

*Transform silver elderly to gold resources*

Y-F. WANG, Y. TIAN. *Transform silver elderly to gold resources*. *Gerontechnology* 2014; 13(2):302; doi:10.4017/gt.2014.13.02.081.00 **Purpose** A demographically ageing population is one of the several factors creating great pressure and future challenges in China. The drastic increase in the percentage of aging people in the nation has created a boom of over 200 million seniors in China's communities<sup>1</sup> today. This research article is based on this current challenging environment. This study considers seniors as a resource in an effort to deal with the aging population, through intervention designed to reintegrate seniors into society by fully utilizing the social contributions of seniors. Doing so will further enhance the role of seniors as a asset to society, increase the pool of people available to assist others in the social labor force, and thus achieve the goal of lessening the demands of seniors on the social resources society can provide. **Method** First, reintegrating seniors into society will achieve the goal of changing the role and status of individual seniors. They will be transformed from a role of a prospective retiree who relies on social benefits into a vital part of the work force. Through reemployment, prolonged employment, and social volunteering, the potential value of seniors as human resources can be explored to discover the contribution seniors can make for social and economic development<sup>2</sup>. Second, integrating seniors into society will provide them with mental benefits by enhancing the aging process. Providing increased social interaction for seniors through volunteering will help seniors regain respect and will improve their mental health which will greatly enhance their lives after retirement. For example, the 'Gingko Club' in Hong Kong is a retiree-focused experiment<sup>3</sup>. It employs a chef, two assistant chefs and a purchaser; all other employees are seniors above the age of 60. They have all been provided with special training including an opportunity to improve their use of English as well as their appearance to enable them to work for the Gingko Club. In addition, the Club is specially equipped and designed with a focus on senior safety, including slip-resistant flooring, blood pressure measurement equipment and a large character menu. A social worker is available in the Club to work with and help seniors on a daily base. **Results & Discussion** The reintegration for seniors has gained momentum and achieved good results. From 2000 to 2006, the percentage of seniors who participated in social charitable activities and volunteering increased from 38.7% to 45.1% in the cities. Also, the percentage of residents who are willing to communicate with seniors who have difficulties in the cities has increased from 50% to 60.7%. The percentage of senior who participate in community events organized by the organizations, has increased from 56.4% to 66.2% generally, and in the city to 54.0% to 61.4%<sup>4</sup>. These efforts achieve the goal for transforming silver seniors into golden resources for the society. It not only helps seniors to enrich their lives during retirement, but also helps society as a whole to rethink the role of seniors; seniors transition from being thought of as consumers of social services to active participants in society who are socially responsible and provide benefits to society as a whole. Above all, gerontechnology plays an important role in helping older adults to return to work. Gerontechnology could improve the diagnosis of the process of memory impairment, and the assessment of functional disabilities among seniors as it relates to activities of daily living. Information and communication technologies may also allow the development of tools used to improve the rehabilitation and cognitive stimulation of society's senior members. Finally, technological tools can be designed to compensate for the cognitive impairment of seniors and to support patients and their families<sup>5</sup>.

**References**

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