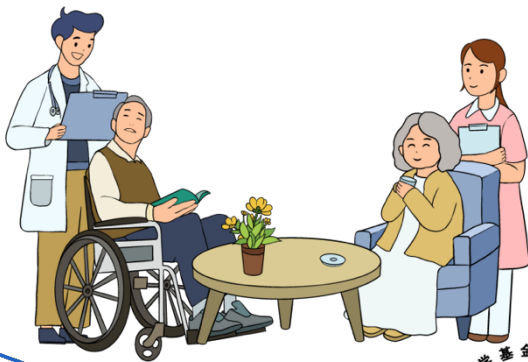


# HOME- AND COMMUNITY- BASED SERVICE UTILISATION AMONG CHINESE OLDER ADULTS

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## SUMMARY

**Background** In China, as of 2022, the population aged 65 years and older reached 209.78 million, constituting 14.9% of the national population. This growing proportion of older adults poses significant challenges for the long-term care system in China. Although family members play a crucial role in caregiving, the increasing complexity of older adults' needs necessitates more support from home- and community-based services (HCBS). The term “HCBS” encompasses various types of formal long-term care services and supports provided by health and social care professionals to older adults, either at home or in the community. These services include home nursing, homemaker services, home rehabilitation, and respite care.

**Objectives** This dissertation aims to investigate the utilisation of HCBS and changes in utilisation; to analyse unmet needs for these services; to examine the association between HCBS and selected health outcomes among Chinese older adults; and to provide evidence-based recommendations for effectively promoting the utilisation of HCBS.

**Methods** A mixed-methods approach was used, starting with a systematic review and meta-analysis to investigate HCBS utilisation globally (N = 2,942,069), followed by a quantitative survey to explore HCBS utilisation in China (N = 419). Secondary data analysis from the China Longitudinal Ageing Social Survey was then used to identify changes in utilisation (N = 6,924), unmet needs (N = 9,358), and their determinants. Furthermore, the relationships between HCBS and two selected health outcomes—depression (N = 11,941) and all-cause mortality (N = 8,102)—were examined using data from the Chinese Longitudinal Healthy Longevity Survey.

## SUMMARY

**Results** The systematic review identified three global categories of HCBS: health services, social services, and family caregiver services. Each category includes different types of services. Findings from 2023 indicated that 29.8% of older adults in China utilised at least one category of HCBS, with a specific utilisation of 13.4% for health services, 24.6% for social services, and only 0.7% for family caregiver services. However, it is worth noting that utilisation for most individual types of HCBS remained below 5.0%, which was lower than the global average identified in the systematic review. Between 2016 and 2018, there was an approximately 6% increase in Chinese older adults' use of at least one category of HCBS. Changes in HCBS utilisation were observed across four groups: 6.9% as continuous users, 4.2% as former users, 10.1% as new users, and 78.8% as non-users. Additionally, three patterns of unmet needs were identified: no needs / met needs (68.4%), unmet needs (11.1%), and uncertain needs (20.5%). Furthermore, the perceived availability of daily life assistance services was associated with a lower risk of depression, whereas the perceived availability of emotional support services was specifically associated with a reduction in all-cause mortality.

**Conclusions** This dissertation reveals a significant underutilization of HCBS in China, with a considerable number of older adults experiencing unmet and uncertain needs. Moreover, the research suggests that a greater perceived availability of these services may potentially reduce depression symptoms and lower all-cause mortality rates. Based on these findings, the following recommendations are made: firstly, to expand service availability; secondly, to improve long-term care insurance coverage to enhance accessibility and affordability; and finally, to develop targeted information campaigns for older adults and their family caregivers in China.

“Ageing in place: home is where our heart and health are.”

09 Nov 2020 by Ben Knight

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## LIST OF PUBLICATIONS INCLUDED IN THIS DISSERTATION

### Published online

Yu, Y., Zhang, J., Petrovic, M., Zhang, X., & Zhang, W.-H. (2024). Utilisation of home- and community-based services among older adults worldwide: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 155, 104774. (Ranked 1/123 in Nursing, IF= 8.1)

Yu, Y., Zhang, J., Song, C., Petrovic, M., Pei, X., & Zhang, W. H. (2022). Perceived availability of home- and community-based services and self-reported depression among Chinese older adults: A cross-sectional study. *Health & social care in the community*, 30(5), e2827–e2837. Ranked 32/91 in Social Work, IF=2.4)

Yu, Y., Zhang, J., Chen, C., Petrovic, M., Pei, X., & Zhang, W. H. (2023). Longitudinal association between perceived availability of home- and community-based services and all-cause mortality among Chinese older adults: A national cohort study. *Journal of ageing & social policy*, 1–36. (Ranked 7/37 in Gerontology, IF= 5.1)

### Under review

Yu, Y., Zheng, X., Petrovic, M., & Zhang, W. H. (2024). Changes in utilisation of home- and community-based services and its associated factors among Chinese older adults: A national cohort study. *Journal of advanced nursing*. (First round of review)

Yu, Y., Chen, C., Petrovic, & Zhang, W. H. (2023). Pattern and associated factors of unmet needs for home- and community-based health services among older adults in China: A latent class analysis. *Journal of ageing & social policy*. (Third round of review)

### Preparing for submission

Yu, Y., Chen, C., Zhang, J., Xu, J., & Zhang, W. H. (2024). Utilisation of home- and community-based services among Chinese older adults: A cross-sectional study in 2023.

## DISSERTATION LINK

Full list of publications (including the digital version of the PhD dissertation): <https://biblio.ugent.be/person/8c794569-1e28-11eb-a765-be2bd24d0aa9>

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