

CHINA

Space explorers

Teenagers from Hong Kong experience weightlessness inside a simulator during a youth aerospace educational activity at the Qian Xuesen youth academy of space sciences in Beijing on Tuesday. The event, organized by the Hong Kong Aerospace Society, involved 46 space enthusiasts learning about the country's space achievements.

LI MUZY / FOR CHINA DAILY



Seniors with disabilities to get monthly online vouchers

Subsidy program aims to support aging strategy, boost consumption

By ZOU SHUO
zoushuo@chinadaily.com.cn

China has launched a subsidy program for elderly citizens with moderate to severe disabilities, supporting its national aging strategy while aiming to improve elderly care services and boost consumption.

The program, announced by the Ministry of Civil Affairs and the Ministry of Finance on Wednesday,

will provide electronic vouchers through the civil affairs ministry's "Minzhengtong" digital platform to eligible seniors assessed as having moderate, severe or complete disabilities.

The subsidies will cover home and community-based elderly care services, including meal assistance, bathing support, rehabilitation nursing and day care, along with institutional care for both long-term stays exceeding 30 days and

short-term care under 30 days. Recipients will be able to offset service costs proportionally using monthly distributed vouchers.

The pilot program's implementation begins this month in selected regions, including Zhejiang and Shandong provinces, Chongqing, and the cities of Shenyang in Liaoning province, Chuzhou in Anhui province, Xinyu in Jiangxi province and Chengdu in Sichuan province. Nationwide expansion is scheduled for late 2025.

Funding will follow a tiered cost-sharing model, with the central government covering 85 percent of costs in eastern regions, 90 percent in central areas and 95 percent in western regions.

Eligible seniors can apply voluntarily through the "Minzhengtong" platform using available assessments.

Local authorities have been instructed to integrate existing systems with the platform, implement data security protocols and conduct regular monitoring. Oversight measures will include verifying assessment quality, preventing service fraud and blocking pricing manipulations, such as "pre-subsidy price hikes".

Civil affairs departments will bear primary implementation responsibilities, requiring dedicated staffing, training and quarterly progress reports. Finance departments will enforce full-process fund supervision.

China had an elderly popula-

tion of 310 million people aged 60 and above by the end of last year, accounting for 22 percent of the total population, according to government figures.

An official with the Ministry of Civil Affairs said seniors with moderate to severe disabilities will receive monthly vouchers via the "Minzhengtong" platform, with values tentatively set at 800 yuan, or about 112 dollars, for long- and short-term institutional care and day care, and 500 yuan for in-home services.

When purchasing services, these vouchers can offset 30 to 60 percent of the costs, with the initial offset rate set at 40 percent. For example, a 100 yuan in-home service would cost the senior 60 yuan after applying a 40 yuan voucher, the official said.

Elderly care consumption is a major sector in China's overall consumption and an important contributor to the economy. The voucher program is expected to attract more social investment in elderly care, boost sector development and cultivate new economic growth drivers, the official said.

China had 40,000 elderly care institutions and 364,000 community elderly care facilities by the end of March. Institutions and facilities that wish to participate in the program are required to register with the ministry and meet basic standards. Those found to be in violation of regulations will be removed from the program.



Medical workers conduct a health checkup for an elderly resident at a nursing home in Xi'an, Shaanxi province, on May 18.

WU KUANHONG / FOR CHINA DAILY

Nanotech makes bathing elderly safer and easier

By ZHENG ZHENG in Shanghai
zhengzheng@chinadaily.com.cn

A nanotechnology-based bathing solution that requires just one bottle of pure water and a single staff member to complete full-body cleaning is now available in Shanghai as part of new services for elderly bathing assistance.

"Our nanogenerator creates water particles as small as 500 nanometers, enabling deep penetration into skin pores for effective cleansing during the 15-minute bath," said Ding Qingfei, general manager of Nano Mist Care, which developed the new bathing system.

The service is introduced in Shanghai's first systematic and professional vocational training program for elderly bathing assistants, launched in the Minhang district's elderly care service capacity building base. The training incorporates traditional bathing assistance and technology-based solutions to ease the bathing process for seniors.

The program aligns with guidelines from the Shanghai Civil Affairs Bureau, which has integrated bathing assistance into community home-based care. From more than 100 applicants, 50 trainees were selected based on

caregiving credentials and nursing experience. The training program, which includes over 16 class hours, emphasizes customized home-based bathing services for bed-bound seniors and includes practical sessions whereby trainees experience the bathing process themselves before conducting supervised home visits.

"The temperature, ranging from 38 to 42 Celsius, stimulates perspiration, allowing nanodroplets to permeate and dislodge deposits," Ding said, adding that the portable folding bathing cabin can be set up on beds, reducing the risks associated with moving elderly clients and helping them maintain comfort and dignity.

"Traditional bathing often requires moving seniors from bed to tub and back, which poses significant risks," Ding said. "Our technology minimizes these risks while maintaining dignity and comfort."

Chen Hong, director of the Minhang district's elderly care service capacity building base, said growing demand for professional elderly care has raised expectations for service quality and standards. "By specializing in roles like bathing assistance, we can better match elderly needs while promoting pro-

fessional development in the elderly care industry," Chen said.

Instructor Liu Zenghui outlined key requirements for home bathing, including adequate air conditioning, water heating systems, and at least 6 square meters of space. Pre-service assessments evaluate factors such as elevator access and bathtub dimensions, while conditions including severe high blood pressure, skin infections, and limited joint mobility may preclude eligibility for home bathing services.

A unique aspect of the training involves role reversal, allowing caregivers to experience being assisted themselves. "Understanding the difference between giving and receiving assistance builds essential empathy," Chen said. "This helps caregivers appreciate seniors' vulnerability and potential discomfort, emphasizing both technical proficiency and emotional support."

Shen Yaqin, 39, a trainee from a local elderly care management service center, said the demand for such services will only increase in an aging society. "This isn't just a job — it's a responsibility to help seniors maintain dignity and cleanliness in their daily lives," she said.

Typhoons so far this year stronger, more frequent

By ZHAO YIMENG
zhaoyimeng@chinadaily.com.cn

This year's typhoon season in China began later than usual and has seen an increased frequency of storms making landfall, meteorological experts said on Wednesday.

Typhoon Francisco, the seventh typhoon of the year, formed in the northwest Pacific on Wednesday morning and is expected to reach the southern East China Sea by Thursday night, according to the National Meteorological Center.

With wind speeds reaching 23 to 25 meters per second, Francisco is expected to approach coastal areas from southern Zhejiang province to northern Fujian province, bringing strong winds and heavy rainfall.

From Saturday to Sunday, heavy rain is forecast for parts of eastern and southern Zhejiang, Fujian, Jiangxi provinces, and Taiwan, with cumulative rainfall expected to range from 20 to 60 millimeters, and some areas potentially seeing 80 to 150 mm.

Between March 15 and July 22, seven typhoons formed in the northwest Pacific and South China Sea, said Jia Xiaolong, deputy head of the National Climate Center. "Three of them made landfall in China, 1.3 more than the typical yearly average," Jia said.

The first typhoon of the season, Typhoon Wutip, formed unusually late on June 11, about two months later than the typical March 25 formation date, while still making an early landfall. Typhoon Danas, the fourth of the season, struck Taiwan and Zhejiang from July 7 to 8, bringing strong winds and intense rainfall across a wide area.

Typhoon Wipha made landfall in Guangdong province on July 21, significantly affecting South China and coastal regions of Zhejiang and Fujian with heavy rain and gusty winds.

Huang Zhuo, deputy head of the National Meteorological Center, said this year has been consistent with historical averages, but the storms have been stronger than usual.

The average strength of the three

typhoons that made landfall reached 34.3 meters per second, compared with the typical 30.2 meters per second in June and July, Huang said.

Danas and Wipha delivered some of the strongest impacts. Danas brought rainfall as high as 740.8 mm in Jiexi county, Guangdong province, and led to mass evacuations and suspension of transportation in Zhejiang. Wipha resulted in nearly 650 mm of rain in Xuwen county, Guangdong.

Jia said August is expected to be quieter, with four to five typhoons likely to form, a slight decrease from the average of 5.6, with two to three typhoons expected to make landfall or impact China's coastal regions. "One storm is expected to affect northern regions, including the Yangtze River," he said.

Meanwhile, Jia noted that China has experienced record-breaking temperatures since the start of the flood season, with heat waves arriving earlier and lasting longer than usual. On July 2, the National Disease Control and Prevention Administration and the China Meteorological Administration issued the country's first national heat-health risk warning.

Xu Dongqun, an expert from the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention, said these alerts play a vital role in helping the country adapt to health impacts caused by climate change.

"The system integrates meteorological warnings with public health interventions, providing the public with high-quality and diversified health services, such as personalized alerts and health protection guidance," Xu said.

She added that the first alert sparked widespread public engagement. According to statistics, the China Central Television news app saw over one million views within an hour of the release of the alert, and the topic trended on social media platform Sina Weibo's hot topics list.

"The alerts boost awareness and knowledge about the health impacts of extreme heat among the public and methods to protect themselves," Xu said.

Domestically built UAV successfully tracks Wipha

China's independently developed Wing Loong unmanned aerial vehicle has successfully conducted typhoon warning reconnaissance for the first time in the country, according to its developer.

The large fixed-wing drone executed a series of tasks, including pre-typhoon warning reconnaissance and post-typhoon disaster assessment, as Typhoon Wipha swept across southern China this week, the Aviation Industry Corporation of China, the country's leading planemaker, said on Wednesday.

As the typhoon approached the coast of western Guangdong, the aircraft skillfully navigated through extreme conditions, including strong winds and torrential rain, to provide critical early warning information and pinpoint disaster locations ahead of the storm's landfall.

The UAV's onboard synthetic aperture radar penetrated thick cloud and rain barriers to conduct real time surveillance of key areas. The acquired reconnaissance data and imagery were transmitted immediately to the provincial emergency command center, providing

vital information for assessing disaster risks, deploying defensive measures, and formulating flood control strategies, said AVIC.

Following the typhoon's path, the drone operated under extremely low visibility but successfully identified critical situations, including flooded roads and farmlands, as well as rising river levels. This information facilitated the deployment of rescue teams, the clearing of vital access routes, and the assessment of potential disaster areas.

Additionally, equipped with an airborne base station, the drone delivered stable, wide-area public communication network coverage to affected regions.

It successfully delivered over 6,000 text messages, establishing a crucial "aerial lifeline" connecting the disaster zone with the outside world, according to AVIC.

Prior to the recent typhoon mission, Wing Loong had already successfully carried out multiple disaster-relief missions under extreme conditions, such as earthquakes and rainstorm disasters.

XINHUA

Racing across water



Participants compete in a single bamboo drifting race on Wuyang River in Zhenyuan county, Guizhou province, on Wednesday. The event included 10 teams from several provinces. YANG WENBIN / XINHUA