Welcome to our third issue in Volume 7 of the *International Journal of Care and Caring*. The issue includes nine peer-reviewed articles, a contribution to our regular ‘Debates and issues’ section, two book reviews and a conference review. Authors contributing to this issue are based in, or writing about, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Chile, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK. We thank them for their work and are proud in this latest issue to present further evidence about, and perspectives on, care and caring in diverse parts of the world.

**Peer-reviewed articles**

Our first article is from the Netherlands. In ‘Bridging social distances in home care in super-diverse settings: a study of workers, clients and care organisations in the Netherlands’, Monique Kremer (2023) (University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands) discusses how ‘migration-driven super-diversity’ is affecting access to care in European welfare states. Based on qualitative research undertaken in two home-care organisations in the same, ‘super-diverse’ neighbourhood, Kremer explores how home-care workers, in the pursuit of providing good care for all, must bridge different kinds of social distance to build trusting relationships. She considers the strategies they use, their efforts to maintain distance when their professionalism is challenged and how efforts within the Dutch welfare state to standardise care can compromise care organisations’, and their employees’, ability to provide ‘good relational care’.

Next, we present ‘Challenges and adaptations of an intermediary: an exploration of support coordination in the Australian National Disability Insurance Scheme’. Here, Australian researchers Eloise Hummell, Michele Foster, Samantha J. Borg and Alyssa Venning (all at Griffith University) and Karen R. Fisher (University of New South Wales), together with Catherine Needham (University of Birmingham, UK) (2023), present analysis based on a study developed within the tradition of street-level policy research. They explore support coordination within Australia’s National Disability Insurance Scheme, drawing on interviews with support coordinators and front-line personnel involved in coordinating support for people with disability and complex needs. Their study was designed to explore the challenges they experienced and the adaptations they made in addressing these. The authors find that a more explicit focus on overseeing and attending to norms of practice and capacity to work collaboratively is needed to deliver effective support coordination.

Our next article focuses on the role of volunteers in the delivery of care services. “Extra hands” or the “icing on the cake”? The boundaries of the volunteer role in...
formal care settings in England’, by Eleanor K. Johnson, Ailsa Cameron, Paul Willis, Liz Lloyd and Randall Smith (2023) (all at the University of Bristol, UK), notes that the adult social care sector in England has been encouraged to increase the role of volunteers in delivering services. The authors discuss findings from a large qualitative study designed to explore the role of volunteers in care delivery and how their input affects paid care work. They find variation in the clarity of the boundaries established between care workers and analyse boundary making in these settings, with particular reference to ‘emotional’ and ‘bodily’ care, and the impacts on the invisibility, lack of recognition and poor remuneration of paid care work.

In a further contribution from Australia, Sophia A. Harris (University of New South Wales), Amee Baird (Newcastle Neuropsychology) and Celia B. Harris (Western Sydney University) (2023) present ‘“She starts to be her old self again”: familial reflections on pre- and post-onset identity in people with Alzheimer’s and behavioural-variant frontotemporal dementia’. The authors investigate perceptions of identity in Alzheimer’s disease and behavioural-variant frontotemporal dementia based on data collected from family members of people with dementia about experiences before and after the onset of the disease. They found changes and differences in family members’ perceptions of people with dementia, both over time and in experience of these different diseases. Behavioural-variant frontotemporal dementia was perceived to cause greater disruption to identity than Alzheimer’s disease and was more often associated with negative moral traits. Their article also shows differences in some of the ways family members navigate stability and change in the identity of loved ones with dementia.

Our next article focuses on universal basic income, a policy issue attracting growing interest in many parts of the world. Authors Caroline Murphy and Thomas Turner (2023) (both at University of Limerick, Ireland) note that long-term care has become a major policy concern across Europe, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. In ‘Providing income certainty for carers? Care, labour market participation and support for a universal basic income in Europe’, they consider the potential, post-crisis, of using universal basic income as a progressive way of rewarding care. They consider the relationship between caring responsibilities, labour market participation and support for a universal basic income in several European countries, concluding that support for this is divided, even among care-providing groups with the potential to benefit from its introduction.

From Sweden, Camilla Malm, Stefan Andersson and Elizabeth Hanson (all at Linnaeus University) and Håkan Jönson (Lund University) (2023) provide ‘Exploring the knowledge contributions of carers involved in a group process aimed at co-creating a targeted support intervention’. Their study, inspired by discourse psychology, explores the knowledge contributions of carers participating in group meetings to co-create a support intervention. Acknowledging the complexity of carers’ knowledge and based on the heterogeneous sample of carers studied, they argue that the multifaceted knowledge of carers could increase both the validity of research and the relevance of the interventions developed.

‘Barriers and facilitators to physical activity among informal carers: a systematic review of international literature’ is an output of a collaboration between seven UK-based authors – Rosie K. Lindsay and Lee Smith (both at Anglia Ruskin University), Jitka Vseteckova, Joanna Horne, Joseph De Lappe and Nichola Kentzer (all at The Open University) and Mike Trott (Queen’s University Belfast) – Pinar Soysal (Bezmialem Vakif University, Turkey) and Damiano Pizzol (Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, Sudan) (2023). The authors undertook a systematic review of the benefits of physical activity for carers, whose caring circumstances may lead them to have lower levels of physical
activity than non-carers. The review identified barriers and facilitators to physical activity from the perspective of carers internationally, finding that barriers to physical activity include lack of time, fatigue, lack of motivation and lack of support. Motivators included health and well-being, using physical activity as a coping mechanism, and social support.

In ‘Extending understanding of “care” as an embodied phenomenon: Alexander Technique teacher perspectives on restoring carers to themselves’, UK authors Charlotte Woods and Lesley Glover (both Society of Teachers of the Alexander Technique) and Emma Wolverson (University of Hull and Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust) (2023) draw on data from an international survey of teachers of the Alexander Technique. They explore perspectives on how its use can support caring by combatting carers’ feelings of self-loss. Conceptualising care as an embodied phenomenon, the authors highlight specific habits pertinent to the care of self and others, and consider practical and philosophical ways in which the Alexander Technique differs from alternatives. They also call for new research and fresh thinking about theory and practice in supporting care.

The final peer-reviewed article in this issue, from Ireland, is provided by Breda Moloney, Attracta Lafferty, Doreen Mucheru and Thilo Kroll (2023) (all at University College Dublin). In ‘An exploration of young carers’ experiences in secondary school and their perceptions regarding their future career: a scoping review’, the authors emphasise that compared with their peers, young carers are at a higher risk of being outside of education, employment or training. Their review maps the literature on young carers’ experiences and perceptions while attending school, identifying as key themes: the impact of the caring role on education and future aspirations; school awareness and multiagency support; and the positives gained from caring.

**Debates and issues**

The present issue also includes a multi-authored contribution to the journal’s ‘Debates and issues’ section. In ‘Care–life balance: a new normal for men too?’, contributors based in Austria – Yvonne Prinzellner (St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences) and Ali Simon, Independent researcher – join forces with Danielle Drachmann (Odense University Hospital, University of Southern Denmark and Ketotic Hypoglycemia International, Denmark), Mouna Ghanem and Lars Münter (both at Danish Committee for Health Education, Denmark) and Stecy Yghemonos (Eurocarers, Belgium) to explore the lack of male informal carers, considering how stereotypes, socialisation and representations shape this situation, and calling for more research on this topic.

**Reviews**

The reviews section in this issue includes two book reviews. Our thanks to Francisca Ortiz Ruiz (Millennium Institute for Care Research, Chile) for her review of *Women, Precarious Work and Care: The Failure of Family-Friendly Rights* by Emily Grabham (published in 2021) and to Myra Hamilton (University of Sydney, Australia) for her review of *The Reluctant Carer* (published anonymously in 2022).

We are grateful also to Lorena Armijo (Universidad Católica Silva Henríquez, Chile) for her review of the conference ‘Conceptual orientations and recent debates on care: strategies, resistances, vulnerabilities and reproductive justice’, held in March 2023 under the auspices of the IV Latin American Congress of Social Theory, Santiago, Chile.
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**References**


