Research Benefits for the Ageing Population:
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Family Care of Older People in Europe
Summary of Results of EUROFAMCARE

Dr. Hanneli Döhner
University of Hamburg, Germany
(Co-ordination Centre EUROFAMCARE)

on behalf of the EUROFAMCARE group


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Aims

- EUROFAMCARE provides a European review of the **situation of family carers of older people** in relation to the existence, familiarity, availability, use and acceptability of supporting services.

- EUROFAMCARE intends to push a **change management process** at various policy levels to promote social and health policies towards a **partnership approach** between family carers, professional providers and cared-for.

- EUROFAMCARE will help to bring family carers on the **political agenda** in all European countries and give more **awareness** to the situation of family carers and the differences in and between countries.
Methodology

• **Background Reports** in 23 European countries synthesised in a European Report

• **A Six Countries Comparative Study**: In-depth studies in Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Sweden and UK and a European analysis

  ➢ **A baseline study** with caregivers: Face to face interviews with 1,000 carers per country providing 4 or more hours of care/support per week to an elderly relative (65+)

  ➢ **A 12-months follow-up study** with carers to monitor main changes: Face to face, phone or postal interviews (analysis just started)

  ➢ **Service providers study**: Semi-structured interviews with 30-50 service providers per country
Value of family care-giving

- Family care is the backbone of care-giving almost all over Europe: except for Sweden, in all countries the family is regarded as the main responsible institution of elderly care.
- The economic value of care-giving is enormous.
- Carers endorse positive statements about their caring experience to a greater degree than they endorse negative statements.
- On the other hand, care-giving leads to income loss and other kinds of burden.
- Support for family caregivers makes sense, both socially and economically.
Service use

- More than three quarters of all carers never use specific support services: in Poland (high costs), Italy (bureaucratic procedures) and Greece (services not available or too far away) service users are less than 3%!
- Up to one third of all carers uses generic services instead. Still: the vast majority of carers does not use any service at all. The reasons are (besides “no need”): Older persons’ or carers’ attitude and high costs
- If service use has been stopped the reason is mainly the high cost.
- If services are available and used, however, satisfaction is high.
- Low quality of support and care endangers optimal service utilisation.
Service Needs

• Despite efforts made so far, information and advice (esp. on diseases, availability and access) - considered as the most important service - is still a problem: more intelligent and creative forms of information provision are needed.

• Importance of service characteristics:
  • Care worker treat elder with respect
  • Improvement in quality of life of the cared-for
  • Help available at the right time
  • Skills of care worker

• Family carers need more help for the cared-for in terms of:
  • Financial support
  • Emotional support
  • Mobility support
  • Timely and flexible practical support
Service Needs

- Establishment and use of **tailored specific services** for carers should be encouraged.
- Services should be made **available** by public financing of services or benefits for carers.
- In nearly all areas of need family carers in **Sweden** have the lowest need for help (except for emotional care), while in **Greece** in all areas the need is the highest.
- There is no single best way of organizing care, but the development of “**mixed care arrangements**” (family carers, formal services, neighbourhood/friends/volunteer work, privately paid carers) seems to be a key strategy for the future (integrated services).
Labour market

Working family carers
- are a **considerable resource** to provide care of older people (41% of all carers).
- experience difficulties in **combining both paid work and caring responsibilities**, and this affects mostly women.
  ⇒ need a more **care friendly legislation** for the labour market to grant more flexibility between paid work and informal care of the elderly.

Privately paid migrant carers
- are a widespread feature in **Italy** and **Greece**.
- Can it be expected that the employment of migrant care workers will increase in **other European countries**?
- Migrant carers provide **opportunities and risks**.
  ⇒ A co-ordinated strategy is urgently needed to **legalize and regulate** paid migrant caregiving in hosting countries, paying attention to possible drawbacks of “care drain” in sending countries.
  ⇒ Need for more **research**!
Future care

In the EUROFAMCARE study we found in all six countries:

- high motivation to care and
- high willingness to continue caregiving

While:

- consideration of elder’s placement in a care home is cross-nationally very different. Carers who say “no” represent:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SE</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>51%</td>
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<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>87%</td>
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Actions for the future

EUROCARERS – European Association Working for Carers

… initiated by members of the CARMEN and EUROFAMCARE teams

… consists of a European network of carers’ organisations, researcher and development organisations who try to act as a voice for carers and to advocate on issues relevant for carers.

… aims at promoting the establishment of national carers’ organisations

… intends to initiate a European Carers Day

… is currently finalising the draft for a European Carers’ Charter developed by the EUROFAMCARE team
EUROCARERS Guiding Principles
(London, 6th of July 2006)

1. Recognition
2. Social inclusion
3. Equality of opportunity
4. Choice
5. Information
6. Time off
7. Support
8. Health promotion
9. Compatibility of care and employment
10. Financial security

Join the EUROCARERS
For more information please visit our website:

www.uke.uni-hamburg.de/eurofamcare

Thank you for your attention!