

# Activating Technologies Of Social Service As A Factor Of Improving Social Self-Personality Of Elderly And Disabled People In Russia

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## ABSTRACT

The article emphasizes the importance of introducing activating technologies of social services for the elderly and disabled in the practice of residential institutions, rehabilitation and complex social service centers located in Belgorod region (Russia). In January - June 2018, the international Department "Social Projects' Laboratory" of Belgorod State University conducted a sociological research to study the level of social activity and social well-being of elderly and disabled people, living in different types of institutions in Belgorod region. The main method of study was structural interview. The whole sample was presented which included 415 informants (both elderly and disabled). According to the results of the research, the classification of clients was developed, regarding the level of their social activity. The results of the survey made it possible to state that activating technologies of social services were the factor of increasing the level of social activity of elderly and disabled people which in its turn could improve the quality of their lives, as well as their social well-being, including somatic and dental health.

**Keywords:** somatic health, dental health, social activity, social health, social care, elderly and disable people.

## INTRODUCTION

At the present time, developing social services and health care is one of the most important strategic directions of state social policy in Russia, aimed at to improve the quality of life and promote the health of elderly and disabled people. The state government social policy led to a qualitative change in the delivering social services to the elderly and people with disabilities, improving in particular dental health care for these categories of clients. Providing adequate services, including dental care in terms of volume and quality to the target groups of the population in the Belgorod region is the purpose of the study.

## Literature Review

The literature review shows the vast and diverse range of priorities, paradigms and languages regarding disability; it combines specialized methodological and empirical concerns with more nuanced and wide-ranging theoretical discussions [1]. One of the key aspects of the research is the exploring what activating technologies of social services are needed for specific groups of elderly and disabled people. Some researchers agree that there is the need to develop a disability-inclusive approach to evaluate public health interventions. It can be seen as a step forward to the improvement of social and urban environment for people with disabilities [2]. American scientists find out that the presence of an activity limitation is strongly associated with decreased odds of employment for persons with different combinations of sensory, functional, and

activity limitations [1]. Canadian researchers [7], explore the inconsistent approach adopted by the provincial government in how it identifies and accommodates disabled people in Ontario. The result of the study is the development of classification based on four criteria (employment, post-secondary education, accessibility regulations, and social assistance) to assess the state social policy in Ontario with particular attention to the medical services. Some researchers pay particular attention to the connection between depression and disability, stressing the peculiarities of diagnostic and statistical methods [6]. At present, there is a transition from passive forms of social services to active ones, which contribute to increasing the social activity of the elderly and disabled, and encourage the restoration and expansion of their social ties [9].

## Data And Methodology

In January-June 2018 a sociological study was conducted to explore the level of social activity and social well-being of elderly and disabled people (n = 415), living in different types of boarding homes for elderly and disabled in Belgorod region. The main method of study was structured interview. The target sample included two categories of respondents: old people aged 65-80 and people with disabilities aged 30-69 at the time of the research.

## Empirical Results

According to the regional statistics, there are more than 500,000 of elderly and 219,000 people with disabilities, living in Belgorod region. There is a

whole system of social service, including 59 different types of state social institutions as well as several NGOs, which provide social services for elderly and disabled. The main goal of the regional state social policy is to prolong the active way of elderly and disabled people's lives. The important role is given to maintaining physical and dental health, restoring the functionality of the dentoalveolar system in the region [3]. Activating technologies of social services for elderly and people with disabilities will help them to

increase their self-esteem, to expand social and communication ties, to perform new social roles, etc. through active participation in volunteer, public or community organizations [8]. Active life position and participation in various spheres of public life is determined by elderly and disabled people's values which are important to diagnose [4]. The structure of basic values of elderly and disabled people is presented in table 1 based on the results of the survey.

**Table 1. Structure of the core values of the elderly and disabled.**

S.no	Values	Score, %
1	Physical health	83 %
2	Family	64 %
3	Dental health	60 %
4	Stability	58 %
5	Material well-being	54 %
6	Peace	38 %
7	Friends	17 %
8	Good neighbors	39 %
9	Respect of others	20 %
10	Clear conscience	12 %
11	Interesting leisure	11 %

Both elderly and disabled of all age groups are focused on five main values (table 1): physical health (83 %), family (64 %), dental health (60 %), stability (58 %) and material well-being (54 %). The lower rank has such values as: peace and stability – 38 %; friends – 17 %, respect of others – 20 %, clean conscience – 12 %, and interesting leisure – 11 %. This hierarchy of values can not be called random, it reveals a number of typical social problems of these categories of population. The health issues concern both categories of informants – elderly and younger disabled people – and increase the awareness of its value. The results of the study suggest that most institutions for elderly and disabled in Belgorod region have satisfied conditions for residents to take care of their health. One third of them are engaged in sport activities, but 59 % of respondents do it regularly. Preferences are given to gymnastics – 48 %, active walking, including Scandinavian walking – 7 % and different types of hardening – 4%. More than half of the informants – 57 % walk outdoors daily, 24 % walk 2-3 times a week, 22 % do not exercise at all. When assessing their physical and dental health, only 4 % of elderly and 6 % of disabled people rated their physical condition as "good", 45 % as "satisfactory"; 18 % elderly and of 31% of disabled are satisfied with the level of their dental health. A differentiated consideration of the importance of physical and dental health is due to the significance and rather high cost of the latter. The importance of the family value is connected with the need for communication, mutual assistance, as well

as a sense of need and importance. Another significant problem for all respondents is meeting an acceptable level of material standard of living. These problems are being solved through the social protection system in the region. The results of the assessment of the emotional and psychological state show that 56 % of respondents are optimistic about their immediate life perspectives, 24 % are pessimistic (in particular, pessimist men are more than women), 15 % are disappointed, believing that their life has developed completely differently, as they would like. The social activity of elderly and disabled people, living in institutions is rather high. In general, 73 % of elderly people and 48 % of disabled participate in cultural and recreational activities such as clubs, creative classes, and volunteer movement actions, organized by specialists. The most popular activities are watching movies, attending lectures (67 %), involving in sport activities (27 %), and travelling (29 %). Education plays a very important role in the structure of social activity of elderly and disabled, living in institutions in Belgorod region. Annually 70 old people take computer literacy course "Grandma-on-line", organized by Belgorod State University. For the last three years, 750 people took courses at the University of the Third Age, organized on the basis of "Complex Center for Social Services of the Population". The results of the research allow us to classify the respondents according to the level of their activity (elderly people and disabled people) into four groups. The first group consists of respondents with a high level of social activity (22 %),

that is, those who constantly show independence and creativity in all proposed activities and actions. They are proactive, have a strong internal motivation for active work; most of them are included in the bodies of self-government institutions. The second group includes informants with an average level of activity (31 %), those who are active under the certain conditions: when their activity is stimulated by others (group leaders or specialists) or by external stimuli. The third group includes those who do not want to change their habits and lifestyle due to the circumstances (37 %). We called them "inert". This group is not homogeneous, and consists of those who chose this position due to the lack of experience or the possibility of manifesting the initiative; those who are "disillusioned" (most often they are disabled) and those "who have always been socially passive". All of them have a weak motivation for active actions. In the fourth group we place those who, due to their health conditions, severe disability, the inaccessibility of the social environment or the lack of technical equipment can not perform the active lifestyle. We called them "forced passive", because their low motivation to social activities is due to objective reasons (11 %).

### Conclusion

Thus, the criteria for classifying participants by the level of their social activity are the level of involvement in various spheres of life (employment, education, leisure, social and cultural events); the participation in activities, provided by the staff of the institution (club activities, promotions, health groups, volunteer movement, etc.); the subjective level of social adaptation, based on the self-assessment (the attitude towards his/her current social status; the satisfaction of life); the system of values; physical and dental health status indicators; the level of independent life support.

### Outcome

According to the research we can identify the main activating technologies of social services used in institutions for elderly and disabled in the Belgorod region. First, the most effective technologies for the rehabilitation of the elderly and disabled are labor and socially useful activities such as the volunteer movement "Volunteers of the Silver Age", associations on loosening and making clay toys, workshops of beading and embroidery. Secondly, activating technologies aimed at the implementation of leisure and recreation using various kinds of therapies: zoo therapy, animal therapy, aqua or aqua-fish therapy, and others which can help to develop different kinds of skills increasing social independence, and self-service. Thirdly, intensifying technologies for elderly and disabled people include the realization of the right to continue education. The examples are "Schools of legal literacy"; "University

of the third age"; "School of computer literacy"; "Financial literacy classes". Fourth, the revitalizing technologies aimed at the keeping in a good health. One of them is "social tourism" that includes a set of activities - from walking in the park with elements of a cognitive excursion to a distant trip to sightseeing that contributes to reduction of physical and emotional stress and the improvement of health in general. Fifth, the introduction of various kinds of therapies such as the environment therapy, landscape therapy, garden therapy, etc. helps elderly and people with disabilities to adapt to the institution's conditions; contributes to the formation of an active lifestyle and improves their social well-being

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