Recent Developments in Finnish Old-age Policy

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In 2015 there were 317 relatively independent local authorities (communities e.g. cities, towns), in Finland.

Each of the communities are obliged, by legislation, to ensure health- and social care for their inhabitants.

= high degree of decentralization
OECD
(http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/countries/finland/)

Key Findings
Most OECD countries have enjoyed large gains in life expectancy over the past decades, thanks to improvements in living conditions, public health interventions and progress in medical care. Life expectancy at birth in Finland stands at almost 81 years, one year above the OECD average of 80 years. Life expectancy for women is 84 years, compared with 78 for men, close to the average OECD gender gap of five years, with a life expectancy of 82 years for women and 77 years for men. Higher life expectancy is generally associated with higher health care spending per person, although many other factors have an impact on life expectancy (such as living standards, lifestyles, education and environmental factors).

When asked, “How is your health in general?” 65% of people in Finland reported to be in good health, less than the OECD average of 68%. Despite the subjective nature of this question, answers have been found to be a good predictor of people’s future health care use. Gender, age and social status may affect answers to this question. On average in OECD countries, men are more likely to report good health than women, with an average of 70% for men and 66% for women. In Finland, the average is 65% for men and 64% for women. Not surprisingly, older people

Better Policies for Better Lives

Health care in restaurants and bars

The provision of health care in restaurants and bars is providing patients who are typically hard to reach for more traditional services with access to health care. The service is carried out by nursing students of Metropolia University of Applied Sciences (Helsinki), who visit bars and restaurants during the day.

This combats the passive attitude towards personal health by providing health care in a familiar environment. Blood pressure and diabetes are considered as major public health issues. Finding and tackling these diseases improves life quality and makes early interventions possible. The programme provides hard to reach patients with the knowledge and means for following their own health condition on a daily basis.

The service was made available to 150 people from a group who are normally quite passive in health care. In interviews, both customers and nurses said they were satisfied with the programme.

Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life expectancy</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>+0.2% average annual increase since 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Inequality</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-reported health</td>
<td>64.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27 / 36</td>
<td>-0.8% average annual increase since 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Inequality</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>women</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More Resources

How’s Life? at a Glance
- Structural change going on, in the elderly care services; institutional care is downsized; home care (HC) is promoted
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Towards Age-friendly Finland through Legislation & Informative Guidance

- Act on Supporting the Functional Capacity of the Older Population and on Social and Health Care Services for Older Persons (in Swedish: Lag om stödjande av den äldre befolkningens funktionsförmåga och om social- och hälsovårdstjänster för äldre)

- Quality Recommendation to Guarantee a Good Quality of Life and Improved Services for Older Persons (in Swedish: Kvätilitetsrekommendation för att trygga ett bra åldrande och förbättra servicen)
Act on Supporting the Functional Capacity of the Older Population and on Social and Health Care Services for Older Persons

- The Act entered into force on 1 July 2013
- The Aims of the Act

**Population Level** (eligible for old age pension)
- To support wellbeing, health, functional capacity, and independent living of the older population
- To improve the opportunities of the older population

**Individual level** (functional capacity weakened due to old age)
- To improve the access of older persons to social and health care services of high quality
- To strengthen older persons’ opportunities to influence the content and way of provision of the social and health care services provided for them, and to contribute to deciding on the choices regarding them.
Act on Supporting the Functional Capacity of the Older Population and on Social and Health Care Services for Older Persons

Be prepared!

Assure service quality!

Ensure inclusion & agency!
Key messages
The Majority of Older Population DO NOT Use Services Guarantee as Healthy Ageing as Possible!

- Regular service users/63+ population
- 989039
- 91318
- 52136

- Regular services provided in the home
- 24-hour care elsewhere than in a private home
- Population aged 63+ (excl. users of regular services)

Figure 1

Regular service users/63+ population
Focus on these!

Promoting as healthy ageing as possible

Providing diverse housing options & foreshadowing

Increasing home care & developing its contents: a whole new design is needed!

Rehabilitation
Reform the Service Structure!

The service structure is to be planned as a whole and provided:

- primarily in the person’s private home or other home-like residence (incl. informal care, family care, home care or sheltered housing);
- in the form of institutional care only if there are medical grounds for doing so, or if it is justified to ensure client/patient safety;
- services that ensure the permanence of the care arrangements.
The Service Profile

- National targets that must be examined in terms of the residents’ needs when setting the goals of a municipality are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aged 75 or over</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those aged 75 years or over living at home % of the population in this age group</td>
<td>89,7</td>
<td>89,6</td>
<td>89,5</td>
<td>89,6</td>
<td>90,0</td>
<td>90,3</td>
<td>91,0–92,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clients receiving regular home care. Those aged 75 years or over % of the population in this age group</td>
<td>11,2</td>
<td>11,8</td>
<td>12,2</td>
<td>11,9</td>
<td>11,9</td>
<td>13,0–14,0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clients receiving informal care support aged 75 years or over % of the population in this age group</td>
<td>3,0</td>
<td>3,7</td>
<td>4,2</td>
<td>4,4</td>
<td>4,5</td>
<td>4,6</td>
<td>6,0–7,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clients aged 75 or over in sheltered housing for older people on 24-hour basis, % of the population in this age group</td>
<td>1,7</td>
<td>3,4</td>
<td>5,6</td>
<td>5,9</td>
<td>6,1</td>
<td>6,5</td>
<td>6,0–7,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those aged 75 or over in old people’s homes or in long-term institutional care at health centers, % of the population in this age group</td>
<td>8,4</td>
<td>6,8</td>
<td>4,7</td>
<td>4,4</td>
<td>3,8</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>2,0–3,0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Follow-up of Developments
Follow-up of the Implementation

- Using available indicator sets for monitoring welfare & health promotion, service needs, service delivery structure & finances: among others Sotkanet.fi & Welfare Compass

- Open access on data & reports of the follow-up of the implementation of the Act (on Supporting the Functional Capacity of the Older Population and on Social and Health Care Services for Older Persons)
Further information on: