
POSTER ABSTRACT

Future model for care prognosis

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Marie-Laure Robberechts¹, Ludo Gielis¹

1: Departement of Care, government of Flanders, Belgium

Background: Until now, the Flemish government, as many other governments, has planned and budgeted elderly care and home care primarily based on demographic data. However, this approach does not adequately reflect the actual care needs of people in the long term, nor does it take into account the local context.

Approach: The policy note of the Flemish Government states that by 2029, a care forecasting model will be developed. This model aims to provide better insight into the current and future care needs of the Flemish population. In the long run, the model can also be used to simulate and evaluate policy, allowing for improved planning of services and budgets.

Given the complexity of the topic and the involvement of many different stakeholders, the first version will focus on elderly care in residential care centers, home care, and care budgets. Key partners include the cabinet of the Flemish Minister for Welfare and Poverty Reduction, Culture and Equal Opportunities, the Department of Care of the Flemish Government, and LUCAS, the KU Leuven knowledge center for care and welfare.

Results: The project started in 2024. A plan has been developed that includes a policy note, an overview of data sources, a glossary, model descriptions, and a specification for a first test version of the model, which is scheduled to be ready by June 2026.

Implications: This care forecasting model is unique. Instead of relying solely on demographic data for the entire population, it can predict the need for elderly care in residential care centers and home care at the local level. This model is expected to enable more effective planning of services, thereby allowing for better budget management.

What makes the model particularly special is that it also considers people's actual care needs, their care preferences based on their life goals, and the availability of informal care in their surroundings.