



The family as caregiver of the elderly in Europe

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1. Introduction: data about aging

- The population of people between 20 and 59 years old, and that of the sixty-year-olds is growing at the same rate over the last ten years.
- The group with the sixty-year-olds will, from now on, and that for a period of 25 years, grow by an average of 2 million people annually.



2. Definition age according to WHO

- The age of 60 or 65, roughly equivalent to retirement ages in most developed countries, is said to be the beginning of old age. In many parts of the developing world, chronological time has little or no importance in the meaning of old age.



3. Evolution in the elderly in Europe

- The elderly in Denmark, Sweden and Austria get more help and care than in the other countries like Germany, France, The Netherlands, Italy, Spain and Greece.



- The legal duty to provide for the elderly
 - The Dutch Government
 - In the southern countries
 - In the Netherlands
 - The Swedish Government



4. Deciding whether to stay at home

- Location and accessibility
- Home accessibility and maintenance
- Support available
- Isolation
- Medical conditions
- Finances



5. External facilities for elderly at home

- 1. Family care (MOH)
- 2. Home meal
- 3. Home nursing
- 4. Service for 'babysitting'
- 5. Day care
- 6. Geriatric day treatment or day therapy



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- 7. Night shelter
- 8. Service centers
- 9. Shopping service and vehicles central
- 10. Lending service
- 11. Persons alarms
- 12. Palliative Care



6. What is family care

- Family care is the provision of (Professional) care to the disabled, chronically ill or frail elderly by family, friends, acquaintances or neighbors.
- Family caregivers have a personal connection with the patient or client.



7. Pitfalls and tips for family caregivers

- Ask what they want to eat
- Ask how they feel
- Play games with them
- Give them rides on nice days
- Give them their own space as much as possible
- Offer to read to them
- Ask for their advice
- Laugh with them when they laugh
- Tell them you love them every day



8. Feelings and Experience of the Caregiver

- Chronic emotional and physical fatigue.
- Internalized guilt.
- Issues of death, dying, and other end of life concerns.
- Not fully understanding the course or prognosis of the illness.
- Anger towards self, the elder, and other caregivers.
- Social isolation.



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- Sadness and grief.
- Unexpected and increasing financial burdens.
- Complex legal issues.
- Stress on one's own immediate family and relationships.
- Denial and lack of preparation for the possibility of a difficult course of illness.



9. Tips for Family Caregivers

- Caregiving is a job
- Watch out for signs of depression
- When people offer to help, accept the offer
- Educate yourself
- Be open to technologies and ideas



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- Trust your instincts
- Grieve for your losses
- Stand up for your rights
- Seek support from other caregivers.





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