



NEWSLETTER 6 2008



Peer Reviews

The future of long-term care

As the number of older people increases and with it the need for long-term care, several countries are looking at ways of keeping care affordable while ensuring equal access to all. Estimates suggest that the share of the population aged 65 and over will approach 20% by 2030 and 25% by 2050. More significantly, the share of those aged 85 and older, is expected to double from 1.5% in 2005 to 3% in 2030 and to rise to over 5% by 2050.¹

The Netherlands, where there is currently a public debate about the future of long-term care, hosted a Peer Review meeting in February this year. The Peer Review focused on the AWBZ (Exceptional Medical Expenses Act), introduced as long ago as 1968 to respond to the need for non-hospital care.

Lessons learnt

Although participants in the Peer Review agreed that there is no unique solution, they also agreed that social insurance should be the preferred funding source since it offers

greater protection against service cuts than tax-financing, especially during periods of recession. Participants felt that private insurance could not form the backbone of long-term care systems, since if it were risk-related, it would rule out universal provision, and if it were compulsory it would be indistinguishable from social insurance.

However, sustainable long-term care requires more than the right balance between collective and individual responsibility. While participants agreed that the provision of care should become more integrated, they warned against the danger of health care taking precedence over long-term care and taking funds away from this. Accordingly, there was much interest in the Dutch scheme of 'personal budgets' (PBs), under which individuals receive a specific allowance to use on the services they choose, so controlling costs while giving people more autonomy.

It was also stressed that policies should address the question of how to balance demand and supply of qualified staff given the looming

shortage of professional care workers. This, it was noted, could be achieved by reducing demand, as well as by increasing supply, through prevention, better healthcare and special measures, such as the 'reablement' scheme in the UK, which helps people be more self-sufficient in their own homes. Equally, more people could be encouraged to take up care work by making it more attractive and increasing pay.

<http://www.peer-review-social-inclusion.eu/peer-reviews/2008/how-to-organise-affordable-sustainable-long-term-care-given-the-constraints-of-collective-versus-individual-arrangements-and-responsibilities>



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On behalf of the



European Commission
DG Employment, Social Affairs
and Equal Opportunities

¹ OECD (2007): "Trends in Severe Disability Among Elderly People" DELSA/HEA/WD/HWP



Peer Review Programme 2009

Denmark, 1st April 2009: Combining choice, quality and equity in social services

Because of budget constraints and the need to ensure quality, choice and equity, some public authorities have moved from direct provision of certain social services, or the financing of external providers, towards innovative measures such as voucher or personal budget schemes.

Nevertheless, there are questions from all perspectives as to the appropriate balance between the rational use of financial resources and the quality of services provided, and ensuring access to high quality services for vulnerable groups.

In this Peer Review, participant countries will share their experience on the challenge of combining choice, quality and equity in the provision of social services.

France, 5-6 May 2009: Alzheimer's and other related diseases: coping with behavioural disorders in the patient's home

Caring for people with Alzheimer's disease is a difficult task for all, whether professional or informal carers. Under its 2008-2012 National Plan for Alzheimer's and other related diseases, the French Government is currently seek-

ing to develop a set of measures to improve the care of people suffering from dementia. These include training of carers and a new training programme is to be implemented by September 2009.

In this context, it is important to exchange ideas and experience on care and support arrangements, especially about the balance between home and residential care, support to family carers and the quality of care.

Greece, 27-28 May 2009: Integrated programme for the social inclusion of Roma

As elsewhere, the Roma population in Greece faces acute social exclusion. An "Integrated Programme for the Social Inclusion of Roma" was introduced in 2001, but was less successful than hoped, largely due to the lack of finance for the measures required and a

managing authority to coordinate and implement policy.

A study has recently been commissioned to assess current policies and record the situation of the Roma, with a view to developing more appropriate long-term arrange-

ments for implementing inclusion policies. Participants in the Peer Review will exchange experience to improve the chances of future efforts being more effective and discuss a common integrated approach across EU Member States.

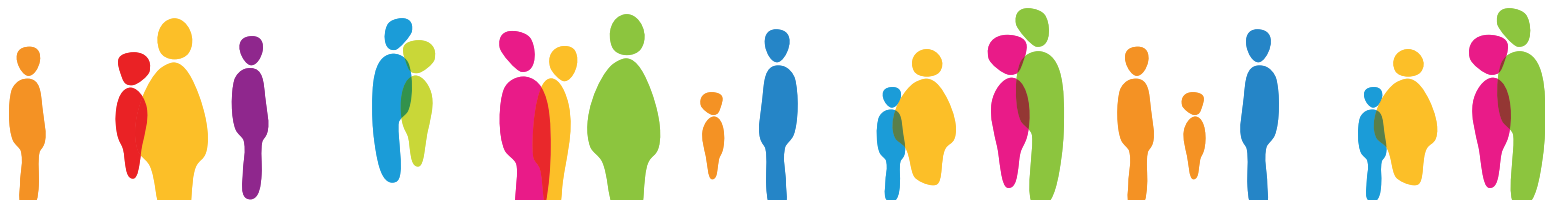
Germany, 15-16 June 2009: Ensuring a functioning healthcare system in regions with declining and ageing populations

With its particularly sparse and ageing population, Brandenburg faces a challenge in providing health care in rural areas. In response, it has launched the "Gemein-deschwester-Modell" project,

under which "community nurses" carry out home-visits to relieve general practitioners.

The first results indicate a high acceptance of this kind

of community nursing among participating GPs, nurses and patients. In particular, the use of ICT, on which the project relies has proved to be cost effective in ensuring high-quality primary care in are-



as with ageing and declining populations.

The Peer Review will provide an opportunity to discuss how primary medical care

can be improved in rural areas through more flexible approaches.

UK, 6-7 July 2009: The City Strategy for tackling unemployment and child poverty

The City Strategy aims to improve support to the jobless in the most disadvantaged communities in the UK through a bottom-up approach that devolves more powers to the local level. The idea is to test how best to combine the work and efforts of government

agencies, local authorities, the private sector and voluntary associations in a concerted partnership to provide the support the jobless need to find a job and to ensure that local employment services and training are tailored to their needs.

The Peer Review will bring together representatives from local and central government and the private sector to discuss local measures of this kind and how they can best be coordinated with national policy.

Norway, 29-30 October 2009: Developing well-targeted tools for the active inclusion of vulnerable people

A new programme for helping people with severely diminished working capacity integrate into the labour market was set up in 2007 under Norway's Plan of Action against poverty.

The programme is targeted at people with low income, long-term dependency on social assistance and limited access to training and consists of personalised measures for two years.

The Peer Review will consider how best to persuade vulnerable people to participate in such programmes as well as the best mix of employment, social and fiscal measures that meets their needs.

Austria, 12-13 November 2009: Counting the homeless – improving the basis for planning assistance

Homelessness is perhaps the most acute expression of poverty and the European Parliament has called for an end to 'street homelessness' in the EU by 2015. There is, however, a lack of knowledge about its causes and the numbers of people sleeping rough.

In Vienna, where reintegrating the homeless through housing programmes has been a priority for 20 years, the need for data has been identified as a sine qua non for introducing efficient, needs-oriented measures in this area.

The primary aim of the Peer Review is to discuss how best to define the homeless as well as methods for counting them as a basis for improving assistance.

France, 3-4 December 2009: Measuring the impact of active inclusion and other policies to combat poverty and social exclusion

In 2007, the French authorities established a scoreboard to assess progress towards the national target of reducing poverty by a third by

2012. While the central indicator in the scoreboard is the risk of poverty rate, 39 other policy-related indicators have been defined so as to provide

a clearer picture of the intensity of poverty and deprivation and the extent of access to basic services. Partnerships with local communities



have been set up to ensure indicators are also monitored at local level.

With 2010 planned as the European Year for combating poverty, the Peer Review offers an opportunity to as-

sess the French initiative and exchange good practice on monitoring active inclusion strategies.

Germany, 21-22 January 2010: The Federal Foundation Mother and Child for pregnant women in emergency situations

The aim of the Federal Foundation is to prevent young women with low incomes or in households where they are the main earner from falling into poverty during pregnancy and/or following the birth of a child by providing support tailored to their needs.

The scheme is on top of unemployment or social welfare benefits they receive, which can take some time to materialise. It also provides pregnant women with support and counselling via local information centres. The Government and the Federal Foundation currently provide assistance

to around one in five pregnant women.

In the Peer Review, the scheme will be presented as an example of good practice in supporting pregnant women in difficult situations, reducing family poverty and preventing child neglect.

Spain, 5-6 February 2010: Modernising and activating measures relating to work incapacity

As Spain embarks on a broad review of social security policy, the issue of social protection for people suffering from sickness or disability has emerged as an important issue.

Efforts in many Member States to reform incapacity schemes are still concerned to find the

best means of defining permanent incapacity, or incapacity for work, preventing abuse and designing activation measures to help people with disabilities into jobs. While it is important that people in need of income and support are able to receive it, it is equally important that those able to work are not

forced into early exit from the labour market.

The Peer Review will provide a valuable opportunity to share recent national experience and to assess the outcomes of some of the policies that have been implemented.

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Further information on the Peer Reviews and the Policy Assessment as well as all relevant documents are available at: <http://www.peer-review-social-inclusion.eu>

More information on policies and activities on Social Protection and Social Inclusion in the EU can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi

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