

WP3: ICWE Training Program

Module 1: General Information on Caretaking



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Module 1: Introduction

What is **Informal Caregiving (IC)**?

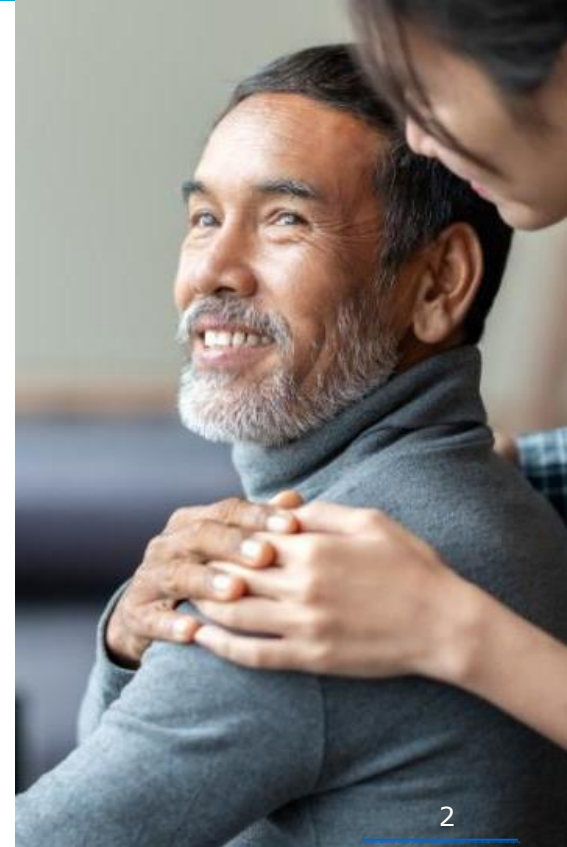
- Unpaid care provided by family, friends or neighbours to a person in need.
- Includes emotional, physical, medical and logistical support.

Key Statistics

- Informal caregivers provide up to **60% of all long-term care** in the EU.
- Estimated **10-25% of Europeans** are informal caregivers.

Importance of Informal Caregivers

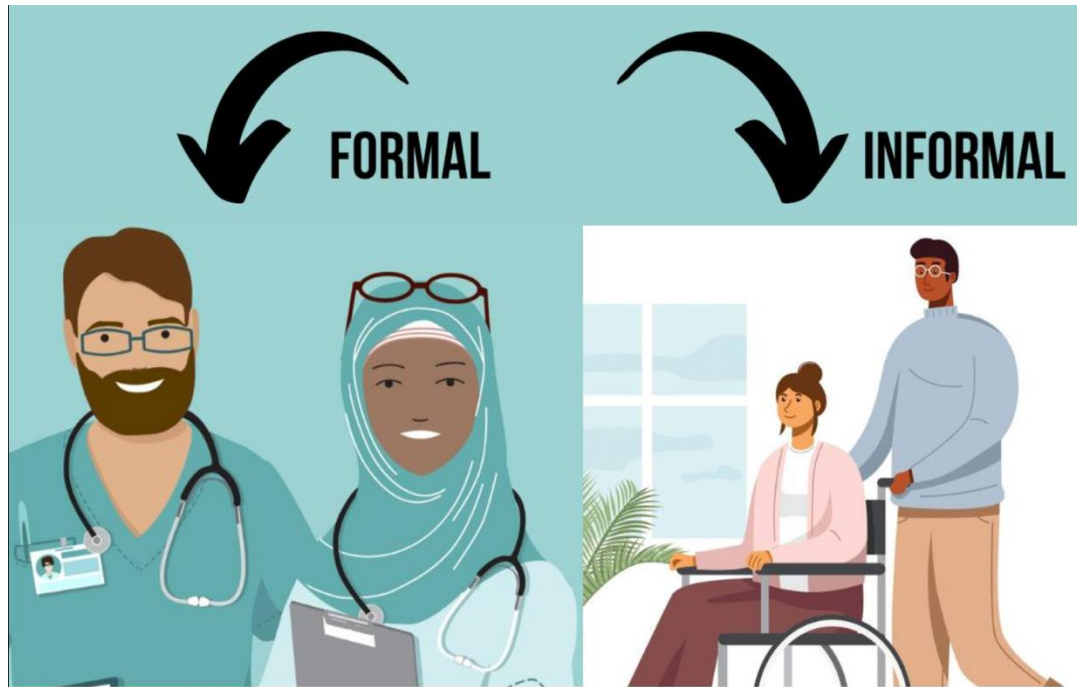
- They provide essential support that formal care systems cannot fully cover.
- Their work reduces healthcare costs but can cause personal strain.



Module 1: Learning Outcomes

- Understand the role of informal caregiving and its distinctions from formal care.
- Identify various **types of support** informal caregivers provide.
- Recognize **challenges** such as emotional burden and physical strain.
- Learn how to **assess the needs** of care recipients effectively.
- Understand the **long-term effects** of caregiving on health and well-being.

Formal and Informal Caregiving



Key Differences Between Formal & Informal Caregiving:

- **Formal caregivers** are trained professionals working in regulated settings.
- **Informal caregivers** operate without formal training, offering personalized care at home.

Differences between Formal and Informal Caregivers

Table 1: Basic characteristics of formal and informal care (Džakula, Banadinović, Lončarek & Vočanec, 2023)

Feature	Formal Care	Informal Care
Provider	Trainer professionals	Family members, friends or neighbors
Payment	Paid services	Unpaid services
Setting	Structured setting (nursing home, assisted living facility, home health agency)	Home Based or community-based
Regulation	Regulated by government agencies or professional organizations	Unregulated
Focus	Specific tasks and services	Personalized care and support
Flexibility	Schedules and services may be more rigid	Schedules and services may be more flexible
Emotional Connection	May have less emotional connection with the recipient	May have a strong emotional connection with the recipient

Roles and Responsibilities of Informal Carers

- **Medical & Nursing Support**

Administering medications, assisting with medical devices, monitoring health.

- **Daily Living Assistance**

Helping with dressing, eating, bathing, mobility and toileting.

- **Emotional & Social Support**

Providing companionship, mental stimulation and reducing social isolation.

- **Financial & Logistical Support**

Managing bills, coordinating healthcare appointments, handling insurance.

- **Care Coordination**

Communicating with healthcare providers and arranging external support when needed.

The needs of care recipients

Physical Needs

- Assistance with **daily living activities (ADLs)** such as mobility and hygiene.
- Adapting home environments for safety and accessibility.

Emotional & Psychological Needs

- Support for anxiety, depression or cognitive decline.
- Encouraging engagement in social activities.

Social Needs

- Maintaining relationships, preventing isolation.
- Connecting with community resources and support groups.



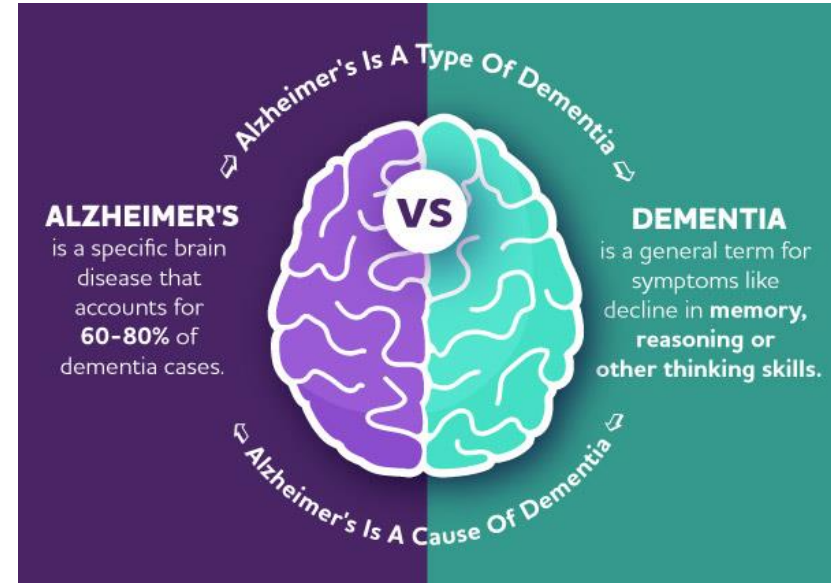
Common Care Cases

Alzheimer's & Dementia

- **Symptoms:** Memory loss, confusion, mood swings, communication difficulties.
- **Care Strategies:** Routine-based care, cognitive engagement, maintaining a safe home environment.

Chronic Illness & Mobility Issues

- Managing **diabetes, heart disease, arthritis** through medication and physical support.
- Encouraging **safe mobility** and preventing falls.



Challenges

The Challenges Faced by Caregivers



Emotional & Psychological Strain

- **50% of caregivers report high stress** and emotional exhaustion.
- Increased risk of **depression, anxiety and burnout.**

Physical & Logistical Challenges

- **Financial burden:** Caregivers often reduce work hours or quit jobs.
- **Time constraints:** Balancing caregiving, employment and personal life.
- **Lack of professional support:** Limited access to training and external help.

Activity

Scenario:

Mrs. Maria Evans is a 75-year-old woman who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease two years ago. She lives at home with her daughter, Anna, who is her primary caregiver. Anna, 42 years old, also works part-time as a data analyst. Over the past year, Mrs. Evans' condition has worsened, and she now requires assistance with almost all daily tasks. In addition to cognitive decline, Mrs. Evans struggles with arthritis, making mobility difficult. Her memory loss has worsened and she often forgets familiar faces, including Anna's. She experiences frequent mood swings, sometimes becoming agitated or withdrawn. Anna, as the sole caregiver, is feeling overwhelmed by her caregiving responsibilities and balancing her work life. She reports feeling physically exhausted and emotionally drained, with limited time for self-care or social interactions.

Activity

Instructions:

- 1. Identify the Needs of the Care Recipient:** List physical, emotional and social needs.
- 2. Caregiver's Roles & Responsibilities:** Outline daily caregiving tasks.
- 3. Challenges:** Identify key struggles and potential solutions.
- 4. Findings:** Share insights on caregiver stress and care recipient well-being.

Assessment-Quiz

What is the main distinction between formal and informal caregiving?

- A) Informal caregiving is paid and formal caregiving is unpaid.
- B) Formal caregiving is provided by trained professionals, while informal caregiving is provided by non-professionals such as family members.
- C) Informal caregiving only occurs in institutional settings.

Reflective Question: How does the emotional and psychological stress of caregiving affect an informal caregiver's ability to provide care?

Assessment-Quiz

Which of the following is a common task performed by informal caregivers that formal caregivers may not typically engage in?

- A) Administering medications.
- B) Providing emotional support and companionship.
- C) Performing surgery.

Reflective Question: What logistical challenges do informal caregivers often face when balancing caregiving with other responsibilities?

Assessment-Quiz

Why is it important to regularly assess both the physical and emotional needs of care recipients?

- A) To ensure care is personalized and responsive to changing needs.
- B) To reduce the caregiver's workload.
- C) To increase the duration of care provided.

References

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Thank you for your attention!



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