Strategic Focus on Relatives and Next-of-Kin Support

Social Director Lise Willer
Special Consultant Elsebeth Nebeling
Relative’s Counsellor Lene Voetmann

ESSC Hamburg
Workshop 8 June 2022
The Danish Welfare Model

The municipalities are
- Responsible for conducting social services
- Responsible for allocation of social benefits
- Authority concerning social services
- Provider of social services

Social services are funded by taxes
Social benefits, social services and long-term care are **free** for the citizens

Denmark Population: 5,800,000
Esbjerg Municipality: 115,000
New challenges for the welfare system

CHALLENGES
- An aging population
- More citizens’ need for social services
- More Relatives
- Lack of labour force
- Recruitment is difficult

REQUESTS
- Inquiry from NGOs
- Relatives asking for support
- Social services in need of the relative’s resources

SOLUTION
Designing a Next of Kin Policy

ACTION
Offers for relatives
- Relative’s councillor
- Courses for relatives
- Self-help groups
- Citizens' Adviser
- Brain Injury Coordinator
- Dementia Coordinator
Why? From the relative’s point of view

Facts
• 45% of the relatives feel depressed
• 38% suffer from sleeplessness
• 36% develop stress
• 18% get a chronic illness themselves

Issues
• Change of living conditions
• Responsible for another person
• Bound to their homes
• Homecare – professionals in your home
• In need of help to find help
• Lonely - who can I share with?
• Affects the whole family

Source: Pågørende i Danmark
Relative’s Counsellor

The counselor is for:

- All relatives over the age of 18
- Relatives to persons with abuse, disability, mental illness, unexpected illness, chronic disease, ageing
- Relatives can be a spouse or cohabitant, young or adult, siblings or parents, colleague or friend
The relative’s role

We are deeply dependent on the help we get from the municipality. Our private life is not so private anymore.

I feel like I do a lot, but at the same time I feel like I'm not doing enough. I can hardly handle anymore.

Do other people experience the same as we do?
Who can help to manage all the choices we have to take?
And handle all the professionals we need to meet?

Friends and family have quietly withdrawn - it is difficult for them to understand our situation.
Counselling for relatives

Support System
What am I supposed to do in my situation?

Guidebook
Where should I go?
Who should I contact?
- NGOs
- Municipality
- Hospitals

Anonymous
No records or notes
One Year: Experiences so far

The effects of guidance

- Creates an overview
- Fewer complaints
- Security and comfort
  - Reduces stress
- Breaks isolation and loneliness
  - Enhances the quality of life
- Enhances the quality of life
Debate

Reflect on the offers you have for relatives and what offers you would like to have.