

LEGAL REFORM FOR INDEPENDENT NURSES PRACTICE TO COPE WITH POPULATION AGEING, CHRONIC DISEASE PREVALENCE & DOCTOR SHORTAGE: A PROPOSAL FOR JAPAN AS AN EXAMPLE*

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ABSTRACT

Measures for preventive and supportive care are in more demand as such issues as population ageing, chronic disease prevalence and doctor shortage become more serious throughout the world. However, at the moment, the healthcare delivery systems in many countries lack the appropriate measures to cope with those issues. Against this backdrop, this article proposes a legal reform which expects central/federal governments to enact a law which allows the local/state governments to open special posts for a limited number of nurses and to have the nurses offer health care designed for the communities' specific needs independently as local public officers who can do so

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only within their appointed regions. In order to make explicit the difficulties in healthcare system reform and the desirability and applicability of the proposal, this article takes up, as an example, Japan where the aforementioned issues have been discussed by the country's administration but would not be satisfactorily addressed by the legislature under the present circumstances.

KEYWORDS: *chronic disease, doctor shortage, independence, nurse, population ageing, post.*