Project «MYCELF- More You care in Estonia, Latvia, Finland»

Questionnaire Results: The life quality and well-being of informal carers in Alūksne district, Latvia.

Cooperation partners in Latvia

 NGO «Alūksne district Support centre «Saulstariņi» for children and youth with special needs»

Social service of Aluksne municipality

30 RESPONDENTS

Female – 87% Male – 13%

In full-time employment – 37%
In part-time employment – 17%
Unemployed – 26%
Retired/pensioner – 20%

36-58 years old – 86% 66-75 years old – 14%

Lower secondary education – 23%

Vocational education – 7%

Secondary education – 10%

Vocational secondary education – 33%

Bachelor's degree – 26%

CHARACTERISTICS OF CARERS

87% of care receivers are getting care allowance for people with disability

77% are the **guardians** of the person they are caring for

93% - live in the same household as the care receiver

7% - live in the same city/parish (municipality)

Have been a carer for:

Less than a year - 4% 1-5 years - 30%

6-10 years -10%

more than 10 years- 56%

CHARACTERISTICS OF CARERS (continued)

Had negative impact on the family's economic situation:

Greatly -13% Somewhat - 27% Not at all- 60%

Receive support and assistance from family members or friends:

Greatly - 30% Somewhat - 33% Not at all - 27%

Care for their close one:

Willingly - 67%
Because they are obliged to - 33%

CARE NEEDS

50% - Care and supervision for 24/7

Help with self-care and taking medications, accompanying while going out, cleaning and other housework, cooking, doctor visits, feeding (for some)

50% – Accompanying while going out, planning and structuring the day, assistance, mediation, help with receiving healthcare services

Accompanying to/from work or school, concert, church etc., shopping, paying bills, supervision of medications, assistance with transport and self-care, communication with others, doctor's and other therapist's appointments

THE MOST COMMON ACTIVITIES TO BE UNDERTAKEN (every day)

- 1. Housekeeping (cooking, cleaning) 87%
- 2. Emotional assistance, closeness 83%
- 3. Personal assistance (clothing, personal hygiene, feeding) 60%

- 4. Assistance with shopping, transport 60%
- **5. Medical assistance** (wound care, supervision of medicinal products...) **53%**
- 6. Assistance with technical aids 30%
- 7.Economic(financial) aid -30%

WORK LIFE

Would be ready to temporarily give up their work if needed to fulfill the care responsibilities:

Yes – 50%

Depends on the situation – 40%

No - 10%

Working in:

Public sector - 33%

Private sector - 20%

Member of administration - 10%
Departmental manager - 7%
Regular employee - 36%

Work LIFE (continued)

Have received support at the workplace in relation of care responsibilities:

Plenty of – 23%

Slightly – 23%

Not at all - 27%

75% - claims that their employers are interested in health and welfare of employees

50% - have thought about early retirement based on the health status or other circumstances; and **67%** from them reported that the above thoughts are largely related to their care responsibilities and careload

Feel that they would want to leave their care responsibilities and focus on their work:

Seldom - 40%

Never - 60%

HEALTH AND COPING ABILITY

Evaluate their health status (compared to their peers) as:

Very good – 7%

Good – 27%

Average – 56%

Poor – 10%

Currently feel that their life is:

Easy – 3%

Bearable – 43%

Difficult – 50%

Extremely difficult – 3%

33% - claim that they are worried about their health status, particularly about:

Psychological state, back pain, sleep disturbance, frequent migraines, stress, nervous system disorders, fear of traumatic incidents

HEALTH AND COPING ABILITY (frequently or constantly)

37% - feel that they do not have enough time for themselves due to the care responsibilities

30% - claims it is stressful to cope with care responsibilities in addition to taking care of their family and fulfilling their work responsibilities

30% - feel tired in the company of the cared for person

33% - feel that the care load limits their freedom of choice

40% - feel that they have to improve their caring skills

ITEMS THAT ARE IMPORTANT OR VERY IMPORTANT FOR COPING

100% - family

83% - "one day at a time" mentality

73% - work

73% - friends

67% - faith and spiritual assistance

57% - hobbies

43% - information and experience groups available through NGOs

40% - counselling (psychotherapy)

SATISFACTION WITH SOCIAL SERVICES

(very satisfied + satisfied, not satisfied)

Home care (LMS) – 17% Support person – 7% Personal assistant – 27%

Daycare – 27%
Physical therapy – 10%, 3%
Respite care – 0

Private paid services – 13%, 3% NGO services – 20%, 3% Social transport – 7%, 7%

Educational services – 33%, 10% Medical services – 70%, 10% Rehabilitation services – 30%, 7%

THE MOOD OF CARERS

70% - are satisfied with their life

70% - think that now it is a good time to live

63% - are usually in a good mood

63% - happy with their life

77% - had to give up some activity or hobby

43% - often feel helplessness

43% - feel that they are not fit for anything

40% - fear that something bad may happen to them

30% - often feel sad

3% - think their life is meaningless

CHANGES THAT CARERS WISH FOR IN THEIR LIFE

To find a well-paid job Assistant services Respite care Early retirement

Health; not to lose faith
Exercizing, self-education
Future safety
To travel, go to theatre or concert

So that cared for person would integrate in society, would be able solve his own problems and find a suitable work So that the health of the cared for person improve

EXPERIENCED CONFLICT SITUATIONS AND THEIR SOLUTIONS

Problem: Doesn't want to take a shower/bath

Solution: Trying to persuade, and if it doesn't work, talking in

an imperative way

Problem: Broke 3 bathroom taps over 1 year period

Solution: Fixed everything and explained that it is not

necessary to use so much physical strength to take a shower

or bath

Problem: Want to use too much salt, sugar, shampoo, shower gel etc.

Solution: Since it wasn't possible to convince the person not to do the above, these substances are being hidden and supplied only in limited quantities

EXPERIENCED CONFLICT SITUATIONS AND THEIR SOLUTIONS (continued)

Problem: Boy is slouching due to scoliosis

Solution: Have to always remind him to sit up straight and

threaten with operation – it works for a while

Problem: Goes to a father's work place without permission and

disturbs his work

Solution: Not yet resolved.

Problem: Doesn't want to eat.

Solution: He is not being forced to eat and after a while he asks

for food in his own language.

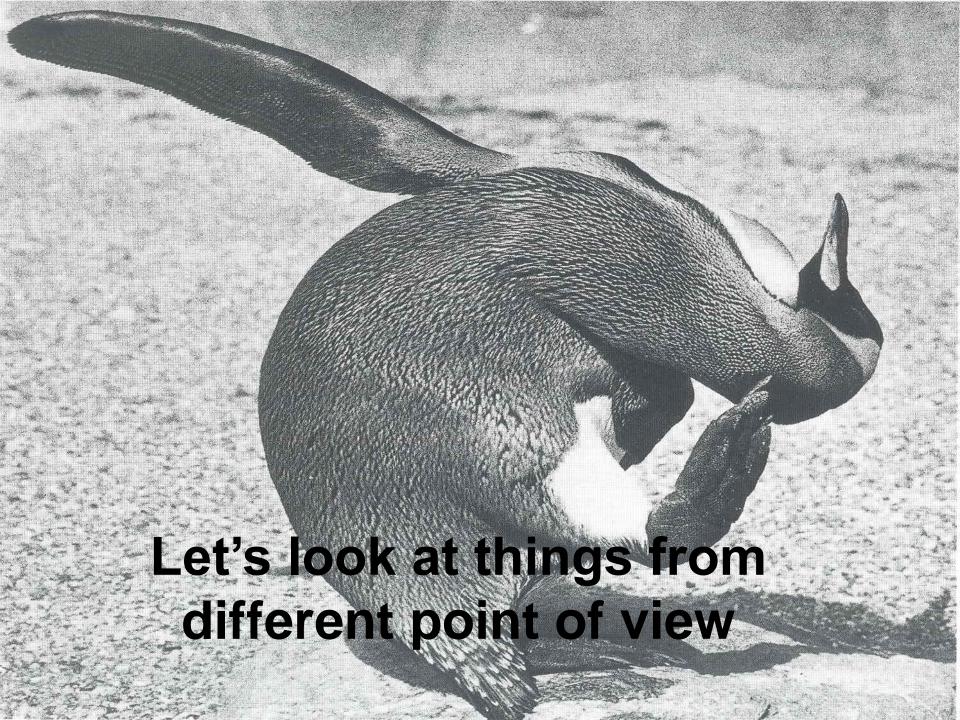


















Recommendations for Social Service

- 1.To inform the residents of Alūksne district about the available social services:
 - a. Personal assistant
 - b. Daycare centre
 - c. Home care
 - d. Support group for informal carers
 - e. Respite care in a Social Care Centre for grown-ups
 - f. Specialized transport
 - g. Receiving technical aids
- 2. To develop a respite care for children with disability.
- 3.To provide individual consultations by social workers and other Social Service specialists with aim to inform carers about different care issues.

Recommendations for NGO

- Organising events, informative seminars, discussions and other forms of support for informal carers.
- 2. Providing emotional support and sharing personal experience with the members of NGO who has similar care problems.
- 3. Developing a supported work offers within the framework of projects for people with intellectual disability who wishes to work.

Thanks to the project participants for responsiveness and co-operation!

Thank you for your attention!