

**Healthy and Active Ageing, a preventive program for independent living well elderly. Experiences with implementing an innovative, preventive intervention for elderly in various contexts, using an action research design.**

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### **Introduction**

In July 2008, a governmental grant was awarded for a follow-up study, to implement the Dutch Healthy and Active Ageing program. The intervention is based on the American Lifestyle Redesign and British Life Style Matters Program. Both showed positive effects: older people scored positively on health and quality of life issues, and required less health care services. However, these results can not be easily translated to another culture, since many differences can be expected in elderly and their life worlds.

### **Objectives**

Is it possible to perform a 'bottom-up' study on the implementation of the preventive intervention for elderly living at home, in specific contexts, aimed at preserving health and well-being, so they can live independently for longer, whilst using the experiences already gained by the various partners?

The research project explores the implementation in seven various contexts for different groups of elderly, focusing on the development of knowledge on the intervention, the organization, how it will be offered, and the evaluation.

### **Method**

An action research design is used to reflect on and learn from the issues that emerge during the implementation of the program, experienced by the various parties concerned, in order to improve practice. Important information will be particularly derived from the professionals and elderly involved.

In addition, quantitative measurements on health, self-management, and quality of life will be used to gain insights in the characteristics of the potential target group, and their preferences for the content of the program by using Q-methodology (N= 150).

After analysis, the results are discussed within a focus group of stakeholders per context, aimed at fine tuning and realizing suitable conditions.

### **Results**

The following outcomes will be presented:

- Differences per context
- Consequences for contextualized programs
- Puzzles and pearls for implementation of preventive interventions

### **Contribution to the practice/evidence base of occupational therapy.**

Methodology of action research can generate highly usable knowledge for professionals to perform actions that are clearly aimed at improvement. Particularly the process of collaborative learning with and from the parties concerned (including elderly), has shown to be effective to develop contextualized programs.

