

**Eurocarers Conference in Paris
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Caring in Finland

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For Organisations
Supporting Family Caring**

Basic facts on family caring

- Over 300 000 (estimate) family carers in Finland
- Of them some 29 000 receive family carer's allowance from their respective municipalities
- The allowance varies between municipalities, two minimum classes are defined by the new act on family caregiving (310 / 620 euros)
- Age, income etc. do not affect the granting of allowance



Omaishoitajat ja Läheiset –Liitto ry, Association of Care Giving Relatives and Friends

The association aims at improving the situation and status of family carers and care recipients as well as promoting the development of numerous support measures for them.



Association of Care Giving Relatives and Friends

- Founded in 1991
- Nation wide and bilingual
- 63 local carer associations covering some 310 (80 %) municipalities in Finland (2007)
- 8000 individual members (2007)
- Funded mainly by RAY (Slot Machine Association in Finland) – budget 1 340 000 euros in 2007
- 23 staff members
- Head Office in Helsinki, regional offices in Joensuu, Pori and Rovaniemi, project offices in Outokumpu, Oulu, Salo and Tampere



Association of Care Giving Relatives and Friends, activities:

- Guidance and counselling including legal advice
- Promotion of the interests and rights of carers: statements, participation in national planning and decision making in carer-related matters, guidelines for supporting family caring etc.
- Publications and information: magazine Lähellä, books, national and local service guides, reports, videos, website (www.omaishoitajat.com) etc.
- Organizing holidays and rehabilitation courses for carers



Association of Care Giving Relatives and Friends, activities:

- Promotion of peer group activities for carers
- Training of carers, students, volunteers and professionals
- Nationwide projects with a limited duration in cooperation with municipalities, parishes, local carer associations etc., EU-projects
- Regional work
 - Support for local actors including local carer associations: training, consulting, networking, guides for planning and conducting projects (63 local projects in 2007)



Services for elderly people in Finland / Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in Finland

- The main policy aim is to ensure that older people are able to live independently as long as possible in their own homes, in a familiar environment
- In order to carry out this policy, each municipality is expected to have an up-to-date policy strategy concerning care for older people that safeguards their social rights.
- Provided services should be client-oriented and the cooperation between relatives and service producers should function seamlessly.



Proposals on expanding family care / Rapporteur of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

- In 2004 Ministry Rapporteur suggested many improvements for developing family care.
- The aim was to make family care an important part of the social welfare and health services.
- By 2012 about 52,000 persons should receive family carer's allowance and the responsibility for funding the family care compensations should be transferred to the state



Act on Family Caregiving (1.1.2006)

- The Act updated and replaced the existing regulations on family caring
- The purpose of this Act is to promote the best interest of the care recipient by securing adequate social and health care services as well as the continuance of care and support for the work of family carers
- Family care support refers to the whole that includes the **services given to the care recipient and the caregiver allowance, time-off and support services for the carer.**
- The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health also published a **guide booklet about** national recommendations and equal practices in supporting family carers. The guide is mainly for municipal authorities
- The municipality and the family carer draw up a care agreement that includes a plan on care and services.



Act on Family Caregiving

- The municipality may arrange various social and health care **services** to back up family caring. The main types of services: home help and home nursing; meals on wheels; rehabilitation, short-term care etc.
- The law ensures a minimum **caregiver allowance** of EUR 310. Caregivers in heavy caring situations will receive a minimum of EUR 620 a month. (taxable)
- **Time off** for the carer: at least 3 days / month
 - When the carer is continuously or with only minor interruptions tied up to caring.
 - Municipality has to ensure that the care for the care recipient is appropriate during family carer's time-off. Taking days-off or recreational time do not reduce the amount of family carer allowance