



Community care by **commons** in the Netherlands
Ben van Essen. European Carers Day 4 October 2024

Challenges Dutch health care system

- Aging (2040: solitary living 80+ x 2)
- 500,000 overburdened caregivers
- Structural shortage of care personnel
- Financial limits are in sight

How are we doing so far?

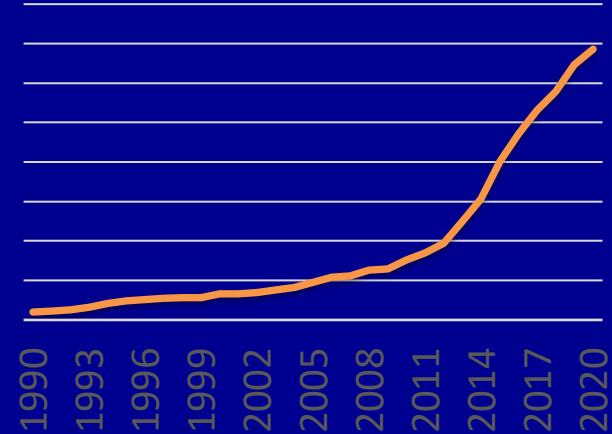
- High quality standards for cure and care
- But not very well organized
 - Or rather: overorganized
 - Highly compartmentalized
- Accessibility of health care is decreasing
 - Major problems in youth care, mental health and support for the elderly
- Particularly vulnerable citizens (30% op pop.) get lost in our health care system

Netherlands since 2013: less state, more civil society

- Last 15/20 years: bring more responsibility back in society.
- Municipalities are committed to self-managing communities;
- In addition to the classic social infrastructure (clubs, village halls, etc.) upcoming new citizen' initiatives like cooperatives/commons for Community-care, Collective housing, Welfare → Building Caring Communities



Netherlands 2024:
2000 local care initiatives, taking care of
3 million people (16% op population)



Netherlands Cares for Each Other (NLZVE) is the network of local citizens initiatives where citizens provide or maintain services in the area of care and welfare.



Social engagement



Info & Advise



Active citizens / volunteering



Increase of self-reliance

Care initiatives / Social cooperatives



Welfare



Local services

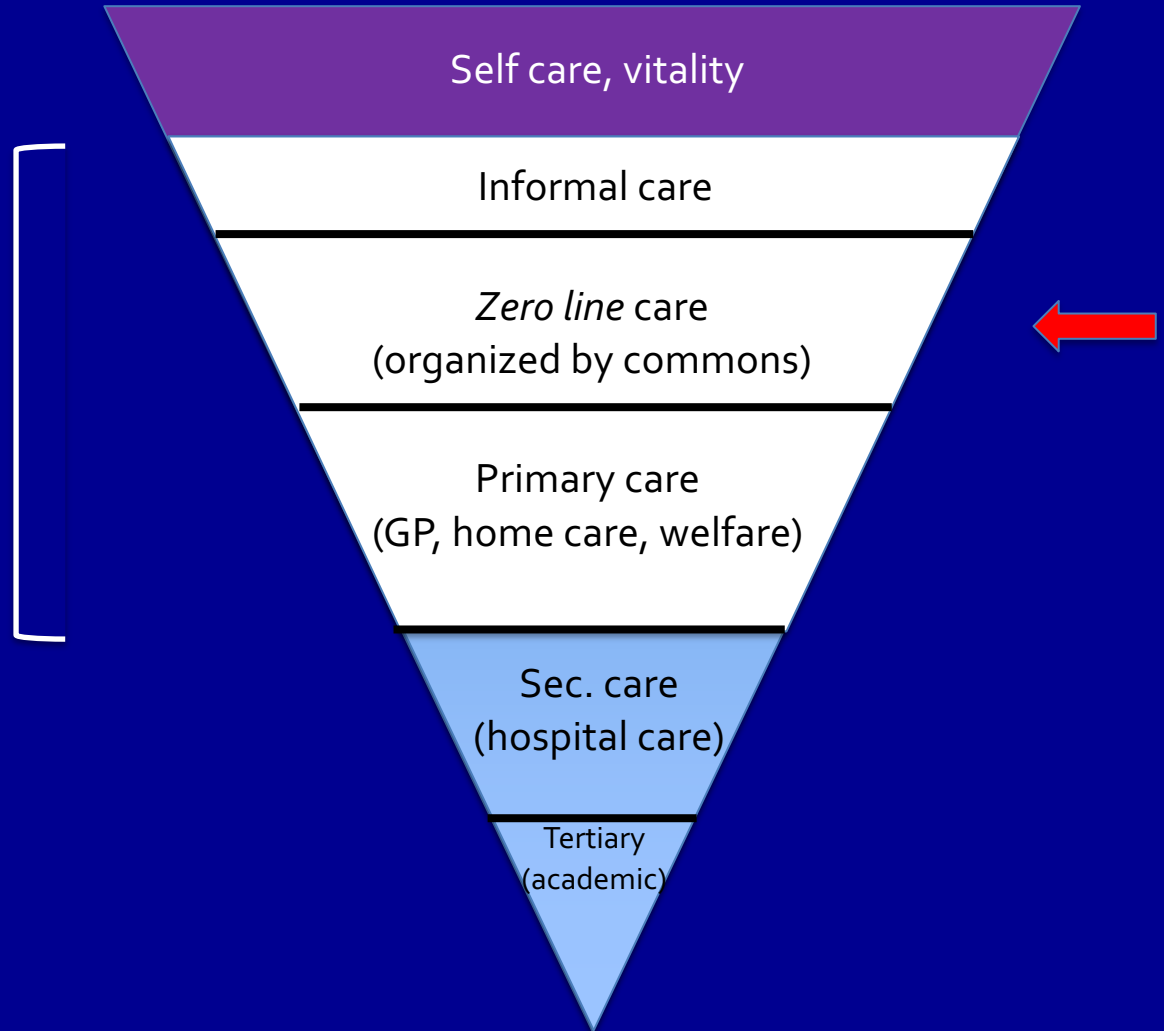


Housing with care



Home care

Integral basic
care in local
communities





Health-Care centre LaefHoês
Village America (2200 inhabitants)





2010 - 2015

Village program of requirements

Medical functions: GP, Physio, Pedicure, Blood test, Cesartherapist..

Wel care functions: Library, Kitchen, Garden, Handyman-team, repair café

80 volunteers



2010

2010 GP wants to retire
Village working group takes initiative

2015

2015 - 2017
Finance and building (volunteers)

2017

Villagesupporter, Transport-service, Housing-projects, Local economy,

2022

2022
Care cooperative: professional home-care

Village Support Worker



Key lessons

A close-up photograph of an elderly person's hands, showing significant wrinkling and discoloration. The hands are firmly gripping a wooden cane. The person is wearing a dark, vertically striped shirt. A silver ring is visible on the ring finger of the left hand.

- It is an illusion to think that the current health care system is able to deliver sustainable and integrated health care services.
- We need local commons for achieving vital communities and integration of basic care.