

CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

Multidisciplinary policies and practices to support and empower informal carers in Europe

ICIC20 Virtual Conference – September 2020

Stecy Yghemonos¹

1:Eurocarers, Brussels, , Belgium

Introduction (Core aim of the workshop)

According to research, informal carers provide over 80% of all care in Europe. Despite their vital role, carers' needs are rarely discussed. Yet, demographic ageing puts carers under growing pressure, with negative outcomes on their health and wellbeing. Over the last few years, much has been done to take forward the carers' agenda. However, the success of initiatives aiming to address carers' needs depends on the interplay between a broad set of social and health policies and developments have often been implemented in a siloed manner. This workshop will present inspiring carer-led initiatives focusing on different stages of the informal carer 'journey' where private, public and voluntary sector organisations collaborate around more carer-friendly approaches.

Background

In Europe, the estimated value of unpaid informal care - as a percentage of the cost of formal long-term care - ranges from 50 to 90 %. The latest Ageing report highlights that a progressive shift from informal to professional care would entail an increase of 130% in the share of GDP devoted to long-term care. Against this backdrop, meeting the growing care needs of an ageing population without recognising and supporting informal carers will be challenging. Besides its bearing on the financial sustainability of care systems, informal care also contributes to social cohesion and intergenerational solidarity.

Aims and Objectives

Stecy Yghemonos, Eurocarers, will provide a quick overview of the situation of informal carers in the EU and present the Eurocarers Strategy "10 steps towards carer-friendly societies in Europe".

Elizabeth Hanson, Linnaeus University, will shed light on young carers, a sub-group of carers which is still largely invisible. Her presentation will underline the importance of awareness raising among professionals in the care and educational sectors and the need for adequate tools allowing to identify and support young carers through multidisciplinary collaborations.

John Dunne, Family Carers Ireland, will describe the emerging Irish model for supporting family carers across different 'tiers' of the carer population and several dimensions of carer well-being in an integrated, cost-

effective manner. He will also outline how building carer resilience strengthens integrated care by enhancing carers' capacity to engage in healthcare partnerships.

Target audience

The workshop will serve to inform policy-makers, health and social care professionals, as well as patients and carers advocates about the needs and added value of carers in integrated community-based care settings.

Learnings/Take away

Recognising carers as partners in care in integrated care pathways has positive effects on the quality of care they provide and helps to prevent the adverse impact of caring on carers' health and wellbeing.

Format

- Introduction on situation of informal carers in the EU, Stecy Yghemonos (5')
- Presentation of initiatives on young (adult) carers (10')
- Q&A on presentation (5')
- Presentation of Irish model (10')
- Q&A on presentation (5')
- General discussion (25'): participants will be invited to share about practices and policies in their countries, and to identify common challenges and opportunities.

Preferred length

60 minutes