

TEMPLATE N°1: IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES BY HOST ORGANISATION

NAME OF HOST ORGANISATION/INSTITUTION	SINT VINCENTIUS, KORTRIJK (B) STIMUL: CARE-ETHICS LAB, MOORSELE (B)
TITLE OF THE GOOD PRACTICE	Experiential learning of empathy in a care-ethics lab
GENERAL OBJECTIVE OF THE GOOD PRACTICE	Stimulating care providers and students to reflect critically on care practices, Creating an educational/pedagogical context in which 'good care' can be taught and cultivated.
MOTIVATION FOR CHOOSING THIS GOOD PRACTICE	<p>In six European countries, empirical research showed that older people perceive that 'good care' is at stake in a number of daily care interactions. In day-to-day instances – such as receiving courteous treatment, having one's privacy respected, avoiding being reduced to a 'problem', and being allowed to choose for oneself – older people report experiencing that care providers knowingly or unknowingly contribute to their vulnerability. The extent to which care providers are sensitive to older adults' sense of vulnerability is crucial to achieving 'good care'. Good care includes everything that care providers undertake in order to respond to the vulnerability of others. Showing empathy to the other and tuning in to the integral well-being of this person are essential hallmarks of good care. This means, among other things, being attentive to the person and providing more than the minimal needs for an older adult's situation.</p> <p>In this sense, good care includes a number of activities and attitudes that begin with care providers' attempts to understand older adults' situation, perspective, and vulnerability, and then to deal with these appropriately. From the above consideration, the extent to which care providers understand the vulnerable situation of care receivers and act on it determines whether good care is achieved. With reference to virtue ethics, we have argued previously that an attitude of empathy for the other must be acquired and cultivated. Moreover, care providers can acquire this attitude through practice, adjusting their care accordingly. If this attitude is not taught, or if it is rarely or superficially taught, through education and training of care providers, there is a risk that care is reduced to nothing more than the execution of technical acts and interventions. The care provider focuses mainly on these technical actions and the care-technical question 'Has everything been done correctly?' rather than on the care-ethical question 'Has everything been done to benefit the care receiver?'</p> <p>In 2008, the care-ethics lab sTimul was established in Flanders, Belgium, to promote ethical reflection, to stimulate a caring attitude and to generate empathy in care providers and care providers in training. The initiative for setting up a care-ethics lab was undertaken by a few nursing schools and nursing homes. The sTimul care-ethics lab represents a collaborative project between the education and care sectors. The sTimul lab offers several educational tools, among which are an empathy session, workshops, and learning trajectories.</p>

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE (+/- 500 WORDS)	To generate empathy in the care of vulnerable older persons requires care providers to reflect critically on their care practices. Ethics education and training must provide them with tools to accomplish such critical reflection. It must also create a pedagogical context in which good care can be taught and cultivated. The care-ethics lab 'sTimul' originated in 2008 in Flanders with the stimulation of ethical reflection in care providers and care providers in training as its main goal. Also in 2008, sTimul commenced the organization of empathy sessions as an attempt to achieve this goal by simulation. The empathy session is a practical and fairly straightforward way of working to provoke care providers and care providers in training to engage in ethical reflection. Characteristic of the empathy session in the care-ethics lab is the emphasis on experience as a basis for ethical reflection.
DESCRIPTION OF TARGET GROUP	Care providers + students
MEANS/METHODS OR TOOLS USED	An empathy session in sTimul consists of an internship, followed by discussion and, finally, a return day or time for ethical reflection. The internship component is a simulation exercise lasting two days and includes one overnight stay. Because the participants are students or experienced care providers, the empathy session is two-dimensional. First, the experienced care providers have the opportunity to play the part of an older resident according to a specific resident profile in a simulation exercise. These care providers are all working in residential care settings for older people. They are registered nurses or allied with health and social work professionals. They are assistant nurses, managers, or professional nurses and will have different lengths of service. Second, a group of nursing students are given full autonomy in planning and carrying out the care process for the simulation residents. These groups are always students from the same school and the same degree course. They are final year nursing or nursing assistant students. The only 'care' experience most of the students have is during their hours of internship. Some students – especially nurses who are seeking to upgrade their qualifications – are older and have previous experience in health care. For both groups, students and care providers, participation in the empathy session is not obligatory, but is voluntary. Two educational assistants from the care-ethics lab are responsible for preparing and supporting the empathy session.
SKILLS INVOLVED FOR THE CAREGIVERS	Critical reflection on care practices Giving good care in order to respond to the vulnerability of others
ATTITUDES INVOLVED FOR THE CAREGIVERS	Experiential learning of empathy Ethical reflection
RESOURCES NEEDED	An educational/ pedagogical context in which good care can be taught and cultivated

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