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HomeCare  
for Dependent Elderly People  
Educational Path  
for Informal Carers

**Home Care for Dependent Elderly People Educational Path for Informal Caregivers**

**2019-1-PL01-KA204-065703**

# **The Elderly Home Care Training Path for Informal Caregivers**

*Intellectual Outputs No 1*

**September 2020**

This publication has been carried out under the HomeCare for Dependent Elderly People Educational Path for Informal Caregivers, 2019-1-PL01-KA204-065703

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September 2020

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The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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## The Home Care project

Demographic aging is among the most serious challenges Europe is facing.

The demographic projections indicate that by 2060 30% of the European population (155 million) will be aged 65 or older (while today it is 19%).

The project “HomeCare for Dependent Elderly People - Educational Path for Informal Caregivers” (The HomeCare project) is a response to the existing and widening lack of skills in providing home care for the elderly by adults in their close surroundings (currently in Europe, approximately 60% of Caregivers for the elderly are their close relatives).



### DEMOGRAPHIC AGING

is one of the major challenges for Europe. In 2017, almost one fifth (19%) of the EU population was 65 or more years old

### CULTURAL CONDITIONS

30% of the EU population believes that the best option for the elderly, for example parents living alone and not functioning without regular assistance because of physical or mental condition, is to live with one of the children.

### LACK OF PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCE IN THE ROLE OF AN INFORMAL CAREGIVER

that would be tailored to individual needs.

According to the literature on the subject, **an informal caregiver** can be defined as a person who provides regular, permanent, physical and / or emotional support and assistance in everyday activities to someone who is physically or intellectually disabled, mentally ill or is an elderly person whose psychophysical condition can be described as weak. Frequently, it is a family member, neighbour, friend and other relative of

an elderly person. The majority are people who are not qualified medical caregivers. They usually use their own intuition and life experience rather than proven, substantive theoretical and practical knowledge. This deficiency of professional knowledge and skills in performing care functions usually results from the need to handle a completely new situation. Becoming a caregiver of a loved one is frequently not an independent choice of a person, but it happens as a result of a sudden event or a problem developing over time due to a health condition of the person under care.

Hence, the initiative **to create an educational path developing the caring skills of adults who are informal caregivers for the elderly at home**

The main core of the HomeCare project is to make it possible for adult informal caregivers to prepare for active ageing in a professional way and to participate in the ageing processes of their loved ones through the HomeCare open educational platform that will supplement their knowledge and skills in this area, and above all will provide them with proven substantive knowledge and information on topics adapted to the specifics of work and the function of an informal home caregiver for the elderly.

These home caregivers usually use their own intuition and life experience rather than proven, substantive theoretical and practical knowledge. This deficiency of professional knowledge and skills in performing care functions usually results from the need to handle a completely new situation. Becoming a caregiver of a loved one is frequently not an independent choice of a person, but it happens as a result of a sudden event or a problem developing over time due to a health condition of the person under care.

The needs of informal caregivers result from the very diverse needs of the elderly, which in turn are a derivative of such factors as: family, psycho-social, economic and health situation, place of residence, availability of institutional care, etc.

This document presents the educational path focused on elderly home care training path for informal caregivers. The educational path assumes a holistic approach to the issues of taking care of a dependent elderly person at home by informal caregivers.

On the one hand, it provides caregivers with basic knowledge and skills in the area of caring functions and a proactive approach to the ageing process of the ones under their care. On the other hand, it includes elements of psychological support for caregivers, who experience physical, psychological, social and economic disruptions referred to as "caregivers stress" which they are mostly forced to face without any support.

*The educational path for informal caregivers assumes a holistic approach to the issues of providing care for a dependent elderly person at home, that is providing basic knowledge and skills in performing care functions and a proactive approach to ageing of the person under care.*

## Target group

**Primary**, The HomeCare Educational Path is addressed to **Adults acting as informal caregivers**, who are those providing regular, lasting, physical and / or emotional support and assistance for the elderly in everyday activities.

Indirectly, the addressees are the elderly themselves: the use of HomeCare resources by caregivers will enable elderly people to obtain more professional and tailored care in their place of residence (which is of great importance for this group of people). It will also provide them with a better quality of life thanks to the greater knowledge and better skills of the caregivers.

## Methodology

Open digital e-learning package. The educational path is structured by modules in terms of learning objectives, competences, and skills.

## Learning objectives

The general learning objectives under this educational path focus on the following items:

- Understanding about basic diseases, mental disorders related to the elderly and the aging process and early diagnosis.
- Acquaint techniques and tools for performing first aid and simple medical procedures, as well as for addressing basic needs of the elderly related to personal hygiene and nutrition.
- Identification of the procedures for taking care of a lying person.
- To gain knowledge on elements of emotional intelligence, coaching and mentoring in order to provide psychological support for the caregiver.
- Recognition of the tools to prevent social exclusion, burnout and depression of the caregivers.

After completing the training according to this educational path, the informal Caregivers will acquire the following competences:

- knows the basic diseases of old age and recognizes the basic symptoms of the disease,
- recognizes the symptoms of psychophysical disorders in the elderly person,
- provides first aid in emergency situations for the health and life of an elderly person,
- can carry out care and hygiene of an elderly person,
- helps the elderly person to take the medicines prescribed by the doctor,
- supports and mobilizes the elderly to actively spend their free time, taking into account their psychophysical needs and capabilities,
- helps an elderly person to use technical aids to facilitate independent daily activities.

There are two training areas of the educational path for the informal caregivers:



Traning area 1

- **Care for an elderly person**



Traning area 2

- **Emotional intelligence of informal caregivers**

**Area 1: Care for an elderly person**, composed on the six modules:

- Module 1.1: Common Diseases of the Elderly
- Module 1.2: Simple Medical Procedures
- Module 1.3. Personal Hygiene
- Module 1.4: Nutrition for the Elderly
- Module 1.5. Care and Hygiene during a Virus Epidemic
- Module 1.6. First Aid for the Elderly in Emergency

**Area 2: Emotional intelligence of informal caregivers**, composed on the three modules:

Module 2.1. Emotional Intelligence in Caring for the Elderly

Module 2.2. Coping with Caregiver's Stress

Module 2.3. Burnout, Depression and Social Exclusion of the Caregiver



## the Elderly Home Care Training Path modules

### Training area 1. Care for an elderly person



### Training area 2: Emotional intelligence of informal caregivers



The content developed under the framework of this training path will allow organizing and sequencing in a planned manner home caregivers' training, meeting their developing needs and aiming to become a key tool in the implementation and consolidation of the training offered for them.

### **Content of each module**

The educational path for informal caregivers is developed in the form of short training modules. This will allow the caregivers to individually choose from the catalogue of training modules the ones that meet their individual needs and shape the process of developing their own care competences.

Each module in the educational path is presented taking into account the following elements:

- **LEARNING OBJECTIVES** – a reference to competences that the caregivers will obtain, develop and/or strengthen after completing a module
- **EXPECTED LEARNING EFFECTS** - what kind of knowledge (theoretical and practical), skills and attitudes the carer will acquire or develop after completing a module
- **GENERAL TOPICS** – General thematic content of the module;
- **LEARNING FORM** - what kind of learning methods will be used in the learning process;
- **LEARNING DURATION** – how long does it take to learn in each module;
- **EVALUATION METHODS** – what kind of methods are used to check if the learning objectives have been achieved;
- **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT** - how the caregivers can further develop knowledge and skills after the end of the module (e.g. indicating the acquisition of additional sources, e.g. literature, publications, internet sources, additional tasks to be performed on their own, other forms of support and improvement).

<b>Area 1: Care for an elderly person. Module 1.1: Common diseases of the Elderly</b>	
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b>	<p>Basic knowledge about diseases of old age.</p> <p>Identifying the symptoms of the most common problems health of an elderly person.</p>
<b>EXPECTED LEARNING EFFECTS</b>	<p>After completing this module, the learner should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify the basic diseases of old age</li> <li>• recognize the basic symptoms of the disease of old age</li> <li>• recognize the symptoms of psychophysical disorders in the elderly person</li> <li>• provide first aid in emergency situations for the health and life of an elderly person.</li> </ul>
<b>GENERAL TOPICS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The outline of diseases of old age:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cardiovascular Diseases: Hypertension</li> <li>○ Cardiovascular Diseases: Atherosclerosis</li> <li>○ Alzheimer’s disease</li> <li>○ Parkinson’s diseases</li> <li>○ Diabetes</li> <li>○ Osteoporosis</li> <li>○ Incontinence</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Disease symptoms in the elderly and their differences.</li> <li>• Exercises: recognizing the problems and needs of an elderly person with pain based on case study description.</li> </ul>
<b>LEARNING FORM</b>	On-line self learning

<b>LEARNING DURATION</b>	240 minutes.
<b>EVALUATION METHODS</b>	A single choice quiz with 5 questions
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS for further DEVELOPMENT</b>	<p>Additional resources to be downloads.</p> <p>Video “Blood pressure measurement”.</p> <p>Lists of recommended literature, publications, and other internet sources for further self-learning.</p>

### Area 1: Care for an elderly person. Module 1.2: Simple Medical Procedures

<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic measurements in an elderly person.</li> <li>• Prevention of complications related to immobilization of an elderly person.</li> </ul>
<b>EXPECTED LEARNING EFFECTS</b>	<p>After completing this module, the learner should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• perform basic measurements in an elderly person: body temperature and heart rate, arterial pressure, respiration measurement, measurement of blood glucose level, etc., and document and interpret the obtained measurement results.</li> </ul>
<b>GENERAL TOPICS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation of basic vital parameters:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Observation of body temperature, method and place of body temperature measurement.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Heart rate observation: heart rate characteristics, method and place of measurement. Blood pressure monitoring, principles and techniques of measurement. Observation of breathing, types of breathing, breathing disorders, breathing measurement technique. Measurement of blood glucose using a glucometer.</li> <li>○ Preparing an elderly person for self-observation and self-care</li> <li>● Prevention of complications related to immobilization the elderly (Burns and bedsores. Contractures. Respiratory complications - causes, prevention).</li> <li>● First aid in special cases: loss of consciousness, fainting, chest pain, soft tissue injury, bleeding and haemorrhage; bone injuries (fracture), thermal injuries; poisoning, choking.</li> </ul>
<b>LEARNING FORM</b>	On-line self learning
<b>LEARNING DURATION</b>	120 minutes.
<b>EVALUATION METHODS</b>	A single choice quiz with 5 questions
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS for further DEVELOPMENT</b>	Lists of recommended literature, publications, and other internet sources for further self-learning.

**Area 1: Care for an elderly person. Module 1.3. Personal hygiene**

<p><b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hygienic and beauty treatments performed on an elderly person requiring care.</li> </ul>
<p><b>EXPECTED LEARNING EFFECTS</b></p>	<p>After completing this module, the learner should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>know how to maintain the personal hygiene of an elderly person and their environment.</li> <li>be able to provide assistance to the elderly person in related activities with changes in body position and in movement;</li> <li>be able to organize the housing conditions for the elderly person requiring care, i.e. prepare a room and basic equipment for the elderly person.</li> <li>be able to provide the elderly person with comfort and safety and respect for personal dignity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>GENERAL TOPICS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hygienic and beauty treatments:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal hygiene of the elderly person: body toilet, hygiene of mouth, hair and scalp care,</li> <li>Making a bed, changing bed linen and underwear.</li> <li>Hygiene and toilet for a lying person</li> <li>Hygiene of people with excretion disorders</li> </ul> </li> <li>Transfer - safe carrying, lifting an elderly person:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changing the position of an elderly person, moving an elderly person from bed to wheelchair, chair, and armchair. Positions in bed.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Organization of housing conditions for an elderly person:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preparation of premises and equipment for an elderly person.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Maintaining the proper microclimate in the rooms. Airing rooms. Lighting. Noise.</li> </ul>
<b>LEARNING FORM</b>	On-line self learning
<b>LEARNING DURATION</b>	240 minutes.
<b>EVALUATION METHODS</b>	A single choice quiz with 5 questions
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS for further DEVELOPMENT</b>	Lists of recommended literature, publications, and other internet sources for further self-learning.

### Area 1: Care for an elderly person. Module 1.4: Nutrition of elderly

<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b>	General rules of nutrition. Diet of the elderly in selected diseases. Errors in the nutrition of the elderly. Rules for the preparation and storage of meals.
<b>EXPECTED LEARNING EFFECTS</b>	<p>After completing this module, the learner should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• create a menu for the elderly, taking into account the basic principles of nutrition for the elderly</li> <li>• Calculate the need for nutrients in the diet of an elderly person.</li> <li>• Prepare meals taking into account a special diet (e.g. for certain diseases)</li> <li>• Choose the equipment needed to prepare meals.</li> </ul>

<b>GENERAL TOPICS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The basic principles of nutrition for the elderly.</li> <li>• The elderly person's need for nutrients.</li> <li>• Types of nutrition in the elderly.</li> <li>• The diet of an elderly person with various diseases (e.g. diabetes, liver and kidney diseases, circulatory diseases, etc.).</li> </ul>
<b>LEARNING FORM</b>	On-line self learning
<b>LEARNING DURATION</b>	180 minutes.
<b>EVALUATION METHODS</b>	A single choice quiz with 5 questions
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS for further DEVELOPMENT</b>	Lists of recommended literature, publications, and other internet sources for further self-learning.

**Area 1: Care for an elderly person. Module 1.5. Care and hygiene during the epidemic**

<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b>	The sanitary and epidemiological regulations in force when caring for an elderly person.
<b>EXPECTED LEARNING EFFECTS</b>	<p>After completing this module, the learner should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to apply the sanitary and epidemiological regulations in force when caring for an elderly person.</li> </ul>
<b>GENERAL TOPICS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevention of infectious and non-infectious diseases:</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hygienic hand washing.</li> <li>○ Disinfection. Types of disinfection.</li> <li>○ Rules for dealing with waste.</li> <li>○ sanitary and epidemiological regulations in force during the provision of care.</li> <li>○ Exercises: Hygienic hand washing. Preparation of waste containers. Performing disinfection of utensils and means used for hygienic procedures.</li> <li>● First aid in health emergency</li> <li>● The sanitary and epidemiological regulations in force when caring for an elderly person.</li> </ul>
<b>LEARNING FORM</b>	On-line self learning
<b>LEARNING DURATION</b>	180 minutes.
<b>EVALUATION METHODS</b>	A single choice quiz with 5 questions
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS for further DEVELOPMENT</b>	Lists of recommended literature, publications, and other internet sources for further self-learning.

**Area 1: Care for an elderly person. Module 1.6. First Aid for the Elderly in Emergency**

<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dealing with a sudden health deterioration of an elderly person caused by various factors</li> <li>● Preventing complications associated with the immobilization of an elderly person</li> </ul>
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<p><b>EXPECTED LEARNING EFFECTS</b></p>	<p>After completing this module, the learner should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide first aid to an elderly person with a diabetic coma or a suspected heart attack</li> <li>• Handle fractures, colds and other emergency situations related to health deterioration of an elderly person</li> <li>• Prevent burns and bedsores, as well as to handle such symptoms when they occur in an elderly person</li> </ul>
<p><b>GENERAL TOPICS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diabetic Coma</li> <li>• Heart Attack</li> <li>• Falls and Fractures</li> <li>• Fainting and Losing Consciousness</li> <li>• Seizures (Convulsions)</li> <li>• Chafing</li> <li>• Nosebleed</li> <li>• Food Poisoning</li> </ul>
<p><b>LEARNING FORM</b></p>	<p>On-line self learning</p>
<p><b>LEARNING DURATION</b></p>	<p>180 minutes</p>
<p><b>EVALUATION METHODS</b></p>	<p>A single choice quiz with 5 questions</p>
<p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS for further DEVELOPMENT</b></p>	<p>Additional resources to be downloads.</p> <p>Lists of recommended literature, publications, and other internet sources for further self-learning.</p>

**Area 2: Emotional intelligence of informal Caregivers. Module 2.1. Emotional intelligence in caring for the elderly**

<p><b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b></p>	<p>Emotional intelligence and assertiveness help a lot in caring for an elderly person.</p> <p>In this module, carer will gain a basic understanding of the different emotions that is an invaluable aid to the elderly person the carer is caring for. In caring for an elderly person, the carer often encounters various reactions on their part. It is important to be able to recognize them and respond to them in a mature and balanced manner.</p> <p>Emotional intelligence also allows you to meet the needs of the elderly and take care of them in the best possible way. It is worth being able to express your opinion in an assertive way that does not degrade anyone's dignity.</p>
<p><b>EXPECTED LEARNING EFFECTS</b></p>	<p>After completing this module, the learner should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• know basic knowledge about emotional intelligence, what we call emotions, emotions that rule human life</li> <li>• be able to identify and/or recognize various emotions and reactions in the elderly person</li> <li>• have more confidence in their knowledge of the subject matter.</li> </ul>
<p><b>GENERAL TOPICS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Emotions - what is an emotion?</li> <li>– Types of emotions: anger, sadness, fear, contentment, love, surprise, disgust, shame</li> <li>– Recognizing and naming emotions in an elderly person (e.g. people with dementia)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Emotional intelligence - how to understand it?</li> <li>– Expressing feelings</li> <li>– Communication with elderly people (e.g. elderly people with symptoms of dementia)</li> <li>– Other</li> </ul>
<b>LEARNING FORM</b>	On-line self learning
<b>LEARNING DURATION</b>	180 minutes.
<b>EVALUATION METHODS</b>	A single choice quiz with 5 questions
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS for further DEVELOPMENT</b>	Lists of recommended literature, publications, and other internet sources for further self-learning.

**Area 2: Emotional intelligence of informal Caregivers. Module 2.2. Coping with stress**

<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b>	Caregiver Stress Syndrome occurs in people who have long-term care for an elderly or chronically ill person. Often, they give up their lives to be able to take care of an elderly person (e.g. their parent). Over time, such boundless dedication and the overwhelming burden of responsibilities can lead to frustration and even depression. Being aware of and watching for stress symptoms to know when need to take steps to combat or prevent the stress they experience.
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<b>EXPECTED LEARNING EFFECTS</b>	<p>After completing this module, the learner should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to recognize a signals and symptoms of stress.</li> <li>• be aware of the warning signs of burnout to recognize when you have them.</li> </ul>
<b>GENERAL TOPICS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caregiver Stress Syndrome (CSS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ what it is?</li> <li>○ symptoms of CSS</li> <li>○ how to deal with CSS?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Coping Strategies for Caregiver Stress.</li> </ul>
<b>LEARNING FORM</b>	<p>On-line self learning</p>
<b>LEARNING DURATION</b>	<p>210 minutes.</p>
<b>EVALUATION METHODS</b>	<p>A single choice quiz with 5 questions</p>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS for further DEVELOPMENT</b>	<p>Lists of recommended literature, publications, and other internet sources for further self-learning.</p>

**Area 2: Emotional intelligence of informal caregiver. Module 2.3. Burnout, depression and social exclusion of the caregiver.**

<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b>	<p>Taking on the role of a family caregiver -though admirable and rewarding - can also be incredibly draining and caused burnout and depression. Depression can affect both the caregiver and the elderly person they care for.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition of burnouts and depression signs.</li> <li>• Ways and methods of counteracting burnout and depression.</li> </ul>
<b>EXPECTED LEARNING EFFECTS</b>	<p>After completing this module, the learner should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be aware of the warning signs of burnout to recognize when they appear.</li> <li>• be able to prevent a some of the burnouts signs</li> </ul>
<b>GENERAL TOPICS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is caregiver burnout?</li> <li>• Signs and symptoms of caregiver burnout</li> <li>• How to avoid caregiver burnout (prevention)?</li> <li>• Burnout vs. Depression. What Is Caregiver Depression?</li> <li>• Depression of the elderly person: signs and symptoms.</li> <li>• How to avoid depression of the elderly person?</li> <li>• Social exclusion. How to avoid it.</li> </ul>
<b>LEARNING FORM</b>	On-line self learning
<b>LEARNING DURATION</b>	180 minutes.
<b>EVALUATION METHODS</b>	A single choice quiz with 5 questions
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS for further DEVELOPMENT</b>	Lists of recommended literature, publications, and other internet sources for further self-learning.