Journal of Health Psychology
1–11
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DOI: 10.1177/1359105315587141
hpq.sagepub.com
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I wonder if robots will take care of me when I am old: Positive aging representations of professionals working in health promotion services

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Abstract

How the social and institutional context is structured and represented by its actors has an impact on positive aging representations. This qualitative study explores professionals' views on positive aging, how they promote positive aging in their practice and what disparities occur between their discourses and the actual practice of promoting positive aging. Interviews were conducted with professionals from different active aging promotion services and analyzed with thematic coding. Findings show professionals hold negative views on aging while trying to promote positive views in their work, illustrating an existing theory-practice gap. Strategies used in practice can be integrated in existing agency models and inform interventions and active aging policies.

Keywords

health promotion services, positive aging representations, professionals, qualitative research

Introduction

Within an increasingly aged society, there are more professionals employed in various active aging promotion services. The developing service culture targeting aging includes health services, psychological counseling, social assistance, care services, and financial insurance agencies that should help guarantee well-being in old age and shape views on active aging (Stenner et al., 2010). Since most discourses about "the elderly" are constructed at a social and institutional level in welfare European states (Weicht, 2013), aging moves beyond being a personal issue, to becoming a public concern and challenge for policy

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