



# Transforming care, empowering lives: the WELL CARE project

**Linnæus University** 

#EUHPP LIVE WEBINAR

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Funded by  
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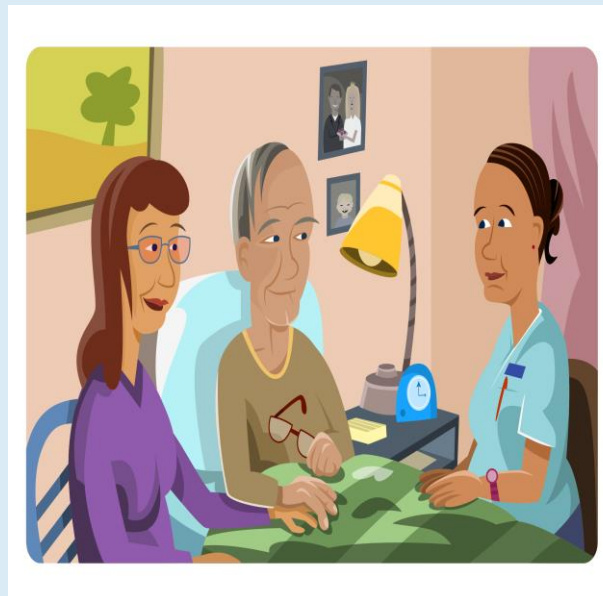
# Target groups

Informal carers are persons who provide – usually- unpaid care to someone with a chronic illness, disability or other long lasting health and/or care need, outside a professional or formal framework (Eurocarers, 2023).

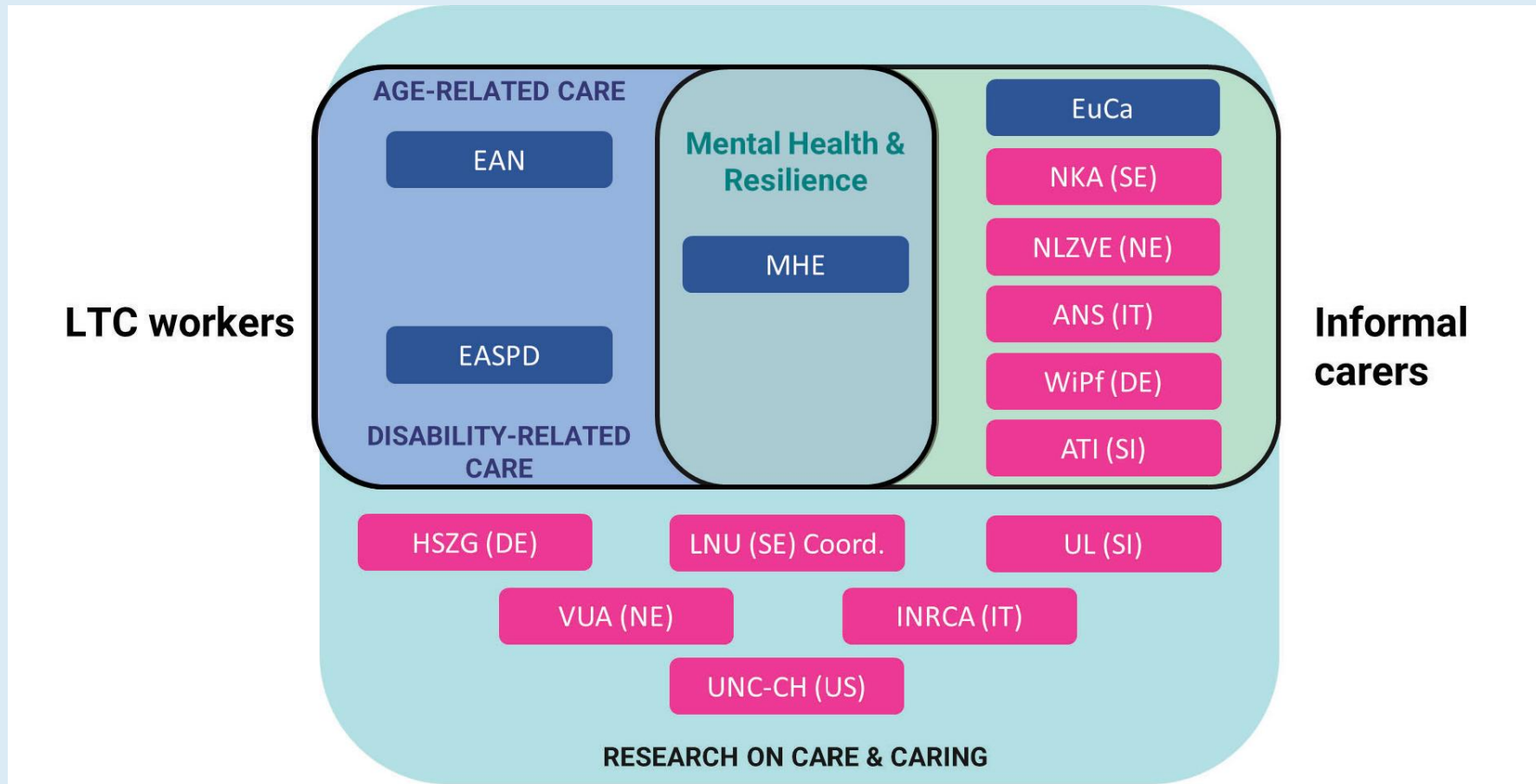
LTC workers consist of (EC 2021, OECD 2021):

Qualified nurses  
Personal care workers

either employed by a LTC provider (home or residential settings) or directly by the care recipient/family (mainly home setting).



# Partnership



# Key issues

- **Informal carers** suffer from a “triple penalty”, with caring affecting their health and well-being, work/life/care balance and social situation.
- **6.3 million workers in the long-term care (LTC) sector** in the European Union (EU) – are exposed to low wages, irregular working hours, heavy workload and adverse social behaviours.
- Both, face the potential risk of compromising their mental health over time.
- They have so far been viewed as two disparate groups with differing needs and situations, rather than as being **interconnected**.



# The mental health of informal carers

- Anxiety and depression are **20% higher** among carers than the general population
- Those providing **high-intensity care** (more than 20 hours per week) are more likely to experience mental health problems
- Women engage in high intensity care, carry out more demanding types of care and experience poorer subjective mental health



# Mental health of informal carers: risk factors

- Intensity of care
- Illness/disability of the care–recipient
- Carers' existing health status
- Lack of prior caring experience or training
- Lack of support
- Lack of satisfaction in their caring situation

A chronic stress  
experience

# Mental health of informal carers: approaches

- Mitigation measures aimed at supporting informal carers in their caring activities and increasing their resilience: e.g., multi-component support groups, training, respite care (**secondary or tertiary prevention**).
- Tackling the source, via a comprehensive preventative approach: ensuring access to affordable and qualitative formal long-term care services, work-life care balance policies, carer-friendly societies... (**primary prevention**)

Ensure informal  
care is a choice



# WELL CARE GOAL AND APPROACH

## GOAL

- We aim to strengthen supports available to informal carers and LTC workers for improving their resilience and mental wellbeing through care partnerships.
- We work to improve working and caring conditions so they will be well and care better.

## APPROACH

- **Research and advocacy together**
- **Integrated LTC** (LTC workers and informal carers collaborate together)
- **Participatory research**





# Concepts

**User and stakeholder involvement,** mainly through Blended Learning Networks.

**Resilience:** Resilience is the ability – of individuals and communities – to adapt to adversity considering not only individuals' internal resources, but also their social environments and the availability of resources within them. It is an integrative process made up of psychological, social, and systemic factors.

**Care partnerships:** the coordination, integration, and mutual recognition of care and caring activities performed by LTC workers and informal carers, in a vision of integrated LTC.



# Activities

**WP2**  
Identify good practices reducing risks for both occupational and non-occupational challenges

**WP3**  
Develop, test, and validate 5-8 innovative solutions across five countries

**WP4**  
Analyse policies, providing recommendations for all stakeholders

**WP5**  
Establish a sustainable research, innovation, and sharing process, involving key stakeholders



# First project policy report now available!

## Analysis of legislation, policies, care frameworks and funding schemes

- How do policies, legislation, care frameworks and funding schemes impact on the mental health of informal carers and LTC workers? – Snapshots for DE, IT, NL, SL, SE
- What is the current EU policy climate?
- What can policymakers at EU and national level do to better support LTC workers and informal carers?
- Why should we care about carers?

**Access the report here:**

<https://wellcare-project.eu/>



# Partners



**Linnæus University**  
(Project coordinator)

**Nka**<sup>TM</sup>



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