

THE POTENTIAL OF CARING COMMUNITIES FOR HEALTH PROMOTION

EuroHealthNet Country Exchange Visit

9.00 CET on Wednesday 29 March – 15.00 CET on Thursday 30 March 2023

Austrian Health Promotion Fund, Aspernbrückengasse 2, A-1020 Vienna

Across the world, there are efforts to develop new social spaces, neighbourhood and community-oriented models and support networks that foster health and social cohesion. “[Caring communities](#)” promote social participation, and help cities and municipalities meet the increasing demands for care and create age(ing)-friendly environments. It is an emerging concept in German-speaking countries such as Austria, Switzerland and Germany¹ that focus on (mental) health promotion and community empowerment. Caring Communities also address cooperation between neighbourhoods, civil society initiatives, municipal administrations and the health and care system.

This Country Exchange Visit, hosted by our member the [Austrian Health Promotion Fund FGÖ](#), the Competence Center for Future Health Promotion and the Department for Long-term Care at Gesundheit Österreich GmbH, will enable representatives of national or regional public health agencies from across the EU to explore:

- How to establish caring communities by e.g., inter-professional approaches to health promotion at the local level, fostering links between formal and informal care, supporting community nursing, social prescribing, and related concepts;
- How to ensure an equal distribution of care and safeguard caring communities from reinforcing inequalities;
- How to monitor and evaluate impacts of caring communities’ projects;
- How to ensure the sustainability of caring communities.

¹ Examples of individual initiatives and networks include:

- healthy neighbourhood initiative at the Austrian Health Promotion Fund providing funding for caring communities in Austria ([gesunde-nachbarschaft.at](#));
- Caring Communities Network in Switzerland ([Netzwerk Caring Communities](#)); overview of caring communities in Switzerland
- Neighbourhood network in Germany: [Netzwerk Nachbarschaft \(netzwerk-nachbarschaft.net\)](#)

Participants will discuss examples of community level programmes and other health promotion and primary care strategies and explore the practical, financial and policy factors needed to strengthen the links between health promotion at the community level, primary care and social services. Participants will also discuss what role these initiatives have or can play in broader health system reform strategies.

During the meeting, there will be an opportunity to visit work taking place in this field in Vienna. Participants will meet and discuss with health promotion experts and community service providers in the framework of a [Caring Community initiative](#) and a [Community Nursing initiative](#) in Vienna. We will also explore European level strategies and programmes that can support such efforts and help build capacities in this area, and the financial considerations of running cross-sectoral programmes.

About Country Exchange Visits

EuroHealthNet Country Exchange Visits are member-only events that are open to senior delegates. Participants should be comfortable making contributions in English.

The aim is two-fold, namely (1) to exchange good practices and policies on selected core themes and showcase members' work to a selection of senior European colleagues and, at the same time, (2) discuss how related EU policy instruments may support at national, regional and local levels.

This event is free to attend, but places are limited. Travel and accommodation will be reimbursed for one delegate per organisation. For any questions or to express interest to participate, please contact [Lina Papartyte](#).



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Agenda

Co-moderators: *Ingrid Stegeman, EuroHealthNet and Petra Plunger, Austrian Health Promotion Fund*

Day 1 - Wednesday, 29 March 2023

8.30 Registration at Austrian Health Promotion Fund

9.00 Welcome and introductions

- Austrian National Public Health Institute (Gesundheit Österreich GmbH, GÖG)
- EuroHealthNet
- Tour de table, expectations and needs

9.30 General introduction to the concept of “Caring Communities” and its relevance for health promotion, *Michaela Moser, Ilse Arlt Institute for Social Inclusion Research, St Pölten University of Applied Sciences*

Room for a brief exchange with participants about the concept.

9.50 Overview of current developments regarding caring communities and related concepts in Austria – *Gerlinde Rohrauer, Petra Plunger, Irina Vana on Caring Communities; Elisabeth Rappold on Community Nursing, speakers from Austrian National Public Health Institute*

10.10 Knowledge exchange: Policies, strategies and promising initiatives across Europe focusing on social participation

- Interventions from participating EuroHealthNet members: France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Portugal, Slovenia, Austria

10.40 Coffee break

11.00 Group picture

11.05 Continue the knowledge exchange

Questions for discussion:

- Do caring communities only address healthy ageing? What about approaches addressing health across the life cycle, e.g. childcare or support networks for young parents?

- Can caring communities be one of the solutions to address loneliness and foster social participation in old age?
- How to organise the collaboration between health promotion, primary care, social services, and the role of municipalities, health insurance, civil society, etc.?
- How to ensure such initiatives become embedded in relevant systems, and administrative structures, to 'mainstream' them?

12.00 Tools and initiatives from EU Institutions, followed by a discussion on how they can be used to support (sub-)national organisations and advance health promotion, *Lina Papartyte, EuroHealthNet*

12.30 Lunch

13.45 Monitoring and evaluation of impact: The example of caring communities projects in Austria and the "Healthy Neighbourhoods" initiative („Auf Gesunde Nachbarschaft“), *Friederike Weber, [prospect gmbh](#)*

Room for a brief exchange with participants.

14.45 Site visit to the [Community Nursing initiative](#) in Austria

- Presentation of the initiative in Vienna by local stakeholders. The initiative is located 30 minutes distance (walking and public transportation) from the GÖG.
- Roundtable discussion at the seminar centre.

17.00 End of the Day 1

19.00 Dinner (*place to be defined*)

Day 2 - Thursday, 30 March 2023

8.45 Meeting at the Austrian Health Promotion Fund

9.00 Online conversation with Jan de Maeseneer, *Head of WHO Collaborating Centre for Family Medicine and Primary Health Care-Ghent University; Chair of the Expert Panel on Effective Ways of Investing in Health.*

Guiding questions for Prof. De Maeseneer and participants:

- What resources are required (human, financial) to run sustainable, holistic health promoting community services (including those visited)?
- How are such services financed in your country?
- How to solve co-budgeting challenges when running integrated community services?
- How can cost-effectiveness be evaluated to make an informed budget-allocation decision?
- How can we benefit more from the European initiatives and European funding schemes in place to support the transition to more holistic health promoting services in the community?

10.20 Site visit to “ACHTSAMER 8.” - “[Caring Communities initiative in Austria](#)”. Walking in the district where caring community is implemented, visiting several sites.

Meeting point is in front of the district office at Schlesingerplatz, [see here](#).

- 1st stop - Presentation of “Sorgetnetz” (association “care net”) and ACHTSAMER 8 (“Mindful 8th District”) by *Daniela, Martos, Gert Dressel (project coordinators), Martin Fabisch (district head) and Anita Habershuber (district senior citizens officer)*.
 - What can be learned from starting such an initiative bottom up? Which resources are needed?
 - How can we integrate bottom up and top down approaches? (building necessary structures without losing the commitment)
- 2nd stop (approx. 11.30) - [Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art](#), which is a local partner of “ACHTSAMER 8.”.
 - Input from *Katharina Richter-Kovarik, responsible for cultural education activities at the museum, including for people living with dementia.*

- 3rd stop (approx. 12.30): **Light lunch** at the “Wiener Würstelstand” - food truck, and a local partner of “ACHTSAMER 8.”

14.00 Moving forward - Member discussion

Finishing the site visit with a discussion at the Austrian Health Promotion Fund.

- How we can work together to achieve more integrated and community-based health promoting and social services?

14.30 Conclusions and take-aways from participants and the host

15.00 End of meeting



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