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Stand by Palliative and
Elderly Caregivers

SPES4Caregivers

SPES4Caregivers is a training project designed for **family and professional caregivers** of elderly and/or palliative care patients. The main aim is to provide them with the **transversal skills needed to manage distress and prevent burnout**. This project also **promotes social inclusion**, to reduce barriers and inequalities in caregiver support pathways.



Palliative care is a holistic form of care dedicated to those suffering from serious illnesses. It aims to improve the quality of life in patients, families, and caregivers.

Our goal

The project's objective is to reach as many caregivers as possible through the design and production of high-quality, multilingual digital learning resources (e-books, video/ audio tracks, etc.). These will be freely available online, even for those who are not part of a structured care network.



The initial phase of the project focuses on **identifying the needs of the target population** through tailored interviews with a sample of caregivers from diverse nationalities

A thematic analysis will be conducted on these interviews, for the development a training program that includes both in-person lessons (featuring role-playing activities and case studies) and digital learning materials, which will remain freely accessible even after the project's completion.

Why it matters

In Europe, around 4.4 million people require palliative care each year, although access to such care still shows significant disparities. A large share of the caregiving burden falls on **informal or family caregivers, who represent 12–18% of the adult population and provide about 80% of all long-term care**. Additionally, there are numerous professional caregivers—paid assistants who provide care for individuals who are not self-sufficient, operating under medical or agency supervision rather than family oversight

Caregivers are often unprepared to face the responsibilities and lifestyle changes that this role entails, which can lead to **symptoms of psychological and physical distress and, ultimately, burnout**. Therefore, it is essential to build a **support network** to help caregivers cope with the heavy physical, psychological, organizational, and financial burden of care, and to transform this demanding experience into an opportunity for personal growth

The project guidelines call for the direct involvement of local stakeholders, with the aim of enhancing and strengthening existing territorial resources and creating a network-based model that effectively supports caregivers. This is expected to generate significant care-related, social, and economic benefits for elderly patients and those in need of palliative care, and also for the healthcare system as a whole.