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INTRODUCTION

CKU Sopot, PL

The international project collaboration on the SEAL project has resulted in many valuable lessons that provide light for further work on behalf of seniors and expand the knowledge already possessed. Through the implementation of the SEAL project in a diverse international partnership, it became clear that we see many differences in the perception of: old people; the aging process; opportunities, limitations and needs of older people. At the same time, we had the opportunity to see how much we have in common in terms of local activities for seniors despite cultural and world-view differences.

During more than two years of project cooperation we have had an opportunity to exchange knowledge and experience on functioning local institutions supporting activation and education of seniors in the countries: Czech Republic, Italy, Poland and Turkey. We had an opportunity to visit some of the local institutions and learn about their offer. Unfortunately, due to the persistence of the Covid-19 pandemic for over a year during the project it was not possible to carry out all of the scheduled project meetings in partner countries, and it was necessary to intensify project work in the virtual space.

Based on the collected information (including the results of a survey of seniors, professionals working with seniors and family members of seniors) a proposal for tools for education and activation of seniors (IO2-Toolkit) was developed, as well as a set of guidelines for education and activation of seniors (IO3-Guidebook). As a complement to the developed results, we have also developed a set of recommendations for representatives of local governments, decision-making bodies in the field of local senior policies. In this project result (IO4) we have shared our observations and collected knowledge. We have developed a set of recommendations that include key issues to be taken into account while creating an offer of services for seniors. Below you will find a set of recommendations related to the activation and education of seniors. The recommendations are divided into thematic areas. The level of universality of the recommendations is high, because it was developed in an international environment of representatives of the project team.

We hope that the results of the SEAL project will inspire other organizations to implement further projects in the area of supporting the functioning of seniors in society. The subject matter is important, taking into account the demographic changes in the world and the trend towards aging of societies. Activation of seniors is an important problem from the perspective of individuals as well as entire communities. The search for useful and effective solutions to keep seniors in good psychophysical condition for as long as possible is in the interest of all of us. It is an important aspect of local policy to ensure that seniors have a strong say in local community and land-use decisions. Caring for the psychophysical well-being of seniors, we take care of their fitness, independence and autonomy. Taking into account the increasing migration of the population, economic migration and changing places of residence of people of working age, it is important to include in the local activities for the local environment various forms of support for the functioning of seniors in society. It is important, among others, because seniors more and more often live alone and it is necessary to support their independent functioning in local environment. It is also an important issue taking into account not only social but also economic factors. An active and independent senior citizen is less likely to need caregivers in his or her daily life.

The attached recommendations are useful for both local government representatives and seniors' centre managers, as well as for professionals who work with seniors on a daily basis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

According to Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union (EU) at the start of 2019, 101.1 million people in the EU had reached the age of 65 – 20% of the total population. By 2050, this share is projected to increase to 29%. The ageing is mainly due to a long-term fall in fertility rates and increased life expectancy. The needs of these people have changed over the years. There are significant differences between the seniors at present and in previous years. Together with the global phenomenon of ageing of societies (decreasing birth rate and prolonging life expectancy), increased migration of population, growing number of breakdowns of unions, lack of offspring, etc., a growing number of environments in which seniors run single-person households are observed.

Is there any stereotype thinking about seniors?

PROMETEO, IT

Aging is a highly individualized and complex process; yet it continues to be stereotyped, especially in Western cultures. Stereotypes about a particular group play a powerful role in shaping how we think about and interact with individuals, as well as how individuals within the stereotyped group see themselves. Stereotypes are unchallenged myths or overstated beliefs associated with a category which are widespread and entrenched in verbal, written, and visual contexts within society. Stereotypes of aging include assumptions and generalizations about how people at or over a certain age should behave, and what they are likely to experience, without regard for individual differences or unique circumstances.

Stereotypes of aging in contemporary culture, particularly in Europe and North America, are primarily negative, depicting later life as a time of ill health, loneliness, dependency, and poor physical and mental functioning. However, stereotypes of ageing can also be positive (e.g., healthy, wealthy, and wise) or neutral and they are continually changing over time and across contexts. Views of old age, and the perceptions older adults hold of themselves, are complex, multidimensional, and dynamic. In other words, stereotypes of aging are social constructs that are culturally and historically situated, as well as individually interpreted.

Notably, any stereotype of aging (including those that equate aging with frailty and decline, or later life with health and affluence) has the potential to reinforce ageism (i.e., social oppression based on age) because they position ill health in old age as undesirable and they do not acknowledge the vast diversity among older adults. The terms “older adults,” “older people,” “older individuals,” “old age,” “the elderly,” or “seniors” have been used interchangeably in academic literature, policy, and popular press to refer to people who are aged 55 years or older. Therefore, although we adopt the general term “older adults” in this review, we recognize the extensive heterogeneity among this group of people. Given this diversity, it is important to acknowledge from the outset that older adults are unlikely to respond to stereotypes as a single entity.

The purpose of this review is to report findings on the effects of stereotypes of aging on health outcomes related to older adults, such as physical and mental functioning (specifically) and overall well-being and perceived quality of life (more broadly). The health outcome of focus in each study, or group of studies, has been italicized as the literature is discussed below.

The initial discussion will focus primarily (although not exclusively) on the effect of negative stereotypes, while the latter will focus on the effects of positive stereotypes. In doing so, this review highlights that both positive and negative stereotypes of aging can simultaneously have enabling and constraining effects on the actions, performance, decisions, attitudes, and, consequently, holistic health of an older adult. Increasing our awareness of the multiple effects of stereotypes on individual health outcomes in older adults, and the assumptions embedded in research findings, can promote changes in individual and societal attitudes and behaviours, as well as policy and professional infrastructures that benefit older adults.¹

RECOMMENDATIONS

While it has been shown that implicit and explicit activation of negative age stereotypes can negatively impact older adults' short-term performance in physical and cognitive domains, and potential long-term health outcomes (i.e., health-related behaviours), the effects of positive stereotypes of aging appear more complicated and are comparatively under researched. The following review will focus on findings that have emerged from experimental studies primarily related to the effects of positive stereotypes of aging on the health of older adults.

Preliminary evidence suggests that implicit positive stereotype primes can improve performance in older individuals. For example, many of Levy and colleagues' implicit priming studies reviewed in previous sections revealed that the positively primed group improved their performance in the task being measured, such as memory, swing time, and balance speed associated with walking, or had no change in their performance after being primed, such as a muted cardiovascular response to cognitive challenges. The latter finding led to the assumption that positive primes may act as a buffer to the effects of negative stereotypes.

In addition, Levy et al. found in their hypothetical will-to-live study that those who were exposed to positive aging stereotypes were more likely to accept the life-prolonging medical intervention. However, in contrast to Levy's findings on memory, it was mentioned earlier that Stein et al. found that older individual's memory performance did not improve after they were primed with a positive age stereotype. Therefore, it cannot be assumed that implicit positive primes will always lead to improved performance in older adults. Nevertheless, researchers have begun to examine if experimentally making people feel younger will result in improvements in physical and mental performance.²

The Elderly- between “value” and “problem”.

KMEM, TR

The World Health Organization, in a classification it makes about the types of old age, defines senescent period as senior age between 60-74 years old, old age between 75-89 years old, elderly age 90 and above. In the early literature in Turkey, it is being launched by age 60 years. But in the near term, depending on factors such as technology facilitates human life in the world and in Turkey, economic growth, investment in healthcare, aged care services, raising awareness about human health protection and improvement, the average prolonged human life, increased life expectancy at birth. For this reason, it seems more appropriate to start senior age with the age of 65. However, it can be stated that this definition will ultimately

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be shaped in a cultural context and will include subjective ideas. For example, according to a study conducted in Turkey, ending the youth was 34.2 years, while after age 55 are considered to be the elderly. On the other hand, Greeks start old age at the age of 68.

Increasing the average human life span has increased the number of elderly people. According to the data of the World Health Organization, the number of individuals in the age group 60 and above, which was 900 million between 2015 and 2050, is expected to be 2 billion. These figures mean that the elderly population increased from 12% to 22%. However, demographic change is expected to be more in developing countries rather than developed countries. Accordingly, the change in the elderly population in France in 150 years is expected to occur in 20 years in China and India.

According to Turkey's statistical agency statistics, the elderly population in Turkey (65 and older) in 2012 was 5 million 682 thousand 3, while people in the last five years increased by 17.1% in 2016, 6 million 651 thousand 503, in the total population of the elderly population While its rate was 7.5%, it increased to 8.3%. The data available shows the rate in Turkey, according to the world's population, is over the middle but at one point in time would reveal a similar graph the Western countries. Accordingly, while the world's elderly population is 8.7 % of the population in 2016, this rate is 8.3% in Turkey.

Both the decline in birth rates in the world as well as in Turkey, raises several concerns about the future society will bring loads of old people. The statistical increase in the number of elderly people has increased the burden of social security institutions, and policies regarding elderly people have become more urgent. As a result of all these developments, old age ceased to be an individual problem, but turned into a social problem.

Turkey's social and cultural structure inculcates for the elderly to be approached with reverence respect, love, compassion. Kissing the hands of the elderly, seeing the elderly as wise people and consulting them, not starting to eat before the elderly people start, giving the elderly people the main corner at home and in social settings are social practices that show the importance and value of the elderly in Turkish society.

The modern perspective assumes that the elderly withdraws from active life. Based on this assumption, the modernization theory of aging assumes that the status of the elderly changes as societies modernize. It is possible to say that this point of view is widely accepted also in Turkey.

Accordingly, in the past, listening to the word of the elderly, benefiting from their experiences and authority are more important than today, the situation is different today. One of the main reasons for this is the emphasis on youth and change in popular culture elements and media. Such a cultural background is positioned old age as the opposite of change, and this emphasis causes the elderly to be perceived as old and closed mind and lose their importance. Although the family structure shaped according to the priorities of the Turkish-Islamic culture sees old age as an important social category, there have been important changes in the Turkish family structure with the effect of changing socioeconomic conditions and modernization. In this context, the traditional extended family order has begun to change and the economic understanding, orientation and necessities emerging today have required women to participate in working life outside the home. In addition, families had to continue their lives in more limited spaces, and the loneliness of rural elderly people emerged as a result of migration from rural to urban.

The change in the family structure also affected the socio-cultural structure, the place and position of the elderly in the family changed to a certain extent, and the elderly were sometimes perceived as a burden. Considering that old age can be defined as an abstract value, we can see that the meaning attributed to the old age value in traditional social structure and the meaning attributed in consumer societies is different as a result of socioeconomic and cultural changes. Accordingly, the old age value is consumed and old age turns into an undesirable phenomenon.

Old age is a period in which people view life from a different perspective. The factors determining the social position and perception of the elderly are social assumptions about old age, sociocultural elements of old age and socioeconomic conditions of old age. Factors such as transition from agricultural society to industrial society, urbanization and migration weakened the social position of the elderly and caused the phenomenon of old age to be determined negatively. The same justifications are among the sources of negative value judgments about old age.

The social position of the elderly and social perceptions about old age can be read through social value judgments. Looking at the social value judgments about older people and aging in Turkey, these values of judgements are classified as negative, as positive and as a hybrid. It is seen that religious-traditional understanding is an important element in the formation of positive value judgments about old age. Negative value judgments, on the other hand, are mostly shaped in the context of modern perception of mind as elderly people are seen as social burden and not as producers. Sociocultural and socioeconomic changes are the most important factors that weaken the social position of the elderly and shape the old age phenomenon in social imagination.

As a result, social value judgments about the elderly are transforming from a value-centered structure to a problem-centered perspective. The most important factors in the emergence of this perspective are the depreciation of traditional values as a result of sociocultural change, the elimination of the authority of knowledge, the departure from a value-centered understanding of life, and socioeconomic conditions defining the elderly as individuals in need of (social) care by allocating a share from the budget.

The Elderly in the process of Covid-19 pandemic.

KMEM, TR

Although all age groups are at risk of transmission with Covid-19, elderly individuals are at risk of serious illness due to aging and underlying medical conditions. Elderly individuals are at higher risk for Covid-19 infection due to both physiological and biological changes in organs and systems with age and underlying medical conditions. In addition, the immune system of the aged individual has a clinical predisposition to infections, autoimmunity and malignancy.

The United Nations Population Fund stated that the following issues should be taken into account in interventions related to Covid-19, in the technical information note on Covid-19 and the elderly.

These issues are:

- Today, the elderly does not live with large families, but live alone or in nursing homes due to demographic changes such as the aging of the population, the employment of all individuals in the home, internal migration and urbanization.

- Access of older people to health services are associated with many social determinants such as gender, income level, racial or ethnic origin and individual's previous experiences. In addition, elderly people also face problems such as age-related negative discrimination and stigmatization. These factors make it difficult for elderly people to access health services. It is recommended to consider all these variables while evaluating elderly individuals as a holistic one.
- Elderly people living alone may face obstacles in the provision of accurate information, food, medicine and other necessary materials under quarantine conditions and may need support for this.
- Some elderly people also care for their grandchildren and this can increase the risk of Covid19 as it makes it impossible for them to quarantine themselves. In addition, higher mobility of young family members living under the same roof poses an additional risk of infection for older people.
- According to data from high-income countries, although higher case-fatality rates are observed among older men than women, elderly alone women are at risk.
- Older individuals may be exposed to physical, psychological, sexual, economic abuse / exploitation during the Covid19 epidemic. There is an urgent need for public health action to protect the rights of older people.

In order to reduce the spreading rate of the epidemic in our country and to maintain the social distance between people, with the circular of the Ministry of Internal Affairs dated 21 March 2020, after 24:00 on the same date, our citizens aged 65 and over are prohibited from going out to the streets ,leave their homes, walk around in open areas, parks and travel by public transportation .In this process, the elderly are dependent on others (buying food and medicine, taking money from the bank, etc.).They faced problems such as social isolation, change in family dynamics, mental / emotional problems, inactive life, not being able to benefit from daylight, having to close their workplaces, not being able to go to health checks, age discrimination risk. Due to elderly people staying at home and not being able to go out; It was determined that physiological, biological and psychological regressions were observed, functional and structural changes were experienced, protection, supervision and care requirements increased, and there were problems in performing daily life activities.

Since their immune systems are more susceptible to being affected by coronavirus, individuals over the age of 65 who are recommended to follow the social distance rule and stay in their homes also need psychological support in this process. Expressing that the discourses about the elderly on social media are wrong, experts recommend that the needs of the elderly people in the house be met by their relatives and that they are constantly called and motivated speeches.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It should be explained that the source of the virus is not the elderly

In this process, elderly individuals need to talk, express their feelings, and people who listen and understand them. This task falls to their relatives. It is necessary to take a more correct approach to inform and listen to elderly people and allow them to express their feelings. The best way to prevent anxiety is correct information. Nowadays, there was a situation as if the virus was spreading by the elderly, its source was them, and when they were caught, a serious situation would immediately occur. These phrases occupy their minds too much and can cause them to misinterpret their emotional worlds. Therefore, it is necessary to explain why they

should stay at home, why some situations pose a risk, they do not actually infect, and that this is a basic virus.

Information and support should be provided without worry them

Since the elderly people may have limited opportunities to have sufficient information about the process, their relatives should inform them about the precautions to be taken and the current situation without causing any fear and anxiety. The importance of social isolation and social distance should be emphasized in the interviews. It should be said that they should not accept guests to their homes and should not leave the house unless it is a very urgent situation. It should be explained that they keep their immunity strong and how important hygiene is. They can be supported for situations that need to be dealt with outside, such as basic needs, shopping and etc.

Motivating speeches should be made

Talking about different issues from this infection or the illness, talking about happy days, talking about positive things and positive issues will comfort them in this process. They may be more anxious and anxious about this epidemic due to their old age. A lot of work falls on their relatives in this regard. Actions such as making motivational speeches, being called frequently by video calls, and asking about their well-being will make them feel better. Apart from that, different activities can be suggested for them to spend time at home. Thus, they can have a better time during their stay at home. They can decide what to choose among the different suggestions based on their features.

The statements on social media are wrong

Despite the curfew restrictions on social media, there have been discourses such as why elderly people go out and do not listen to the rules. Therefore, exclusionary, offensive and intimidating hate speech towards the elderly began to occur in the society. The virus epidemic we are exposed to should cause solidarity, not segregation, in society. These statements are extremely wrong because elderly people may not perceive and experience this process as everyone perceives it. As a result, they are going through a more sensitive period due to their age. Fear of being alone, anxiety about death, resistance to death or the desire to continue their current habits can also cause them to go out. They may also be trying to overcome trifle, which is one of the most fundamental methods of dealing with anxiety, by considering it appropriate to go over it. First of all, we need to understand them about why they behave this way.

Constructive Support Should Be Provided to the Elderly

Apart from those living in big cities, there are also elderly people who live in rural areas, villages or have no relatives in Anatolia. More organizational studies should be done. For them, the state and non-governmental organizations need to take effective and versatile measures and raise awareness to make their lives easier. Just to say that going out is risky is not an effective method. Like all of us, they are in a sensitive mood. They are experiencing

troubles and anxiety for many reasons. Instead of such behaviours, it is necessary to be in an inclusive, understanding, listening and informative stance. Positive activities should be recommended.

Even the young generation, who uses social media more effectively and is more involved in life, finds it very difficult to find activity during this time when they are at home. This situation is even more serious for the elderly. Therefore, they should be considered instead, and what they like should be considered. They may like solving puzzles, they may like to watch movies, books can be recommended to those who like to read, audio book applications can be downloaded for those who have problems with sight and hearing, radio theatres can be recommended, and they can be directed to various activities such as handicrafts. In this process, many opportunities and conditions can be provided for them. It is said that withdrawing money from banks and going to banks is very risky. Due to their old age, they may not be able to use technology as effectively as the younger generation. Instead, their relatives should meet these needs.

Is the word “senior” positively or negatively associated? What to focus on while organising activities dedicated to seniors?

CKU Sopot, PL

Multi-generational households, where the senior citizen plays a significant role of "head of the family" and has a decisive opinion on the functioning of the family, are becoming less and less common. The meaning of the word "senior" has changed significantly over the years. At one time, the word "senior" was associated in particular with a "wise man", a person experienced in life, a "family elder" to whom young people went to for advice, and who made important decisions concerning the family. With the social changes in the communities, the word "senior" was increasingly associated with: the loss of health, physical and mental fitness. In the era of the cult of beauty, youth and fitness, the tendency to associate the word "senior" with loss and lack of fitness persists. At the same time, it is observed that since last year's seniors are becoming more and more independent in their daily life, taking care of themselves, their physical fitness and developing their passions.

From our project experience as well as from our previous work for/with seniors, cooperation with them and with institutions working on their behalf, the word “senior” usually evokes such associations as: old age, lack of health, low life energy, low social, professional and physical activity. However, the stereotype of seniors has changed significantly over the years in different cultures. More and more often the image of seniors is portrayed as active, physically fit, and aware of their needs.

Increasingly, the locally available offers of support, activation and education are dedicated to seniors functioning well, independent in running the household, people who want to expand their knowledge and gain new experiences. This is consistent with the concept of LLL (lifelong learning), which emphasizes that it is important to create opportunities for lifelong learning, development of knowledge, skills and competencies regardless of age.

On the one hand this is an important aspect to remember, when creating an offer for seniors, that currently the senior citizen is often a person with above-average expectations about the quality of the offer, the form of guidance/service, who "will not settle for just anything".

Therefore, the form and content of classes, workshops (available offer) should be of good quality.

At the same time, it is important in the trend to promote the image of an active, aware and satisfied senior citizen, not to forget about the need of continuous development of the support offer for dependent senior citizens, who need care and support in their daily improvement of their basic physical and mental fitness.

More and more often seniors stay alone in their apartments, because more and more often their "adult children" or other relatives move away to another city (often to another country) where they live and work. Family support is more and more often in the form of paid care in the form of an assistant or a caregiver, who supports the senior citizen in everyday life with a certain responsibility. The cost of providing care in private nursing homes often exceeds the financial possibilities of family members, while the waiting time for a place in nursing homes subsidized by local governments is very long. Therefore, it is important that the offer of available local support for seniors includes the possibility to partially provide care and activation at the place of residence or to provide forms of local activation and support outside the place of residence of seniors, if possible, providing transport from and to the place of residence in situations requiring it, when the senior citizen is unable to use the available forms of public transport by himself.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is important that from the earliest age people in society develop an attitude of respect, tolerance, understanding and responsibility towards the elderly. Nowadays, when the culture of consumerism dominates, as well as the cult of youth, beauty and material possessions, it is important to maintain the need for caring about family traditions, one's own roots, and passing on family information from generation to generation. It is important for each of us to perceive beauty and possibilities in every stage of life. We should also look at the senior stage of life as a stage when many new possibilities open up before each of us, a stage that we should enjoy.

Below you can find 5 recommendations that we want to underline in accordance to the topic of this section:

- 1) promote the image of an active senior citizen who develops his/her interests, acquires new skills and is actively involved in social life.
- 2) create high-quality educational and interest-oriented offer for seniors based on the actual needs of seniors (local offer recipients).
- 3) disseminate/promote (at all educational levels) the image of the senior as a person with extensive experience, from whom it is worth drawing knowledge, who can not only be a recipient of local support offer, but also initiate and lead various thematic meetings.
- 4) It is important to provide opportunities for seniors to participate in decision-making on the functioning of the local offer dedicated to the residents.
- 5) building various forms of support for seniors in their places of residence; involving active seniors in supporting seniors in need of care (assistance, volunteering in the form of spending time together, shopping).

Ageing and disabilities.

IST, IT

The ageing of the population and the increase in life expectancy also affect people with disabilities and those around them. It is a multidimensional phenomenon with health, psychological, family and social, infrastructural and economic implications that requires in-depth and shared reflection in order to find the best answers regarding the quality of life of the people involved. For some time now, the sector has been calling for global reflection on this still little-known phenomenon so that there can be a unity of purpose in the accompaniment of people with ageing disabilities.

In general, on the tick of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, only in recent years has the issue of the intersection of the elderly and disabilities begun to be addressed. Although an international definition of frailty in the elderly has not been achieved internationally, some factors are recognised as being associated with increased vulnerability, both in terms of overall health and loss of physical, psychic, and social spheres. Vulnerability that can be a precursor or at least a risk factor for frailty. Silver Steps defines the non-disabled person as a frail elder, i.e., autonomous in all ADLs, but not autonomous in carrying out two or more complex functions, aid (such as preparing meals, doing housework, taking medication, going around, manage yourself economically, use a phone).

According to Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union (EU) at the start of 2019, 101.1 million people in the EU had reached the age of 65 – 20% of the total population. By 2050, this share is projected to increase to 29%. The ageing is mainly due to a long-term fall in fertility rates and increased life expectancy. The needs of these people have changed over the years. There are significant differences between the seniors at present and in previous years. Together with the global phenomenon of ageing of societies (decreasing birth rate and prolonging life expectancy), increased migration of population, growing number of breakdowns of unions, lack of offspring, etc., a growing number of environments in which seniors run single-person households are observed.

The quality of life has improved for everyone, we are starting to be longer-lived, and so are people with disabilities. They also have the prerogative to remain younger, fresher, less attacked by the stresses that life imposes on us; we improperly call them "boys", they are animated by constant curiosity, their spirit is kind and the advancement of their biological age does not correspond to their desire to live. While the ageing of the world's population occupies a leading place in the debate on the future of Europe, people with intellectual disabilities are largely excluded from this debate. People with elderly disabilities are often subject to double discrimination: because of their disability and age. Since this is the first generation of people with disabilities living so long, systems and services still need to be implemented to ensure their quality of life.

One of this discrimination is also related to the choice of the place to leave. In many countries, at the age of 65, the institutions impose a change of the live of some people with disabilities, with the consequence of subtly imposing a radical change of life by pushing those people with disabilities towards retirement homes for the elderly. This condition heavily mussels with Article 19 of the UN Convention (Independent Living and Inclusion in Society) which requires that "People with disabilities have the opportunity to choose, on an equal basis with others, their place of residence and where and with whom to live; persons with disabilities have access

to a range of home or residential services and other social support services, including the personal assistance necessary to enable them to live in society and prevent them from being isolated or victims of segregation; services and social structures for the whole population are made available, on an equal footing with others, to people with disabilities and adapted to their needs." We must therefore put a stop to this 'tout-court' parallelism of people with disabilities with the elderly!

RECOMMENDATIONS

Working with seniors can be very challenging and requires a lot of patience. This also apply when you want to focus on their personal and emotional area. So, we suggest you to be quite rewarding as they can often be misunderstood and treated as a burden to society. In the following lines, we suggest you some tips and tricks that you can apply in your daily work with seniors.

Do not treat them like they are babies!

Intentionally or not, many people say and do things that belittle, disregard, or otherwise treat seniors as though they are less than full-grown adults. It can happen with care home staff, store clerks, and younger relatives. You should think into consideration that most of the seniors you can work with can be independent and they can hate being treated like babies. With, it is well known that seniors are at a higher risk for falls and injury. You need to be close enough to them to prevent injury or falling, while also not appearing to be too overbearing. Use common sense. If you see them really struggling, you should help.

Listen to them!

Natural declines can cause seniors to feel more vulnerable than other age groups. They can worry about issues such as personal safety, illness, and memory loss. It is important as professional to listen to a senior's concerns. Remember that sometimes an elderly person just wants to be heard. Find out where and when they feel most vulnerable, and work to calm those fears. For example, safety concerns could be addressed with a home alarm system or the daily presence of a care worker.

Let them tell you stories!

Seniors love to share stories about their past. Make sure you are actively listening and paying attention to details. For them, if you can repeat details about their stories or ask them questions brings a smile to their faces. Sometimes they will tell you the same stories more than once, but overall, it is better to respond as if it is the first time, you are hearing it. This avoids unnecessary embarrassment and prevents awkward interactions between you and them.

Be empathetic!

Always try to put yourself into their shoes and understand what they are thinking or feeling. In our experience, the number one factor that prevents seniors from exercising is the fear of falling. Try to understand what barriers they are experiencing in their lives. You as professional, need to be adaptable and provide alternate solutions/methods of doing things if they are not comfortable with something you propose or happen to them.

Be patient!

As obvious as this may seem, it cannot be stressed enough. Often, seniors are hard of hearing and it may take them a little longer to process information. Take your time when explaining

things, break them up into smaller parts, and talk loudly and clearly. Lastly, explain what you are doing and why you are doing it.

Be punctual and respect their time!

In many cases, you may be the only social interaction that seniors receive in the day. They are waiting for you to arrive and most people, including seniors, do not appreciate those who are unreliable. Seniors, like others, may interpret you being late as a lack of care and respect. It may appear to them as if you do not take pride in your work and just want to get your job over with as soon as possible. Alternatively, punctuality demonstrates professionalism and helps build mutual respect.

Share your knowledge!

Some seniors are curious about you, what you do or thing that happen in the world. This is a great way to build rapport with seniors. If they see that you have a lot of knowledge and know what you are talking about, they are more likely to trust you. As they like to learn new things and they are happy to have you share your knowledge of anatomy, physiology, or whatever else you know lots about. So, this can be a good structure in other for them to learn news thing and to exchange.

Encourage connection!

Loneliness and social isolation are major problems among seniors. This because as we age, our social circles naturally dwindle. Friends move, become busy or pass away. Family members may visit less or become too busy with their own lives. In e senior age, the feeling of disconnection from friends and family can lead to depression and even early mortality. To prevent a senior from feeling lonely, encourage online connection of senior so they can connect with their friends and family. So, you as professional working them with them encourage activities that could provide them new friendship groups, such as clubs or activities at a local senior centre (if available).

How to improve the self-confidence of seniors and their feeling that they are valuable members of society?

GLAFKA, CZ

Probably anyone would like to feel that her/his live has a meaning. People often have certain goals in their lives which they try to follow and wish to fulfil. Yet as people grow older, they face many changes and insecurity that can affect their quality of life, sometimes even in negative perspective. After fulfilling basic needs and goals (like achieving education level, obtaining quality housing, being part of one's own family with children) they might get feelings that everything important in their lives has been accomplished. Sometimes, people are fully concentrated on their families and jobs during their middle years so hobbies and friends are pushed to the side lines.

After retirement, the life has tendency to slow down. This can affect seniors as they no longer have a specific and definable meaning in their lives. Especially, if they pushed hobbies and friends to the side lines in active age, suddenly they realize they have no actual purpose in their lives. They might feel that the world is too fast and no longer for them.

They retire from job, children are released from home, there might occur several difficulties or diseases which in their eyes can reduce ability to take part in social life or participate in meaningful activities. When they retire their life have a tendency to slow down

Seniors might feel adrift, without goals or purpose, useless or they simply believe they have nothing valuable to offer society anymore. Some of them might even feel lonely and isolated. These might even cause depression to seniors.

Above mentioned is a problem as sense of purpose is linked (among other) to healthier brain and a longer life. For seniors, it is significant to find a sense of purpose as it can actually help staying healthier longer. To have a sense of purpose is closely linked to a higher quality of life, a stronger sense of wellbeing, and even better physical and mental health. Those who feel a greater sense of purpose usually live longer than people who lack feelings of purpose. Furthermore, better sleep quality and reduction of the hard attack or stroke is also associated with purpose in life.

Therefore, the society's aim should be helping seniors feel valuable, important and with a strong sense of purpose. Simply, helping seniors to find a reason to get out of the bed every morning and do or create something they find meaningful. In order to make this process successful the society should become aware that elderly people are valuable members with rich experience and wisdom to be shared.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Simply said, promote them meaningful activities and tasks, encourage them to be active and concerned, regularly reinforce their importance to society and world. There are plenty of tips and suggestions how to make seniors feel useful and needed. We selected those we have found interesting and actually useful to whole society. We hope seniors will find following tips interesting too.

Give seniors opportunity to become a storyteller. It can be in a form of written story, digital storytelling or contact which we call human book. There are so many interesting and impressive stories which shouldn't be forgotten. This is also great opportunity for intergeneration dialog and creating connections between youth/children and seniors/elderly. Create intergeneration dialogue and cooperation:

- Give young generation possibility to meet with seniors with purpose to teach them basic ICT skills and how to operate new technologies. In reward seniors teach youth forgotten skills or share their traditional and old (honest) recipes.
- Establish cooperation with kindergartens or elementary schools. Both groups are visiting each other. Seniors can tell or read children fairy tales and children can create little presents for seniors.
- Give them chance to be part of volunteering activities or charity. They might be producing hand made products (like knitting hats, gloves, shawl, or other).
- Give former teachers/doctors/etc. possibility to get back to the process as senior consultants for young generation (it helped a lot during the pandemic)
- Give seniors work in museums, castles, galleries as guides. Seniors might give added value to guided tours by telling interesting stories nobody else remember.
- Give seniors opportunity to become grandparents in case they do not have any grandchild (but it is not a condition). Simply, offer them babysitting of kids who either doesn't have grandparents or their own grandparents are not retired yet and can't take care of them.

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FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The result is a summary of the hitherto worked out results, where we have included remarks that we think should be taken into account while creating the space for work with seniors and planning activities for their benefit. The content of the developed result is a kind of supplement to the results developed so far: Toolkit (IO2), Guidebook (IO3). The developed set of materials will certainly be helpful for people working directly with seniors and for their benefit, for family members of seniors and for representatives of institutions dealing with the development of local policies for the local community. As the average age of the population increases each year and the birth rate declines nationally, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of expanding and improving local support services for seniors and of national policies to support the functioning and independence of older people.

In addition to the above-mentioned outputs, an additional output (IO5-How to cope with lockdown and remain fit and active) has been developed in relation to the experience of the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown.

For information on the *SEAL- Senior Education for Active Living* project and its results, please visit project website: www.sealproject.eu .

PROJECT PARTNERS



CKU Sopot is a public school providing formal and informal education for adults; at this moment provides VET courses in professions such as: photographer, informatician, accountant, graphic designer. CKU Sopot provides various workshops for elderly people at Third Age University (with approximately 950 students). Within CKU Sopot there is also teacher training centre. CKU Sopot is highly experienced in transnational cooperation including Erasmus+ projects.



GLAFKA is an educational and training organisation providing education and consulting in the area of lifelong learning and development of innovative educational methods, vocational skills of beneficiaries. Provides courses and support for groups experiencing social exclusion. Provides IT courses for seniors (aged 60+). GLAFKA has a various experience in transnational projects including Erasmus+.



IST is a non-governmental organization founded in 1814 to provide support for people with sensory disabilities and to train their teacher. IST provides various types of support like: daily care, assisted housing, assisted learning, therapy workshops (painting, cooking, cinema, sport activities), VET education of disabled people and training for operator working in the sector. Highly experienced in Erasmus+ projects.



PROMETEO is a nongovernmental organisation providing educational offer and support for members of institutions working in the field of education of adults. Is involved in projects and programmes connected with: development of vocational skills of students; tourism; social inclusion of immigrants and activities against racism; education of elderly people; development of innovative educational tools. PROMETEO has a wide experience in transnational cooperation including Erasmus+ projects.



KMEM is a public body which coordinates and supervises over 1084 schools. The employees from the research and development department are highly experienced in various types of projects (including Erasmus+ projects). The institution is responsible for organizing the various courses for adults and for teachers in whole region. It supports the acquisition and development of competences required in the labour market; obtaining qualifications to supplement education.