

Chapter 1

The New Demographic Structure of the World

Future Projections and Implications

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ABSTRACT

From the past to the present, the population structure of the world and Turkey has been constantly changing. Demographic differences become more apparent according to the development levels of countries and cause social and economic changes all over the world. Demographic changes are shaped by changes in the demand for health services, migration movements, the increase in urban population as a result of internal migration from rural to urban areas, and economic and social policies. Along with the change in birth rates, which is one of the main factors of demographic variables all over the world, changes and new developments have also occurred in health services. Health service demands vary with low birth rates, the increase in the elderly population, and the spread of chronic diseases. Home health services in particular have become an important solution area to adapt to this new demographic structure.

INTRODUCTION

Demography is the discipline that scientifically examines the structure of a population, the transformation processes of this structure, and the social effects of these changes. It helps us understand how societies may shape in the future by analyzing

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characteristics such as age, gender, fertility, mortality rates, and migration. Demographic data plays a critical role in planning and policy development processes in many areas such as health, education, economy, environment, and social security.

The rapid demographic changes observed on a global scale in recent years have had direct effects on health systems. In the 21st century, major changes have begun to occur in health systems as a result of demographic changes experienced all over the world. Developments at the center of demographic changes, especially low birth rates and increased life expectancy, deeply affect health services. The aging of the population has also brought about certain changes. Such as resource distribution, provision of health services, and society's perspective on old age. The increase in average life expectancy, along with both technological developments and advances in medical science, has been effective in the increase in the elderly population. This has led to a significant increase in the proportion of the elderly population in societies. In addition to the increase in the elderly population, the decrease in birth rates has caused demographic imbalances. Factors such as population aging, decrease in fertility rates, rural-urban migration and the increase in the burden of chronic diseases are transforming the way health services are provided. Taking these important changes into account, health services are expected to make the necessary policies to provide services appropriate to the needs of the increasing elderly population. In this context, home health services are gaining more and more importance as a sustainable and individual-centered care model (Mallinson and Shafi, 2022; Jarzebski et al., 2021; Woessner et al., 2021; Briggs et al., 2020; UN DESA, 2023; WHO, 2022; OECD).

Home health services are comprehensive medical services provided by professional health teams in the patient's living space, covering both acute and chronic health needs. These services include not only medical treatment, but also aspects such as care, rehabilitation, monitoring and counseling. Home health services are of vital importance for elderly individuals with limited mobility, the disabled and those with chronic diseases (Ministry of Health, 2023).

When the new demographic structure and future projections are taken into account, it is clear that home health services will expand further, become integrated with technological solutions and need to be restructured in accordance with social dynamics. This book chapter aims to provide an analytical view on the current status and future of home health services in light of global and national demographic trends. Another aim of this chapter is to reveal the impact of home health services on health systems. In addition, strategic recommendations for home health services will be developed based on the opportunities and challenges that demographic changes may pose.

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