

LONG TERM CARE IN A POST TRANSITION COUNTRY POLAND AS AN EXAMPLE

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Outline

- Long term care institutions and stakeholders
- Factors influencing the debate at the early stage of transition
- LTC reform proposals
- Factors currently influencing the debate
- Conclusions

Long term care institutions in Poland

- Family - low retirement age; women could retire at 55 and many did so up to mid 2000 (high co-residence index and rate of non working women 55-64)
- Public formal care
 - Before transition – Ministry of Health and Social Care
 - During transition - institutionally divided between Health Sector (Ministry of Health) and Social Policy Sector (Ministry of Labor and Social Policy)
- Private providers

Long term care institutions in Poland

- Health Care Sector
 - Main Services
 - Care and treatment homes
 - Nursing and care homes
 - Funding – mixed
- 52 000 people receiving long term care in the health sector
- There are 442 care homes

Long term care institutions in Poland

- **Social Policy Sector**

- Main Services/benefits
 - Residential care homes (824 social assistance homes)
 - Day care homes
 - Care services at home
 - Special care services at home
- Funding – mixed
- 130 000 people receiving services via social assistance annually

Stakeholders

- Central Government
- Ministries: Health Ministry and Labour and Social Policy Ministry
- Local governments

- LTC Employees (nurses and social assistance workers)
- Private providers
- The long term disabled, their families and organizations

Factors influencing the (lack of) debate and political process at early stage of transition

- Policy focus on transition
- Social institutions to play double role (often contradictory)
- Social institutions reformed and reformed again
 - Old age pension system
 - Shield against the cost of transition
 - Helping to build capital market
 - Social assistance system (activation in place of care)
 - Health care system (social insurance and internal market))
- LTC not perceived as an important institution
 - No policy space for ltc
 - No strong stakeholders present who would raise the issue of LTC

Reform proposals

- Two law proposals (since 2006)
 - Care insurance
 - prepared under „Law and Justice” government in the Ministry of Health based on German social insurance
 - Following the example of German institution
 - Strong criticism from the Ministry of Finance and from employers about extra contributions
 - Helping the long term disabled
 - under „Citizen’s Platform” partly continuation but (with time) modified towards universal system
 - Started with German system model, then modified

Ltc regulation supported (at least in theory) by two parties criticizing each other on other social issues

Reform proposals

- Directly driven by high sectoral costs and demographic projections (it seemed that broader picture: labour market issues, changing family patterns did not count enough in the initial political process)
- Strong belief that putting in place comprehensive system would help (if not solve the whole problem)
- Looking for good practice in terms of the comprehensive system to follow

Reform proposals

- Working group in the Parliament affiliated to governing party
- Many activities of this group
 - High profile conferences
 - Green Book on Long Term Care
- Institutional coalition set up for introducing the reform; members of this coalition: various organizations of disabled people and institutions
- Many groups and institution joined the coalition, however they also started to voice their particular interest; sometimes fighting the general law proposal

Reform proposals

- The law on helping long term disabled people proposal defines:
 - Tasks of helping the long term disabled persons and their families
 - Types of benefits
 - Organisation
 - Competences and qualifications of the carers
 - Financing
 - Supervision

The proposal is comprehensive indeed

Reform proposals

- Some important features of the current proposal
 - 3 levels of disability; the most seriously disabled served first
 - Universal benefit – voucher
 - Financing – mixed
- Proposal put forward to shift some financing from people over 75 who would be eligible to extra allowance just on the age basis to those needing long term care. Not well received in society.

Factors influencing the debate now

- Population aging (more awareness, „seniority departement” in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy)
 - 15% 65+ in population
 - Projections showing ltc demand increase to 500000 in 2030
- Changing family patterns
- Labour market projections – decreasing labour force supply
- Old age pension reform completed (for the time being), social assistance reform prepared
- Old age pension system reform – increasing the retirement age (from 60/65 to 67/67)
- Activity of the parliamentary working group – yet another stakeholder in the process

Conclusions

- It seems LTC gains more interest due to, among others, the activity of the working group preparing the LTC law
- Long Term Care is also mentioned in growing number of various government or ministerial documents and strategies
- Political focus can switch now towards LTC after old age pension system and social assistance reform
- The cost is still the main issue to address
- If enacted, the new law will underline the importance of the Long Term Care and the formal LTC in particular