

POSTER ABSTRACT

Listening to Family Voices to Guide Collaboration Between Private Nursing Care, Primary Health, and Social Services in Estonia

International Conference on Integrated Care (ICIC26), Birmingham, 13-15 April 2026

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Background: Estonia's ageing population calls for better coordination between health and social care. Independent inpatient nursing care plays a vital but fragmented role. This study, conducted within Elora hospitals, a private nursing care enterprise, explored how the voices of patients' family members – those living the experience – can guide the development of more connected and compassionate care.

Aim: To describe how the experiences, insights, and expectations of patients' relatives reflect the strengths and shortcomings of current nursing care, and how listening to these voices can inform integration efforts between nursing care, family doctors, and social services.

Methods: A qualitative descriptive study based on semi-structured interviews with 18 family members of patients receiving independent inpatient nursing care. Data were analysed inductively to identify themes related to accessibility, communication, and care continuity.

Results: Relatives often felt unheard and unsupported, describing difficulties accessing services, limited cooperation between providers, and uncertainty about what happens after discharge. Their reflections revealed a strong wish for partnership, trust, and shared care planning. These insights have directly shaped Elora hospitals' internal programme connecting nursing care, primary health care, and social support.

Conclusion: s: In nursing care, the voices most closely linked to lived experience are often those of family members. Recognising and integrating their perspectives not only improves service design but also helps bridge practice, research, and policy – fostering a more person-centred, collaborative model of care.