



Research Article

The Technologies of Performing Social Services in Russia by Social Service Institutions (Evidence from Kursk and Belgorod Regions)

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Abstract

Social service is an integral part of social protection of the sick, the handicapped, the senior, etc. It relates to many categories of citizens who need governmental help. Providing this support acts as a guarantee for observance of social, human, freedom and civil rights. The social service system is organized in such a way that enables to provide help for everyone who needs it. Only in this case it meets the interests of the society.

In Kursk and Belgorod regions the local social service systems are presented by various types of institutions. In the Kursk region these institutions are: general and psychoneurological care homes, social rehabilitation centres for minors, social assistance centres for families and children, medical social rehabilitation centers, social shelters for children and adolescents, social professional centre. In the Belgorod region these are: general and psychoneurological care homes, social rehabilitation centres for minors, women's refuges, child development and socialization centres, rehabilitation centre for children and adolescents with limited health capacities, geriatric center, child guidance and family counselling centre, a special care-home for the senior and the handicapped. The comparative analysis of social service systems in Kursk and Belgorod regions revealed that in both regions their social service systems are fully formed and provide services in institutional, non-institutional and partially inpatient forms. The network of social service institutions in Kursk and Belgorod regions is widely presented by various types of institutions, but in the Belgorod region it is wider and has a bigger variety of the institutions. It is likely to be explained by the attention that local authorities pay to this problem and the funding level for it from the regional budget.

Keywords

The handicapped; The sick; Social service; Social services; The regions of Russia

Introduction

The development of contemporary society is inevitably accompanied with the appearance and aggravation of many social

problems [1]. Such issues as population ageing [2,3] and increasing prevalence of non-infectious diseases [4,5] which are mostly of genetic origin [6-8] (especially cardiovascular [9,10] and metabolic disorders [11,12] are particularly urgent in Russia. Health disorders among children are frequent in Russia nowadays [13]. The material prosperity level [14] of the population is not that high and due to this fact the pathological prevalence of the population [15,16] is increasing (especially when getting older) [17,18] the high disability [19,20] and death rates are remaining stable (to some extent due to cardiovascular and metabolic disorders) [21,22].

Current social situation demands making the development of social service system one of the key directions in social politics and making the social service system fit today's requirements. In addition, no consistent approach to the definition «social service» has yet been found. One group of authors define it as an effective social technology which helps to provide social support for the citizens in difficult social and financial circumstances, which undermine the health and vital activity of a human being or a social group. Some authors consider it to be a new paradigm of social work, and some presume that it is an essential sector of the social sphere [23].

Public social service in Russia is one of the key aspects of social politics aimed at social protection of the population. It is particularly connected with the activities of the social protection management bodies and relevant social services, which work for providing social services, performing social support and adaptation of the citizens in a critical situation [14].

As a type of a specific social activity, social service is a relatively complicated system with its inherent peculiar functions and with multiple connections and relations of various types between its separate elements, blocks and parts. The elements of this system are described by inner order and focus on performing social services, along with social adaptation and social rehabilitation functions [24].

Social service in Russia is based on numerous needs of the society: on the need of public goods redistributive mechanisms, the need of being protected from social risks, of making the conditions for the health improvement of the most vulnerable segments of the population, the need of controlling the deviant behaviour of certain categories of persons, the need of individual approach for providing social services, of creating a collaboration model when performing social work, of preparing professionals for social service system, of managing the social processes of the society division, etc. [25]. In this regard, this article is aimed at considering the reasons of Russian social service institutions establishment and their contemporary state in terms of social protection institutions of Kursk and Belgorod regions.

The Reasons of Social Service Institutions Establishment in Russia

The Russian state failed to cope with the role of a guarantor for economic and social rights of the majority of the population. There happened a phenomenal social division, which was unprecedented in the history of the 20th century. The most unpleasant consequences of the market reforms were: a dramatic decline of the standards of living, unemployment growth, a deep division of the society, acquisition of

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wealth by the minority at the expense of economic conditions of the majority during privatization.

The urgency of the situation demanded federal and regional authorities and administrations to aim social service at helping socially disadvantaged population groups in the first place. It was planned to be done via a network of governmental social institutions and enterprises.

A number of Government Decrees of Russia, orders and decrees of the Ministry of Labour and Social Development of Russia and some other acts have defined the formation of the material, legal and institutional framework of social service centres, the main areas of their activity, their functions and tasks. These acts formed the basis for the establishment of social service centres. From one side, the legislative and executive bodies were challenged to take the into account the demand in social service for socially vulnerable groups, but from the other side they were challenged to stay realistic in terms of the present situation and the financial opportunities that the government had during the market reforms phase [26].

The social service development perspectives in Russia were defined by «The Concept of social service development in the Russian Federation», as endorsed by the Panel of the Ministry of Social Protection in its decision from 4 August 1993. This Concept defined the necessity for providing social services for the population groups who needed it because of the decline of their standards of living, providing targeted aid at the territorial level. This act was the first to define such professional terms as «social work», «social service», «social services», «social service worker», «difficult life situation» and «social service client»; the social services system (state, municipal and non-state), the functions, types and forms of activity of a social service, the principles of social service, the principles of organizing a social service and its management structure.

The enactment of the Concept of social service development in the Russian Federation actually led to derogation from the social service principles towards establishing a social protection system of a European type. This system is based on the state's care which «includes addressing the factors that impede achieving an optimal level of prosperity by an individual, a family, groups of people, as well as organizing individual help for people in difficult life situations». Addressing these factors and organizing individual help were supposed to be assisted by social service events via a system of various services [27].

At the turn of the century, 10 geriatric centers, 16 houses of charity, more than 500 small boarding houses functioned in Russia. Due to the help of the public health authorities new geriatric centers, hospitals and offices appeared. By 2000 the family social service network had included 2240 institutions and had provided 23 438 426 services of all kinds (socio-psychological, socio-psychological, socio-household and socio-pedagogical, etc.). However, the system of social services institutions, providing help for family and children did not maintain the proper level of social support. Not only the problem families needed social help, but also the majority of Russian families reached out for it.

At the same time social shelters for children and adults, half-way houses, women' refuges, homeless shelters, the centres of social help for families and children appeared in our country [28]. The regions were independent in making the decision about establishing a local network of institutions.

By and large, Russian social service system is one of the basic social institutions aimed at providing help and support to the citizens in critical conditions. For a long time the network of institutions had been developing through extensive measures in order to provide social services to the people who needed them.

The Contemporary state of social service in Belgorod and Kursk regions of Russia

As at 1 January 2016 seventy organizations functioned in the social service system of the Belgorod region, including 15 regional governmental social organizations, 7 organizations with social services for orphans and children deprived of parental care (5 public and 2 private), 14 municipal organizations for the senior and the handicapped, 1 regional and 12 municipal social rehabilitation centers for minors, 22 municipal comprehensive social service centers (2252 people resided in the organizations for the senior and handicapped, 481 people resided in the organizations for minors, social services provided at home were performed for 20454 citizens) [29].

- In the Kursk region the social service institutions differ a little from the Belgorod ones:
- Inpatient facilities – 13 (psychoneurological care homes – 6, care homes for the senior and the handicapped – 5, children's homes for mentally retarded children – 2),
- Social rehabilitation centres for minors - 2,
- Comprehensive social service centres – 25,
- Social shelters for children and adolescents – 2,
- Inter-district centres of social help for families and children – 4,
- Women and children refuges – 1,
- Non-state social service providers – 4,
- Medical social rehabilitation centers – 1,
- Social rehabilitation centers -1,
- Social professional center – 1 [30].

The social service institutions of Belgorod and Kursk regions widely use various social service technologies: traditional (providing social services in institutional and partial inpatient forms, in the form of social services provided at home) and newly-introduced and implemented innovative forms of social service.

In the Kursk region social services are provided at home, in institutional and partial inpatient forms. In 2016 social service centres of the Kursk region provided social services for 93 000 senior and handicapped people.

Since 2012 the Kursk region has had such a form of social support for the senior and the handicapped as foster family. Currently there are 78 foster families that provide help for 79 senior people in the towns and districts of the Kursk region.

The service called «Social taxi» has been functioning in the Kursk region since 2011. Its main aim is the socio-household services improvement and enhancement the quality of social services. This new service provides transportation for single elderly persons and handicapped people. For these categories of people «social taxi» facilitates the access to socially significant places: health care and

social protection institutions, the Pension fund and the Social security fund, medico-social appraisal establishments.

In the Kursk region the rental places with technical aids, which are situated in comprehensive social service centres, have become important among the forms of social services.

The «Mobile brigade» is one of the significant forms of social service and is aimed at helping the citizens in resolving the citizens' problems on a field visit basis. Social service centres specialists and social protection department experts, specialists from the «Social payments centres», a specialist from the Pension fund, a hairdresser and a health worker are the members of a mobile brigade.

Since 2014 such a form of cooperation between the population and social welfare services as a social contract has been intramitting in the region. Social contract is an agreement concluded between a citizen and a social protection body. Under this contract social protection bodies are obliged to provide social help for the citizen and the citizen is obliged to implement the measures which are mentioned in the social adaptation programme. The help for subsistence farming and dwelling repair works are the most popular types of help under the social contract.

As a result of the work carried out by the specialists from the institutions of social help for family and children, 1162 families (1592 children) were withdrawn from the database on children and families at risk, also due to the positive changes – 886 families and 1197 children (75%). It was possible due to the early intervention into the long-standing family problems. Early prevention of the bad influence that comes from a family stops the growth of social orphanhood, reduces neglect and the problems which can trouble children, and allows preventing the child's (family's) transition from the category of «difficult life situation» to the «at risk» category. Identifying the mentioned categories of minors and families is conducted in collaboration with all the subjects of the system of child neglect and juvenile delinquency prevention, including the help from the coordination councils that provide support for families and children in difficult life situations and in need of the social support from the Kursk region.

In order to resolve the social problems that dysfunctional family face, the Kursk region implements 50 programs aimed at overcoming family dysfunction and the prevention of children neglect. One of the examples of such program is «Home that melts the ice» [31], implemented by the inter-district centre of social service for families and children of the Shigri district. The programs of the inter-district center of social help for families and children of Solntsevo district are quite effective either: «Self-help» [32] program (which aims at help in resolving the self-sustainment problems and accumulating person's own abilities in order to overcome difficult life situations), «Village with no juvenile delinquency» [33] (prevention and reducing juvenile delinquency, creating the conditions for the socialization and rehabilitation of minors who have troubles with the law), «On the way to yourself» [34] (prevention of the addiction to alcohol, the formation of minors' and their parents' social and life skills that influence their physical and mental health and active lifestyle; harmonization of the relations between an individual and the society through rescuing from alcoholism). A number of other technologies are also implemented for preventing family dysfunction: the «Off-site lyceum» (a program for young and expectant mothers aimed at getting the experience of positive maternity, formation of an adequate concept of parenthood, club programs for women in difficult life

situations, the «Game bus» (a visit by a team of activities organizers from the center's staff to the rural settlements in order to entertain children during their holidays).

Seminar-conferences of a regional level are organized for the staff of the institutions that provide social help for families and children, and the best social practices and problematic issues in the work of the institutions are discussed on them. For instance, one of the seminars was held in 2016 in Zheleznogorsk inter-district centre of social help for families and children. It was devoted to the following theme: «Psychological and pedagogical forms and methods of behaviour modification of children with unbalanced psychoemotional state». In the Cheremsinovo centre for minors a seminar «Steps to success» was held. It touched the topic of effective interaction between the social service institutions of the Kursk region and the tutorship or guardianship agencies and the topic of the formation of responsible parenthood in order to prevent family dysfunction and social orphanhood.

Along with the 50 state social service organizations, there are 3 non-state organizations which provide social services in institutional, partial inpatient forms and at home and are included in the register of social service providers in the Kursk region:

1. The Kursk regional public organization named «The Women's Union of Russia» (provides socio-pedagogical, socio-psychological, communicative, etc. services for mostly elderly people and citizens who need social service), which has provided help for 87 people as at 1 December 2016.

2. The Alehin medical rehabilitation centre «Ortho-doctor» firm (provides socio-household and socio-medical help services for the handicapped, including families with handicapped children), which has provided help for 103 people as at 1 December 2016.

3. The Kursk regional public organization named «The Mill» (provides services of a nurse that replace inpatient treatment for the families who need it).

As in Kursk, the traditional forms of social service are implemented by social services institutions along with the newly-introduced forms in the Belgorod region too. Moreover, the range of them is wider than in the Kursk region and similar forms of the service differ from each other.

In the Belgorod region the technologies and methodologies of providing social services in partial inpatient form and at home, which replace inpatient treatment, develop rapidly. For instance, «The nurse service» provides the services of a nurse which are aimed at helping and supporting the vital activity of the person who gets this service and who requires permanent or interim care. In 2016, 305 people used the help of nurses.

Another innovative form of social service is «A family for a weekend». This is a form of a homestay when elderly people live in a social worker's family on weekends and holidays. A single elderly person stays in a calm home environment for 24 hours a day, where he is given special attention and care.

The technology of social tourism is actively implemented (in contrast to the Kursk region, where it is used only by two inpatient facilities). «Social tourism» is a broad term which includes a set of activities – from a quite walk in a park with elements of an informative excursion to a long-distance trip with sightseeing. It stimulates maintaining health on the same level and improving it and

also is helpful in declining physical and emotional stress. In 2016, 631 people took part in the rehabilitation activities of «Social tourism».

One more form of social service in the Belgorod region is «Health resort at home». This is a socio-rehabilitative service which helps the handicapped and the senior get health resort services. Elderly people who cannot get health treatments on medical grounds need to be given preventive socio-medical help at home. This type of help includes socio-medical rehabilitation procedures in accordance with an individual rehabilitation programme, which include massage, inhalations, ultrasound examination and physical therapy exercises. In 2016, 910 elderly and handicapped people were provided with socio-rehabilitative services at home.

In the Belgorod region such results of initiatives as projects are implemented along with the governmental programs. For example, in 2013, 40 social projects were implemented by the municipal authorities and social protection institutions. They include: «Establishing «Houses of sympathy» in the distant localities of the Krasnenskiy district», «Providing the socio-household services for the elderly people of the Krasnoyarskiy district», «Organizing a social tourism system on the territory of the Staryi Oskol urban district», «Establishing a city club named «Meeting» for elderly and handicapped people».

For the parents who raise handicapped children and children with limited health capacities the project named «The school of tutor's experience» is implemented in the Belgorod region. It is aimed at making rehabilitation procedures at home, at teaching and providing practical experience for parents (families) with handicapped children. In the institutions that provide social help for families and children, various events are organized for adolescents in difficult life situations: poetry reading contest, excursion trips, gala concerts, art and skill workshops, sport events, etc.

The comparative analysis of social service systems in Kursk and Belgorod regions revealed that in both regions their social service systems are fully formed and provide services in institutional, partial inpatient and non-institutional forms. The network of social services institutions in Kursk and Belgorod regions is widely presented by various types of institutions, but in the Belgorod region it is wider and has a bigger variety of the institutions. It is likely to be explained by the attention that local authorities pay to this problem and the funding level for it from the regional budget.

Conclusion

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Conflict of Interest

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