

## **SUSTAINABILITY WEEKS 2014**

### **Workshop Description**

*Theme 1 - Health Problems in an Aging Society with a Harsh Winter Climate*

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Keywords: Healthcare, Aging Society, Public Health

Category: Service Design Workshop

### **Summary**

In Japan, problems such as declining birthrate and aging population continue unabated. Furthermore, more and more young people are moving to urban cities. Consequently, many villages and towns are projected to become severely depopulated within the next 25 years. Such a situation will result in poor access to medical care, and this will further contribute to a continual decline in population, resulting in a vicious circle occurring.

Citizens of Hokkaido, Japan's most northern island, face cold winters with heavy snow fall. These harsh winters often mean that the elderly are confined to their homes, with depression, malnutrition, and sarcopenia etc. developing. Furthermore, temperature differences between rooms increase the risk of stroke or myocardial infarction. Among younger citizens, traveling by car is common due to the vast area and severe natural environment. Due to this, obesity is also a health problem in Hokkaido.