

Care Living Labs Flanders: Have they incorporated the policy program goals?

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Introduction:

In 2012, the Flemish government launched a call for Care Living Labs (CLL) targeting on innovation in the care for older adults. Six CLL were selected, comprising 23 projects. Main goals of the Flemish government for the CLL are (1) to live independently as long as possible, (2) to improve the home environment and (3) to counter social isolation. The aim of this study is to analyze if the CLL have incorporated the policy program goals.

Methods:

An inductive analysis was performed to explore the presence of the policy program goals in the CLL and their projects, based on document analysis of the submitted proposals and semi-structured interviews with CLL and project coordinators.

Results:

All CLL mentioned the 3 main goals. Nevertheless, projects focused on certain goals. Projects with a social focus, such as neighborhood care and social cohesion, mentioned explicit the 3 goals. In total 8 projects mentioned all the program goals whereas 2 projects didn't describe any of the policy goals. Moreover, to live independently emerged 18 times explicitly and 3 times implicitly, to improve the home environment respectively 19 and 1, and to counter social isolation respectively 6 and 2 times.

Conclusions:

Despite the same policy call, a diffuse pattern of goals is seen. This finding might induce some risk but also opportunities with regard to health care for older adults.

¹ KIO is an interuniversity consortium studying innovations in elderly care in Flanders. The consortium consists of Mark Leys & Lien Pots (OPIH-VUB), Ellen Gorus & Charlotte Brys (GERO-VUB), Ezra Dessers, Geert Van Hootegem & Hakim Benichou (CESO-KUL), Marc Jegers & Lies Van Pee (iCher), Patricia De Vriendt & Juul Lemey (Arteveldehogeschool), Bart Jansen (ETRO-VUB), Bart Mistiaen & Bart Grimonprez (HOWEST). The consortium is financed by the Flemish agency for Innovation by Science and Technology (IWT).