

Report on Multinational Senior Community Meeting held on October 24, 2015 at
Sapporo International Communication Plaza
Senior Housing Care Facilities

This report is based upon handouts and notes taken during the PowerPoint presentation given by Ms. Keiko Nishihara, Senior Advisor of the Senior Housing Information Center. The presentation covered the basic points involved in selecting appropriate care facilities for those who qualify for admittance to such facilities using long-term care insurance known as *Kaigo Hoken*. The PowerPoint slides in English can be downloaded from the following link:

[Senior Housing Long-term Care Insurance Presentation - PowerPoint](#)

Ms. Nishihara focused on the differences between services offered at various senior housing facilities. Of course the foreigners in the audience were most concerned about the costs and the long-term care insurance coverage benefits. We learned that those benefits extend to long-term care provided by care takers in one's own home. There was not enough time to go into the details of *Kaigo Hoken* but an excellent link was provided to an explanation of the system in English. I have downloaded that PDF file created by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, and highly recommend that all foreigners living in Japan read it. Here is the download link to access the html file.

<http://docplayer.net/12291903-Long-term-care-insurance-system.html>

There was one other important handout provided which showed the contents of the following URL produced by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

This website is all in English and points to other pages with detailed information on various aspects of the "Long-term Care Insurance in Japan."

<http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/topics/elderly/care/>

The Ministry of HLW main page is here: <http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/>

Ms. Nishihara spoke about the senior housing facilities here in Hokkaido because she will lead a group of 24 members to visit 3 different types of such housing on November 21st. There are still seats available on the rental bus which is being subsidized in part by our group sponsor "Neighbors". Therefore the cost to participants will only be 1,500 yen, which includes lunch at one of the facilities.

According to Ms. Nishihara there are very few foreigners residing in senior housing facilities yet, but they are certainly eligible for admittance. She says that there are valid concerns about the ability of such facilities to be able to communicate adequately in any language other than Japanese. Since there are few foreign residents the need for staff to speak English has not been a priority. As the foreign community grows and becomes elderly this will clearly become a problem that must be addressed. If you have questions about these care facilities the best way to get answers would be to join the tour on November 21st.

Some other points which came out of the presentation are as follows:

Kaigo hoken monthly premium payments cost around 7,000 yen per person.

Guardianship system for elders is basically a power of attorney for those who can't handle their financial situation and have no one to look after them.

The care levels range from 1-the lowest level of care needed to 5-the highest level of care needed. Levels are assigned after testing when applying for benefits.

From October to April there is an extra fee for heating in Hokkaido facilities. The meals are usually not very flexible and may have extra fees attached.

The contract at senior housing facilities is usually for two years and then you renew it. There are actually several contracts to be signed, i.e. rental of room/ care contract/meals/fire/etc. Deposits are difficult to get back, although partial returns are possible.

Currently, there is no recognized hospice care system in Japan.

A Senior Housing Directory 2015 (Japanese only) for Sapporo can be purchased for 1,500 yen at Oak Sapporo Building 1F, Kita 1-jo Nishi 2-chome, Chuo-ku, Sapporo.
TEL: 011-210-6224 FAX: 011-210-7722

Japanese URL: <https://www.ansuma-sapporo.com/>

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