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Exploring challenges and possibilities in providing welfare among the elderly in Southern Greenland – an exploratory study



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Background

In 2004, the Greenlandic national health report singled out older people as a particularly vulnerable demographic group, because they suffer from surprisingly high disease rates, including a high prevalence of lifestyle diseases.

This calls for establishment and improvement of welfare structures and solutions to improve the state of health and independence of older people in Greenland.

Despite high disease rates and economical concerns about the increasing number of older people, their well-being, lifestyle and health only play a minor role in the current Greenlandic public health system and ageing policies.

Challenges and possibilities vary in the different Greenlandic municipalities. In the Southern Greenlandic municipality Kujalleq there are already several initiatives that try to meet some of the challenges that older people face.

Challenges

- No systematic overview or exchange of initiatives and practice exist
- Insufficient knowledge about the importance of local and regional differences and similarities in the needs of older people
- Geographical distances between towns and settlements
- Infrastructural barriers
- High turnover of healthcare staff

Aim

To contribute to the overview, and thereby knowledge that can help solve the challenges that the municipality face in the development of ageing policies, initiatives, and solutions and to map out some of the challenges and possibilities older people in Southern Greenland face in everyday life.

Methods

The fieldwork will be carried out among older people in cities and settlements of Southern Greenland during august 2017.

Participant observation

- Private homes of older people
- Nursery homes
- Towns and Settlements
- Focus on lifestyle challenges in everyday life

Semi-structured interviews

- With older people, network of family and caretakers
- Inspired by the Inuit tradition of storytelling
- Expected to be conducted in various locations, such as the community houses, private homes, nursing homes etc.

A thematic analysis will be used to identify and analyze patterns in the transcribed interviews and field notes.

Expected Findings

The expected findings may be used in the further development of new policies facing challenges and possibilities among the older people in Southern Greenland. Furthermore, findings are expected to be submitted by the fall of 2017 in a peer reviewed journal.

Acknowledgement

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Further information

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