ADDRESSING OLD-AGE LONELINESS AND SOCIAL ISOLATION — FROM EVIDENCE TO ACTION

LOCAL PERSPECTIVE: FIGHTING LONELINESS & ISOLATION IN FLANDERS

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1. SOCIAL ISOLATION AND LONELINESS IN FLANDERS
WHY IS IT RELEVANT?

**Hot topic**

- Decree on local social policy
- Intensified collaboration between primary care actors
- Socialisation of care

**Mismatch between supply and demand**

- Lower income
- Single households
- Health problems
- Increased risk of social exclusion

**An individual challenge**

- A societal challenge
• 1.625.000 regularly feel lonely
  • = Smoking 15 cigarettes a day

A local story

• Ageing population
• Increase of dementia
• Rural versus urban

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aandeel 65-plussers</td>
<td>10% (Vilvoorde)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aandeel 80-plussers</td>
<td>3,4% (Opglabbeek)</td>
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Loneliness doesn't discriminate

Objective social isolation ≠ subjective feelings of loneliness
  • And vice versa

A gradual process

The fear of feeling alone

Focus on loneliness is insufficient

(HEYLEN, 2011)
2. CHALLENGES AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

| Loneliness is coloured | A culturally sensitive approach |
| Double vulnerability |

| Age friendly cities and communities | Active and healthy ageing |
| Ageing in place? |

| Residential care homes | Meaningfulness |
| Resident centred approach |

| Urbanisation and unpersonal neighbourhoods | Individualisation |
| Reciprocity? |
3. GOOD PRACTICES
’It's important for me that I can join the activities with other people. That’s how I get to know other people and I don't feel alone in my situation. At the same time I can come outside. It makes me feel good. “

Fatma Gökler, visitor to the Turkish Union
LEARNING NETWORK AGE

FRIENDLY CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

➔ Initiative of VVSG

- 24 municipalities
- Three-yearly meeting
- Thematic

Focus on:
- Sharing good practices
- Sharing experiences
- Service design thinking: user-centred approaches
LIVING AND FEELING AT HOME IN RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES

Shift towards a resident-centered approach.

Even when care needs are high

➤ Meaningfulness
➤ Autonomy
➤ Hope and optimism
➤ Connectedness
➤ Feeling at home
➤ Self-value
SOCIALISATION OF CARE AND COMMUNITY BASED CARE

➔ ‘t Salonneke (Knokke-Heist)

➔ Dorpspunt (Beveren aan de Ijzer)

But also:
- Zorgzaam Gullegem
- Over De Zulle
- Community coins
- …
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

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