for the weekend and involve their parents [1].

On the other hand, family members can keep an eye on their elderly relatives who have chronic diseases with regular medical and health follow-ups and help maintain their health or prevent the condition from worsening [6]. While the elderly who live alone and have no family are in a worse condition due to self-neglect and unwillingness to seek treatment and the distance of medical centers, high treatment costs, and the possibility of long-term hospitalization in care centers is raised [7].

Families can play a great role in active aging and increase the quality of life of the elderly through sharing care, helping the elderly in daily activities, maintaining social interactions,

maintaining the dignity of the elderly, and helping the elderly to become independent [8].

Studies have shown that elderly people living in nursing homes suffer from depression, anxiety disorders, isolation, loneliness, and feelings of rejection. And their happiness levels are very low. However, factors such as the mandatory or optional presence of the elderly in this place play a constructive role in the occurrence of these disorders. But on the contrary, the health levels of the elderly living in the family are higher in different dimensions [9].

It seems that the family plays a key role in improving the health of the elderly, increasing their quality of life, and ultimately realizing active aging.

Just as families can play an essential role in active aging, the elderly can also play an essential role in maintaining family structures and policies.

The elderly are a valuable treasure trove of experiences, and the heavy price of gaining some experiences is such that it may endanger human life [3].

The influence and role of the elderly in the family are undeniable, the presence of an active, self-reliant and happy elderly in the family strengthens the emotional and social relationships between the family members and is always considered a psychological and emotional safe haven for the younger ones. The level of mental health increases self-confidence and the feeling of hope and motivation among other family members, and makes interpersonal and social relations more extensive and effective [4].

In a conventional and balanced family, the elderly play the role of supervisor or guide whose job it is to guide, and regulate the overall policy of the family. Children follow them and learn their way of life [6].

As a result, it can be said that families play a key role in active aging by improving the physical, mental and social health of the elderly, and the elderly also play a key role in maintaining the family structure. As a researcher in the field of aging, I state that government policies do not pay enough attention to families to realize active aging, and on the other hand, families do not have

the necessary training and support in this field. If you pay attention to this important matter, reaching active aging will be achieved sooner.

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