

Care Living Labs Flanders: did Active Ageing find his way into care innovation?

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Introduction:

Within gerontology active ageing (AA) constitutes an important concept. It aims to enhance the quality of life of older people by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security. Six determinants influence AA: health and social services, behavioral factors, personal factors, physical environment, social factors and economics. To date, six Care Living Labs (CLL) were selected, comprising a variety of 23 projects. The aim of this study is to see if and how AA is embedded in the project plans of the CLL and their projects.

Methods:

A document analysis was conducted of the submitted project proposals. Additional semi-structured interviews with the CLL and project coordinators were completed. The presence of the AA determinants within the CLL and the projects was explored.

Results:

The number of AA-determinants present ranged from 2 to 6 for the CLL and also 2 to 6 for the projects, with only one project covering all the 6 determinants. Some determinants were more present than others: 20 projects mentioned implicitly the economic determinant, followed by the health and social services determinant (19 explicit), the determinant physical environment (8 explicit and 2 implicit), the behavioral determinant (9 explicit and 1 implicit), the personal determinant (8 explicit and 1 implicit) and the social determinant (6 explicit and 2 implicit).

Conclusions:

Taking all CLL together, all AA determinants are covered, however no CLL or project addresses them all explicitly. Results suggest that innovations are not targeting an all-encompassing intervention.

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 & Patricia De Vriendt & Charlotte Brys (GERO-VUB), Ezra Dessers, Geert Van Hootegem & Hakim Benichou (CESO-KUL), Marc Jegers (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).