

Integrated Elderly Care in Sri Lanka: Mapping Services, Human Resources, and Policy Pathways

Prasangi P.M.U¹, Walpita N.B¹, Maduwage S¹, Wijerathne P.D¹, Mallawatantri H²

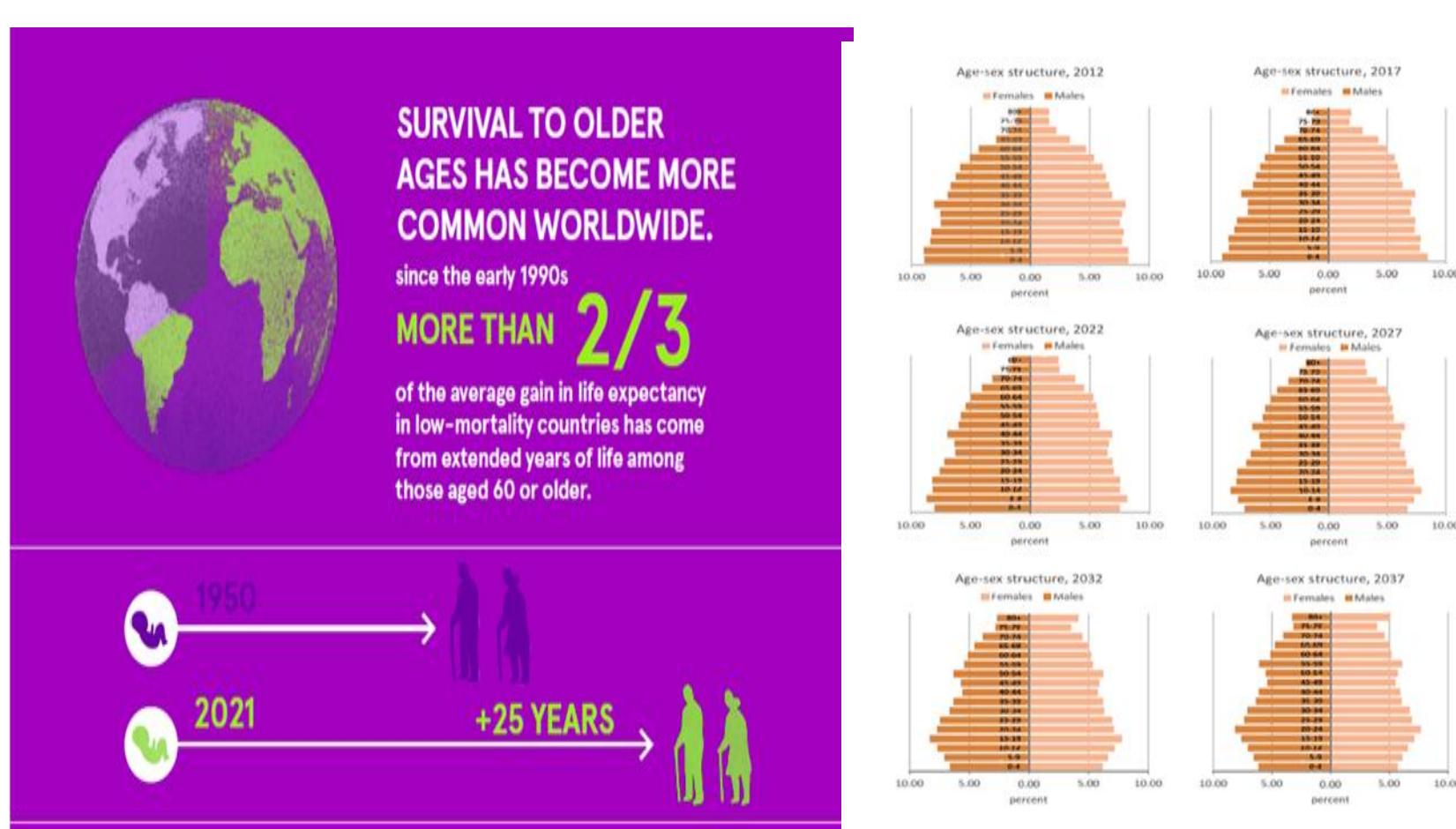
¹Ministry of Health Sri Lanka

² Zhejiang University China

uthpala.muhandiram@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Population of Sri Lanka is reporting significant demographic changes with projections of one in four citizens will be age 60 years or above by 2040. To meet the growing needs of older people and achieve Universal Health Coverage, existing services and human resources need to be reformed.



Disparities in service provision, evolving family structures, workforce shortages due to outbound migration, and fragmented stakeholder engagement have resulted in duplicated services, inefficient resource use, and weakened monitoring and implementation. These challenges underscore a growing unmet need for integrated, equitable care services for older persons, which may be optimally addressed through re-engineering existing systems and strengthening human resource competencies via a shared-care cluster approach.

OBJECTIVE

To identify, map, and re-engineer key components of elderly care services into an integrated service delivery model for older people in Sri Lanka

METHODS AND MATERIALS

A sequential mixed-method design was used. A comprehensive review of policies, guidelines, and literature was followed by Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews with experts, service providers, and older adults. Qualitative data underwent thematic analysis. Review and qualitative findings were triangulated to map services and human resources, and an iterative process was used to develop an integrated care model.

RESULTS

Key components identified included: social and economic support; primary healthcare; continuum of care (secondary, tertiary, intermediate, palliative, long-term care); age-friendly environments; and policy/legal frameworks. (Figure 1)

Existing healthcare and social services were mapped, human resource availability was assessed, and care pathways for diverse elderly needs were developed. Key action areas for implementation were also identified.

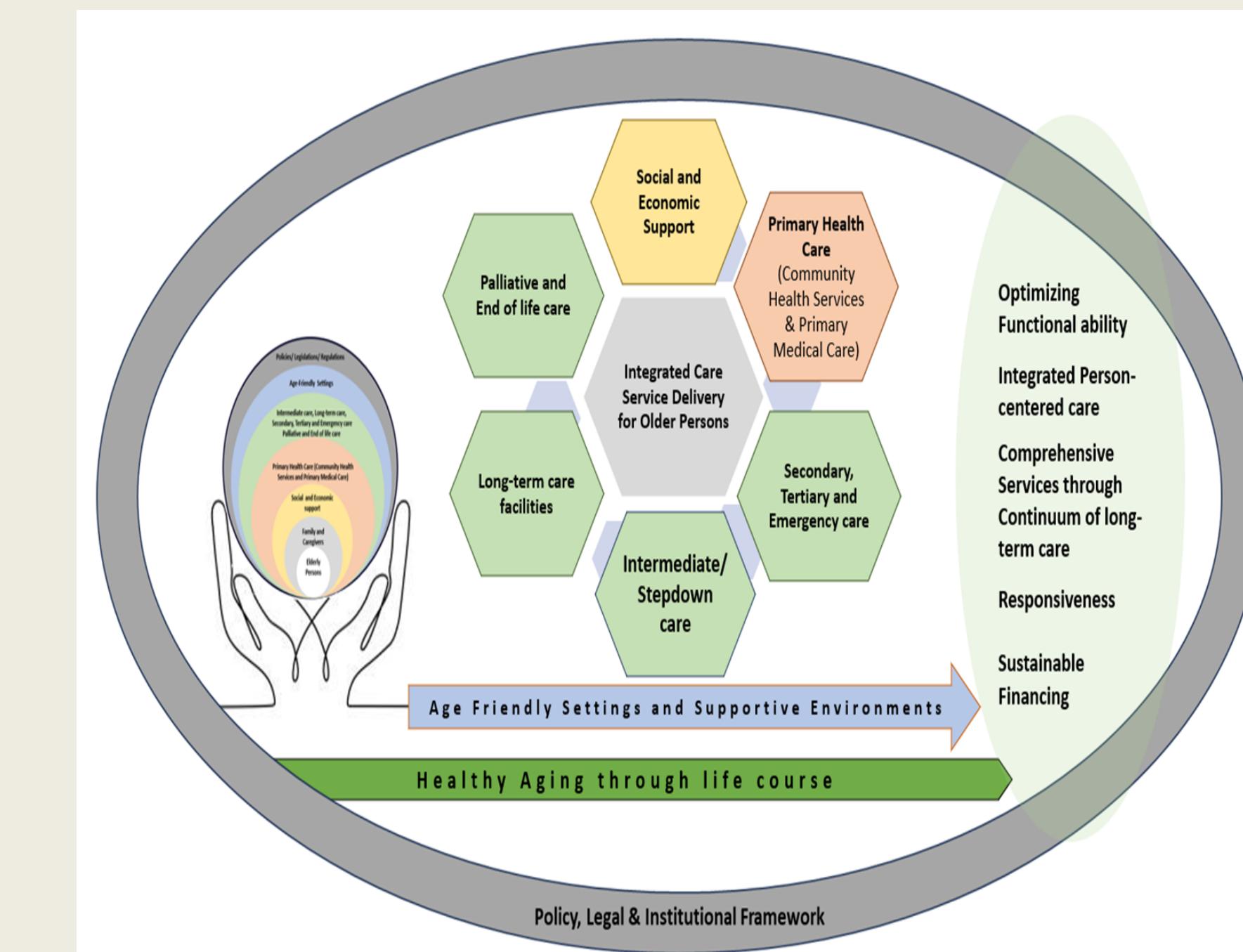


Figure 1.

CONCLUSIONS

An integrated care for older people can be achieved through system re-engineering. Care pathways for older people addressing diverse needs, with key implementation actions were identified.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Strengthen intersectoral collaboration for integrated elderly services.
- Invest in training and redistribution of the health and social care workforce.
- Establish age-friendly environments and enforce policies supporting older people.
- Pilot and refine integrated care pathways before nationwide adoption