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EUROFAMCARE Final Conference
Hamburg 18th of November 2005

Family Care of Older People in Europe





The 5th Framework Programme: Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources

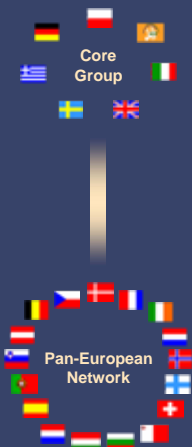
Services for Supporting Family Carers of Elderly People in Europe:

Characteristics, Coverage and Usage

EUR FAM CARE

Key Action 6: The Ageing Population and Disabilities 6.5: Health and Social Care Services to older People

This project (Contract: QLK6-CT-2002-02647) is supported by the European Union in the Vth Framework Programme:
Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources - Key action 6: The Ageing Population and Disabilities
6.5: Health and Social Care Services to Older People





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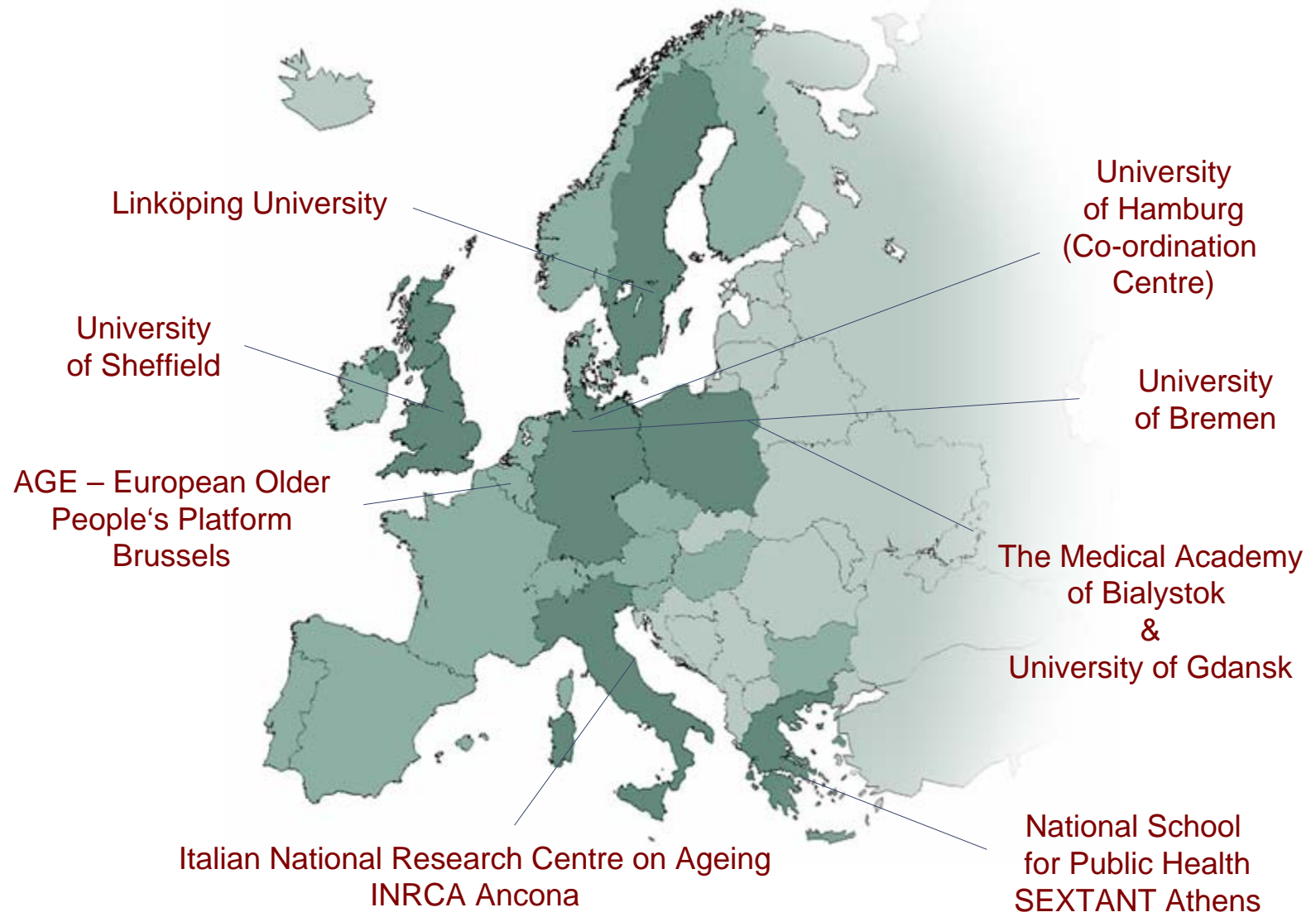


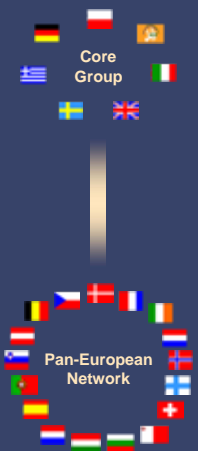
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Services for Family Carers in Europe: Characteristics, Usage, and Acceptability

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Aims and methods

- AIMS of this section of the study:
 - To find determinants of Negative Impact of caring factor
 - To evaluate the influence of using supporting services (in general and different types of services) by Carers/Elders on negative outcomes of caring
- METHOD: multivariate regression analysis (standard; stepwise backward and forward) in overall sample



3. Support and service characteristics: the opinion of family carers and service providers





Service providers' perspective

- **A survey**
- **Aim:** to gather information about service providers' perspectives on services provided for family carers and older people
- **Method:** Common standardised questionnaire, structured and semi-structured questions (using content analysis)
- **Data collection:** Interviews, mostly by phone
(face to face in PL, postal questionnaire in DE)
- **Sample**
 - 201 service providers responded
 - 21 - 53 service providers per country
 - 75% operated in metropolitan and urban areas
 - 77% were heads or managers of the service organisation
 - 50% worked in the public sector and 25% in the voluntary sector



Service supply according to service providers (SP)

- The most common services given to family carers:
 - counselling services
 - training courses
 - carer support groups
 - assessment of carers' needs
 - services for ethnic groups

- The less frequently offered services to family carers:
 - temporary home care service
 - internet service

- The most frequently provided services for older people were health care services and house keeping services

The importance of different types of support

	FC rank	SP rank	Diff.
Information about OP's disease	1	8	-7
Information about available support	2	1	1
Opportunities for the OP to undertake activities they enjoy	3	5	-2
Opportunities to spend more time with the family	4	10	-6
Opportunities to have a holiday or take a break	5	2	3
Possibility to combine care giving with paid employment	6	13	-7
Opportunities to enjoy activities outside of caring	7	9	-2
Help with planning future care	8	7	1
Help to make the OP's environment more suitable for caring	9	3	6
More money to help provide things need to give good care	10	12	-2
Opportunities to talk over problems as a carer	11	6	5
Training to help FC develop caring skills	12	4	8
Help to deal with family disagreements	13	14	-1
Opportunities to attend a carer support group	14	11	3

OP= older person, FC= family carer, SP= service providers



Assessment of family carers' needs

- Generally service providers did not use standardised assessment procedures to identify the needs of family carers
- There appeared to be no framework for this at a local, regional or national level
- Responsibility for deciding how carers' needs would be assessed was left to the individual managers of service provider organisations



SP's views on their services for FC: coverage, usage, access and costs

- 38 % perceived that there were areas of FC's needs that their service did not cover
- 42% considered that their services for FC were not fully utilised
- 35% considered that FC had problems in accessing their service
- 9% perceived that charges for their services caused problems for FC



Barriers to service use as perceived by SP (1)

- Ability to properly inform FC and OP about:
 - existence of the service
 - eligibility criteria for using the service
 - kind and range of support it might offer them
 - quality of the service and its cost to them
- Beliefs and attitudes of family carers and older people
- Staffs' knowledge, perceptions and attitudes
- Limited availability of services
- Restrictions based on the older person's level of dependency
- Geographical distribution of services
- Economic availability of services



Family carers' satisfaction

Service providers believed that:

- Family carers were generally satisfied
- They were frequently more satisfied with the services they received themselves than with those provided for the older person



Quality of provided service

- The most common form of service evaluation took place in direct dialogue between service providers and family carers
- Few service providers appeared to use structured evaluation of carers' views of the quality of services to improve them
- Difficulties connected with the evaluation:
 - lack of knowledge on how to make structured evaluations
 - lack of instruments
 - lack of time
 - family carers' dependency upon the services provided inhibited their ability to criticise



The importance of different quality characteristics

	FC rank	SP rank	Diff.
Care workers treat OP with dignity and respect	1	1	0
The help provided improves the quality of life of the OP	2	5	-3
Help is available at the time they need it most	3	2	1
Care workers have the skills and training they require	4	4	0
Help arrives at the time it is promised	5	6	-1
Care workers treat FC with dignity and respect	6	3	+3
The help provided is not too expensive	7	10	-3
Carers views and opinions are listened to	8	7	1
The help provided improves the FC's quality of life	9	8	1
Help focuses on the FC's needs as well as those of the OP	10	9	1
Help is provided by the same care worker each time	11	12	-1
The help provided fits in with FC's own routines	12	11	1

OP= older person, FC= family carer, SP= service provider



SP's views on future challenges and need for development (1)

- Ensuring that older people and family carers become aware of available services, and opportunities to use new technologies
- A systematic approach to identify unmet needs
- More flexible and tailored services
- Greater equity in the distribution of service, geographical and economical etc





SP's views on future challenges and need for development (2)

- Improving networking opportunities for different authorities and service providers
- Dedicated organisation for family support
- Increasing education and training for professional carers
- Creative ways of financing high quality support for FC
- More targeted financial benefits for FC



Final comments

There is a need for systematic approaches at all levels:

- in the identification and assessment of family carers' needs as defined by set goals e.g. relief and support for the family carer
- in the development of quality assurance strategies for services as well as continuous improvement in service quality using reliable measurements to assess quality

Such actions would provide evidence for further decision making and the development of services for older people and family carers

