



FACULTY OF PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

Care and support in later life: A study on the dynamics of care networks of frail, community-dwelling older adults

Public defense to obtain the degree of

DOCTOR OF ADULT EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

of

Ms. Deborah Lambotte

which will take place on

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Promotiezaal, D.2.01 (Building D, 2nd floor)

Brussels Humanities, Sciences & Engineering Campus (Etterbeek)

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Summary

Ageing-in-place policies nowadays endorse the need to arrange and deliver strength-based, person-centred and integrated care at the local level. In order to meet this changing view on health and social care for frail, older adults, a more positive and comprehensive approach towards frailty needs to be adopted. Furthermore, frailty should be considered as a dynamic process as older adults' strengths and resources (cf. balancing factors) can decrease negative experiences of frailty and increase positive outcomes.

By using a multidimensional approach for frailty, an ethics of care perspective and the convoy of care model, this dissertation contributes to a comprehensive view on care relationships and broader care needs of frail, community-dwelling older adults. Analyses of 65 qualitative interviews from the D-SCOPE project provide insights into frail, older care recipients' experiences of positive outcomes (e.g. mastery, life satisfaction) and the use of the convoy of care model. Furthermore, this study examines the diversity in care convoys' structure with quantitative data from the Belgian Ageing Studies (BAS). Finally, care convoys as balancing factor in the relationship between multidimensional frailty and wellbeing are studied with quantitative data from the D-SCOPE frailty program.

The dissertation concludes with recommending policy and practice to use the 'frailty balance' and to acknowledge the complexity of care convoys. Also, care and support should be conceptualised as relationship-based, while recognising care recipients as active members of their care convoy.

Curriculum Vitae

Deborah Lambotte was born in Anderlecht on 30 July 1991. She obtained the degree of Master of Sciences in the Adult Educational Sciences in 2013 and the degree of Master of Sciences in the Communication Studies in 2015 at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB).

Deborah started her PhD at the Department of Educational Sciences of the VUB in January 2015 as a member of the Belgian Ageing Studies (BAS) research group. She started her PhD research on informal care and care networks of frail, community-dwelling older adults. She was involved in the D-SCOPE project, an interdisciplinary research project (2015-2018) which aimed to identify strategies for proactive detection of community-dwelling older adults at risk for frailty, in order to guide them towards appropriate care and support, with a focus on empowerment. Deborah's work has been presented at international conferences and has been published in international peer-reviewed scientific journals such as Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics, BMC Geriatrics and Health and Social Care in the Community.