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Disruptive developments: New challenges for health care and social services

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We live in great times of increasing possibilities. But these possibilities have a huge impact on the way we take care of the vulnerable people in our societies. The formal care professionals and institutes need to improve their resilience in these fast-changing times. Technology leads to exponential enhancements, but also to radical transparency, big data that make via algorithms more information available (better diagnostics, better treatment options), personalized medicine and quality benchmarks. Also on the side of socio-cultural developments, we shift in preferences and renewed empowerment, also due to the network society. Because of aging societies and increased possibilities, the costs of formal health care and social services are growing rapidly, putting pressures on solidarity within societies and/or on equity between citizens. All these developments, including a lot of new entrants in the healthcare market, have an impact on the care delivery and the people working in the traditional institutes. How do they re-organize their activities and remain relevant? But there are plenty of opportunities: health is valued greatly, employers are increasingly interested in a healthy workforce (employees are aging as well), social capital within the communities can support the formal healthcare and technology is an important ally. Harvesting these opportunities require at least one big condition from the health and care industry: a flexible mindset and adaptive capabilities. To reinforce these disruptive developments and make them work for us, instead of against us, we need to embrace these advancements in a smart way.

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