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New definitions of health and healthy ageing: how can these influence your work as health professional working with older people?



Joost Degenaar
Hanze University, Netherlands

In our ageing societies it is important for all of us to stay as healthy as possible. Health professionals play an important role in this. Healthy ageing is one of the grand societal challenges and important for individual persons and for societies. Health professionals focus on health and wellbeing of older people they work with. However, there are many different definitions of health and healthy ageing, and they can have huge effect on the approach of older people by health professionals. In this workshop three definitions are compared: The current WHO definition of health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being", a new definition of Positive Health, as "the ability to adapt and self manage in the face of emotional, physical and social challenges" and the ICF approach with functioning as central theme as a result of interaction between health conditions and contextual factors. Research on positive health shows that there are important differences in the evaluation of different dimensions of health between different stakeholders like patients, policy makers, health providers and health professionals. The discussion in the workshop will be about questions like: how does your definition of health influence your work with older people? What factors help or obstruct? The implications of a new vision on health and healthy ageing can have a big impact on your approach, on health education and on the organization of health care.

Biography

Joost Degenaar has graduated from Utrecht University in 1989. He worked in higher health education, mostly in Nursing education and curriculum development, and was Director of Education and Research at Hanze University of Applied Sciences. Since 2013, he is Director of the Centre of Expertise Healthy Ageing, a public private partnership in which Hanze University collaborates with 150 partner organizations in 20 innovation labs on innovation in health care. Questions and challenges from professional practice and an interdisciplinary approach are starting point for innovation. Nursing research and education is an important part of the activities.

j.l.h.degenaar@pl.hanze.nl

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