



POLITECNICO
MILANO 1863

DIPARTIMENTO DI ARCHITETTURA
E STUDI URBANI
DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE
AND URBAN STUDIES

Transforming Care Network

Spring School

Researching Care and Care Policy in Europe: challenges for care resilience in turbulent times

Polytechnic of Milan

5-7 June, 2024

Programme overview (see table below for details on parallel sessions)

5 June:

14.00 Welcome and organizational details

14.30-16.00 Keynote speech 1: Ricardo Rodrigues (University of Lisbon)

16.00-16.30 Break

16.30-18.00 Session A

18.00 Welcome aperitivo & poster session

6 June:

9.00-11.00 Parallel sessions B

11.00-11:15 Short break

11.15-12.45 Keynote speech 2: Kate Hamblin (Sheffield University)

12.45-14.00 Lunch

14.00-15.00 Presentation of research paper by senior scholar

15.00-17.00 Parallel sessions C

17.00-17.30 Break

17.30-18.30 Presentation of research paper by senior scholar

7 June:

9.00-11.00 Parallel sessions D

11.00-12.30 Keynote speech 3: Ingela Naumann (University of Fribourg)

12.30-13.30 Lunch



Parallel sessions

Date and time	Session	Presentations
5 June, 16.30-18.00	<i>A Access and utilization of care in old age</i>	SARAH JASIM BARBARA MASOTTI ESTER GUBERT
6 June, 9.00-11.00	<i>B1 Equity, generosity and quality in LTC</i>	DAVIDE VIERO MAGDALENA WALBAUM and NICOLA BRIMBLECOMBE ANNA BRAMBILLA EDOARDO RENATO PIOMBINI
	<i>B2 Work-life balance and the gendered division of care</i>	PEDRO MANUEL BELLÓN JIMÉNEZ PAOLA ASJA BUTERA LARA HOEREN KATY GILLESPIE
6 June, 15.00-17.00	<i>C1 Care workers</i>	CAMILLA DE AMBROGGI and NOEMI MARTORANO ISABEL MARIA PERERA JANNA GOIJAERTS VIKTORIA SZENKUROK
	<i>C2 Care policies and care policy-making</i>	CELESTINA VALERIA DE TOMMASO CATHERINE HENDERSON CAROLINA HERRERA-CANO MONIKA PIECEK
7 June, 9.00-11.00	<i>D1 The challenges of informal caregiving</i>	CAROLINA CHIZZALI ZUZANA TALASOVA ENRICO PFEIFER JUSTINE VAN DE BEEK
	<i>D2 Innovation in care and care research</i>	MARIA CHESHIRE-ALLEN LISETTE DANSEREAU IVAN GALLIGANI FRANCESCO DIODATI

Poster session: 5 June, 18:00

Posters:

DOMINIC LOK BUN LO

SHUYANG SUN



5 June, 16.30-18.30

Session A: Access and utilization of care in old age

Understanding the influence of diverse cultural backgrounds and ethnicity as barriers to access and uptake of social care services on older adults

Sarah Jasim

This research applies a realist action approach to better understand the influence of diverse cultural backgrounds and ethnicity as barriers to access and uptake of social care services for older adults from two London Boroughs. The first phase defined a preliminary conceptual framework for diverse cultural backgrounds and ethnicity in the context of the UK social care system, drawing on insights from the study's advisory team (comprised of local and regional stakeholders to the London Boroughs of Newham and Redbridge), and the 'Living Experience' group (of care users and recipients in London Boroughs of Newham and Redbridge). The framework was used to systematically review international evidence, which guided a qualitative study to understand lived experience perspectives. Nominal group techniques will be used to prioritise barriers to access and uptake of social care services in the UK. Prioritised themes will lead to co-developing resources and recommendations to improve access and uptake.

Centenarians' care convoys. Insights from SWISS100

Barbara Masotti

At age 100 and beyond, individuals deal with increasing support needs, especially when their social network is at risk due to the death of spouses, siblings, and friends, while children may face own age-related health issues. However, little is known about the specific aids received by centenarians. This study investigates care convoys of the SWISS100 study participants (N = 275), examining their composition, function, subjective adequacy, and the impact of individual and contextual characteristics. Findings indicate that centenarians are part of intricate care convoys. The diversity of types of care and providers was high among community-dwelling, where informal and formal caregivers both provide help with a wide range of tasks (e.g., personal care, monitoring), while in institutional settings there was a more defined division of roles, with family providing administrative and socioemotional support. The impact of individual and contextual factors varied depending on the type of care and the provider.

Finding the direction in a fragmented long-term care system. Local comparisons of care trajectories in Northern Italy

Ester Gubert

Finding the direction in long-term care (LTC) policies for older people can be complex, especially in fragmented care systems, such as the Italian one, where seeking care requires finding information and dealing with multiple care transitions. Evidence shows that this contributes to inequalities in accessing adequate care; however, less attention is paid to how and why LTC policies exacerbate or limit this risk. Drawing on observation and repeated interviews with older people and caregivers, this paper aims to identify what hampers and facilitates accessing and navigating LTC policies by comparing the care trajectories in two towns in Northern Italy. Preliminary results show that when well coordinated, outreach interventions partly level up differences in the ability to perceive care needs and seek care for older people with scarce social and support networks. Also, significant differences are found in how care transitions are experienced between the two LTC local systems: one more market-oriented and the other state-oriented.

6 June, 9:00-11:00

Session B1: Equity, generosity and quality in LTC

Comparative Assessment of Long-term Care Systems' Generosity

Davide Viero

Scholarship on welfare and care policies recurrently addresses issues like access, equity, and financial protection. Bringing together these themes are discussions on systems and schemes' generosity, which point attention to the limited choice for quality benefits, their different targeting approaches, and the available solutions to alleviate the socio-economic issues people in need face. This research aims to contribute to these discussions by focusing on LTC systems and proposing a framework to assess their generosity comparatively. Besides introducing the theoretical framework, an empirical application is planned. Data on the available LTC benefits and the inclusiveness criteria they apply will be collected for 50 countries by coding national laws and secondary literature. Then, using a factorial survey experiment, the strength and relevance of single conditionalities in triggering eligibility will be tested for a smaller country sample. Within the project, particular relevance is also given to the generosity towards people with dementia.



Social care equity indicators

Magdalena Walbaum and Nicola Brimblecombe

There is no routine approach to measure and quantify inequities in social care in England. This hampers the efforts to reduce unmet needs and unfair and avoidable differences in care between groups. Also, most of the evidence focuses on inequities and unmet needs related to the provision of activities of daily living (ADLs) and/or instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs), without incorporating unmet need related to emotional support and loneliness. Most of the measures of unmet needs focus on quantity of care without incorporating measures of quality of services. Thus, we aim to (1) investigate how to measure the extent of inequities in quantity and quality of care in England; (2) develop equity indicators for social care incorporating quantity and quality of care in ADLs, IADLs and socio/emotional care; (3) examine the inequities in quantity and quality of care looking at provision of support with ADLs, IADLs and socio/emotional care.

Quality indicators used internationally in residential long-term care (LTC): a rapid literature review

Anna Brambilla

In the assessment of the quality of care in long-term care facilities (LTCFs), residents' experiences matter. The indicators used in Swiss LTCFs are predominantly clinical. Therefore, they offer only a partial perspective on the quality of care in LTCFs. A rapid literature review was conducted to understand which patient-reported experience measures (PREMs) and patient-reported outcome measures (PROMs) are used as quality indicators in LTCFs for older people internationally. The review includes sources that have utilized quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methodologies and reviews on the use of PREMs and PROMs. The results show that PRMs are rarely utilised in LTCFs, but that several exist for use with older adults in other care settings (e.g., hospitals) or with specific conditions (e.g. kidney condition). In conclusion, a portion of the PREMs and PROMs implemented in other care settings can be adapted and applied also in LTCFs' care quality assessment.

Long-term care delivery and competition in Emilia Romagna region, Italy

Edoardo Renato Piombini

In several countries, long-term care is predominantly managed by the private and non-profit sectors, with limited involvement from the public sector. In Italy, public expenditure in this domain is low, amounting to only 1.18% of the GDP, with 52% allocated to home and residential services. Within the Emilia Romagna region, resource scarcity poses challenges to the provision of care services, with a prevailing fragmentation in the residential facility market. The aging demographic raises concerns regarding the capacity to deliver quality care. This study scrutinizes the nursing home sector, encompassing all active facilities in the year 2023 within the region, revealing a primarily non-profit market, with disparities in competitiveness at the district level between rural and urban areas. The research aims to appraise the quality of nursing homes, assessing their impact on emergency room access and hospitalization for conditions amenable to outpatient care, albeit universal quality indicators remain elusive.

6 June, 9:00-11:00

Session B2: *Work-life balance and the gendered division of care*

Framing work-life balance: a content analysis of open-ended responses from recent parents

Pedro Manuel Bellón Jiménez

Understanding how recent parents in Spain perceive these demands is vital for targeted policy interventions. Research reveals resistance to WLB policies, termed "work-life backlash," influenced by stigma, inequity, and cultural norms. Despite organizational support, individuals shoulder responsibility for WLB practices in a society emphasizing personal accountability. The centrality of paid and unpaid work, gender roles, and social class perspectives shape perceptions of WLB. However, collective strategies for addressing WLB are diminishing, reinforcing individualization and moralization of caregiving responsibilities. We rely on a large sample of recent parents in Spain (N=2,700). Our methodology combines quantitative analyses of closed-ended survey questions with a qualitative analysis of open-ended survey questions on parent's understanding of work-life balance. We aim to understand the challenges faced by parents and their views on work-life balance, considering gender and socioeconomic factors. Preliminary findings suggest divergent concerns among fathers and mothers; working-class mothers prioritize career aspirations alongside childcare worries, whereas fathers prioritize family responsibilities.

Care Beyond Boundaries: unveiling the Work-Life Balance Directive and identifying gaps for care-related needs

Paola Asja Butera



This study delves into the evolution of work-life balance policies within European labor law, specifically examining the 2019 Work-Life Balance Directive (WLBD) and its impact on caregiving needs. Utilising a comprehensive approach involving literature review, legislative analysis, and interviews with trade union representatives and caregiver organisations in Italy, Ireland, and Finland, the research uncovers both the strengths and limitations of the WLBD, while also shedding light on implementation challenges. The findings highlight that while the directive introduces innovative features and measures, illustrating a shifting perspective and acknowledging the growing significance of work-life balance and caregiving responsibilities, it also presents notable shortcomings. Particularly, it lacks inclusive definitions of caregivers and faces difficulties in ensuring accessibility and awareness of its provisions. This underscores the need for more inclusive approaches and multi-actor involvement at the national level to advance equitable care policies, emphasising the importance of addressing societal transformations and diverse caregiving responsibilities effectively.

Regional Provision of Early Childhood Education and Care – A Sub-National Policy Analysis in Federal and Decentralised Countries

Lara Hoeren

This research builds on an ever-growing body of comparative research on work-care reconciliation policies by examining variations of early childhood education and care (ECEC) within European countries. While the heterogeneity of welfare typologies is increasingly discussed, the regional variation within countries has received less attention. This research's unique approach is a multilevel analysis, considering not only the national legislation but also the regional provision. The latter is important to understand the diverse gender and social inequalities within countries. By drawing on previous analysis to measure the defamilialism of family policies as well as the ideal types of childcare services, this research develops an understanding of regional variance and similarity. In analysing the regional policy implementation leading to different accessibility, affordability and availability of ECEC, the study contributes to developing a regional perception of childcare provision. Therefore, enabling an understanding of how these create an environment, restrictive or enabling, women's employment.

Realising Change: Gender, Care and Covid-19

Katy Gillespie

This study investigates pandemic-induced shifts in unpaid care roles and domestic labour tasks between heterosexual couples in Scotland, exploring impacts on the gendered organisation of work and family life. Despite recent survey findings suggesting an exacerbated care burden for women, qualitative data understanding experiences of these shifts are lacking. Through joint and individual semi-structured interviews with 15 heterosexual couples, guided by three theories, initial analysis reveals that while some renegotiations of care work occurred, women still predominantly perform unpaid care tasks. However, couples express gender-egalitarian attitudes, indicating a desire for wider sharing of care responsibilities. Key themes will be discussed, reinforcing the complexities of lived realities during Scotland's lockdown periods and in a post-Covid-19 environment. The presentation will foreground this thesis's policy and theoretical implications, underscoring the importance of learning from lived experiences to facilitate deeper shifts in attitudes, supporting long-term changes in equitable care work distribution between both sexes.

6 June, 15:00-17:00

Session C1: Care workers

Migrant labour in Italian long-term care facilities: between wear and tear and turnover

Camilla De Ambroggi and Noemi Martorano

Our work stems from a broader project titled "InMigrHealth: Investigating Migrants' Occupational Health" and focuses on the occupational health of migrant women employed as care assistants in long-term care facilities (RSA: Residenze Sanitarie Assistenziali) in Italy. This sector involves physically and mentally demanding work, carries inherent risks, offers low wages, displays high gender specificity, and grapples with a significant workforce shortage, heavily relying on immigrant labor. Our study presents an analysis of the initial findings from qualitative and exploratory field research conducted in northeast Italy, spanning various private and public RSAs. The research included observation periods and interviews with directors, trade unions, occupational health professionals, and care assistants. Our work aims to illustrate how the organization, working conditions, and pace impact the health of workers, and to explore the workers' own perceptions of their health and the influencing factors.

Who "governs" the welfare state now?

Isabel Maria Perera

For the past three decades, a single paradigm has anchored the vast majority of social policy scholarship. That framework identifies three types of welfare states, formed over the course of the 20th century by varying coalitions of industrial workers and their partisan allies (Esping-Andersen 1990). But societies have since changed. One such transformation is that of the welfare state itself. As social services have expanded, so too has the share of the labor market that depends on them for employment. Those who now work for the welfare state are significantly different from those who first formed it. These “welfare workers” are employed by schools, hospitals, and care homes; not metal factories, coal mines, and auto plants. They are overwhelmingly female, not male. Many have attained tertiary education. In some cases, they enjoy highly stable and protected employment in the public sector as teachers or nurses. In other cases, they experience extreme precarity as low-paid, informal, and often migrant carers. Perhaps most ironically, the former has engendered the latter: the expansion of formal female labor force participation has also expanded the informal market for paid domestic labor. This grant application proposes to investigate the relationship between welfare workers and contemporary social policies. Asking the classic political science question of “who governs,” it examines whether and to what extent welfare workers have replaced industrial workers as the primary demanders of social benefits and services—and with what impact on both the welfare state and the labor market as a whole.

Navigating the Discrepancy: How middle managers bridge socio-health service delivery goals and practice

Janna Goijaerts

Social services are an increasingly important part of the welfare state. According to existing scholarship, services should be preventative, tailored and complementary. Yet in practice these service delivery goals are often found lacking. In this paper we ask how this discrepancy is experienced. We conducted a vignette interview study among middle managers from a variety of welfare state organizations in the Netherlands. We focus on service recipients with a combination of socio-economic and health problems, which constitutes a ‘most likely case’ for the service delivery goals we aim to study. The results show that middle managers use certain strategies to cope with the discrepancy between service delivery goals and practice. First, they externalize the responsibility for accessibility of services. Second, they internalize a discourse on customization. Third, they substitute complementarity for collaboration. Given the span of influence of the middle managers, we argue that these coping mechanisms could be self-reinforcing.

Explaining earnings in and within female-dominated sectors: Evidence for the(long-term) care sector in Portugal

Viktoria Szenkurök

This study aims at explaining pay differentials between and within caring sectors in Portugal, particularly in long-term care (LTC). Utilizing employer-employee data, we apply a multilevel model to identify individual-level and firm-level factors contributing to disparities between female-dominated (‘caring’) and male-dominated (‘non-caring’) sectors, exploring both sectoral and occupational segregation. Subsequently, we evaluate whether gender-based or ageism-based theories elucidate remunerational disparities within caring sectors. Although findings reveal persisting disparities between male- and female-dominated sectors, showcasing that care workers pay a financial penalty, our study does not uncover evidence that disparities within caring sectors can be attributed to the devaluation of female-typical nor elderly-specific work. Instead, we find a premium for LTC workers, stemming from a financial compensation for the emotional demands associated with caring for older adults. By delving into the unique working conditions of LTC, our study offers new insights that are crucial for addressing workforce needs in ageing societies.

6 June, 15:00-17:00

Session C2: Care policies and care policy-making

The politics of long-term care: The Case of Italy, Spain and Portugal

Celestina Valeria De Tommaso

This research intends to analyze the political dynamics around the adoption of public and national long-term care policies for old-age people in Italy (2024), Spain (2006) and Portugal (2006). The research aims to reconstruct political dynamics around social consumption and social investment policies, those aimed at reducing - respectively - market and family dependence. The three Southern European countries diverged in when (timing) and how (institutional design) long-term care reform were adopted. Spain oriented towards a social-investment pattern, thus departing from its initial model of long-term care, while Portugal and Italy adopted a piecemeal and gradual change then approaching to a structural reform, mainly based on a social-consumption pattern. Despite similar functional pressures, political dynamics are key to determine reform outputs in the three countries. The research is based on qualitative methods, process tracing, including relevant policy documents and semi-structured interviews with key informants.

Reablement models supporting people to leave acute hospital

Catherine Henderson

In the UK, policies to improve hospital discharge processes have been introduced to support patients who no longer need acute hospital treatment to return to home for further assessment. Reablement can help people to make the transition home and resume their usual activities after a hospital stay for illness. Our study aims to evaluate which model/models of reablement are associated with better outcomes for people leaving acute hospital. We will conduct a mixed-methods feasibility study in five local authority areas. If feasible, we will then conduct a large-scale survey of people using different forms/models of reablement, collect participant-reported outcome measures and link with social care records data in eight areas. We will use this dataset to investigate the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of the reablement models. Planned work, strategies for overcoming challenges to conducting research in this area, and grounding in the wider health and social care context will be discussed.

Care Arrangements for Gender Equity: A Comparison of the Scottish and Colombian Partnerships Models

Carolina Herrera-Cano

Governments are developing public policies that put the responsibility of care at the centre of welfare. Scotland implemented the Social Care (Self-directed Support) Act 2013, and there are proposals for a National Care Service. Social policies for care provision in Colombia are emerging, such as the 2010 National Law and the Special Direction for a Care National System in 2023. Both countries have progressed in partnership models for care provision (government, NGOs, and private organisations). This research compares the discursive dimensions of care policy-making in both countries regarding care arrangements and their contribution to gender equity. Implications for policy-making and social justice will be discussed, providing insights into how care issues are constructed within different socio-political contexts. The research will compare the Global North and South, providing opportunities for mutual learning and theory development.

Housing and ageing in Switzerland : new social care policies

Monika Piecek

Since late 2000, social and health policy reforms in Switzerland have led to the development of a wide range of intermediate housing facilities for elderly people – housing options with social care situated in-between institutional care settings and home spaces. In this contribution, I examine these social care policy developments in six Swiss cantons. I identify three models of social care policies and show how the imbrication of narratives about state's role, the public who require social care support and the character of that support shapes policy interventions, the housing with care supply and the professionalisation of care work. This presentation draws on documentary sources (legislative and regulatory texts, arguments in support of the law and its revisions, reports produced by state agencies) and 30 semi-structured interviews conducted in 2022 with cantonal and institutional officials in charge of the implementation of intermediate housing solutions.

7 June, 9:00-11:00

Session D1: *The challenges of informal caregiving*

The mobility of care in rural areas: an exploratory mixed-methods approach in South Tyrol (Italy)

Carolina Chizzali

My research investigates the concept of "mobility of care" in rural areas, which encompasses all trips made for unpaid caregiving duties and household maintenance. These care-related mobilities constitute a cornerstone of caring practices and responsibilities, particularly affecting mothers. Existing literature predominantly focuses on the importance of care-related mobility in urban settings, overlooking the distinct challenges faced in rural areas, such as longer distances to essential services. To address this gap, my research employs a mixed-methods approach to both quantify and explore qualitatively the experiences and challenges of care-related mobility in rural contexts. Quantitative analysis of 99 travel diaries from adult residents in Mühlwald (South Tyrol, Italy) reveals that care-related trips constitute a substantial share (37.8%) of daily mobility. Complementing this, qualitative analysis of 12 semi-structured interviews of female caregivers in rural South Tyrolean villages uncovers a range of experiences and challenges, that are classified into physical, psychological, and social aspects.

Intergenerational care in a four-generation family

Zuzana Talašová

This research project delves into the interactions within a four-generation family where grandparents provide care while simultaneously receiving care from their offspring, with a focus on the influence of gender roles in Czech Republic. Through qualitative research employing individual interviews and focus groups, this study aims to identify the intricacies

of intergenerational care, including its impact on family relationships, mutual support, and the distribution of care tasks. By adopting a phenomenological approach, the subjective experiences and emotions of family members engaged in intergenerational care will be explored. The research objectives encompass understanding mutual interactions between generations, evaluating the effects of intergenerational care on family dynamics, and considering gender roles in care provision. The expected outputs include a detailed comprehension of intergenerational interactions, insights into the influence of care on family relationships, and recommendations for supporting families engaged in intergenerational care, particularly concerning great-grandparents.

The relationship between unpaid caregiving transitions and health behaviours across the lifecourse

Enrico Pfeifer

In the UK, demographic and epidemiological shifts have led to an increase in unpaid caregiving, however, it remains unclear how caregiving affects a caregiver's ability to enact positive health behaviours. This research aims to investigate how transitions into and out of caregiving, as well as changes in its intensity, influences health behaviours. The study uses secondary data from the nationally representative UK household longitudinal study and employs an interdisciplinary framework that integrates caregiving role theory and health behaviour theories from a lifecourse perspective. Advanced statistical models, including propensity score matching and piecewise growth curve models, will be used to model the trajectories of health behaviours, such as smoking, alcohol-intake, physical activity, and diet when participants experience a caregiving transition. Preliminary results indicate that caregiving transitions are associated with positive and negative changes in health behaviours. However, these associations differ by health behaviour outcome, care intensity and lifecourse stage of the caregiver

Unraveling the threads of vulnerability and resilience: young men's journey through unintended fatherhood

Justine Van De Beek

Background: While previous research has primarily focused on the vulnerable circumstances limiting young fathers' childcare involvement, recent studies indicate resilient adaptation to their new role. This study is the first to analyze both vulnerability and resilience as interconnected concepts in young fathers' lives.

Method: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 14 Dutch young fathers. Transcripts were thematically analyzed to reveal forms of interrelatedness between vulnerability and resilience in their lives.

Results: Analysis revealed that young fathers grappled with vulnerability both before and after unintended fatherhood. They coped with their vulnerable circumstances by cultivating a resilient attitude. This attitude, however, led to an "action mode," limiting emotional processing, and social disengagement. Their resilient stance thus, paradoxically, hindered access to social support, perpetuating existing vulnerabilities.

Conclusion: This study highlights the interplay between resilience and vulnerability in young, unintentional fathers, underscoring the need for interventions assisting with resilient actions while recognizing and praising resilient attitudes.

7 June, 9:00-11:00

Session D2: Innovation in care and care research

The 'DISC' Research Project. Delivering Innovation in Social Care - The Role of the Social Enterprise Organisations in Supporting Family Carers

Maria Cheshire-Allen

The study aims to examine the role of social enterprise organisations (SEOs) in supporting unpaid carers to achieve positive well-being outcomes. SEOs are defined broadly as businesses with a social or environmental purpose. Within the context of decreasing social welfare budgets and increasing care needs, SEOs are recognised as occupying a unique space in the adult social care landscape and as having the potential to deliver co-produced care and support. To date, however, there is little firm evidence of SEOs delivering co-produced solutions in the context of long-term care or within the policy framework in Wales. Furthermore, it is not known if and how the sector drives and supports innovative solutions that support specific underrepresented groups of carers. This study will examine and attempt to quantify SEOs contribution to unpaid carer support programmes. It will pilot a variety of different quantitative and qualitative social research methods to provide evidence-informed practice guidance. The guidance will support resource allocation to SEO-provided carer support programmes.

Poetics of carers managing home care services with public funding

Lisette Dansereau

Although the role of informal carers is hidden or absent in most health care policies, directly-funded (DF) home care in Canada—known as direct payments in the UK—establishes a formal role for carers. Under the official title of 'family-manager', carers organize and purchase home care services on behalf of the care recipient and take responsibility for the



use of public funds. Few studies examine the experiences of carers taking on this formalized role. In this presentation I will outline what is known about family management in DF and read select poems created from interview transcripts of family managers in the province of Manitoba. Research poetry is a novel method of data analysis and presentation providing unique potential for evoking empathy and insight in a reader or listener. The poems illustrate under-recognized expectations, stresses, and frustrations that may be experienced by carers tasked with organizing formal care.

Enablers and barriers for the adoption of assistive robotics in local health systems. An exploratory study from Tuscany.
Ivan Galligani

The increasing pressure on health systems due to an ageing population and growing care needs for chronicity, exacerbated by the progressive shortage of the formal and informal health workforce, drives interest in experimenting with robotic solutions in healthcare. At the same time, it is widely recognised that an effective uptake of robotics in the field depends not only on the strengthening of the technological readiness of these solutions, but even more on the level of social acceptance and organisational preparedness in the field, as well as favourable governance arrangements. In this perspective, the author presents first findings of a research conducted as part of an Italian NRRP-funded project (FIT4MEDROB). The findings are based on a series of interviews and a focus group involving clinicians, trade union representatives, Third Sector operators and patient representatives.

Long-life to digitalization! The "platform imaginary" in elder-care in Italy
Francesco Diodati

This paper aims to discuss how the so-called "platform imaginary" dominates the decision-making of digital entrepreneurs among elder-care platforms in Italy. Narrative interviews to platform founders show that digital entrepreneurs mobilize the platform imaginary to present their companies as technological solutions for contemporary social problems. They declared that platforms are a path toward both the activation of an effective support service to the relatives of dependant older adults and the achievement of decent working conditions in the care sector. Nevertheless, these platforms do not provide a certified training courses neither they effectively hold responsibility for the management of the employment relationship. Founders appeared often unaware of the negative effects associated with platforms for users and workers. Therefore, it is important to explore how cultural narratives on digitalization and platformization may effectively drive the elder care market and also sustain new forms of social stratification.