


How we create the  
“Sophia  
Experience”



How we create the “Sophia Experience”



A cityscape at sunset. In the foreground, there's a large, dark evergreen tree. Behind it, a tall, modern building with many windows is visible. The sky is a mix of light blue and orange, with a few birds flying. The overall mood is calm and reflective.

When living with an illness,  
there is a lot of uncertainty and difficulty.

Yet, having small hopes,  
such as wanting to be able to do something  
or wanting to live a certain lifestyle,  
will become the reason for living.

If we can help make these hopes come true,  
it may lead to a life that is unique to that person.

To support something that someone lives for is  
perhaps as important as looking after the life of the person.

(Nurse, Station Mizonokuchi)





Home-visit nursing is there to support clients and their families.

I myself am supported by clients and  
other staff members through the work of home-visit nursing.

I believe that supporting someone else's life  
is also a way to look after my own life.

(Medical clerk, Station Roka Koen)





What does it mean to care for life?

When I think of it, I think the phrase

“finding a role” sounds appropriate.

It means that through home-visit nursing,

we can help someone find a reason to live,

find a place to be, and find autonomy in their lives.

(Physical therapist, Station Gakudai)



# Mission

## Our Mission

To devote  
our wisdom to  
caring for lives







# Vision

## Our Vision

To develop safe, warm home care environments throughout Japan and create a world where all patients can live happy and comfortable lives



# Valued Actions

## Our Valued Actions

### Accept All

Provide the happiness of living at home no matter how severe the patient's disease, and accept all such patients

### No anxiety

Pay attention to the worries and concerns of the patient and provide considerate support

### No unnecessary hospitalization

Prepare a home-care environment to emphasize life rather than the disease until the last moment





# 5 Values

## Our Values

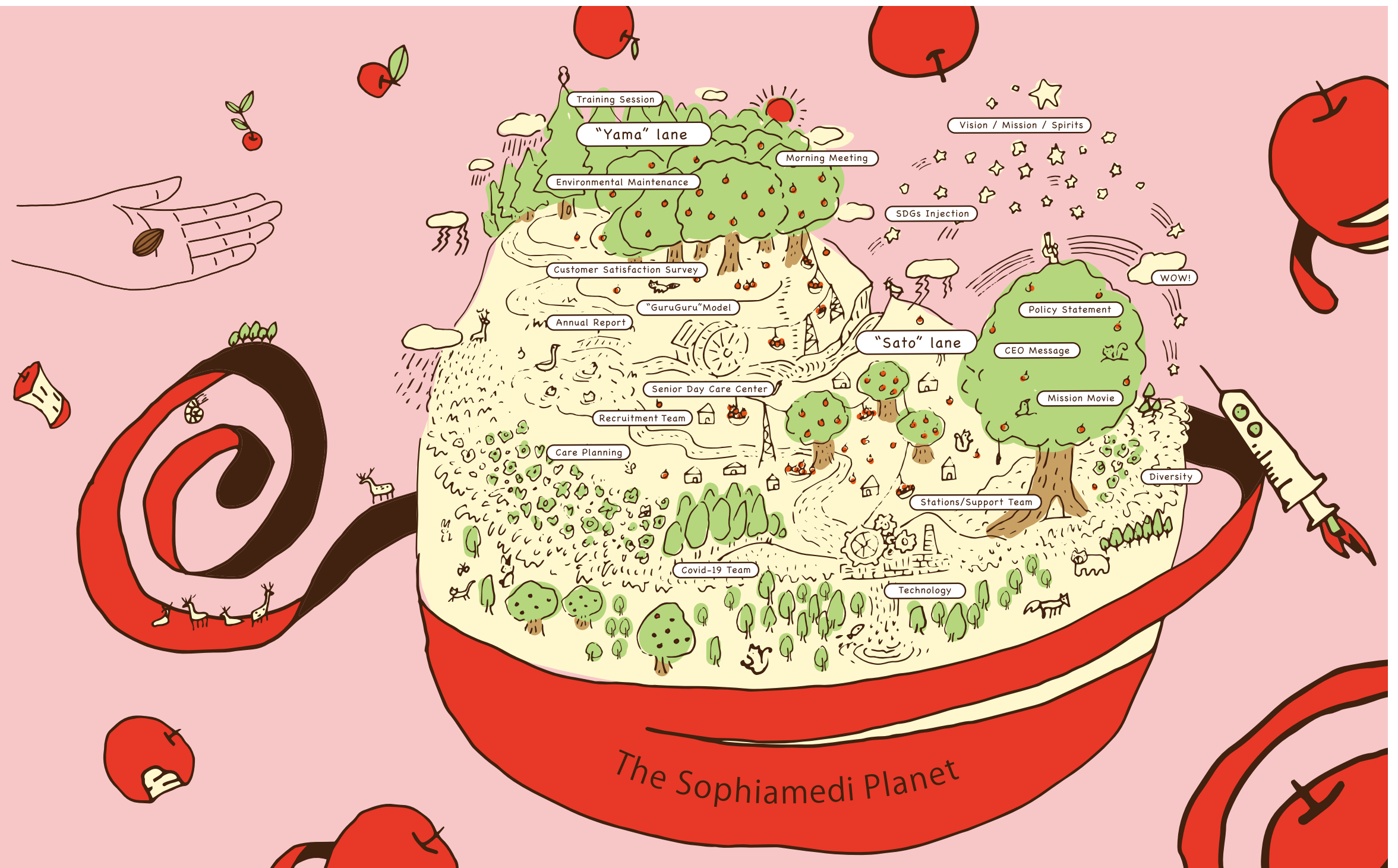
- 1 Commit to the customer-first principle and see things from their point of view
- 2 Be proud to be a professional and pursue every possibility
- 3 Have a sensitive and human approach
- 4 Continue to learn and let it be a driving force for change
- 5 Respect and support each other with a friendly spirit





# Care for life

A single seed germinates with water, light, and oxygen, and eventually becomes lush fruit. The fruit ripens over time, releasing a rich aroma, and finally leaves behind a few seeds. What resides in them is an important message, something that each one has lived through. The seed will eventually germinate somewhere else and become a fruit. Life continues to flow in this cycle, and the baton of seeds has been entrusted and passed on up to today. To care for life we need the humanity to sincerely face life and the professionalism to never give up, no matter how serious the illness is. With all our wisdom we at Sophia function as a team that supports each of our clients by providing the home-visit nursing they desire. We call users "clients," not patients. We cherish individual lives rather than their illnesses up to the end. We have been providing services from our 67 stations since establishment in 2002. And now, looking to the future, we are starting our next action to provide safe and caring home-visit nursing everywhere in Japan. As the number of hospital beds has decreased and the number of end-of-life patients that cannot find care is said to be increasing, a new medical infrastructure is needed to allow people to live as human beings. However, there is still a lack of social awareness toward home care services and the wonderful work that such services can do. We keep on challenging and evolving in order to reduce the dilemma between lifestyle and work style, and to achieve both the fulfillment of life for each client and the fulfillment of work for each staff member. We are creating a standard model for the home-visit nursing of the future. The brilliance of the lives of our clients. The brilliance of individuals who work here. By combining the two elements, we will work together to build a company like the Milky Way that will illuminate the future of this era so as many people as possible can have a truly fulfilled life.



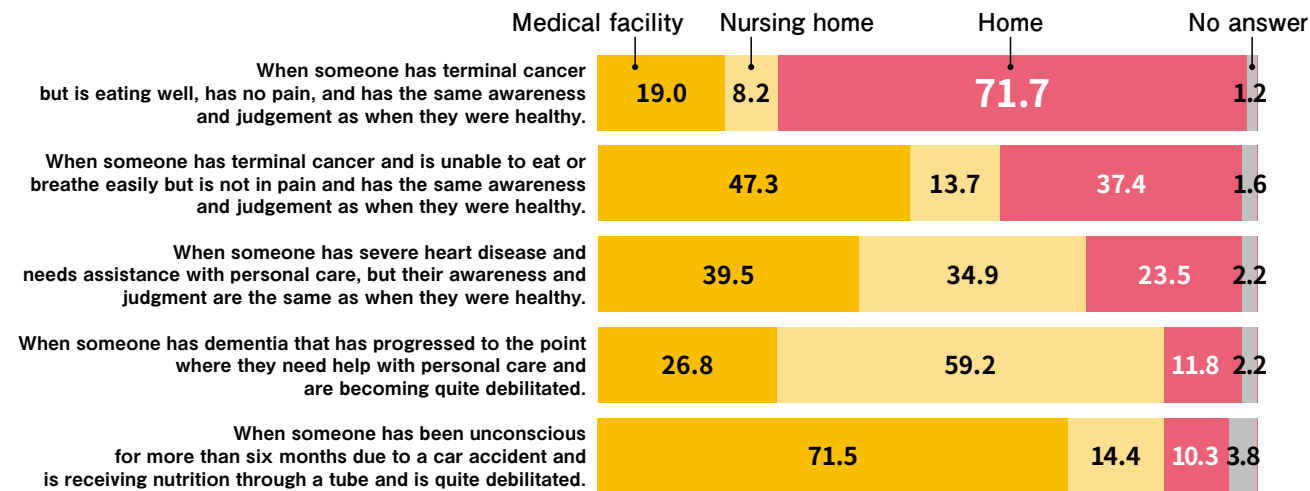
illustration/ Nagahama Takahiro



# Social issues that we face in Japan

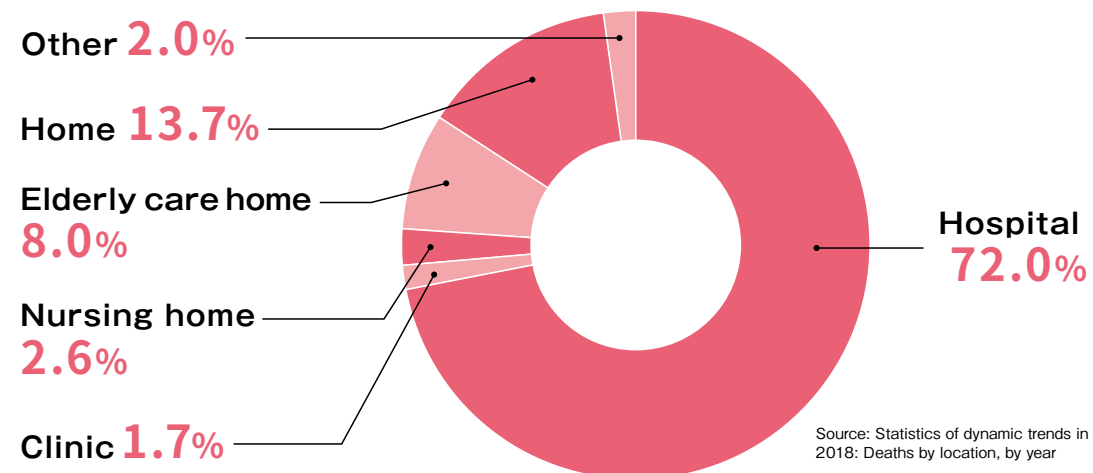
As the population ages and lifestyles change  
home-visit nursing needs to evolve to deal with these new challenges

## Place to spend the last phase of one's life



Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare - The 2014 Advisory Committee on Awareness Survey on End-of-Life Care

## Location where a patient has died

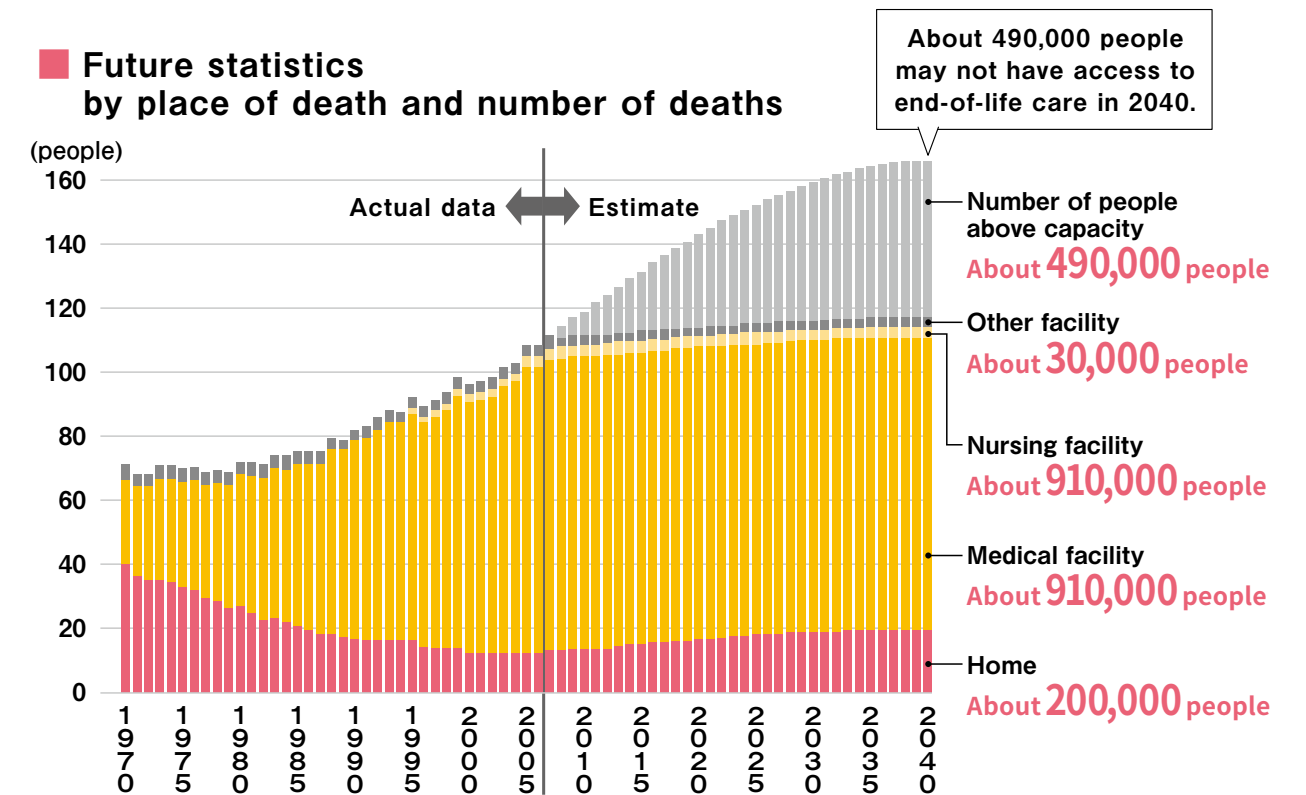


Source: Statistics of dynamic trends in population 2018: Deaths by location, by year

## Medicine and nursing to realize a life that one desires

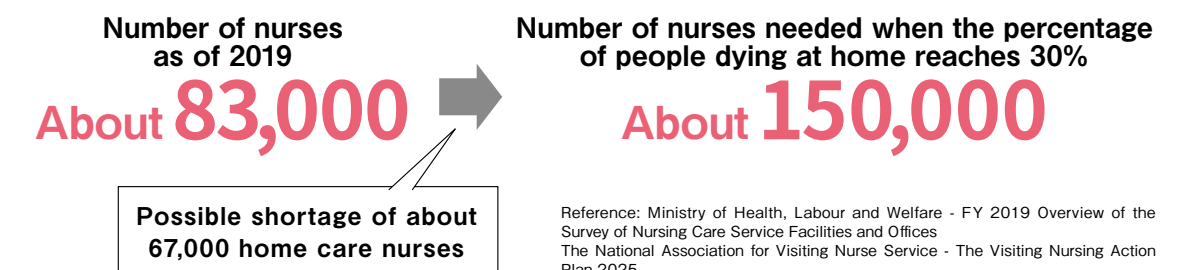
Many people wish to spend the final phase of their lives in a familiar place, such as their home or a nursing home while living a life that is close to a normal lifestyle. However, 72% of people die in hospitals. As a result, it is essential to secure home health care and develop caregivers and care services to support people's lives in order to realize the life that individuals desire. In addition, in order to live a safe and secure life in an environment different from that of a hospital, nighttime and emergency services as well as a 365 days a year care availability system are also required.

## Future statistics by place of death and number of deaths



Source: Central Social Insurance Medical Council - The 2011 Fundamental Reference Concerning Medical Service in Japan  
\* The data up to 2007 is estimated based on the Statistics of Dynamic Trends in Population, and Population Projection after 2008.

## Number of nurses in home-visit nursing services



## There are not sufficient home care nurses to respond to the demand

In Japan's super-aging society, it has been suggested that 490,000 people may not be able to receive end-of-life care by 2040 as the number of deaths increase. There is growing demand for home care nurses to fulfil this role in the home-visit nursing service, and the demand for home-visit nursing, a key component of this issue, has been increasing. Nonetheless, the number of nurses engaged in home-visit nursing is only about 83,000 as of 2019. If the percentage of deaths at home is to rise to about 30%, about 150,000 home care nurses would be needed, indicating an urgent need to secure more home care nurses.



# Company overview February 2020

To make a home care nursing medical infrastructure available throughout Japan

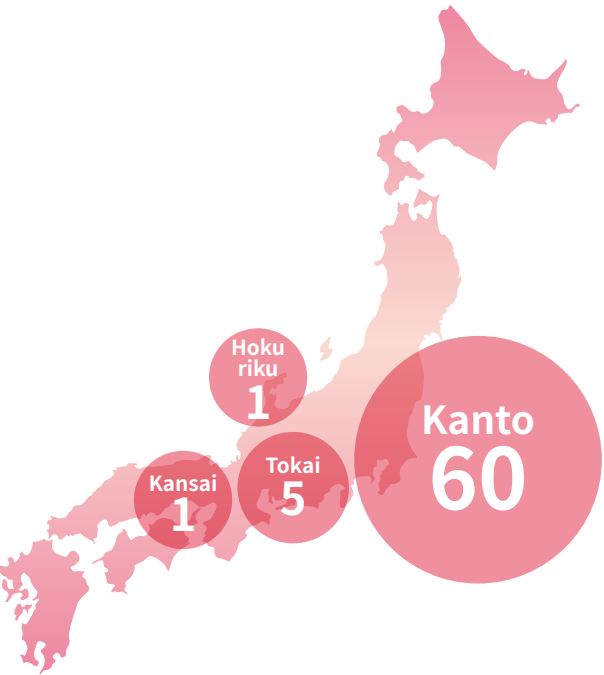
Bring high quality medical experience and expertise to the home.  
Use our extensive know-how to create a good environment for all people who work in the sector.  
Continue to be a pioneer in home-visit nursing.  
We have been founded on the challenge to develop hospital medicine into a home service.

## History

- 2002** Established Sophiamed
- 2003** Opened Sophia Home Nursing Station Koyama
- 2006** Entrusted with preventive care service by Meguro-ku
- 2008** Started day services focusing on rehabilitation ahead of the rest of the industry
- 2011** Started a clinic that provides care plans and home Care Support Services
- 2012** Celebrated the tenth anniversary with 250 staff members and 22 facilities and stations  
Became one of the largest home care providers in the Jonan area
- 2014** Opened a 365 days a year, 24-hour nurse station
- 2018** Acquired Eruboshi certification from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare as an excellent company that supported the careers of women  
Changed management system and started nationwide service  
Established a new human resources system, Sophia WOW! (Work for Our Wonderful life!) as a way to reform work styles
- 2019** Started a 365 days a year, 24-hour service to cover the enter areas of Suginami-ku and Nakano-ku  
Released a completely revised Management Philosophy and Management Policy  
Received a silver rating in the PRIDE Index 2019 for diversity promotion Received the Work Story Award 2019 in the diversity category
- 2020** Released the Guruguru Model, a model to create value  
Received the Work Style Variation Award in the Good Action Awards  
Received an award in the Employee Engagement & Wellbeing category at the Global Good Awards 2020 in England  
Received the Innovation of the Year - Community Care Model category in the 8th Asia Pacific Eldercare Innovation Awards 2020 in Singapore
- 2021** Received the Kaika Award at the Kaika Awards 2020  
Issued the first annual report

## Nature of business

1. Operation of designated home care nursing stations
2. Operation of day services focusing on rehabilitation
3. Operation of home-visit nursing support facilities

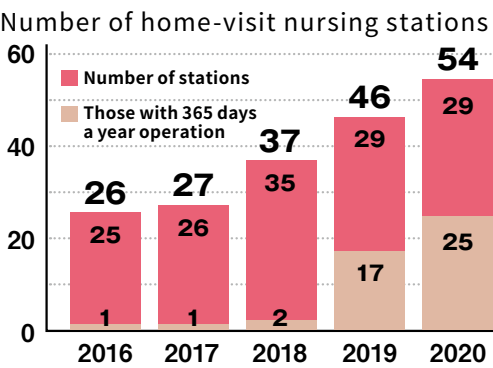


## Number of staff

1,029

## Number of facilities

67 locations



# Highlight for the first half of FY 2020

A report of actual figures for the period from April 2020 to September 2020

## Number of clients

9,648

※ Total number from April 2020 to September 2020

## Number of visits made

283,715 visits

## Number of collaborating facilities

1,491

## Number of collaborating medical facilities

2,058

## Number of facilities opened

7

## Number of new employees

215

## Number of certified awards

2 (International)



## Number of orders received

4,173 orders

## Number of Angel Care services provided

254 times

## Turnover rate

8.9%

※ Based on one year period from October 2019 to September 2020

## Average amount of overtime work per month

11.1 hours

## Number of two-hour paid leaves used

1,927 times

## Hours of philosophy education training provided

1,046 hours

This page describes some of the achievements for the period from April 2020 to September 2020. In addition to the number of clients, which is an important indicator, we have listed the number of visits, the number of orders received, the number of Angel Care services provided, and other figures that are accumulated through daily activities. In the first half of fiscal 2020, while 215 new employees were hired, the turnover rate and average number of overtime hours remained relatively low. Also, the number of employees who took two hours of paid leave, a measure to support work-life balance, remained high at 1,927.



## Message from the CEO

Allow me to talk about the path and the future of Sophia.

# Creating a future in Japan and the world where everyone can live their own lives through the experience and practice of change

CEO

Ryotaro Yamamoto

### Create intrinsic value through the home care service in an era of great change

We are living in a time of transition toward global population growth and aging. The United Nations reported that one in eleven people in the world would become 65 or older by 2019, and that number is expected to increase to one in six by 2050. Also, in 2018, the number of over 65s globally exceeded the global number of children under five years old. Japan, in particular, is the first country in the world to become an aging society. How do we, as people living in Japan who make a living out of home care, face this society, and what can we do? These are the questions I always ask myself, and they are the foundation of Sophia's value creation.

A death-ridden society is fast approaching. Many people still tend to give up on living unique lifestyles when they become old or sick. This is due in part to the fact that home care and home-visit nursing are not widely accepted, and many people are unaware of the option of living a truly fulfilling life at home until the end of their lives. We are now living in a society that is full of choices. If this is the case, then I would like to think about a good end of life in terms of how to live and how to pass away. I am committed to facing this sincerely. We need to resolve the anxiety or the dilemma of how to live that people have.

On the other hand, we also face a great challenge. This is because,

although home-visit nursing is a job with an important meaning that expands the choices of how we live, there is still a shortage of human resources, and there is no end to the number of colleagues in the industry who are overworked, exhausted, and leave or close their businesses. We must also urgently face this work style dilemma.

### Take actions daily without losing sight of the original mission. Create an impact that changes the society

I have been contending with these themes since I took over at Sophia three years ago. Therefore, in my first year, I launched the Polaris Project with our employees so that we could always go back to the basics and verbalize our vision, mission, and five values (action guidelines). It is like Polaris, which shines brilliantly and shows us the way to go, even when we are lost in the dark, so that we do not lose our bearings. In my second year, we formulated the Guruguru Model to visualize the business structure of the company, incorporating every detail of our original mission to care for life. And this year, my third year, we are challenging ourselves to make transparent the results of what we have practiced in accordance with the Guruguru Model, or even what we have not been able to do. This is to help enhance and improve the quality of home-visit nursing, contribute to raising the standards

of the industry, and return value to our clients. The first step in this process is the publication of this report.

The concept of the Sophia Experience, a structured approach to the value of the home-visit nursing experience to address the dilemma of how to live, is still in its initial stage. Under this concept, we hope to show the public and other medical professionals the virtue of home care in an easy-to-understand manner and build an infrastructure for an aging society. Each of our actions may still be tiny reforms. However, I believe that if each and every one of us practices this concept and communicates it in our daily work, it will have an impact on many clients, their families, and the community, and will surely lead to the betterment of society as a whole. Home care will fundamentally change the family landscape of Japan. Let us work together to create such a future.

**Profile:** 2005 Graduated from Faculty of Economics, Keio University. Worked for the Marketing Headquarters of P&G, United States, mainly engaged in developing marketing strategies for clothing detergents. Employed by Recruit Holdings, working in HR sales, as secretary to the President, manager of the Corporate Planning section, overseas M&A, and board member of a European investment company. Moved to the SoftBank Group. Engaged in management strategy and business development for the entire SoftBank Group as a Strategic Planning Manager in the President's office under Masayoshi Son.  
2016 Joined M3ds (now CUC) with the aim of reforming the medical structure. Headed the Corporate Division, currently Executive Officer.  
2018 Became the CEO of Sophiamed upon the transfer of shares. EME, Harvard Medical School.



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Work style data

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How to interpret data

The period covered by the data is April 1, 2020 to September 30, 2020.  
For items related to the CS survey and topics; surveys were conducted during 2020 and are not limited to the above period. Part 3 contains some descriptions concerning the future outlook.

Part 1

The Sophia Experience  
and the First Half of  
the FY 2020 Medical Report



# Sophia

The experience of fulfilling  
the life of the client through caring for life  
We continue to create the Sophia Experience

We want to create a world where the value of the experience is easily visible, and services are delivered to those who need them

The system of home-visit nursing was established in Japan in 2000, meaning its history is short. Consequently, not many people in general are familiar with the service. "I know what helpers do, but it's hard for me to imagine what nurses and therapists do when they come to my house," or "I can't imagine how medical care is delivered in my house." As expressed in these comments, clients are still having difficulty recognizing how home-visit nursing is delivered and the value it contains. Under such circumstances, Sophia, with its 18-year history, takes pride in being a leading company in the industry and aims to develop the industry as a whole by thoroughly presenting the virtues of home-visit nursing and its experiences. Although it is the same medical care, it is no exaggeration to say that the client's experience and perception of the value of medical care differs greatly

between hospitals and home care. First of all, at the hospital, you can feel the easily recognizable effects of your illness or injury improving or being cured, such as "I'm glad the surgery went well" or "I'm glad the medication worked." This is where users find the greatest value in hospital care. On the other hand, the main users of home-visit nursing are the elderly and people with disabilities who are experiencing difficulties in their daily lives. Rather than the conditions getting better, many of these users may find that it is slowly getting worse. In such situations, the value of the home-visit nursing experience is that it allows users to lead their daily lives while consulting with medical professionals who have specialized skills and knowledge about the illness, aging, or disability they are currently dealing with. One of the main features of home-visit nursing is that through this opportunity, users can live at home with peace of mind. In other words, the home-visit nursing experience is something that is very close to our daily lives. The individuality

and diversity of each person's life is difficult to conceptualize and difficult for a third party to see. So, we added our value to this experience and named it the Sophia Experience and worked on structuring it. It is to thoroughly present the true value of home-visit nursing and help many people understand it. We hope to create a warm future for Japan, where necessary services are delivered to those who need them as a result of our efforts.

### High quality services delivered by high quality human resources

We have a Management Policy Statement at Sophia. We discussed what was important in home-visit nursing, exchanged opinions, and carefully verbalized them one by one in the statement. It is not a textbook-like writing; it reflects the real voices of our staff members who have actually worked with tens of thousands of clients. We continue to read it out loud in our daily morning meetings, while sharing our thoughts from time to time, and preparing our minds before starting the day's work.

In particular, the foundation of the services that each of us provides is called the Five Values, our action guidelines that include the concepts of customer first, professionalism, a spirit of learning, and a curious, good-natured spirit. There is a saying, "Have a sensitive and human approach." In this business of caring for people as human beings, we are required to become excellent human resources ourselves. Sophia provides a lot of training and opportunities to support this, which is systematically backed up. We aim to continue to deliver high quality services from high quality human resources as a result. This is the essence of the Sophia Experience, and by spreading our service, more people will gain access to it, which will also raise the quality of the industry as a whole.

### We provide our clients with the immense satisfaction of making their own decisions and choices

Another important feature that we must not forget is that Sophia's home-visit nursing service does its best to support

clients in making their own decisions and choices. We place great importance on each person being able to make their own decisions and choices, rather than simply accepting treatments from doctors and professionals without knowing what is right. There are many people who feel that their health is in such a bad state that they are not entitled to live the way they want. In order to make choices and decisions, we need to have confidence in ourselves, but it is said that as illness and old age progress, we lose confidence and the ability to make decisions. There are also those who are anxious about living with an illness and cannot decide or do not know what to do. Our expertise is to help such clients to understand situations and make their own choices. We present and explain technical medical topics in an easy-to-understand manner so that our clients can understand them properly. We help them to increase their choices. If our clients become able to choose which service they will receive and their "way of life," this will help them regain their important rights as a human being.

We sometimes hear about cases in which medical professionals and family members make decisions for a patient who is kept in the dark. The pain of being placed in a certain situation not of one's own choosing is immeasurable. We let our customers decide for themselves by encouraging them to make decisions themselves. If they are having difficulty making decisions, we support them. Think, select, and decide for oneself. When repeating this process, clients start to actively participate in their own recuperation environment by coming up with questions to ask. This will lead to more agreeable and satisfactory results. As a human being, it is very important to be able to think and decide for ourselves while living with anxiety and inconvenience. That is why we keep making this clear. The Sophia Experience is the service that we provide. It is the experience in which the life of our client becomes fulfilled. It is the experience in which fulfillment and pleasure come back to us as a rewarding experience.

# Experience



# Sophia

The Sophia Experience

that is produced through our care for life

Four of our clients talked about our services

When I talk to you,  
the confusion in my mind disappears

Chieko Wakita (Station Meito)



I have lost a lot of weight because I lost my appetite because of the tuberculosis medicine.  
I have been in and out of hospital. I am not feeling well and cannot walk even when I want to.  
I cannot even go to the bathroom by myself. I worked hard in rehabilitation to be able to do things on my own.  
At first, I was not feeling well, but when the nurses started coming,  
I became more cheerful and my condition improved. When I talk to you, confusion in my mind disappears.  
Now I enjoy talking with you like you are my own sibling.  
Let me live a little longer. I want to reach age 100 while enjoying my leisurely life.

A relationship where we can joke around  
is a precious medicine of mine

Kiyoshi Kato (Station Meito)



I spent three years with my wife who contracted an incurable disease.  
When she was hospitalized, I could not visit her in person because of COVID-19 safety measures.  
All I was able to do was to look at her through a glass window.  
When I realized how much time was left for her, I made one decision; I let nature take its course.  
Still, I struggled many times in the desperate hope that she would live longer.  
She became unable to communicate and even recognize people around her.  
Anxiety overwhelmed me, and I asked for advice many times. Through all these experiences,  
I realized that a relationship where I could joke around was a precious medicine for me.

# Experience



# Sophia

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## Keep enjoying this together

Kazumi Jigami (Station Kyodo)



I have been receiving care from Sophia for more than a decade.  
Right after I was discharged from the hospital, I couldn't even walk on my own,  
but I continued rehabilitation while joking with the therapist, and I became able to walk freely in the house.  
Because of my cognitive dysfunction from the accident,  
I am unable to retain memory and have to ask for the next day's schedule over and over again.  
So, the therapist has prepared brain training printouts for me.  
When the weather is fine, we go outside and practice walking for about 30 minutes while chatting.  
This is quite refreshing.  
I am going to continue rehabilitation while having fun with my therapist.

## Someone who runs with me in the same direction

Eri Oizumi (Station Tsutsujigaoka)



With her daughter Sakiho  
on the way to school

As a mother, I made a decision to keep my daughter alive on a ventilator when she was eight months old.  
I want her to live her life on her own terms and learn the beauty and wonder of this world.  
This is my wish that I am living with day by day.  
Since she requires a lot of medical care,  
the help of nurses with the daily care routine is essential for us to live a normal life.  
I cannot keep doing this alone.  
They give me spare time to take on new challenges.  
“To guide” is not necessarily what I want.  
I am appreciative that someone is there to move forward with us.

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# Experience



# What makes us happy is when we are The Sophia is the choice of living a lifestyle

A station manager and a station support group  
that they encounter at the



Manager of Station Meito  
and Sophia Experience Promotion Group  
Nurse

## Shota Obata

Obata worked in a tertiary emergency department at an highly acute phase hospital in Nagoya for five years. After working as a manager at another home care company, he was appointed the manager of the Sophia Home Nursing Station Chikusa. He is currently the manager of Station Meito and is engaged in operational support for the entire Nagoya area.

## Present choices so that clients can live out their lives in their own unique ways

In our line of work, we often receive the word, "Thank you." However, when it comes to end-of-life care, for example, no matter how much the family thanks us, we all look back and wonder if what we said or did was right. But we cannot just remain there contemplating. While we remain appreciative for the client, we switch our mindset to focus on caring for the life of the next client. Mutual "thank you" is, I think, important in our line of work. When I thought about what the Sophia Experience meant, I remembered a case. A woman in her 40s in the terminal stage of cancer. "I've had kidney failure since I was young and have tried dialysis and other treatments, but they didn't work. I no longer felt like fighting it anymore and made the decision not to receive treatment, but when I went to the hospital, there was no such option. Why can't the doctors and nurses at the hospital accept what I am accepting?" As a manager, I found that she was very self-reflective while I was listening to her in the beginning. I felt that she had matured spiritually, so I knew that this decision was not impulsive, but genuine. So I told her, "We will accept you. We are going to present all the possible options to you. We will then support whatever decision you make. So please make your own decisions. We are there to support you." She then started crying in front of me saying, "I've been looking for someone who would understand me." I told her that it was totally okay to change your decision along the way. She remained under the care of the staff and her family, and spent a very peaceful time until the end. We present choices so that clients can select options to live their lives in their own unique ways. We always take actions thoughtfully for them. I believe this is the most important foundation of the Sophia Experience.

# able to bring out uniqueness in our clients Experience with individual uniqueness

leader talked about the Sophia Experience  
actual scenes of care giving

## The fun of accepting it straight. Smiles of clients are the encouragement and fulfillment

One of the things that makes me happy is when I am able to fulfill the wishes of my client. For example, there is a client who wants to go out when she is discharged from the hospital. Yet, in some cases, her condition makes it difficult for her to walk or go outside. When we come up with ideas and the client is able to go outside, the client and the family become very happy, which makes me happy as well. Although I cannot go outside with the client, it is fun to create plans for the outing thinking how to reduce any difficulties. Why should nurses and therapists go that far to support a client? Many people may wonder. Yet, it's surprisingly the little things that make life worth living for our clients and motivate them to keep going again. I think these little things will lead to the hope of life.

When I transferred from a hospital to home-visit nursing, I said I would quit in one week. It was when I didn't understand home-visit nursing. I had to visit a client alone and administer IVs by myself. There were times when I felt extra anxious, wondering what I would do if things didn't go well, and I couldn't ask for help from anyone. Yet, as I continued working, my boss encouraged me to stay a little longer, and I gradually started to enjoy working after one or two months. People talk more straightforwardly when they are at home than at hospitals. There are times when people say, "thank you." But there are also times when people act selfishly or say whatever they want to say and that makes me depressed. Nevertheless, the human touch comes straight to the point, and even though I face a lot of challenges, I find it fun to be able to see and spend time with one person. After all, I suppose I like people :) A decade has passed since then. The smiles of our clients and communicating with them still motivates me. I think our important value is to understand and care for our clients thoroughly, rather than just treating their illnesses.



Leader of Station Support Group  
Nurse

## Shinobu Murayama

After working at a general hospital (internal medicine, ICU, outpatient), she worked at a cardiovascular and neurosurgical hospital and a palliative care facility in Tokyo. After that she worked at another company's home-visit nursing service and then served as the manager of the Sophia Home Nursing Station Gakudai and Kyodo. She is currently supporting the operation of the stations.



# Ideas behind the Sophia Experience

Visualization of elements that produce the Sophia Experience = Experiences that make people feel that they are being able to live their lives with dignity

## The Sophia Experience



The degree of nursing care and rehabilitation provided



+

Five Values practice rate



+



The feeling that care for life is provided to help clients live a life that is unique to them

We all want to live a more fulfilling life at home despite old age, disability, illness, or disease. We want to live a life that is our own until the end of our lives. Both the clients, and their family members are happy and can see that their most basic and important wishes as a person have been realized by using Sophia's services. The value of the home care experience, or the Sophia Experience, is created through medical technology suitable for home-visit nursing and warm, high-quality services rooted in the Five Values.

Medical technologies suitable for home-visit nursing

Home-visit nursing requires skills unique to home health care. For example, in the diverse environment of the client's home, we manage medical equipment, treat bedsores, perform rehabilitation, and provide end-of-life care by taking into account the family's circumstances and background. Another important point is to support clients by forming a team with relevant personnel in the local community. We also use our specialized knowledge and skills to provide sincere solutions to everyday problems that at first glance may seem unrelated to medical care. Such meticulous care is the foundation of the Sophia Experience.

Customer satisfaction with our service

"I'm glad you came", "I felt relieved when you spoke to me at that time", "I was really happy that you took good care of my family as well". These are some comments that we have received from our clients. Comments like these reflect the quality of the members of Sophia and the service they provide. They do their best and use various ideas to make sure our clients are satisfied rather than simply providing care that is minimally required. We add humane and warm values to standard medical care. We care for people and stay beside them. This practice produces services that increase customer satisfaction.

Degree of choice in life that clients have

One thing we cherish is that clients can make their own decisions and choices. To do so, it is important to explain technical matters in a way that they can easily understand and provide support until the clients gain a clear understanding. In many cases clients hold their true feelings back from family members or change their minds while spending a long time receiving treatment. While being considerate toward such feelings of our clients, we continue to support them until they can make a choice that truly satisfies them. This practice will greatly increase customer satisfaction and enrich their lives.



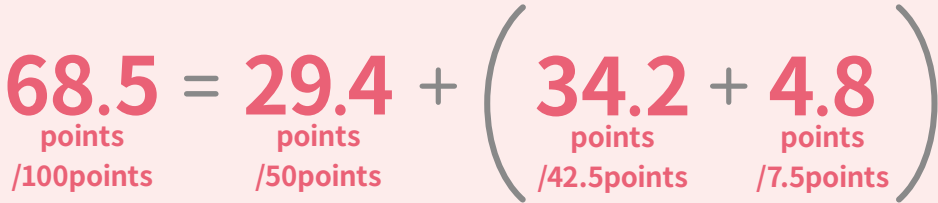
# Sophia Experience scores in 2020

In order to pursue higher quality services, we challenged ourselves to express current levels in numbers



Introduction of examples

## Station Motosumiyoshi



Number of staff	19
Number of clients	267
Operation system	24 hours Provides mental and pediatrics care

\* 24/7 service starts in March 2021.

### An example of Station Motosumiyoshi in Kawasaki City

In Station Motosumiyoshi, the Sophia Experience score was 68.5. As with other stations, we had some new staff members, and the nursing rehabilitation implementation score was close to the company-wide average, while the score on the job satisfaction survey was higher. The station developed its own initiatives, and members developed a sense of leadership within the station. The station itself also has a warm atmosphere. This environment has helped the staff members understand the Five Values, which has resulted in a good evaluation of the overall Five Values implementation level.





# The Sophia Experience and the future of home care

Masashi Nakagawa, a researcher at The Sophia Institute for Home Care Research, comments on the future beyond the Sophia Experience



Sophia Institute for Home Care Research  
Researcher

## Masashi Nakagawa

Graduate of Fujita Health University and the graduate program at Nihon Fukushi University. After working at a medical corporation, Nakagawa launched Community Management in 2017 and was involved in establishing the medical and welfare-related policies of Nara Prefecture. The company merged with Sophiamedi Corp. in 2020, and Nakagawa became engaged in the quality control of the company.

Create a better environment for both parties by making sure clients understand the value of using our services

My impression is that there are still a lot of clients who use home care services because they were introduced to it at the hospital. They don't know what it is, but they give it a try. Communication tends to start with "So what can you do for me? Not knowing how to communicate, we often end up saying, "Please call me when you have a problem." However, if the value of home care is not properly understood and is used in the wrong way, the visiting nurse and therapist become just someone who delivers medicine, comes to the house to give IVs, or does rehabilitation, and the value is reduced by half. I think this is a huge loss for our clients and for us.

This is why we first need to verbalize what home-visit nursing and home care mean and present it widely to society. The largest goal of the Sophia Experience is to help more people understand the true value of using this service. If the true value of home care becomes widely known, people all over Japan will be able to consider and decide for themselves to use home-visit nursing to live a better and more comfortable life until the end of their lives. Choices like this will lead to more fulfilled and satisfied living. We can also say with pride, "Please choose your own way of life. Supporting your choice is our job in home-visit nursing." We hope to create such a future.

## The Sophia Institute for Home Care Research

A think tank that shares information with the industry at large

The labor shortage is a serious problem in the field of home care service. Therefore, Sophia has decided to launch a think tank, The Sophia Institute for Home Care Research, to provide a wide range of information to those who are already engaged in home-visit nursing and medical professionals who want to learn more about home care. By analyzing the characteristics of the home-visit nursing industry,

researching and comparing various events, and so on, we share knowledge, examples, know-how, and skills that provide hints on how to create an environment where each individual can work comfortably and how organizations can achieve healthier operations. Our goal is to provide value that will highlight the various aspects of the home care service and this industry that are often difficult to see.



We would like to think about the future of home care together with people outside the company as well. Please stay tuned for more information.

## Messages from people outside of Sophia

Comments from experts in the medical and non-medical industries on the Sophia Experience

There is no correct answer.  
Yet, it's the thoughts and suggestions that count

In order to maximize the value provided, it is essential to ensure the quality of medical care and to emphasize hospitality on top of that, and I think it is wonderful that the Sophia Experience does not consider them as independent, but as mutually inclusive aspects. There may be no right answer to the diverse and varied needs of patients. However, I believe that there is significance in using the

experience and knowledge gained through actual work experiences as a single equation to show how home-visit nursing should be. Furthermore, we will constantly make improvements while communicating to the outside world with a simple and clear logic. I hope this will invigorate the discussion in the industry as a whole, create a sense of direction, and generate a virtuous cycle.



Director of the Institute  
for Population Health  
at King's College London  
**Kenji Shibuya**

Shibuya, an expert in public health, has served as a coordinator for the World Health Organization (WHO) and as a professor of international health policy at the Graduate School of the University of Tokyo. He has been in the current position since 2019.

## Roles and expectations of home-visit nursing seen around the world

There is no need for a home doctor. That is what I have felt after seeing scenes of home care provided around the world. What people who live with incurable diseases or disabilities want is the continuation of their daily lives. And the main player who supported such people was the visiting nurse. In France, visiting nurses provide not only chronic care, but also post-operative and perinatal care, as well as anticancer drug administration. In the U.K., nurses take on home

hospitalization of acute illnesses in the homes of elderly people with sudden changes in condition, consulting online with doctors. In the Netherlands, Buurtzorg is reinventing the concept of home-visit nursing. In these countries, nurses were proud and responsible for their patients, and doctors were rarely present. There is no need for home care by doctors. I'm actually a little hopeful that the day will come when a visiting nurse tells me so.

## Proposing alternatives for the realization of future society

Nowadays, there is an increasing presence of companies that are proposing alternatives to society. Their main characteristic is to critically propose new ways of doing things in the face of conventional societies and corporations that have pursued only scale and efficiency at the expense of humanity and the natural environment. Representative examples include Tesla, which is criticizing the automobile industry's

continued dependence on fossil fuels and promoting a shift to sustainable energy, and MUJI, which is questioning the state of mass production and mass consumption. And here again, companies are emerging that are proposing alternatives, or different ways to the way nursing care and end-of-life care should be provided in Japan. I'm really looking forward to what the future holds!



Independent researcher,  
author, public speaker,  
consultant and occasional  
workshop designer  
**Shu Yamaguchi**

Yamaguchi has engaged in strategy formulation, cultural policy, and organizational development at Dentsu, Boston Consulting Group, and other companies. The author of books such as Business no Mirai (Future of Business), New Type no Jidai (Era of New Type), and Sekai no Elite ha Naze Biishiki wo Kitaerunoka? (Why do the world's elite train their sense of beauty?)



## Maximizing the value provided

In 2007, Japan's aging population exceeded 21%, making it the world's first country to enter the super-aging society era. Since then, the elderly population has been increasing and is expected to reach 35% by 2040. In the 20th century, medical care evolved mainly to cure people with acute diseases, such as tuberculosis, and injuries from traffic accidents. On the other hand, in the 21st century, with the rapid increase in the number of elderly people,

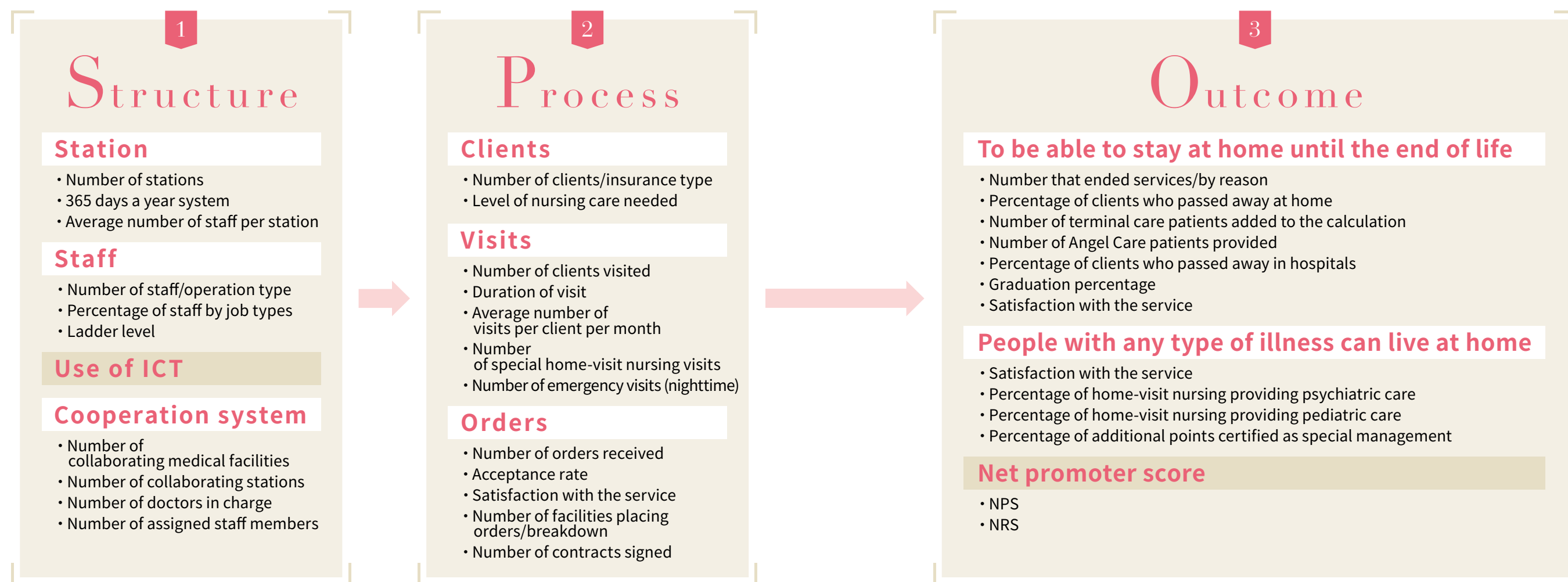
there is a need for a system to support the elderly with chronic diseases. The focus is now on medical care that can support people to live their own lives despite aging, illness, and disability. The quality of life can be improved by continuing to live in the place you want and are used to living, even while suffering from illnesses. From this perspective, the infrastructure for home health care and nursing care has been developed in Japan. Under such circumstances, visiting

nurse stations are playing an important role in connecting medical care and nursing care, and providing support from a professional medical perspective to enable people to live at home until the end of their lives. However, in a rapidly aging society, visiting nurse stations still need quantitative expansion and the strengthening of their functions to support home care. Although the number of visiting nurse stations is on the rise, there is still a lack of a 24-hour, 365-day system which are essential. In addition, while improving the quality of home

care is considered important from the perspective of realizing the life that clients desire, it is unclear what constitutes quality and how to improve it. Based on our experience and achievements as a pioneer in the field of home-visit nursing since our founding in 2002 and the feedback from our clients and community stakeholders, we have used the Donabedian model to facilitate transparency and visualization of the ideal system for home-visit nursing, the required process, and the required results. "Structure" indicates the management system of the station, the ratio of the job

types of staff members who provide services, their skill levels (ladder), and the system of cooperation with related organizations in the community. In "Process," we visualized the changes in the number of clients using our services, level of care and insurance type, the status of service provision, including the number of visits and duration, and actual services provided in response to their requests, while also adding a service satisfaction factor. In "Outcome," we have set our own indicators and use data from customer satisfaction surveys to show how our clients,

their families, and community organizations evaluate us. The satisfaction level and NPS of the services provided are clearly indicated. The three elements of Structure, Process, and Outcome do not exist independently, but are interrelated, and thus balance is important. As a pioneer in home-visit nursing, we will strive to share the actual situation without hiding anything and continue to seek and improve the standardization of quality in home-visit nursing. We thus hope to contribute to maximizing the value provided by the industry as a whole.





Structure

Process

Station

Creating a great team structure and expanding throughout Japan

To support clients with severe illnesses and to provide end-of-life care, 42% of the total number of stations have become all year round operations to provide regular visits that include weekends and holidays. The number of staff per station has increased to about 2.4 times the national average to provide stable services.

Staff

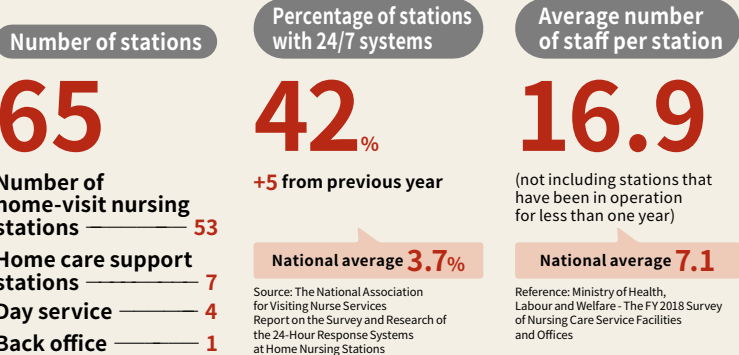
Increasing the number of nurses while building on the foundation of multi-professional staffing

Therapists are being assigned to each station while increasing the number of nurses. As a result of using the ladder level to visualize the skill level of the staff, the largest number of staff in Sophia was on ladder level 3, which is the standard value. Ladder levels 5 to 1 are expert, mid-level, standard (competent), newcomer, and novice, while 4 and 5 are mainly managers and supervisors.

Cooperation system

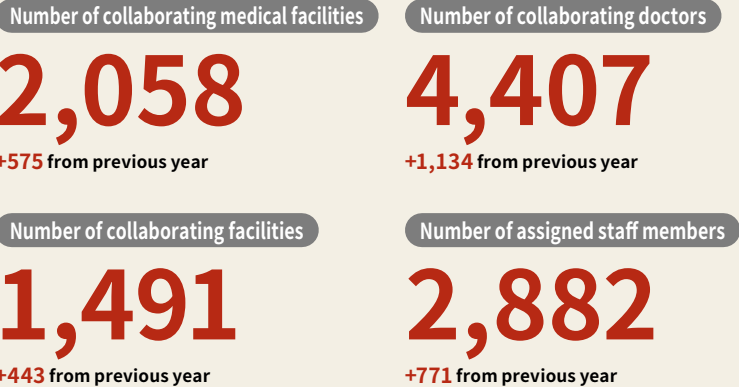
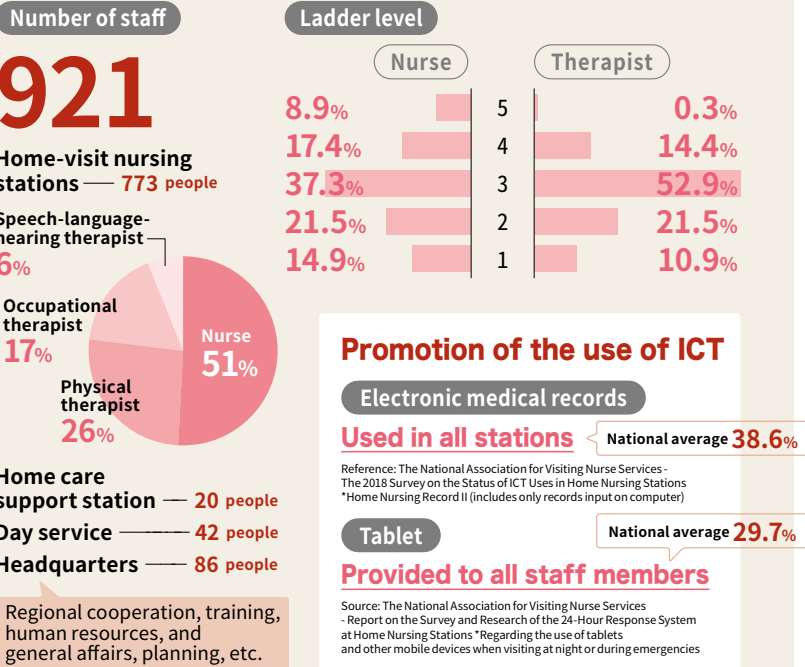
Significant increase in the number of cooperative relationships with both medical institutions and nursing care service providers

In the process of opening new stations and expanding the areas of existing stations, we have established a system of cooperation with more than 1,000 new local facilities compared to the previous year. We actively participate in staff meetings and pre-discharge conferences to maintain and promote a face-to-face service system.



Source: The National Association for Visiting Nurse Services  
Report on the Survey and Research of the 24-Hour Response Systems at Home Nursing Stations

Reference: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare - The FY 2018 Survey of Nursing Care Service Facilities and Offices



Clients

Number of clients increased by about 1.4 times, and the level of care remains at the average level

Services have been provided to 9,648 clients over six months, an increase of 2,644 from the previous year. The ratio of clients in "Requiring help" and "nursing care required" is about 2:8. Compared to the February 2020 Long-Term Care Insurance Business Report, this ratio is similar, but the percentage of those who require nursing care level 1 and 2 is higher.

Visits

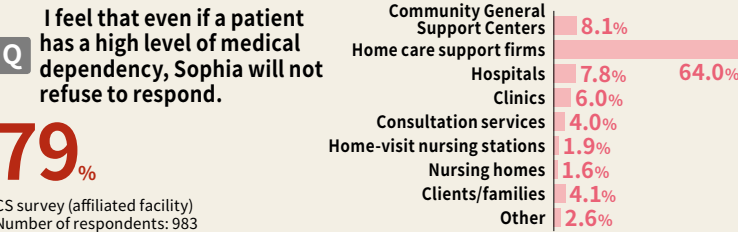
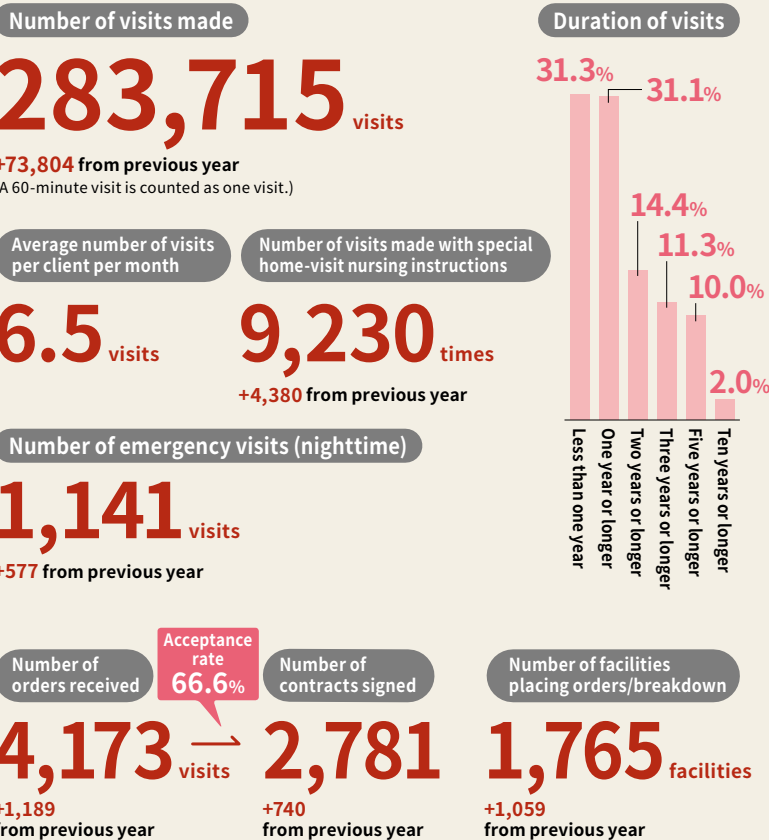
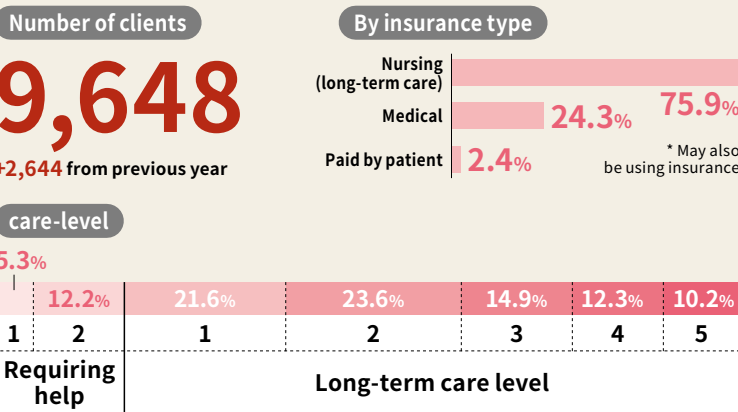
Increase in the number of consecutive day visits and emergency visits as a result of enhanced response to critical illness

The number of visits has increased in proportion to the increase in the number of clients. Yet, the number of visits with special home-visit nursing orders has increased by about 1.9 times, and emergency visits at night have almost doubled, which is a significant increase in the overall number of visits, and the need for 24-hour support and consecutive day visits is increasing.

Orders

We respond to many orders as the partner of home care

In total, 2,781 new contracts were signed, with approximately 72% from nursing care service providers and approximately 16% from medical institutions. We have received high marks from 79% of community members for accepting clients with high medical dependencies.





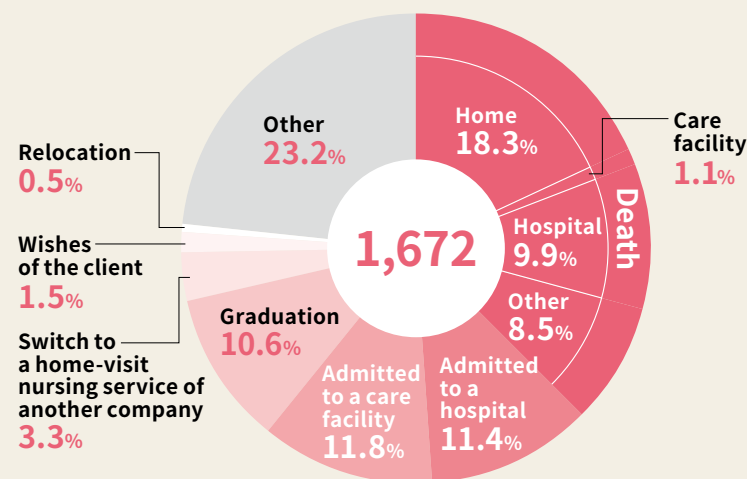
## Outcome

### To be able to stay at home until the end of life

About 51% of our clients spend their final days at home.

About 38% of our clients terminated their services due to death, of which 51% passed away at home. The percentage of our clients passing away in a hospital was 26%, and 63% of our partners in the region evaluated that we were doing a good job of preventing unnecessary hospitalization. We also provided graduation support for improvement while taking into account the need for care and rehabilitation. As a result, 11% of our clients graduated from our services and moved on to day services or community support. Sophia places importance on addressing the anxiety of clients so that they can stay at home until the end of their lives; 80% of our clients gave a positive evaluation, saying that they feel they can stay at home without anxiety.

Number of ended services/by reason



Percentage of clients who passed away at home

51%

\* Number of clients passing away at home or a care facility / Number of deaths

Number of terminal care patients added to calculation

197 facilities

+134 from previous year

Number of Angel Care patients provided

254 cases

+164 from previous year

Percentage of clients who passed away in a hospital

26%

\* Percentage of clients who passed away in a hospital / Number of deaths

Graduation ratio

11%

Q I feel that Sophia is preventing unnecessary hospitalization.

63%

CS survey (affiliated facility)  
Number of respondents: 974

Q I feel that I can stay at home without anxiety.

80%

CS survey (client)  
Number of respondents: 2,816

Q I feel that my caregiver is listening to my unspoken anxieties.

65%

CS survey (client)  
Number of respondents: 2,765

Q I feel that Sophia is providing care in a way that prevents patients from feeling uncomfortable or anxious.

82%

CS survey (affiliated facility)  
Number of respondents: 994

### People with any type of illness can live at home

About 8% of the total number of clients are receiving psychiatric and pediatric home care services.

In response to the shortage of facilities that provide care and the growing need,

Percentage of psychiatric home-visit nursing care

5%

+1.3 from previous year

Q I feel that my caregiver is selecting methods that are suitable for me.

82%

CS survey (client)  
Number of respondents: 2,829

Q I feel that my caregiver is providing thorough care.

83%

CS survey (client)  
Number of respondents: 2,849

Sophia also provides support for people with mental illnesses, children, and people with high medical dependencies who need special care to live at home. Of the total number of clients, 5% are receiving psychiatric home care and 3% pediatric home care. We are now getting ready to provide care for more

Percentage of pediatric home-visit nursing care

3%

+0.2 from previous year

Q I feel that Sophia is sharing necessary information among multiple professions and discussing the direction of care.

73%

CS survey (client)  
Number of respondents: 2,776

Q I feel that Sophia is supporting my unique choice of home care.

79%

CS survey (client)  
Number of respondents: 2,807

clients in these fields. Using satisfaction surveys from our clients and affiliated facilities as an indicator, we received more than 80% positive evaluations in categories, such as "selection of suitable methods," "thorough care," and "friendly response."

Percentage of additional points certified as special management

13%

+5.4 from previous year

Q I feel that my caregiver is trying to treat me as a person with sincerity rather than simply treating my illness or disability.

80%

CS survey (client)  
Number of respondents: 2,815

Q I feel that Sophia is providing choices that clients want.

78%

CS survey (affiliated facility)  
Number of respondents: 987

#### Net promoter score

I can recommend Sophia to my friends. We are going to place importance on this index and keep making improvements.

NPS is an index that quantifies customer loyalty and is calculated based on the percentage of critics, neutrals, and recommenders. According to the Nomura Research Institute's survey of 14 industries, the average score tends to vary from 19 to -64 depending on the industry.

Clients NPS

Q I would introduce Sophia Home Nursing Station to my friends.

13.6

CS survey (clients)  
Number of respondents: 2,658

Affiliated facility NPS

Q I would like to recommend Sophia Home Nursing Stations to other businesses.

▲5.3

CS survey (affiliated facility)  
Number of respondents: 989

NRS

Q I would like to use Sophia Home Nursing Station again.

10.4

CS survey (affiliated facility)  
Number of respondents: 992

Example of industry theme parks 19, hotels 2, life insurance companies ▲41, banks ▲46

Source: Financial Services Agency - The August 2019 Customer Awareness Survey on the Sale of Risky Financial Products (Final Report, Entire Version)  
Surveyed by Nomura Research Institute in March 2018



# Team-based support for home care

Supporting choices of our clients by building a comprehensive service delivery system

## Cooperation within regions

Prompt and thorough regional cooperation through the assignment of dedicated counselors.

Sophia has assigned several counselors in each area to respond to the needs of local stakeholders. In six months, they provided more than 40,000 consultations and received praise for their quickness to respond to consultation requests and the careful and thorough explanations they provided on home-visit nursing.

## Home care support stations

More than half of the stations provide high quality plans by using additional points for specified business establishment.

Four stations have been certified for the additional point for specified business establishment, and the utilization rate for home-visit nursing is 60%. They create care plans that make it easy for clients with severe illnesses to stay at home and provide careful and thorough coordination.

## Day service

Specializing in rehabilitation and providing support for active living.

All of our offices are certified with an additional 2 points for individual functional training, and therapists are assigned. As a day service specializing in rehabilitation, they are contributing to the community by providing preventive care and functional training.

### Dedicated counselors

**16**

+3 from previous year

### Number of consultations provided

**24,960** cases

+2,801 from previous year

**Q** I find Sophia's counselors to be quick to act on requests.

**70%**

CS survey (affiliated facility)  
Number of respondents: 934

### Number of actions taken

**40,041** cases

+10,456 from previous year

### New inquiries

**4,173** cases

+1,189 from previous year

**Q** Counselors of Sophia explain home-visit nursing in an easy-to-understand way.

**68%**

CS survey (affiliated facility)  
Number of respondents: 935

### Number of stations

**7** location

### Additional point for specified business establishment

**0** location **2** location **2** location

### Number of staff

**20**

+8 from previous year

### Number of clients

**611**

+169 from previous year

### Percentage of clients using home-visit nursing

**60%**

+5.1 from previous year

### Number of stations

**4** location

### Number of clients

**232**

+11 from previous year

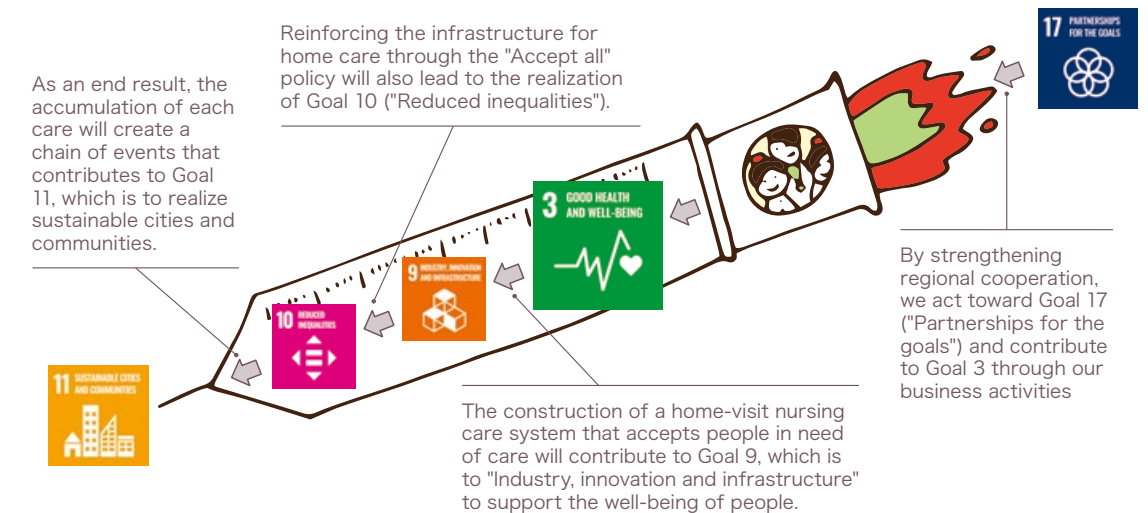
### Number of staff

**42**

+3 from previous year

# Sophia's SDGs injection

We believe that realizing our vision will lead to contributing to the SDGs  
This is a conceptual model of how Sophia views and addresses the SDGs



Aim to contribute to Goal 3 through regional cooperation and create a chain reaction to realize Goals 9, 10, and 11.

Each and every one of us living in the modern world is an agent of the realization of the SDGs. How will Sophia work toward this goal? Sophia's SDGs Injection is a model born from such questions. The point is to create a strong push and linkage through the image of an injection. Our home-visit nursing begins with strong regional cooperation (Goal 17), and each

care strongly contributes to Goal 3 ("Good health and well-being"). It is a never-ending activity that aims to evolve and improve quality and quantity, and practicing it throughout Japan will lead to the support of the well-being of people and will build a resilient infrastructure as in Goal 9. We also have a "Accept all" policy in our Valued Actions. We are also committed to Goal 10 by expanding our

reach and building the local infrastructure. We practice care for life through regional cooperation and aim to build an infrastructure in which people can select medical care to suit their needs. As a result, we create sustainable cities and communities (Goal 11). This outcome is the materialized form of our vision.



SDG Partners  
Representative  
Director and CEO,  
**Kazuo Tase**

Tase joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1992. He was an aide to Sadako Ogata at the Commission on Human Security. He worked at the United Nations and as an officer at Deloitte Tohmatsu Consulting before assuming his current position.

## Message

The essence of the SDGs lies in the wellbeing of each individual.

What are the SDGs ultimately aiming for? It is to realize the well-being of all life and to seek to strengthen universal peace with greater freedom. The future that the SDGs aim for is a world in which all people have more choices and can live better psychologically, socially, and physically, which is beyond the realization of each goal. Sophia's SDGs model places emphasis on Goal 3, but goes beyond it to aim for the expansion of personal choices and the realization of an inclusive society. I feel that this is an approach to well-being through medicine.



“A client called me to tell me  
a thing that made her happy on that day.

I was happy that she called me.

I am working with a wish to build a relationship  
in which my clients can call me any time.”

(Care manager at Care Plan Midorigaoka)







“How can I provide support to this person to live in a way he wishes?

What kind of experiences has he gone through,

and what kind of perspective on life does he have?

As I listened to him attentively, he gradually started to talk about himself.

Our relationship grew stronger, and I realized that unless

I was sincere to my own life, I wouldn't be able to face him properly.

I want to give all I have to support to my clients

so that they can enjoy the happiness of eating through their own mouths

until the end.

I want to protect the motivation of my clients that way.

These are my thoughts when I visit my clients every day.”

(Speech-language-hearing therapist at Station Yaguchi)









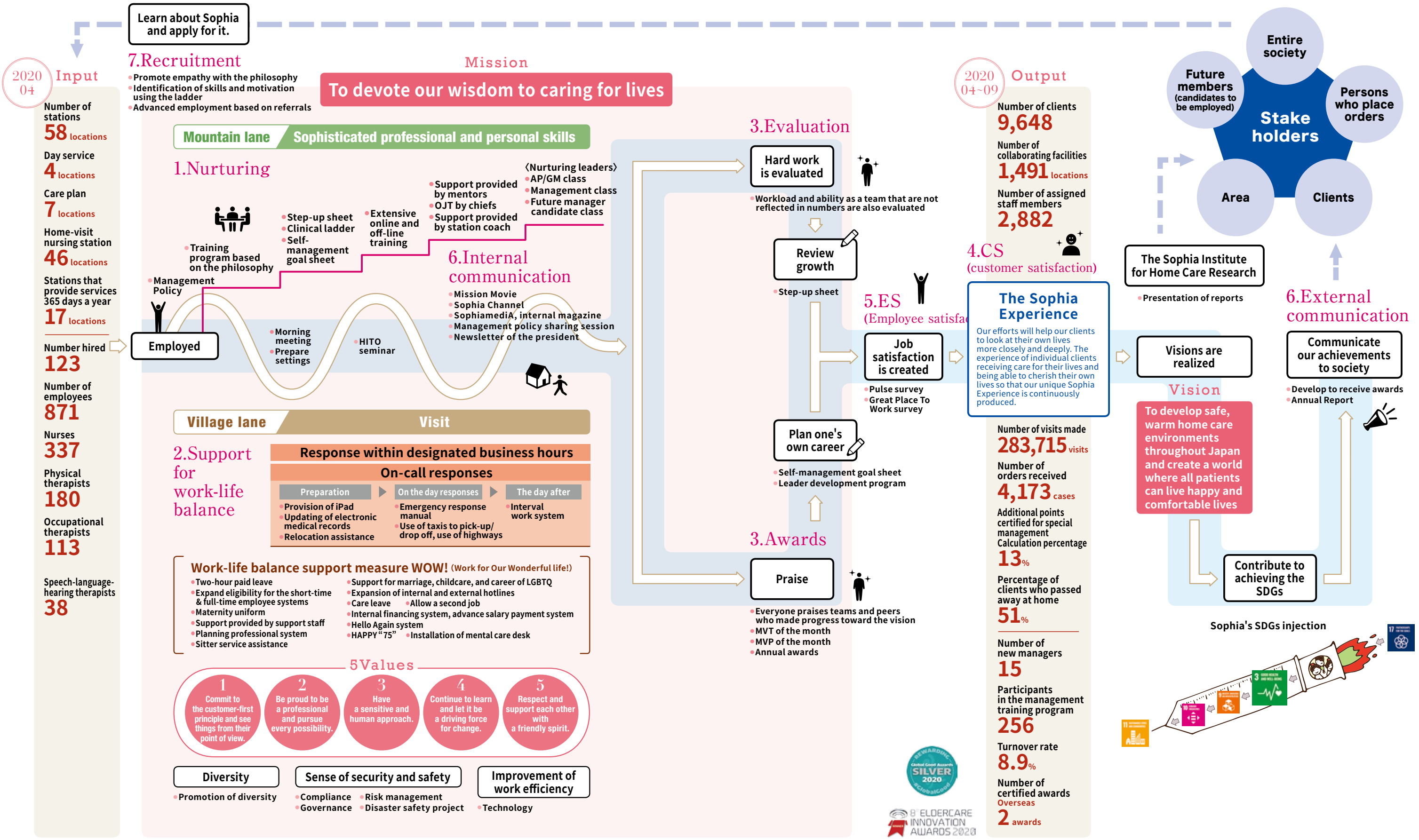
# Part 2

The Guruguru Model of  
caring for life produces  
the Sophia Experience



# Care for life – The Guruguru Model

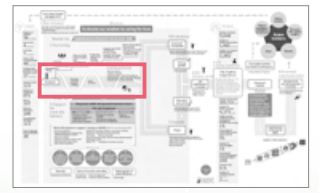
Sofia's Value Creation Model is a virtuous cycle in which all activities continue to grow in unison toward the vision. An internal system rooted in our philosophy will increase employee satisfaction and support customer satisfaction to create the Sophia Experience, as well as increase the number of friends while solving social issues and gaining empathy.





# Keep enhancing professional and personal skills through the Mountain Lane and Village Lane

The clients we visit have a variety of symptoms, live in a variety of living environments, and have a variety of backgrounds. The foundation of our work is to stay alongside the life of our client with not only our medical skills but also the humanity of each of us. We categorize the site of home visits where we see our clients and their families, the station that is our home where we deepen our understanding toward the philosophy and learn and support alongside our peers, and individual learning opportunities as either the mountain lane or the village lane. We move back and forth between these two lanes to grow not only as medical professionals but also as individual human beings.



## Management Policy

Action plans based on the vision and mission  
The Management Policy is the guideline for all actions. It describes the vision, mission, and spirit of how to mentally prepare for various situations based on these principles.

## Morning meetings and preparation of the environment



All members read aloud the Management Policy and clean up together every morning  
The members see each other in the morning meeting and share information every day and clean up their stations. Members who are busy every day cherish this time of the day.

## Training that improves the understanding of the philosophy



The philosophy keeps supporting the growth process.  
Sophia provides continuous training to understand the philosophy in addition to the training at the time of employment. Staff members can learn from the new challenges they face in each growth process.

## Workshop using assigned reading



Members mutually recognize and enhance the perspectives of co-workers.  
They share their impressions and gain new insights from each other's different ways of looking at things, and practice seeing the positive side. Communicating each other's strengths will help build empathy and confidence.

[ Mountain lane ]

[ Village lane ]

The mountain lane refers to the daily activities conducted at work. Staff members deepen their understanding of the philosophy through the morning meeting and workshops, improve their professional skills and leadership skills through the various training programs, recognize peers as teammates, and grow with them while supporting each other.

Understanding of the philosophy

Training

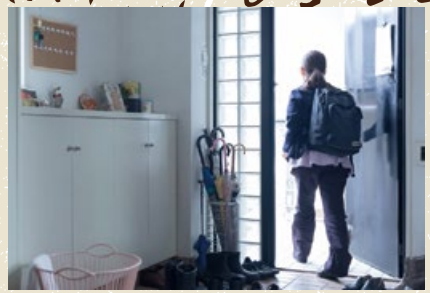
Visits

Emergency response

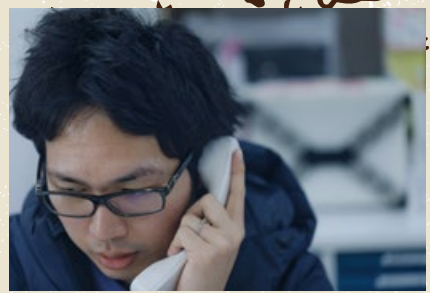
HITO seminar

End-of-life care

In the village lane, each member visits a client alone and deal with the fulfillment of the clients and their families. The visit includes scheduled visits and emergency visits. Staff members visit a client's home even at night. The visit also includes end-of-life care. Care is needed for each life.



Daily visits to stay alongside the life of the client  
Spring, summer, fall, winter, rain or snow, there is no time off for illness. We visit our clients alone. Clients not only have a variety of symptoms and conditions but also a variety of living environments.



Visit clients anytime, 24-hours a day  
All home-visit nursing stations provide 24-hour response services. Various support systems are in place so that nurses can quickly visit clients in need.



To help our clients live their lives to the fullest  
When the journey of our client comes to an end, we provide end-of-life care, as well as Angel Care and grief care. We have installed a mental care desk to support our nurses.



## Daily routines and workshop to build humanity

The station is a home for us, where we meet every morning for the morning meeting and clean up, go out for a visit, and come back when the day is over. The station has a learning environment based on our

### Everyone reading the Management Policy aloud every morning

At the daily morning meeting, all employees read aloud one page of the Management Policy. By continuing to read it over and over again, the words will penetrate and deepen their understanding to become a guide for action in the various situations members face every day. The time the staff members have spent on reading a page every day for one minute is recorded.

Total time spent on reading  
**107,520** hours



### All members clean up the station to get it ready for the day's work

At Sophia, we believe that a good environment creates a good person, and a good person creates a good environment. In addition to cleaning, we maintain courtesy, discipline, cleanliness, orderliness, and safety as the five items for environmental preparation. All members of the station, including managers, participate in cleaning every morning. The time everyone spends on cleaning for ten minutes every day is added up.

Total hours spent on cleaning  
**1,075,200** hours



### New employee training to instill the company's philosophy

At the beginning of each month, new employees are welcomed and participate in a five-day training program. The training starts with a lecture based on the Management Policy by the president and includes basic training on home-visit nursing, as well as group sessions where participants share their thoughts on the vision, mission, and values based on their own experiences. We welcomed 215 new employees this term.

Total hours of training  
**6,800** hours



philosophy. We use the Management Policy as a guideline for our actions and as a guide when we are not sure what to do. The clinical ladder helps us check our current positions. We use the

step-up sheet to create plans and improve our skills in various training programs. We polish our leadership skills in management training and advance our careers. Whenever we become lost or feel unsure, we have

peers who support us and engage in friendly competition. When we make visits, we are usually on our own. Yet, the wisdom of Sophia is accumulated in each of us as we face clients.

### Continuously provided training to instill the philosophy

Sophia continuously provides training to instill the philosophy in addition to the training for new employees. In the group work, participants present their previous work to describe their formative experiences and share experiences related to the vision, mission, and values. The number of such training programs is going to be expanded.

Total hours of training  
**1,046** hours



### HITO seminar to deepen mutual understanding and recognition

In the Corporate Department, staff members read a book on anthropology and discuss their thoughts in group sessions with people from multiple departments every month. By learning different perspectives, and by praising each other's strengths by focusing on the good points, the participants can empathize with each other and build their own confidence. In FY 2020, the workshop was held after August.

Total hours of the session  
**143.5** hours



### Awards to recognize good practices of the Five Values

In May 2020, at the online Management Policy Sharing Meeting, awards were presented to the outstanding offices and staff of the previous year as the Sophia Stars. The selection was based not only on achievements shown in numbers but also on how the spirit of the company was put into practice in terms of how it worked based on the philosophy.

Number of staff members who received an award  
**160** Started in May 2020





# Training system including more than 600 training programs to match each individual's step

Sophia has a full training system that is among the best in the home-visit nursing industry

## Clinical ladder and step up sheet for continuous improvement of skills

The evaluation using the clinical ladder support step-up according to the level of individual staff members. This supports the growth of the individuals and raises the level of the overall team.

Ratio of nurses in the mid-level to expert level

26.3%



## Management training to support career advancement

The provided training includes chief and manager training and an AP/GM (area producer/group manager) class. (In the second half of the year, training for potential managers and management classes were also held. \*Not included in the figure).

Number of participants

256



## Training and OJT provided based on steps

In addition to in-class and practical training, Sophia provides OJT (on the job training) systems conducted by chiefs at the actual work sites. In addition, Sophia enhanced the practical and conceptual contents of the online training program so that staff members can learn what they need, when they need it at their own pace using their free time.

Number of offline training programs provided

688 programs





## Daily visits to help our clients and their families live

The village lane refers to the daily visits we make. We visit the living environment of our clients alone. Just as each person's symptoms and conditions are different, so are their lives, their home environment, and how and what they want to be.

### 24-hour service that provides the same level of security as a hospital

All stations have a 24-hour emergency response system so that patients can enjoy their recuperation with peace of mind. We respond to calls from our clients and their families even at night or early in the morning and rush to them if necessary.

Number of stations with 24-hour service

**53** stations



### All year round service because there is no day off for illnesses

In 2017, only one station provided service 365 days a year, but by September 2020, 22 stations started all year round service. With this change, our work styles have also changed, such as the introduction of a team-based work system and a shift-based work system. Sophia is quickly working to provide all year round service at all stations.

Number of stations with 24-hour service

**22** stations



### Care for the life of family members as well

We support not only our clients, but also the family members who closely support the clients. We support their home care lives together with family members. At times, we provide support for family members so that they can rest and relax. We do all this because our mission is to care for life in addition to illnesses.



While observing daily changes and being thoughtful towards the background of the client, we help them and their families to live their lives in the best way possible. In addition to scheduled visits, if an emergency arises, we

rush to the home of our clients even late at night after working hours. The visit also includes end-of-life care. We stay alongside our clients and their families so that they can cherish the life of the client until the end and leave fond memories

rather than simply taking care of the illness. Every day, we do everything in our power to make our visits a part of a warm and caring life at home. Our line of work is supported by various measures to support our work styles.

### Support the life of individual staff members WOW! (Work for Our Wonderful life!)

WOW!" is a work style support program that was created through repeated trial and error and by listening to the voices of each staff member in order to find out what kind of support is necessary

for us. We are building a 24/7 home care system so that clients with severe symptoms can comfortably stay at home and receive care with peace of mind. At the same time, we will continue

to create the measures necessary for us to energetically face the work of home-visit nursing.

#### Systems and measures to support visits

##### On-call responses

##### Preparation

- Provision of iPad
- Updating of electronic medical records

##### On the day of response

- Emergency response manual
- Use of taxis to pick-up/drop off, use of highways

##### The day after

- Interval between work shifts

##### Relocation assistance

Sophia provides up to a 200,000-yen benefit for moving expenses if Sophia staff move within a designated distance of their assigned stations so that they can quickly arrive at a client's home for emergency responses.

Number of benefits provided

**2** cases

##### Mental care desk for medical professionals

Medical professionals experience unique concerns and mental burdens in clinical settings. To reduce their anxiety and mental problems, Sophia has established a counseling desk so that our medical professionals can talk to external experts.

##### Support staff system

A team of experienced support staff supports staff members through OJT conducted by accompanying them to a client's home and interviews. They acted as a substitute for managers who took leave in this period.

Number of actions taken

**185** cases

##### HAPPY75

The eligibility of the post-retirement re-employment system was raised from 65 to 75 years old. With this system, staff members can work for a long time with peace of mind while utilizing the experience they have gained.

##### Maternity uniform rentals

##### Care leave

##### Support for marriage, childcare, and careers of LGBTQ

Staff members in a same-sex marriage are also eligible to receive a wedding gift, congratulatory or condolence leave, maternity leave, and childcare leave. Staff members can select uniforms with unisex designs from the lineup.

##### Two-hour paid leave

The two-hour paid leave, which can be taken with same-day notification, is the most utilized system of "WOW!" Staff members can take leave during work to run errands and relax.

Number of benefits provided

**1,927** cases

##### Hello Again system

When former employees who resigned because of unavoidable circumstances wish to rejoin the company, they can return to work in the areas they wish and receive the same salary as when they resigned.

##### Subsidy for 50% of babysitting fee

##### Planning professional system

Even in cases where it is difficult to meet the work conditions of a full-time employee due to the individual's circumstances, the employee can be hired as a full-time employee if certain criteria are met, and prior approval is given by the president and/or general manager.

##### Internal financing system, advance salary payment system

When staff members are in need of money for sudden expenses, such as hospitalization or nursing care, they can receive an internal loan of up to 300,000 yen without interest. They can also apply for advance payment of their salary.

Number of benefits provided

**4** cases

##### Conditional lifting of the ban on having a second job

Sophia supports the autonomous career development of each staff member while flexibly accommodating diverse work styles with the aim of bringing synergistic effects to our core business.

##### Internal and external hotlines



## Voices of WOW! users

WOW! is Sophia's work style reform system. The WOW! system was created to specifically address the work style of home-visit nursing professionals. We asked some of our staff who actually use this system how they think it is supporting the lives of individual staff members.



Medical clerk  
**Ikumi Sato**

### Uses the two-hour paid leave

I use this system when I have personal chores that can be done only on weekdays, such as going to a hospital or a municipal office, for which a half-day leave is just too long. I find this system quite useful because it is easier to make an appointment at a hospital on weekdays, and it is often crowded on weekends. I also took this leave to go to a municipal office to complete my paperwork to change my surname after I got married. Sometimes it is difficult to take leave suddenly when the station is quite busy, for example. Yet, it makes a huge difference when I can take a two-hour leave, especially when I am working consecutive days



Physical therapist  
**Masanobu Yamada**

### Conditional lifting of the ban on having a second job

As I turned 40 last year, I thought about the place of work in my life and my own living. I then made the choice to become a sole proprietor and start a side coaching business. I am now engaging in various activities as a professional coach, such as one-on-one training and lectures. In the future, I would like to combine my main occupation as a physical therapist with my second occupation as a coach and enjoy my unique life while making social contributions that only I can make. I hope that this system will help many people realize a flexible work style.



Nurse and manager  
**Konomi Matsuba**

### Subsidy for 50% of babysitting fee

I use this system when I receive a call from a nursery school saying that my daughter has a fever, for example. The use of this system is limited to a babysitting firm specified by Sophia. Yet, Sophia provides 50% of the cost of using the babysitter and that includes related expenses, such as sick childcare and transportation. I want to be with my daughter when she is not feeling well. Yet, it is sometimes difficult or impractical to go to her when I am working. I use this system in such cases. It is very helpful because professional babysitters can take care of my daughter.



VMS Promotion Headquarters  
Human resources team leader  
**Miho Suwa**

### Reflecting the voices of staff members, WOW! keeps evolving

We have created various measures through trial and error to find out what kind of support is really needed so that our staff can work in a safe, secure, and warm environment. Many staff members use the two-hour paid leave, which is very popular. Also, the internal financing and advance payment of salary are often used when staff members need money for sudden

expenses or for family circumstances. The mental care desk for medical professionals was also set up to provide counseling by external experts. Many staff members have told us that they felt much better after talking about the small anxieties they had. We are going to keep updating the WOW! system to support our peers who work in home-visit nursing.

2020  
04~09

## Employee satisfaction (ES) survey

Sophia conducts a monthly pulse survey and annual survey, called Great Place to Work, to improve ES

### Monthly "pulse survey"

Quickly identify physical and mental conditions of the staff and engage in appropriate communication

A five-point questionnaire is used to identify changes in the physical and mental condition of the staff and the organization's status in a short span of time and to take appropriate action. The survey conducted in this period identified difficulties under the threat of COVID-19 and stress due to changes in daily lives, such as the lockdown. The number of interviews includes those that were arranged but later cancelled or ones provided via phone or e-mail according to the wishes of individual staff members.

Response rate

**80%**

Average score

**3.5** points/5points

Number of interviews requested

**33**

Response rate

**100%**

\* Includes responses other than the interview due to a request from an individual staff member.

### Annual survey, Great Place to Work®

Continue to make improvements using the global standard job satisfaction questionnaire as an indicator

A survey was conducted in September 2020. The overall job satisfaction score tends to be lower in the medical and service industries, but we continue to make improvements. The percentage of positive answers to the question, "I think my company contributes to the community and society," exceeded the average for the Best Companies for 2020 (medium-sized), indicating that Sophia employees are feeling a sense of social significance.

**Q** Taking everything into account, this is a great place to work.

Positive response rate **56%**

**Q** I feel good about the ways we contribute to the community.

Positive response rate **81%**

Response rate

**80%**

**+5 more than the Best Companies average**

(Reference 2020 Best Workplaces in Japan (Medium category) **76%**)

### Items to focus on in the future

From the survey questions, we selected items that were considered to have a particularly high correlation with overall job satisfaction. We are going to improve them as priority items. In addition, we will analyze the overall data to find the factors behind the high scores at specific stations and share this information as knowledge to spread throughout the organization.

- I am treated fairly regardless of my position.
- I want to work here for a long time.
- I'm proud to tell others I work here.
- This is a fun place to work.



# COVID-19 safety measures

In order to protect the safety of our staff and clients, we set up the COVID-19 Safety Headquarters and took various measures, such as disclosing our know-how to the public and cooperating with PCR testing by the government.

## Creation of COVID-19 safety headquarters

At the beginning of February 2020, Sophia established the COVID-19 safety headquarters to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. They set basic operational policy "to prevent the spread of infection as much as possible to protect the home care of our clients" and implemented measures to ensure that home-visit nursing services would be safely delivered to those in need even while COVID-19 spreads in society. PPE and face shields, which were in short supply, were manufactured in-house by the Corporate Department and shipped to each office.



## Thorough implementation of business operation rules

Sophia established the COVID-19 Station Safety Rules and took measures to prevent infection within the stations, such as going directly to the home of a client and returning directly to the home of the staff member, separating work areas in the station, going online, and implementing thorough disinfection and cleaning. We frequently and thoroughly checked the physical condition of our staff and clients and took the utmost precautions to prevent infection during our visits. We also created the Guide for Home Support during the COVID-19 Pandemic to describe the recommended PPE and health and infection management.



## Public disclosure of know-how, including the infection control guide and the use of protective equipment

We posted videos on our corporate website and YouTube to share the know-how we have accumulated within the company, such as the Guide for Home Support during the COVID-19 Pandemic, and manuals on how to put on and take off PPE and how to create handmade face shields. Our therapists also launched the Self-Training Support Project and released the Stay Home Exercise Program for those who were concerned about the lack of exercise during the lockdown.



## Establishment of a team to respond to COVID-19 positive patients and accepting such patients

We prepared ourselves to take care of clients who tested positive for COVID-19 at home and anticipated hospital bed shortages. We formed a special home-visit nursing team to look after clients who tested positive for COVID-19 with volunteers gathered from inside and outside the company in April. They are at the forefront of visiting clients who are recuperating at home, sometimes including end-of-life care at home for clients who have been discharged from hospital with positive results. We will continue our efforts without forgetting the mindset to serve the entire community.

### End-of-life care with all the family members

Although my client was asymptomatic, the test results continued to be positive, which meant that hospitals could not accept the client for end-of-life care. I had to do something. By accepting this client, we were able to have the entire family stay with the client until the last moment, and we received many thanks and precious words that would support us for a long time to come.



Station Shimoigusa  
Nurse  
Yukari Fukushima

## Cooperation with government, public health offices, and medical associations to deal with COVID-19

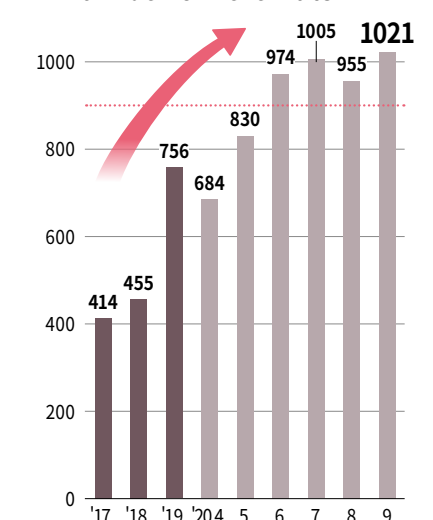
As the anxiety toward the invisible virus created a great deal of social unrest, the demand for nurses with medical expertise increased. Sophia provided support while there is a shortage of labor everywhere in the medical industry. In cooperation with the governments of Tokyo and Kanagawa, where the infection was fast spreading, we created a testing system by sending technicians to PCR testing centers in various areas and supported the development of a system to monitor the condition of COVID-19 patients resting at home.



## Function to accept patients to provide hospital beds

As COVID-19 spread, medical institutions other than those designated for specified infectious diseases have been severely affected, making it difficult for them to admit patients for hospitalization even when the patients have severe illnesses. Sophia established through measures to prevent infections and gathered information at the headquarters from the moment that an infection in a staff member or a client was suspected, and we implemented safety measures of ordering those who came into contact with the suspected persons to stay at home and supported them in seeking medical attention. We have received an increasing number of requests from affiliated medical institutions.

■ Number of referrals





# Communication

## Keep delivering information through various ways

When employed

### Management Policy, Mission Movie

**The Management Policy and the movie that convey the vision, mission, and values**

During the training at the time of joining the company, the president will meet with each of the new staff members and thoroughly describe Sophia's vision, mission, and spirit. The new members read the Management Policy shown in the Mountain Lane and watch the Mission Movie. The Mission Movie describes experiences of employees shared when creating the Management Policy.



Beginning of the month

### Internal magazine, Sophiamedia A

**“Care for life” Share interviews and management information**

Every issue of the magazine contains interviews with staff members who talk about what “care for life” means to them. It also has a section for contributions to describe important thoughts that staff members have related to the Five Values. The magazine will keep reporting new business sites and the progress of company-wide projects.

### Newsletter of the president

**The president directly delivers messages to each staff member.**

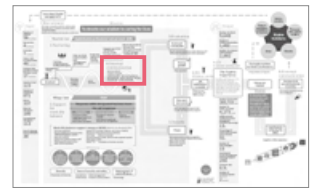
In this newsletter, the president uses his own words to thank staff members for their work every day and describes the direction of Sophia. Sophia has been evolving rapidly over the past few years, steering the company toward nationwide expansion. The president provides detailed descriptions on the reasons why each change is necessary now and how it is required by society.

The number of Sophia stations has increased to more than 60, and the company has grown to have more than 1,000 employees.

With the expansion of the 24/7 service and the promotion of diversity, the working styles of each individual have become more diverse.

We expect that work style and lifestyle will go through more drastic changes as the new normal takes over as the norm. However, no matter how we change the way we work or the way we live, what connects us all at Sophia is our vision and our philosophy. At Sophia, we communicate through

various channels to spread our philosophy and management policies.



Monthly

### Sophia Channel

**A thousand staff members gather online**

This is an online gathering that started in May 2020. Staff from stations across the country will meet online to review monthly performance, receive MVT of the month award, and share important information.



### Manager meeting and chief meeting

**Connecting the horizontal axis and energizing Sophia**

Managers from all stations gather twice a month to share information. It is an opportunity where knowledge can be shared horizontally through case study sessions and panel discussions. In FY 2020, the chief meeting was also started. Both meetings were held online, reducing the burden of travel time for participants, and thereby improving efficiency.



Annual

### Management policy sharing session

**Employees gather together to share policies for the new fiscal year and hold an awards ceremony**

This is Sophia's most important annual event. In this event, presentations are given on the plans and key initiatives for the new fiscal year, and the Sophia Stars award ceremony is held to recognize outstanding employees and offices from the previous year. In May 2020, the presentation was about “care for life” and the Guruguru Model that VMS Promotion Project had worked on for one year and measures that support the model.





# Activity history

Sophia has been working on three projects in sequence since 2018

2018

## Polaris Project

Autonomously created management philosophy that serves as a foundation for each and every employee

In order to create a philosophy that would serve as a source of inspiration for the staff, more than 20 representative nurses and therapists gathered, including not only the executives but also the on-site managers. The participants spent more than 100 hours discussing and sharing their experiences and thoughts to create a new vision, mission, and values that would become the Polaris for all staff members.



2019

## VMS Promotion Project

Created consistent "Care for Life" Guruguru Model based on the vision, mission, and values (spirits)

We launched a cross-divisional project in order to continue to grow our vision, mission, and values as our guiding principles. We created the "Care for Life" Guruguru Model, a model for creating a virtuous cycle of growth through the implementation of various measures to achieve our vision. We also significantly revamped each system, including the personnel system and evaluation system.



2020

## Sophia Experience maximization project

Maximize the outcome of the Guruguru Model to continue creating the Sophia Experience

Staff members in charge of the related departments gathered in order to maximize performance in each department in the "Care for Life" Guruguru Model and continue to create Sophia Experiences while following the virtuous cycle. In FY 2020, the first ES survey and CS survey were conducted at Sophia.



# Part 3

## Sophia Work Style Data

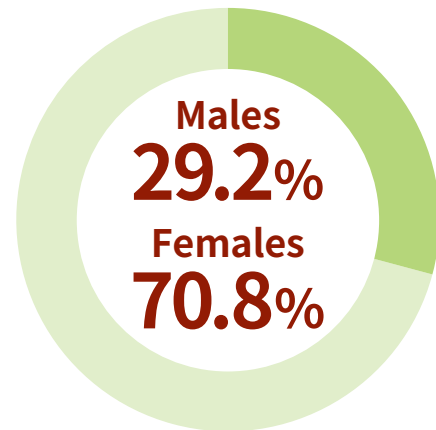


# Work style data

2020  
04~09

Sophia is working to solve the problems of working styles in the medical field and create an environment where diverse human resources can continue to work in a healthy and happy manner

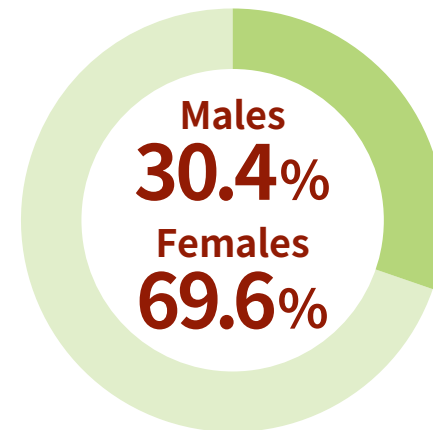
Percentage of male and female employees



Because the business is centered on home-visit nursing, the workforce mainly consists of nurses and has a high percentage of women.

※The percentage is calculated based on sex as indicated in the family register.

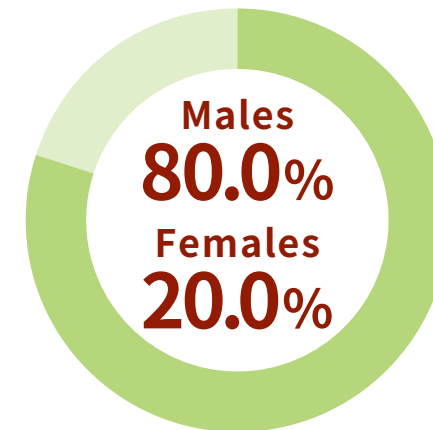
Percentage of male and female in management positions



The percentage of female employees is high in management positions as well. Many of the managers are nurses who are the administrators of the stations.

※The percentage is calculated based on sex as indicated in the family register.

Percentage of male and female in senior management positions



General managers, area producers, and group managers fall under this category. These are a diverse group of people that include some from medical professions and some with business experience from other industries; their career development at Sophia is also diverse.

※The ratio is calculated based on sex as indicated in the family register.

Hours of new employee training

6,800 hours

Sophia provides a full range of training programs, including a one-week training program for new employees and follow-up training provided after starting to work so that even those with no experience can work with ease.

※Calculated based on the number of hours of new employee training x number of participants.

Number of referral-based hirings

39

Sophia places emphasis on hiring by having employees introduce their friends and acquaintances. Since the introduction is from an employee who understands the culture of Sophia, the level of empathy in the new employee for our philosophy tends to be high, and mismatches are less likely to occur.

Turnover rate

8.9%

While the average turnover rate for all industries in Japan is said to be 15.6%, our turnover rate is 8.9%, thanks to our efforts to improve the way we work, including the WOW! system.

(※ The 2019 Employment Trend Survey)

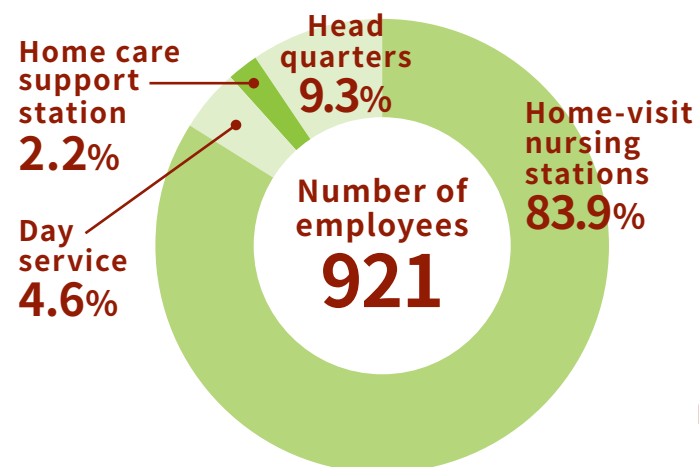
Number of referral-based hirings

11.1 hours

While the average monthly overtime hours for workers, excluding part-time workers, is estimated to be 14.3 hours\*, ours is 11.1 hours.

(※2019 Quick Report - Monthly Labour Survey by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare)

Percentage of employees by business site



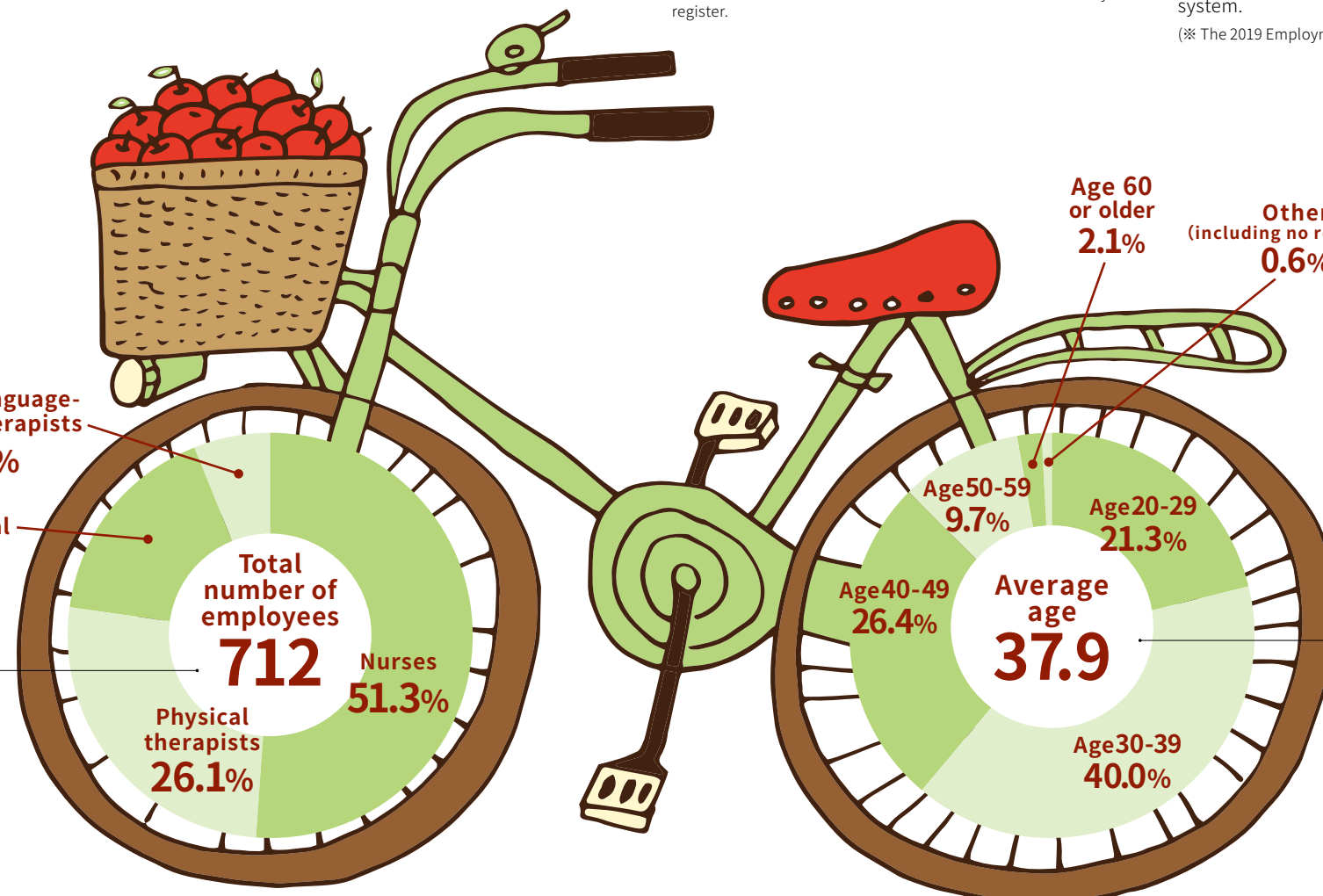
More than 80% of our employees are engaged in home-visit nursing. The fact that we have nearly 10% of our workforce working in the back office is a distinctive feature of our system compared to other companies.

Percentage of professionals

※ Limited to home-visit nursing stations (except for clerks)

In order to support clients with high medical needs, we focus on handling severe cases, medical care, and 24/7 service. Nurses account for more than half of our workforce.

Speech-language-hearing therapists  
5.9%  
Occupational therapists  
16.7%



Average number of staff members at a station

16.9

While the average number of employees per business site is estimated to be 7.1\*, Sophia has an average of 16.9 staff members per station, which does not include stations that have been in operation for less than one year.

(※FY 2018 Survey of Nursing Care Service Facilities and Offices)

Age distribution

Since many of Sophia's employees start working in home-visit nursing after gaining experience in hospitals and other medical facilities, 60% are in their 30s and 40s. Meanwhile, the number of younger people entering our workforce has been on the rise recently.



# Message from the director

Four general managers introduce the initiatives of different operations



General Manager, Home Nursing  
East Japan Headquarters  
**Akira Shinoda**

## Everything we do is for each one of our clients

The Home Nursing East Japan Headquarters supports the operation of more than 40 home-visit nursing stations in eastern Japan, mainly in the Tokyo metropolitan area, resolving issues and preparing for the future. In order to provide high-quality home-visit nursing and rehabilitation services to our clients, it is important to create an environment where each staff member can concentrate on the home-visit nursing operation. The role of the headquarters is to provide the environment and logistical support for this purpose. In FY 2020, we spent the entire year fighting COVID-19. While there were no correct answers, we worked

from the initial stage to create the COVID-19 Safety Rules for Stations so that we can continue to provide services, correctly communicate the right information, and ensure that all staff members can take the right infection control measures. In addition to the distribution of information, a headquarters was set up to make decisions and give instructions on how to deal with the daily occurrence of suspected positive cases, close contacts, and those who actually tested positive, and to function as a consultation service. We also set up a dedicated team to deal with clients who tested positive and visit such clients. All of this was done in order to continue to provide services to the clients who needed us, which was the reason that the headquarters existed. We will continue to make every effort to spread safe and warm home care throughout Japan.



General Manager, Home Nursing  
West Japan Headquarters  
**Masahiro Hada**

## Spread safe and caring home-visit nursing care everywhere in Japan

The new Home Nursing West Japan Headquarters was created to handle nationwide business expansion. Starting in FY 2019, Sophia launched multiple stations in Nagoya City and Aichi Prefecture, followed by another seven stations in Toyama City, Toyama Prefecture, Kashihara City, Nara Prefecture, and Gifu City, Gifu Prefecture. In FY 2020, these new stations had to deal with COVID-19 without sufficient human resources, materials, or a support environment. In spite of the physical distance from the head office, we switched to remote management using Zoom and other tools for each base and updated the original information sharing method in the cloud to build

an autonomous, self-driven team that could make decisions in each region. In addition, to ensure no differences in service quality between eastern and western Japan, we shared information and checked whether the shared information was being implemented. Besides responding to clients and others, we worked closely with the COVID-19 Safety Headquarters to ensure that staff members affected by this pandemic were able to work with peace of mind. The Home Nursing West Japan Headquarters, which started with four employees, will have more than 100 by April 2021, and we plan to increase the number of stations in existing areas and expand into new areas. The nationwide expansion under COVID-19 is not a smooth, easy road, but we will continue to pursue all possibilities with pride as professionals and spread safe home care throughout Japan.



General Manager of  
the VMS Promotion Headquarters  
**Aya Ito**

## Refine Guruguru Model and maximize *care for life*

The VMS Promotion Headquarters may sound unique. It means the headquarters to promote the vision, mission, and values. This headquarters is in charge of hiring, human resource development, public relations, and visualization of the Sophia Experience. We also organize several projects for this purpose across the company. In other words, we are responsible for refining Sophia's Guruguru Model and, like good blood flow, developing its circulation into a thicker and faster one while solving various issues. Sophia welcomed a total of 215 new employees in the first half of FY 2020. In addition, we developed and released a manual specific to COVID-19 safety measures

and home-visit nursing, fully implemented WOW!2, a support program for work-life balance, developed a ladder to indicate nursing skills, implemented a management learning program for leaders, conducted customer satisfaction surveys and employee job satisfaction surveys, and designed and measured the Sophia Experience. We are now in the middle of a long and rewarding journey to realize the new vision we created together in 2018 rather than letting it become "pie in the sky" while supporting the growth and job satisfaction of each and every one of us. The Guruguru Model is the source of Sophia's value creation that realizes the vision, mission, and values. I believe that this refinement will better help us to contribute to *care for life* for each and every one of our clients, as well as to the significant growth of each of us.



General Manager of  
the Management Headquarters  
**Yuichiro Sakai**

## Proud to be a professional who supports the realization of visions

The Management Headquarters consists of a total of seven teams that include the procurement team that specializes in opening new offices, procuring medical supplies, and processing applications to government agencies, and the medical support team that trains medical clerks and follows up on medical affairs work, in addition to teams taking on the corporate functions of accounting, business management, human resources, labor relations, and the information system. This division was formed based on the characteristics of our business of home-visit nursing with which we have acquainted ourselves through years of experience. In FY 2020, we were blessed with the opportunity to take over the business of operating home-visit nursing

stations on a nationwide scale and were involved in the opening of a total of 18 stations and relocations to increase the capacity of stations. Although most of our members are not nurses or other medical professionals, each one is dedicated to providing daily support as a professional in the back office, pursuing all possibilities so that all medical professionals at Sophia can face clients with peace of mind. On top of that, this fiscal year, we actively promoted the transfer of employees to full-time medical clerical positions at the stations, where they can interact more with clients so that they can acquire a more client-oriented perspective as a member of a business that provides medical and nursing care services. We believe that all of our thoughts and actions will lead to the realization of the vision of Sophiamed. There is no rain that does not stop. That is why we will keep facing any challenges today and tomorrow.



# My way to *care for life*

Every month, Sophia conducts an interview with a staff member on the theme of Care for Life in the monthly newsletter. This section introduces seven of them



From Internal magazine, Sophia mediA

## Feel the life of a person as a line and cherish it sincerely

General Nurse Station Jonan  
Chief Nurse, Dementia Care Specialist  
(Current Manager of Station Asagaya)

### Hiroko Araki

What do I want?  
I kept asking myself  
while facing my clients

I had decided to work as a visiting nurse when I was doing practical training at a university. After working at a university hospital for five years, I joined Sophia. When I was in charge of a terminally ill client and was about to face end-of-life care alone for the first time, my boss asked me what I wanted to do. My boss then taught me the procedure until late at night. I took notes and prepared for the moment. When the time came, I was able to coordinate my schedule for other visits, which allowed me to provide warm care together with the family member and the care manager. I recall that I felt it was a gift from the client that I was able to carry out the task. When I can provide good care and the client says, "I'm glad it was you," I am filled with gratitude to my boss and the company that trained me. My boss has a good background and is client-oriented. She is a person who knows so much that if you ask her one question, she will give you ten answers, and she has taught me so many things. I would like to think I've inherited something from her, but I'm not even close. I would like to pass on what I have learned to my juniors, but I don't think I can force them to listen. It is my belief that what I think is important may not be important to others. What is important to the person and how does he or she want to work? What does he or she want to do for their client? I don't like to be pushed around myself, so I listen carefully like my boss used to listen to me. Then, when my boss taught me ten



things, I decided to accept as much as I could, even though I knew I would miss some of it. So, it is now my turn to pass on as much of what I have learned as I can to younger people, although I do not know how much they can accept.

Weekly visits become connected to create a track of life

What kind of life has the person lived, what does he or she want to do in the future, and how does he or she want to spend their final days? These are the questions that are always on my mind, and I also ask them to my clients. Our visits are dots of a visit per week. This is the dot where the lives of our clients and each of us met. Whether we will go on in the same way or drift apart in the future depends on many things, but I believe there is meaning in our encounter. The person I visited for an hour today will surely have a tomorrow. If the person passes away tomorrow, the family will still have a tomorrow. So, I would like to leave something happy

for the people who are left behind. It may be my ego, but I want people to think, "I'm glad I met you." I visit a client once a week. If I see a certain client every Wednesday morning, for example, I start to think about what he or she is doing on Thursday morning, or Friday morning. In that sense, I can think of a client as a line on which I recall what he or she was like one month ago. I want to fill in blanks, like when I see a family member, friend, or loved one after a long absence and ask, "What have you been up to since we last saw each other?" Like when we say, "See you later" to our friends, we say, "This is how we are going to be," as if we are both thinking of the future of each other's lives on dotted lines. When we recall later, the dotted line will be a solid line. I think that we are beings who also live in the lives of others. It is like a ray of light. To me, "care for life" means to feel the lives of individual clients as lines and cherish them from the bottom of my heart.



# There is no single answer

Station Chikusa  
Physical Therapist

## Ryuki Kondo

### Struggling between decision-making and the mission of the medical profession

When I was a student and working as an intern at a day-care center, I had an opportunity to visit the homes of the clients I was assigned to. At one home, I was amazed to see that the client had a lively expression and behavior that I had never seen at the day care. The client was not always able to follow instructions given to her, but she was trying to live her life in her own way. In my first encounter with home rehabilitation, I realized that if I didn't know this real world at home, what I was doing in the hospital would be meaningless. The concept of care for life was still vague back then. It was when I was working at a university hospital that I deepened my thoughts on it. I listened to a presentation on the theme of decision-making and paternalism at a conference. In home-visit nursing, paternalism refers to interventions that a caregiver thinks should be done a certain way, regardless of the client's wishes. After listening to the presentation, I felt that this dilemma is something that all medical professionals, whether therapists or nurses, need to keep thinking about, even though there are many times in the medical field when I feel that respecting the will of the client and my own ideas do not coincide. I think Sophia's phrase "client first" reflects the importance of decision-making. I empathized with the phrase and decided to join the company. From the perspective of a physical therapist, the use of multifunctional lower limb orthoses is increasing, but sometimes the patient does not want to wear them



because they are cumbersome to wear or look too exaggerated. When wearing them, clients cannot wear the shoes or clothes they like. In reality, however, many people reluctantly wear them because they don't want to fall anymore and don't want to bother others by being hospitalized. Still, I do not want my clients to give up on their desire to look good. So, in such cases, I consult with doctors and the team to find and suggest some shoes and clothes in different price ranges that clients can wear while wearing the orthosis. I want to stay

close to my clients and provide them with better options for what they feel is important. I want to do whatever I can do for them. For this reason, I always want to have a broad perspective. It is difficult to draw a line between paternalism and decision-making, and there is no single right answer. My care for life means working while constantly searching for what I can do for my clients, without daring to have a firm idea of what the right answer is. As long as I am in the medical profession, I think I will continue to contemplate, worry, and think.

# I put in all the power I have

Station Seijo  
Occupational Therapist

## Kazuyoshi Yonejima

### Occupation means every single experience in one's life

"Use wisdom to care for life." I am not sure whether it is the wisdom in this phrase, but for me, to use wisdom to care for life is to put in all the strength I have at the time. One of our clients had a variety of higher brain dysfunctions, such as aphasia, dyspraxia, and left hemispatial neglect due to a progressive disease. His wish was to be able to write letters. As requested, we have been conducting rehabilitation on the task of writing without focusing too much on that. If we only work on writing, it would be more difficult to live with the progression of symptoms. It would not improve his happiness level. Aside from writing, one of his other problems was that since he was no longer able to work, he had a hard time spending time doing nothing. A care manager and I have been coordinating with each other to suggest a new lifestyle. His family (wife) was hesitant about our suggestion of going to a day service, which was associated with the image of elderly people. Yet, we explained the importance of participating in some activities with other people and proposed a day service with an environment where he could easily join other people, and she understood. Over the course of one year, the scope of his activities expanded considerably. He now goes hiking with his friends from the day care and has started a volunteer group to contribute to society. By staying close to the client's wish to do what he has been able to do before, and by suggesting different experiences suitable for him, he was able to smile



and speak very much more, despite the progression of the disease. The work of occupational therapists is wide-ranging and often difficult for other professionals and customers to understand. In May 2018, the definition of occupational therapy (Japan Association of Occupational Therapists) was updated to the following: Occupational therapy is work-focused treatment, guidance, and assistance provided in health care, health and human services, education, and occupational settings to promote people's health and well-being. "Occupation" refers to activities of daily living that have purpose and value to the target people. In other words, everything a person experiences

is the "occupation." Occupational therapists are the ones who can solve the difficulty of conducting the occupation. Especially at home, it is often not only difficult for clients to live, but also for the family to live together. I try to evaluate the situation, including the family situation, and try to be involved in the process, valuing the meaning of occupation for a specific client so that they can lead as positive a life as possible. However, I have many worries. I give presentations at events, such as Medifes and other events, and receive advice from others. At Sophia, I have peers that recognize the importance of occupational therapy. I would like to cherish the connections with such peers.



# Deliver the happiness of eating until the end

Station Yaguchi  
(currently working at Station Nogata)  
Speech Therapist

## Tatsuro Yoshida

### Increase options to protect the motivation to live

Speech therapists support the act of swallowing. This means that we support the appetite, which is one of the three major needs of human beings. When I was working in a general hospital, there was a client who had a brain stem stroke, which only affected the function of swallowing. Although his body was fine, he could not eat and thus received IV nutrient therapy. His facial expression became darker and darker over time, and he became mentally depressed. It made me realize the importance of eating.

At the hospital, I also felt the limitations of in-hospital rehabilitation. It is because when a patient returns home, the living environment will be completely different. Hospitals tend to provide minimal nutritional care, and there are many cases where people are forbidden to eat because of the fear of aspiration pneumonia. Once patients return home, however, eating management will not be so easy. They want to eat whatever they want, even with a CV port installed or even if the food might cause choking and pain. In one case a speech therapist visited a client's home and faced that client's desire to eat and worked on it. The therapy gradually strengthened the swallowing muscle, and when a swallowing endoscopy was done, the doctor found out that the condition had improved enough to be able to eat again. I came to Sophia because I wanted to intervene in swallowing as



soon as possible through home rehabilitation to make early improvements. It was a great learning experience for me to be assigned to Station Yaguchi and be in charge of several clients with progressive neurological intractable diseases. People with such illnesses slowly but surely start to eat less, lose weight, become tired, have difficulty speaking, and eventually become unable to eat. Thinking about how I could support my clients to live according to their wishes until the end of their lives, and how I could make them accept me naturally, I started to listen to their stories about what kind of experiences they have had and what kind of views they have on life and told them about myself little by little. As my relationship with them

grew stronger, I realized that I would not be able to face them if I did not live my life sincerely. At the management policy sharing session, I heard the phrase "Care for the living." It reminded me of the words of Ms. Tamami Koyama, a nurse who once said at a symposium, "Keep the happiness of eating through the mouth until the end of life." I think that is what we all want but is not necessarily possible for everyone. Still, as a speech therapist, I think I must not give up until the end. I want to support the happiness of eating of my clients. In order to do so, I feel that we need to work more closely with dentists who cooperate with our visits. I thereby want to protect my clients' motivation to live. This is what I think about when I make visits.

# You are in the circle

Care Plan Midorigaoka  
Care Manager

## Kimiko Ogura

### My client called to tell me the good news

I had been a home-care helper for ten years, but I longed to be able to fully support my clients, so I became a care manager when my children grew up. The actual work was much harder than I had expected. In addition to facing my client, I have to deal with the family members, their backgrounds, and different environments. I have to deal with a client as a whole, including all the aspects that surround them. Yet, it is quite difficult to instantly learn about the whole. My work starts by gradually gaining trust by providing support and listening to them. When my clients talk about their experiences, such as the work they had, relationships with families, and difficulties they had in their lives, I can use the information for care planning.

Recently, a daughter of my client, who is a key person in caring for the client, faced a sudden problem, and her son (the grandson of the client) told her to call me. She later told me, "You are like a care manager to my son as well. You are part of our circle." Her words made me very happy.

In another case, a client was bedridden, her eldest daughter had an incurable disease, and the daughter's husband was taking care of the two of them. He was doing everything on his own, not using many services, so I told him, "I think you should use more services to reduce the load." The husband told me that his mother-in-law liked the home, and his wife with the incurable disease was saying she could hang on because her mother was home. He said this was why he wanted to support both of them. However, there was a time when he



suddenly felt anxious about what would happen to the two of them if he collapsed. He called me right then and told me that he had changed his mind. From there, we came up with a plan, and they started to receive the various services of nursing, care, and volunteers. A short time later, my client passed away quietly. Afterwards, the daughter's husband gave me a book that he had made by hand, titled The Path of My Mother-in-Law. In the book, he had written, "One day, a care manager created a big support group. After that, various kinds of people came to my house and supported us."

My experience is still limited, but I want to support my clients and their families, and think with them and encourage them when they are in the dark. I want to be the person that comes to the minds of my clients when they are in need of something. A client once called to tell me something that made her happy that day. I was glad that she took the trouble to contact me to talk about something that she could have told me on my next visit. I don't always get everything right, but that's the kind of relationship I hope to have as I work. And this is the reason my visits tend to take a long time.



# Provide continuous care until the end of life

Station Shimoigusa  
Nurse

## Yukari Fukushima

The first COVID-19 positive client accepted at Sophia

Immediately after I transferred from Station Mitaka to Station Shimoigusa in June, I was told to accept a COVID-19 positive client. The client, who was in his 90s and had been in and out of hospital for heart failure, had no symptoms of the infection, but continued to test positive. The family could not visit him at the hospital. They could only watch him and talk to him through a monitor. He had only a few days left, but the family could not even be beside him when he passed away.

When I heard from Mr. Yoshioka, the manager, about the request to accept the client, I first wanted to do something about the situation. I also thought that by accepting him, it would not only help the client, his family, and the community but also provide an opportunity for the station to improve. I thought I should be assigned to him because I was new to the station and assigned to few regular visits.

I made nine visits, beginning the day after the contract was signed. The family was determined to bring him home from the hospital even if he didn't have a place to accept him, and they were very nervous with the strong desire to do something for him. Therefore, I organized the necessary care using a four-quadrant diagram based on the degree of urgency, importance, and difficulty of care in mind, and tried to relax the family by telling them what the nurse would do, what I wanted the family to do, what was safe for them to do, and what would be left as a memory for them later, in that order, as well as how they



could spend the time together at home. All the family members stayed with the client until the final moment. When I was working at a hospital, I was assigned to a ward with many cancer patients. I thus provided a lot of end-of-life care. There were some cases, such as liver transplant patients, where medical ethics dictated that medical professionals should not give up until the last second of their lives. In the midst of all this, I came to the realization that the hospital is a place to fight, and home is a place to live. That is why at home, I want to focus on providing the support that makes everyday life a little better in the place where my clients live. I feel very happy when my involvement makes my clients' daily lives a little better. I then believe that the

extension of support to improve the daily lives of our clients is the continuous care up to the end of life at the location where they live. I also want to cherish the lives of family members who are left behind after the client passes away, reminding myself that their lives will continue.

I received many words of appreciation from the family members of COVID-19 positive clients. These important words will surely keep supporting me. Although I face many challenges, I love the work as a nurse. I am considering getting a certification in wound management. I would like to acquire more knowledge and skills and share them with my team to help improve the daily lives of as many people as possible.

# "Good morning" feels like "Welcome back"

Day Service Ikegami  
Care Worker,  
Dementia Care Specialist,  
Life Counselor

## Sanae Taki

Think with clients how they can regain hope

I had been working in the airline industry for a long time, serving customers and involved in training and service planning and was blessed with good coworkers, but the company's situation changed, and I decided to leave under the early retirement program. Since I have been working for a long time, I wanted to find a job where I could continue to be involved in society and contribute for as long as possible, so I chose nursing care work.

At the first daycare service I worked at, I felt that nursing care was suited to my personality and that I could work for a long time, so I started to take on training jobs as well. Unfortunately, I left the job once when I had to take care of my father. When I started working again, I considered opening my own business, but after careful consideration, I realized that what I wanted to do was not management but nursing care. I then learned about Sophia's policy of supporting independence and joined Sophia eight years ago.

The reason why I felt I was suited to this job was because I believe that people can have hope no matter what the situation, and I am pretty good at working with clients and figuring out how they can have hope. I was so happy to see my clients become more energetic when I suggested, "How about trying it this way?" I felt that I could help the world in this way.



I have always liked psychology and philosophy, and I like to learn about different ways of thinking, and if A doesn't work, I try B. If that doesn't work either, I try C. In my previous job, I had to devise ways to increase customer satisfaction by providing everything within the airplane. I suppose my experience from my previous profession has come in handy now.

I am trying to make my clients feel a sense of belonging and connected to the community of Day Ikegami. I think it is important to encourage people to act spontaneously while we refrain from providing too much intervention. In keeping with the "involved, good-natured spirit" of the Five Values of Sophia, clients of Day Ikegami are involved and care for each other. For example, clients become attentive to the behavior of another dementia client. This is

the key that helps Day Ikegami operate smoothly without excessive intervention by the staff. I suppose clients gradually change through relationships with others and based on the environment.

Our clients have a variety of lives, but after they spend time at Day Ikegami, we want them to return home with their hearts filled with satisfaction. When I say, "Good morning" to clients who come to Day Ikegami in the morning, I feel like saying "Welcome back." When a client says, "I really enjoy coming here," I feel that I have been a source of energy for that person, and that makes me very happy. It might be because I feel like I am doing something that I could not do enough of for my own parents. I hope that our clients will continue to come to this day care until the end of their lives and enjoy their lives to the fullest.



# Management System

February 2021

## Introduction of all stations, management members, and the organizational system

Sophia has 55 home-visit nursing stations, 7 home care support offices, 4 day services, and 1 back office. Our home-visit nursing services are now available not only in the Kanto area but

also in the Kansai, Hokuriku, and Tokai regions. The business structure consists of four divisions: Home Nursing East Japan Headquarters, Home Nursing West Japan Headquarters, the Management

Headquarters, and the VMS Promotion Headquarters. With this system, Sophia aims to build a system to maximize the value provided at each business site and increase corporate value.

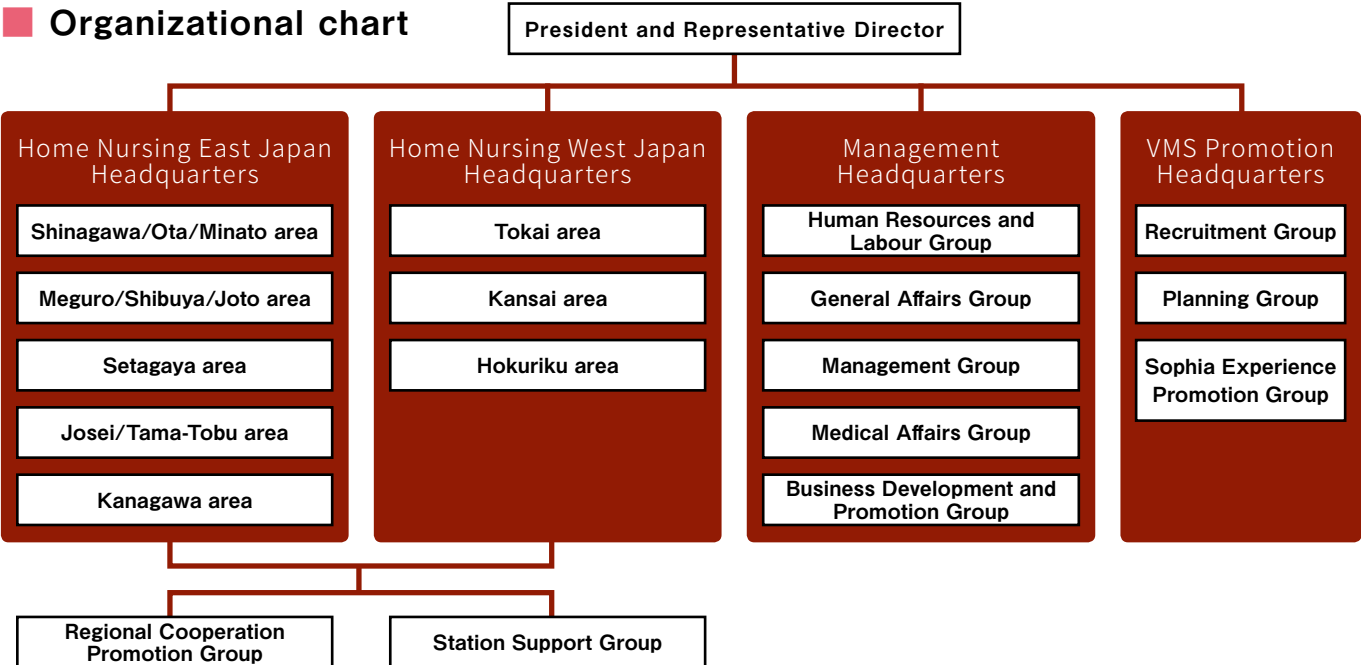
### List of business sites

Kanto		
Home-visit nursing station		
Iriya	Kyodo	Mizonokuchi
Higashi Nihombashi	Yoga	Motosumiyoshi
Shirokane-Takanawa	Mishuku-Sancha	Hon-Atsugi
Aomono-Yokocho	Jiyugaoka	Isehara
Yutakacho	Daikanyama	Iris Odawara
Fudomae	Nakano-Shimbashi	Hadano
Koyama	Nogata	Home Care Support Office (Care Plan)
Sogo Jonan	Eifuku	Gakudai
Komaba	Shimoigusa	Midorigaoka
Higashigaoka	Nishi-Ogikubo	Yukigaya
Gakudai	Takaido	Yaguchi
Otorii	Asagaya	Futakotamagawa
Omorimachi	Kotake-Mukaihara	Asagaya
Nishi-Magome	Oizumi-Gakuen	Mitaka
Yaguchi	Hikarigaoka	Day service
Yukigaya	Mitaka	Jiyugaoka
Ikegami	Tsutsujigaoka	Gakudai
Sanno	Koganei	Ikegami
Futakotamagawa	Asao	Kyodo
Roka-Koen	Miyamae	
Seijo	Kashimada	

### Management members

 <b>Ryotaro Yamamoto</b> CEO	 <b>Akira Shinoda</b> Home Nursing East Japan Headquarters General Manager	 <b>Masahiro Hada</b> Home Nursing West Japan Headquarters General Manager also Recruitment	 <b>Aya Ito</b> VMS Promotion Headquarters General Manager	 <b>Yuichiro Sakai</b> Management Headquarters General Manager
 <b>Tomoe Akahira</b> Meguro/Shibuya/ Joto area Area Producer	 <b>Makoto Ose</b> Kanagawa area Area Producer	 <b>Masako Kawata</b> Josei/Tama-Tobu area Area Producer	 <b>Hiroshi Kurita</b> Setagaya area Area Producer	 <b>Hiroyuki Takase</b> Shinagawa/Ota/ Minato area Area Producer
 <b>Ryota Arimura</b> Regional Cooperation Promotion Group Group Manager	 <b>Masashi Nakagawa</b> Station Support Group Group Manager	 <b>Kazuto Endo</b> Human Resources and Labour Group Group Manager	 <b>Nayuta Iwata</b> Planning Group Group Manager	 <b>Shin Sasaki</b> Sophia Experience Promotion Group

### Organizational chart





# Components of the Sophia Experience

A closer look at what the Sophia Experience is all about

## The concept and calculation method of the nursing and rehabilitation practice level

$$\text{Sophia Experience} = \text{[Box]} + (\text{[Box]} + \text{[Box]})$$

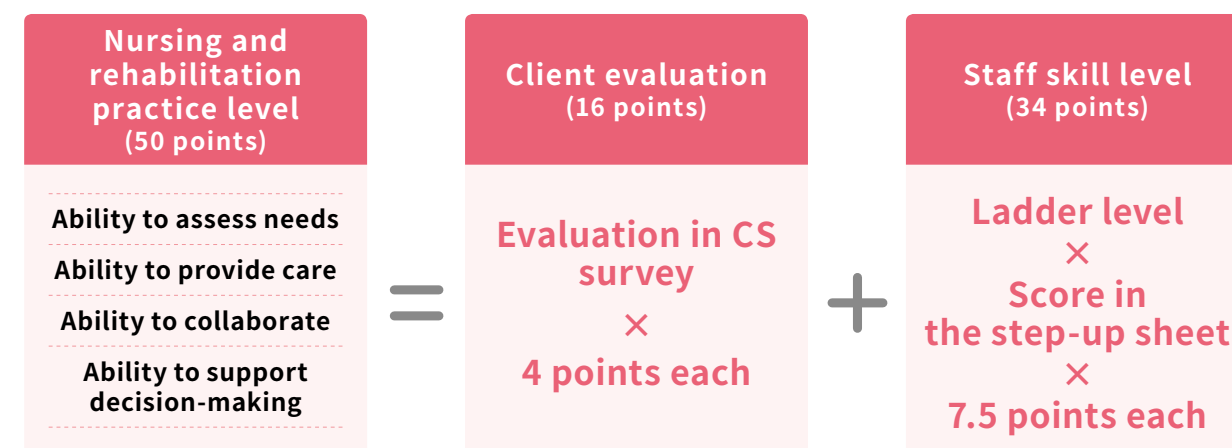
Medical skills appropriate for home-visit nursing are evaluated using the clinical ladder

The nursing and rehabilitation practice level is based on the four strengths of the clinical ladder proposed by the Japanese Nursing Association: the ability to assess needs, the ability to provide care, the ability to collaborate, and the ability to support decision-making. Scores are based on these

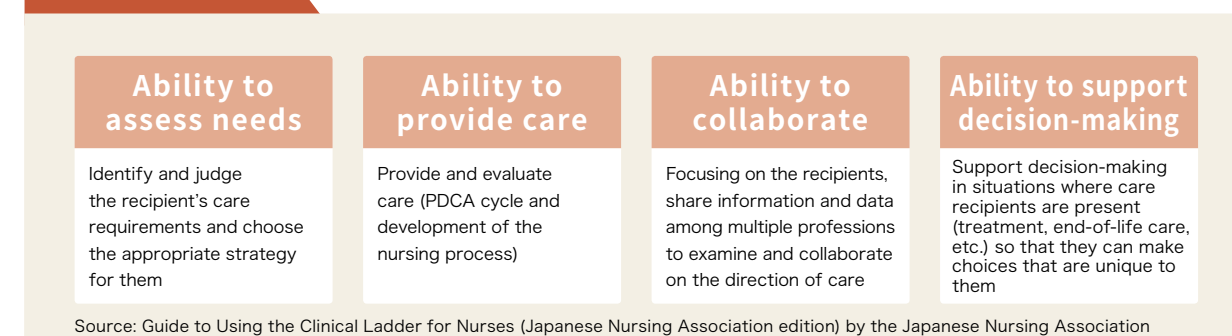
strengths, the evaluation by clients and the skill level of staff. The overall score is 50 points, consisting of 16 points from the client evaluations and 34 points for the staff skill levels. Since the nursing and rehabilitation practice level is an evaluation of medical skills, we have designed a ratio of approximately 1:2 between client evaluation and skill level, with an emphasis on objectively identifying the level.

We ask our customers to rate us on a five-point scale using our own questions

based on the clinical ladder, and then multiply the positive response rate by four points for each question to calculate the score. The skill levels of the staff are scored by multiplying the mastery rate of the ladder system with Sophia's original step-up sheet that utilizes the ladder system. For example, assuming that the ladder level is calculated at 100 points, the skill level of a staff member with a ladder level of 4 (coefficient 0.8) and a step-up sheet mastery rate of 80% would be 64 points.



### Medical skills



## The concept and calculation method of Five Values practice level

$$\text{Sophia Experience} = \text{[Box]} + (\text{[Box]} + \text{[Box]})$$

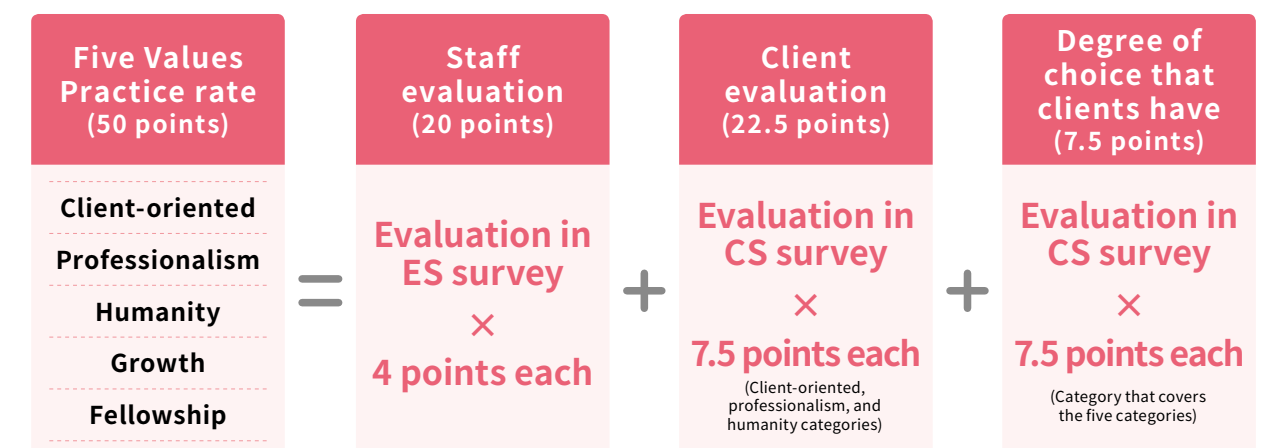
Evaluation of services founded on the philosophy using client and staff surveys

The Five Values practice level is based on the five action guidelines that we value: client-oriented, professionalism, humanity, growth, and fellowship. Based on the staff's own evaluation, the client's evaluation, and the degree of choice the score is calculated. The overall score is set at 50 points with 20 points

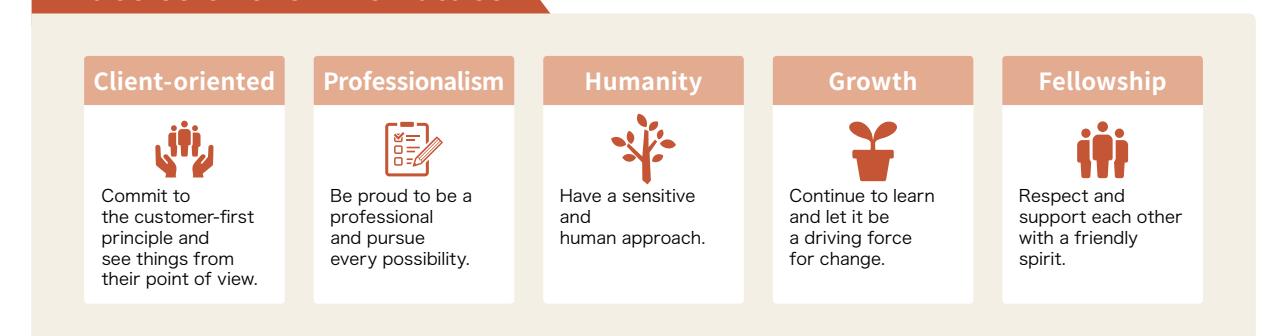
for the staff's own evaluation and 30 points for the combination of the client's evaluation and degree of choice. In order to ensure that services are provided in accordance with the Action Guidelines, we place greater weight on how clients feel and how they are able to make choices in their home care. The staff's self-evaluations are based on the results of the annual Employee Satisfaction Survey (ES Survey), which is conducted within the company and rated on a five-point scale based on the Values.

We calculate the positive response rate by multiplying each question by four points. Clients evaluations are based on a five-point scale using original questions based on the Five Values including client-oriented, professionalism, and humanity, and are calculated by multiplying the positive response rate by 7.5 points.

As for the extent to which clients are able to make choices in their own home care, we use the same method to calculate the answers to the question, "Are you able to decide on the policy for your own care?"



### Practice of the Five Values





# For the FY 2021

In 2021, we will continue to pursue the goal of caring for life.  
Our plans include the publication of annual reports and the opening of new offices at various locations



We will continue to collaborate with the Hoan Hao Hospital.



We will increase the number of members who care for life together.

We will realize our vision while disclosing information with a high degree of transparency

With the publication of this annual report, we will disclose information outside the company every year with a high degree of transparency. The next measurement period will be from October 2020 to September 2021, and the next report is going to be published in February 2022.

At present, we are planning to open 21 new offices (8 in Tokyo, 5 in Kanagawa, 3 in Tokai, 1 in Kansai, and 1 in Hokkaido), and together with the upgrading of existing offices to a 24/7 operation system, we will continue to advance toward the realization of our vision. In addition, in the summer of 2021, we plan to collaborate with Hoan Hao Hospital in Vietnam, which is managed and supported by a group company, to bring the rehabilitation business cultivated in Japan to Vietnam.

## Schedule

	2020 October	~	2021 February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	2022 January	February
Annual Report			Publication of the 2021 edition												Publication of the 2022 edition
Opening of new stations			Kanagawa ①	Tokyo ① Tokai ①	Hokkaido ①	Tokyo④ Kanagawa③ Tokai① Hokuriku① Kansai①	Tokyo ①				Tokyo ② Kanagawa ① Tokai ①				
Start of 365-day service system					Kansai ①					Kanagawa ④ Tokyo ②	Tokyo ②	Tokyo ①	Tokyo ②		
Overseas operations Communi cation			Opening of the Sophia Institute for Home Care Research						Operation in Vietnam						





“We want to be in a position to listen to  
the small wishes of our clients.

Small wishes include doing something  
while standing in a bathroom or going to pick up a newspaper.  
When clients become able to assume small roles in their lives,  
it often increases opportunities to move  
and improves the activity level.

I want to be on their side and keep searching,  
not missing the things that are important to them,  
and not giving up until the end.”

(Team Leader/Occupational Therapist at the Sophia Experience Promotion Group)











“What kind of life a client has had  
and what kind of life the client wants to have from now on.  
The person I visited for an hour today will surely have a tomorrow.  
If the person passes away tomorrow,  
the family will still have a tomorrow.  
Then, I would like to leave something happy  
for the people who are left behind as well.

(Nurse, Station Asagaya)





“I believe that the extension of support to improve the daily lives of our clients is continuous care up to the end of life at the location where they are living.

I also want to cherish the lives of family members who are left behind after the client passes away, reminding myself that their lives will continue.”

(Nurse, Station Shimoigusa)

■ On the publication of this report

Sophiamedi has decided to publish an annual report from this fiscal year in order to introduce our management policies, outcomes of our business activities, and medium to long-term value creation to all stakeholders in an easy-to-understand manner. In this report, we discussed our business activities toward the realization of our vision, as well as the social issues we are facing, the future of home care, and the experience of caring for life to provide more complete information on the Sophia Experience.

■ Note

This report contains statements about the future outlook and facts from the past and present. These statements are based on forecasts we made based on information currently available to us at the time this report was being prepared. As such, they may contain a certain amount of risk and uncertainty, and we would like to caution you not to place undue reliance on the information.

■ Period covered in this report

This report is based on the period from April 1, 2020, to September 30, 2020.

\* Some statements may cover information from before and after this period when necessary.

Research and writing (p.23, p.26-27, p.32-38) by Yoshiko Shiosaka, Illustration by Takahiro Nagahama, design by studio GIVE (Masakazu Yamamoto, Jiro Nozaki)

Annual Report 2021

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