

## Chronic disease to pose big challenge in coming decades

By YANG WANLI  
yangwanli@chinadaily.com.cn

China will face a big challenge on disease control because of a higher incidence of chronic diseases expected in the next 18 years.

It is estimated that the number of people age 40 and older with chronic diseases in China will double or even triple by 2030, according to a report released by China Heart Congress on Friday.

The 2011 report on cardiovascular diseases in China, by the National Center for Cardiovascular Diseases, also shows that the country's death toll from chronic diseases, including cardiovascular disease and diabetes, will increase by 50 percent by 2030.

The World Bank reported last year that more than 260 million people in China have been diagnosed with chronic diseases, which account for 85 percent of deaths in China.

Nearly 70 percent of the country's medical costs are for chronic diseases.

China now has about 230 million people with cardiovascular disease, which means one in every five people has heart problems.

If the cardiovascular disease death rate could be reduced by 1 percent year-on-year in the next 30 years, it would save the country more than \$10 trillion, which is as much as 68 percent of the national GDP in 2010, the



Village doctor Ke Ziming (right) performs a health checkup on 62-year-old Hong Bixia (left) on Thursday in Jinjiang, Fujian province.

World Bank report said.

Hu Shengshou, president of Fu Wai Hospital, China's largest hospital specialized in cardiovascular diseases, said the number of people with heart disease in hospitals across the country is increasing by 10 to 20 percent every year.

However, there are still big discrepancies among hospitals in terms of medical treatment.

A survey by Fu Wai Hospital covering 43 hospitals in China indicated that the death rate in some hospitals after coronary bypass surgery is about 6 percent. But in some hospitals, the rate is less than 1 percent.

In terms of the death rate of acute myocardial infarction, one of the most common cardiovascular emergencies, discrepancies are also witnessed among hospitals in Beijing.

The death rate in some hospitals is 20 times higher than in those with the lowest rates.

"The numbers are amazing. Even in the capital of China, we have a lot of room to improve our medical treatment," Hu said.

Fu Wai Hospital is cooperating with some residential clinics. Doctors from the hospital paid regular visits to residential clinics, not only to treat

patients, but also to give guidance to medical staff.

Kong Lianzhi, deputy director of the Health Ministry's bureau of disease control and prevention, said that the ministry turned the focus from disease treatment to prevention in 1998. Better service in residential areas and home medical staff are essential parts of the plan.

To date, the cooperation between public hospitals and residential clinics has benefited more than 1 million people nationwide.

Yang Yuejin, director of the cardiac surgery department of

Fu Wai Hospital, said the hospital has built a center in Beijing for research on heart disease prevention.

"Despite publicizing the importance of ideas, such as not smoking and eating less salt, we will also publish handbooks for doctors," Yang said.

The China Heart Congress said that the country's first national mass screening for cardiac disease would be carried out this year. Congenital heart disease will be included in the screening for the first time. The latest national statistics on cardiac disease risk factors were compiled in 2002.

## Beijing's disabled provided with free accident insurance

By HE DAN  
hedan@chinadaily.com.cn

The Beijing Disabled Persons Federation gave the capital's 410,000 disabled people a special gift on Friday in the form of group accident insurance.

The program aims to improve the social security network for the disabled and help them to integrate better with the outside world, federation officials said.

The new insurance policy allows disabled Beijing residents to be covered by a maximum payment of 50,000 yuan (\$7,860) for accidental death or disability when using public transportation tools, visiting museums and other public places open to the disabled for free, and participating in officially organized social activities.

Meanwhile, they will be insured for a maximum medical benefit of 10,000 yuan.

Wu Wenyan, president of the federation, announced the insurance at the signing ceremony with the PICC Property and Casualty Company Ltd, an insurance company based in Beijing on Friday.

Zhao Yunsheng, the federation's director of rights protection, said the municipal government has pledged 18 million yuan to support the project for the next three years.

It is expected to be of long-term benefit for the disabled population in Beijing, said Zhao, who is in charge of running the project.

The federation spent about 6 million yuan for one year of accident insurance for the city's disabled, or Beijing residents with government-issued ID cards to show their disabilities, he said.

"We are exploring the new model of using commercial tools to improve the social welfare system for people with disabilities, and if it works out well, we will receive more financing from the government to continue the policy and expand the insurance coverage," he said.

The busy traffic and thick crowds in public venues in metropolitan cities such as Beijing pose more potential risks for the disabled when they go out for social activities, which is why the introduction of accident insurance for this group is necessary, he said.

In the past few years, Beijing has done a great deal to encourage more disabled people to go out.

All parks, seven museums and 173 tourist attractions, including the Forbidden City, have removed admission fees for the disabled.

Since March, the disabled can take buses and the blind can use the subway for free.

"We aim to encourage more disabled people to go out," Zhao said.

Jiang Donghuan, 44, who became disabled from rheumatoid arthritis in adolescence, said she was happy about the free insurance policy but urged the government to try harder to create a barrier-free society for the disabled.

"It's impossible for me to go out without two people's assistance. First, the residential building where I live has no elevators, and the 'barrier-free buses' are limited and usually too crowded. Most taxi drivers shy away from people like me because passengers in wheelchairs are an inconvenience to them," she said.

## philippinespecial

# Strong economy reassures domestic and foreign investors

### A positive picture continues to emerge of this dynamic Southeast Asian services hub

With a Fitch credit rating of BB+ and a strong commitment to fighting corruption and tax evasion, the Philippines is fast becoming one of the most exciting investment destinations in the world.

As confidence builds in the country's macroeconomic situation, the Southeast Asian country is proud to be a step closer to attaining its goal of investment-grade credit rating in the soonest time possible.

Competitive and determined, the Philippines is among the best money-per-value destinations in the world. It has a liberalized services industry and is efficient in terms of wages over labor standard expectations and low operational costs, while enjoying an advantageous logistical location within the ASEAN + 3 (Association of Southeast Asian Nations plus China, Japan and South Korea) trading bloc. With strong remittances, the Philippines' gross international reserves are above the world average and it has a vast pool of homegrown talent.

The Philippines benefits from a government committed to establishing a conducive business environment, while the Board of Investment plays a vital go-to role in finding investor management solutions.

The beautiful country, which has a population of 92.2 million, has proved to be resilient in the face of the global financial crisis, due to efforts to control the fiscal deficit, reduce debt ratios, and adopt internationally-accepted banking sector capital adequacy standards.

The banking sector, which makes up 80 percent of the financial system, has also had limited direct exposure to struggling financial institutions overseas, while prudent regulatory policies, including the prohibition of investments in structured products, have shielded the insurance sector.

A proactive member of the ASEAN trading community, the Philippines

**Globalization is Charter Ping An's partner in growth. It has allowed us to improve our range of future-ready products to cater to socio-demographic and economic trends."**

MELECIO MALLILLIN  
PRESIDENT, CHARTER PING AN INSURANCE CORPORATION

boasted annual growth averaging 4.6 percent during the first decade of the 21st century and is now keen to forge a higher, sustained economic growth level of around 7 percent to 8 percent per year in order to reduce the poverty that affects about a quarter of the rapidly growing population.

The Philippines' Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry currently accounts for about 15 percent of the global market. The industry grew by 40 percent between 2007 and 2009, when the global financial crisis impacted on more sophisticated markets worldwide.

With English as the basic communication medium in business, government and schools, Filipinos are able to deliver a quality service at a significantly competitive cost.

Highly trainable and adaptable, and with competitive technical skills, the local labor force has a strong competitive advantage in the region, especially in industries such as manufacturing, electronics, outsourcing and offshoring.

The country's insurance sector has also emerged as an industry with strong potential for sustained growth. A 6 percent to 7 percent rise in gross domestic product, along with greater consumer spending power, strong remittances from the Filipino Diaspora—estimated to be between 9.5 million to 12.5 million people, a stable BPO industry, and a highly liquidized financial system have put investor-confidence at its highest level for years, with the

knock-on effect heralding a need for better quality insurance services.

The country's life insurers are particularly confident about the performance forecast for their sector, having correctly predicted double-digit growth in written premiums for the second consecutive year in 2011 due to positive economic indicators and an increased demand for products.

### Embracing opportunities

Meanwhile, the non-life insurance segment, broadly divided into general third-party liability insurance, motor insurance, property insurance, and marine, aviation and transit insurance, has also grown exponentially in recent years, thanks to an increased awareness of product and a growing middle class.

Sustainable growth in the sector is expected to be boosted by the country's growing construction and automobile industries, and introduction of micro-insurance, which will address the needs of the low-income population.

Charter Ping An Insurance Corporation, one of the leading non-life insurance providers in the Philippines, is driven by the core values of integrity, excellence, dependability, customer-service and team work.

Charter Ping An is wholly-owned by Metrobank, named the Best Bank in the Philippines for the third consecutive year in the Euromoney Awards for Excellence 2012 following a breakthrough performance last year. In 2011, Metrobank's consolidated



The Philippines is growing in status within the region and beyond.

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net income reached a record \$262.9 million, an increase of 31.9 percent on 2010, as the bank capitalized on market opportunities and efforts for organic growth began to show.

Charter Ping An is making powerful strides to meet the demands of globalization, while keeping its clients' investments as safe as possible.

Formerly the Philippine Charter Insurance Corp, which was established in 1960, Charter Ping An Insurance Corp was rebranded this year. "Ping An" is a Mandarin term that means safe and sound, which President Melecio Mallillin has emphasized as the brand promise of

Charter Ping An.

"It is not enough to merely gain the trust of clients, but to nurture that trust and ensure that their wealth is in good hands," he said in a recent press statement.

"Globalization is Charter Ping An's partner in growth. It has allowed us to continuously improve our range of future-ready products to cater to the changing socio-demographic and economic trends," he added.

With demographic shifts, medical advancements, urbanization, climate change and catastrophes, globalized capitalism and tax treatments affecting the insurance industry, Mallillin

stated that the insurance companies of today need to stay one step ahead of the pack and be ready to adapt to the ever-evolving demands of the market. The forward-thinking Charter Ping An has pledged that the new look organization will continue to provide security, stability and peace of mind to Filipinos while embracing the opportunities an open economy provides.

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CHARTER PING AN INSURANCE CORPORATION  
Skyland Plaza, Senator Gil Puyat Avenue corner Tindalo Street  
Makati City, Philippines | Telephone +632 580-6800 | Fax +632 815-4797

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