

Volume 13, 23 October 2013

Publisher: Igitur publishing

URL: <http://www.ijic.org>

Cite this as: Int J Integr Care 2013; Annual Conf Suppl; [URN:NBN:NL:UI:10-1-114677](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:nl:ui:10-1-114677)

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Poster Abstract

## Exploring the role of home care organisations in the composition and functioning of mixed care networks of frail older adults

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### Abstract:

We explored whether a mechanistic or organic structure of home care organizations and their view on informal caregivers are reflected in, respectively, the composition and functioning of mixed care networks of community-dwelling older adults.

Two home care organizations were selected: one with a more mechanistic structure, and one with an organic organizational structure. Using semi-structured interviews and policy analyses, we gathered both quantitative and qualitative data from various sources: older adults, formal and informal caregivers, informants and policy documents of the home care organizations. Twelve mixed care networks (six of each organization) were compared regarding size, proportion of formal caregivers, task differentiation, communication, and the evaluation of cooperation between formal and informal caregivers.

Care networks of clients from the more mechanistically-oriented organization were relatively large, with a greater proportion of formal caregivers, as result of more task differentiation compared to care networks of clients of the more organically-oriented organization. Although both organisations shared the view that informal caregivers should be supported and consulted regularly, communication was low overall. Since network functioning was generally evaluated positively, we question when regular consultation about care is essential. We also question which work process, resulting from the organizational structure, enhances consultation, which one is more cost-efficient, and most convenient for older adults.

### Keywords

home care organization, mixed care networks, informal care, cooperation