

Training in HE across Europe: evidence from the SiDECar project

Rabih Chattat^{1*}, Ilaria Chirico¹, Giovanni Ottoboni¹
Niels Janssen², Fania Dassen², Marjolein de Vugt²
M. Cruz Sanchez³, Francisco García-Peñalvo³, Manuel Franco³
Pavla Povolná^{4,5}, Vladimíra Dostálová^{4,5}, Iva Holmerová^{4,5}

¹Department of psychology, University of Bologna, IT, *Presenting author

²Alzheimer Centrum Limburg / Maastricht University, NL;

³Psycho-sciences Research Group of IBSAL, Salamanca University, SP;

⁴Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education; ⁵Charles University Faculty of Humanities, CZ

Introduction: Skills In DEmentia Care - Building psychosocial knowledge and best practice in dementia care (SiDECar) is an Erasmus+ project funded under the KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education (2018-2021). Partners are: the University of Bologna (Italy, project leader), Maastricht University (Netherlands), the University of Salamanca (Spain) and the Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education (Czech Republic). SiDECar general aim is to promote the psychosocial knowledge in dementia care through the introduction of an international curriculum of studies. Research has shown that psychosocial interventions can be effective in helping people with dementia (PWD), their informal and formal caregivers to cope with disease related problems. However, multiple factors act as barriers for the translation of empirical evidence into higher education (HE) and then into clinical practice. Among them, a lack of general knowledge and the public stigma often result in the prevalence of medical care models of assistance for PWD and their families. Indeed, HE curricula specifically focused on psychosocial care in dementia are few thus not fulfilling the job market needs.

Method and Results: We developed a survey aimed to investigate HE curricula specifically focused on psychosocial care in dementia across Europe. Preliminary results showed that 19% of the delivered teachings belong to the first level, 80% to the second level, and 1% to the third one (Bologna Process, 1999). Among them 38% are courses, 23% are modules, and 39% are topics dealt with in courses or modules not directly concerning dementia care themes. As for their content, they have a theoretical focus in the 18% of cases while they relate to care practice in the 53%, and to mixed issues in the 29%. Finally, the majority of teachings are distributed in central/western institutes (89%).

Discussion: Evidence-based curricula specifically focused on psychosocial care in dementia should be designed and delivered as to develop professional skills and competences for students interested in this field. In this sense, SiDECar expected outputs are also materials, guidelines, manuals and recommendations along with public campaigns of awareness towards the importance of the psychosocial perspective in improving quality of life of PWD, informal and formal caregivers.