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Conference Abstract

Redefining who cares? Challenging professional roles for accommodating community ownership

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Abstract

How do members of professional care organizations make sense of plans and policies to better engage citizens and communities? When translating these into daily practices, how do they deal with established role expectations and organizational and professional requirements that limit their room to maneuver? This paper presents initial findings of an ethnographic study of two professional care organizations seeking structural involvement of citizens and communities in providing and governing older people's services.

Scholars of integrated care generally treat civic actors as external to the care system that needs to be integrated. These civic actors are positioned as the ones benefitting from well-aligned professional services, instead of being actively included as organizational actors in integrative efforts. This study looks at the 'boundary work' taking place at the intersection of professional care and community involvement, with professional actors being stimulated to engage citizens across boundaries that are simultaneously shifting.

Initial findings show how management level actors employ rhetoric strategies to blur boundaries between 'community' and 'professional' domains when inviting citizens to participate. Simultaneously, professional caregivers sometimes experience limited 'space' for this community participation. On multiple levels within and beyond the organizations' boundaries, established role expectations and professional and organizational frameworks are renegotiated.

Keywords

citizen involvement, civil society, professionalism, change, boundaries, older people, organizational elements

Powerpoint presentation:

<http://www.integratedcarefoundation.org/content/people-centered-integrated-care>