



INNOVATIVE EDUCATION FOR ACTIVE AGEING

COEHRE Annual Conference - Aalborg 2012

Demographic patterns have been changed greatly in Europe, in the past 20 or 30 years. This will impose different demands to education and practice as well as change of roles and attitudes of health professionals and society as a whole. "From 2012, the European working-age population will start to shrink, while the over-60-year population will continue to increase by about two million people a year. The strongest pressure is expected to occur during the period 2015-35 when the so-called baby-boom generation will enter retirement."
(<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=860>)

Eight years ago, the World Health Organization (2002) launched a concept, which aimed to set a new framework for health professionals, and society as a whole, in their views towards ageing and the process of growing older. Active Ageing is defined as the process to optimize opportunities within Health, Safety and Participation, in order to improve quality of life as one grows old. In this perspective, active ageing is seen as a process, beginning in childhood and continuing throughout life. It is emphasised that "the word "active" refers to continuing participation in social, economic, cultural, spiritual and civic affairs, not just to one's ability to be physically active or to participate in the labour force." (pag.12 in Active Ageing: A Policy Framework 2002)

COEHRE has embraced the challenge suggested by the European Commission, and has adopted the theme "**Innovative Education for Active Ageing**" to its annual conference for 2012. We will be inspired by the view of the commission, where "Active ageing includes creating more opportunities for older people to continue working, to stay healthy and to contribute to society..."

In order to promote reflection on the theme, the COEHRE conference will focus on four areas:

Empowered Aging – Focuses on all the strategies (and their effectiveness) with which health professionals and health educators have to facilitate for a healthier, more autonomous and more active (socially, emotionally and physically) life of persons in their latter years.

Use of Welfare technologies – Aims, although this term is not yet very well defined, to incorporate all the technology and technological devices that are being developed in order to facilitate and promote the independence and wellbeing of aging people.

Future professional skills and competences –Focuses on the new skills and competences that are required in collaborating with and assisting the ever more active aging people. A link may be made towards the theme of last year (Voluntary Work), and how professionals and volunteers can work towards the same aim.

Integrated care and Inter-professional approaches – Aims to focus on a very special area of COEHRE. Research results have shown the complexity of the life situations (clinically, socially, economically...) encountered among the senior citizens. The research results have suggested an increase in integrated approaches, based on (a) client centeredness and inter-professional solutions or proposals. According to this view professionals and volunteers may work together towards the same goal in improving the quality of life of aging people.

Come to Aalborg and share your experience

Let's make a significant contribution to each other's development!