

## Meeting of the Eurocarers Research Working Group

11-12 November 2024, Gran Canaria – Spain

Elba Vecindario Aeropuerto Business & Convention Hotel / Room La Palma

### Meeting Notes

#### Day 1

##### Introduction

The meeting opened with a warm welcome to participants, marking the 10<sup>th</sup> annual gathering of the Eurocarers Research Working Group. Attendees were encouraged to actively engage in discussions to maximise the usefulness of the sessions. The agenda was noted to have a strong policy focus this year, reflecting the increasing integration of Eurocarers' advocacy and research efforts. The possibility of a future joint meeting between the Research and Policy Working Groups was briefly mentioned.

##### Thematic Panel Discussion 1: Policy and Regulation

###### Speakers:

- Robert Anderson (FCI) presented the rationale behind the Irish government's Carers Guarantee, which promises a core basket of services for carers nationwide.
- Georgia Casanova (INRCA) shared insights into data collection on local regulations in Italy and their application in analysing carers' rights and challenges.

The session included a discussion on the commonalities and differences between the Irish and Italian contexts, alongside comparisons with other countries.

##### Workshop: Co-creation in Carer Support

Facilitator: Nina Beate Andfossen (Centre for Care Research, Norway)

This workshop focused on co-creation as a method to engage carers, care recipients and professionals in collaboratively designing services. Nina provided a presentation on her work in co-creation, followed by small group discussions on practical applications of this model in carer support. Co-creation is important to enhance the relevance, person-centredness and impact of support measures. It would be interesting to build a knowledge base and identify promising practices involving co-creation.

##### Day 1 Wrap-Up and Preview of Day 2

The day concluded with reflections on the shared challenges facing European care systems, including the growing reliance on informal carers and the pursuit of sustainable, inclusive care models. The importance of integrating co-creation into care systems was emphasised, alongside the need to ensure recognition of carers does not detract from professional care.

The agenda for Day 2 was outlined, with discussions planned on carer wellbeing, caregiving as a protected characteristic and improving access to information and services.

## Day 2

### **Interactive Session: Informal Carers – Beyond Academia**

**Speaker:** Fay Benskin (Centre for Care, UK)

Fay emphasised the importance of ensuring that research findings effectively inform both practice and policy. The session adopted a World Café format to explore practical ways of bridging the gap between academic research and real-world applications in supporting informal carers.

The three topics addressed in the World Café format included:

1. The social contributions of informal carers
2. The positive aspects of informal caregiving
3. Community-based solutions for supporting informal carers

### **Case Study Analysis: Making Caring a Protected Characteristic**

**Speaker:** Melanie Crew (Carers UK)

Melanie introduced Carers UK's work on advocating for caregiving to be recognised as a protected characteristic. The discussion highlighted the complexity of defining carers across diverse contexts and emphasised inclusivity, storytelling, and data collection to support this initiative.

### **Thematic Panel Discussion 2: Wellbeing of Informal Carers and Care Professionals**

**Speakers:**

- Henk provided an overview of the WellCare project, which identifies good practices for supporting carers' mental health and wellbeing.
- Cristina Perdomo (ACUFADE) shared initiatives supporting carers, highlighting the link between research in Canada and Spain.
- Ana Ramovs (Anton Trstenjak Institute, Slovenia) presented the potential benefits of digitalisation in improving carer wellbeing.

The session concluded with a Q&A session.

### **Focus Group: Accessibility of Information and Services**

**Speakers:**

- Laura Kallioma-Puha (University of Tampere) discussed strategies to enhance information accessibility for carers.
- Nina Beate Andfossen addressed the challenges of unmet needs and missed care among carers.

### **Thematic Presentation and Discussion: Position Paper on LGBTI Carers**

**Speaker:** Giulia Lanfredi (Eurocarers)

Giulia introduced a draft position paper on the unique challenges faced by LGBTI carers. Participants discussed the need for more inclusive policies to address the specific needs of this group.



## Interactive Session: Innovative Projects and Collaborations

**SOUND Project:** Svetla Atanasova and Olivier Jacqmain (Eurocarers) provided an overview of this initiative, which developed a training curriculum for carers in dementia care through music-making activities.

**Carer Support in Greece:** Marina Makri (Greek Association of Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders) outlined the challenges in Greece concerning professional care services and informal carer support.

## Day 2 Wrap-Up and Next Steps

The meeting concluded with thanks to all participants for their active contributions. Attendees were reminded to complete an evaluation form to help improve future events and demonstrate the effective use of funds. For those attending the International Care Congress, the meeting closed with a note of anticipation.

Notes and presentations from the meeting will be distributed shortly.

