

ANYONE CAN BE AN INFORMAL CARER AT SOME STAGE

Informal carers are persons who provide care (usually unpaid) to someone with a chronic illness, disability or other long-lasting health or care need, outside of a professional or formal framework. Informal carers across the EU provide over 80% of all care, with women providing approximately two thirds of care mainly as daughters (in law) and wives/partners. In our ageing societies, more and more people endorse informal caregiving activities.

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

The quality of life of carers is generally poorer than for society as a whole. Being a carer is often associated with poverty, isolation, frustration, ill health and depression.

Informal carers often face the specific difficulties attached to dementia without benefiting from adequate support.

Informal carers of working age face significant difficulties to combine care and employment.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

More recognition should be granted to the contribution of informal carers, as well as to their acute need for support.

More comparative research, exchange of good practices and policy initiatives are needed to support progress in this area.

COORDINATION OF THE PROJECT

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MORE INFORMATION

www.eurocarers.org/care4dem



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SUPPORTING
INFORMAL CARERS
OF PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA
through web-based mutual aid groups



SUPPORTING INFORMAL CARERS OF PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA THROUGH WEB-BASED MUTUAL AID GROUPS

The CARE4DEM project (2017-2020) aims to develop a new and innovative model of mutual aid groups which promotes caregivers' involvement, by introducing web-based tools integrated with other types of intervention. Its aim is to:

- Enhance the carer's satisfaction with care and reduce the risks of burn-out;
- Trigger the development of mutual aid groups for carers, building on facilitators' training.

AN INNOVATIVE MODEL BUILT ON EVIDENCE AND A PARTICIPATIVE PROCESS

Building on transnational research, the CARE4DEM model of web-based mutual aid groups will be developed, validated and then tested in Italy, Romania, Spain and Portugal. All the information and tools required to implement this model be made available to professionals.

The project will also:

- Identify the facilitator's competence profile suitable for the designed model of mutual aid groups;
- Develop a multi-media course for mutual aid groups' facilitators;
- Create a network of professionals across the EU working towards improving the support offered to informal carers.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF INFORMAL CARERS

Peer support interventions builds on the capacity of individuals who have experienced a challenging situation to support adequately others dealing with a similar situation. By listening empathetically, sharing their experiences and offering suggestions based on their own experience, people with a lived experience are particularly able to help others in a comparable situation.



Peer support, in particular when embedded in a range of support services, is highly valued by informal carers, and **recommended** by health professionals, vocational training professionals as well as academic research.

However, evidence shows that informal carers face a **multiplicity of obstacles** preventing them from benefiting from supporting measures including mutual aid groups. Among them are the lack of information, self-awareness, opportunities at disposal and limited availability due to their caring responsibilities...

The **use of ICT** offers here new opportunities which have not been exploited to their full capacity to date.

The CARE4DEM project builds on transnational exchange to design an **innovative solution**.

THE PROJECT PARTNERS

Anziani e non solo società cooperativa	Italy	
Caso 50+	Portugal	
EaSI, the European Association for Social Innovation	Romania	
Eurocarers, European Association Working for Carers	Belgium	
Instituto de Salud Carlos III	Spain	
Aproximar, cooperativa de solidariedade social	Portugal	