

What is DanceCARE?



DanceCARE is a European initiative aiming to improve the well-being of long-term caregivers. We're reducing burden, isolation, and depression risk through a flexible, blended programme based on Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) and the WiseMotion (WM) method—tested in the field and designed for replication by organisations and training institutes across Europe. Alongside live training, self-help groups, and a digital community platform, we're sharing results via EU channels to drive adoption. Our goal: better quality of care in ageing, stronger peer networks among caregivers, and a sustainable, evidence-informed model that stakeholders can integrate into ongoing education and everyday practice.

The consortium

The DanceCARE Consortium includes:

The Italian National Institute of Health and Science on Aging (INRCA), Italy, is the Coordinator. The national team is formed by: Sara Santini, Flavia Galassi, Sara Pasquini and Mario Cantore.

Aktios Elderly Care Units, Greece. The national team is formed by Costis Prouskas, Panos Kassidakis and Eleftheria Panopoulou.

Polibienestar University of Valencia, Spain. The national team is represented by Mirian Fernández and Jorge Garcés.

Computer Solutions S.A., Greece. The national team is formed by Stavros Pitoglou, Marilena Taroussi and Olympia Giannakopoulou.

European Association of Dance Movement Therapy (EADMT). Its team includes Rosa María Rodríguez Jiménez, Marloes Shami-van Houten, Dora Bareka, Aleksandra Chlipala.

WiseMotion (WM) is represented by the founder of the WiseMotion Community Dr. Hanna Poikonen.



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Programme Overview: Live Body-Mind Sessions

DanceCARE is currently **piloting a live seven-module programme** with Dance Movement Therapists in **Ancona (Italy)**, **Athens (Greece)**, and **Valencia (Spain)**. The aim is to support the mental health and everyday resilience of long-term caregivers through accessible movement practices and reflective dialogue. Each session is facilitated in person by qualified DMT/WM professionals and designed so participants can immediately apply what they learn on the job and at home.

To broaden access beyond the in-person pilots, **selected sessions and companion resources will also be made available via our YouTube channel** (<https://www.youtube.com/@DanceCareErasmusProject>) — so caregivers who cannot attend live can still benefit and practice at their own pace.

How to access our educational materials online:

- Follow the **DanceCARE YouTube channel** for upcoming session recordings and companion videos:
<https://www.youtube.com/@DanceCareErasmusProject>
- Share the channel with colleagues, NGOs, and training providers so teams can integrate short practices into wellbeing initiatives.



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Piloting Updates from Italy, Greece, and Spain

The intervention in Italy

From September 28 to November 15, a series of Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) sessions took place at Studio Danza AXÈ in Ancona, Italy.

In Ancona, the programme includes seven sessions in two groups at different times to accommodate participants' availability. The programme implementation is led by Sara Santini and Flavia Galassi, with the collaboration of Sara Pasquini and Mario Cantore. The sessions are led by Agnese Polloni and Monica Re, dance movement therapists trained in the original DanceCARE method at the University of Valencia and the meetings are observed by dance movement therapists Sara Lippi, Sabrina Girotti, Serena Gagliardi, and Silvia Perelli.

The intervention in Spain

From September 24 to November 5, the programme was implemented in the municipality of Quart de Poblet in Valencia, Spain.

In Valencia – Quart de Poblet, the programme comprises seven sessions with two groups meeting on Wednesday afternoons and Friday mornings to accommodate participants' availability. The programme implementation is led by researcher Dr. Mirian Fernández from the University of Valencia—Polibienestar, with the support of the local council's Department for Older People. The sessions are led by Dance Movement Therapy trainers Inma Piqueras and Sonia Hernando, and the meetings are observed by dance movement therapists Anna Pellicer and Ana Karen.

The intervention in Greece

From October 18 to November 29, the sessions were held at Kinósfera in Ampelokipi, Athens, Greece.

In Athens, the DanceCARE training programme includes seven sessions in two groups on different days (Wednesday morning and Saturday morning) to accommodate participants' availability. The programme implementation is led by Panos Kassidakis from Aktios Elderly Care Units. The sessions are led by Tonia Dakou and Myrto Zarokosta, dance movement trainers, and the meetings are observed by Maria Arvanitaki, Antonia Katsika, Katerina Petrou, and Georgianna Filippaki.



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Piloting Updates from Italy, Greece, and Spain

The seven modules being piloted

- 1. Self-awareness: Breathing, grounding, and slowing down** – Stabilize the nervous system and reconnect with bodily cues.
- 2. Self-awareness: Self-confidence (posture & mobility)** – Use posture and mobility to cultivate presence and inner steadiness.
- 3. Mindfulness & the Surroundings (stress management)** – Orient to space, track stress signals, and practise tension release.
- 4. Empathy (inward & outward) and Resilience (self-care)** – Balance compassion with boundaries; embed sustainable self-care micro-practices.
- 5. Emotional Regulation (coping strategies)** – Build a practical toolkit (breath, tempo, grounding, imagery) for real-time regulation.
- 6. Communication skills, expression & listening** – Strengthen embodied listening, non-verbal clarity, and congruent verbal expression.
- 7. Social interaction & Creativity** – Re-ignite play and co-creation to restore motivation and team climate.

The effects of the body-mind activities on caregivers' well-being are assessed through validated psychological tools and constantly monitored through live observations.

The first sessions are over and the researchers are already capturing great benefits in the participants, who started to express their emotions and care experience through their bodies. Let the body speak!



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Explore the DanceCARE Platform

The DanceCARE community platform is an open, virtual space for caregivers, trainers, and stakeholders to exchange experiences and build good practices together. It complements the video series by turning individual learning into shared knowledge and mutual support.

What you'll find inside

Topic-based discussions: Conversations are organized in threads by theme (e.g., stress-management tips, communication challenges, movement ideas for group sessions).

Peer knowledge exchange: Share what works, ask questions, and co-create micro-interventions that travel well across settings.

Supportive culture: A place to be heard—celebrate successes, unpack difficult days, and normalize self-care.

How it works

1. Create a free account at <https://dancecarecommunity.flarum.cloud/>
2. Browse existing topics/threads and read along
3. Start a new thread or jump into a discussion with a comment or reflection

Why stakeholders should engage

For service providers: Spot frontline needs early, gather feedback on training, and surface replicable practices.

For training institutions: Identify gaps in curricula and co-design relevant modules.

For NGOs & networks: Amplify community voice, connect members across regions, and accelerate learning cycles.

For caregivers: Reduce isolation, enrich your coping toolkit, and find peers who understand your day-to-day reality.

Help us amplify impact

Please share both resources within your networks:

DanceCARE platform: <https://dancecarecommunity.flarum.cloud/> (community support & practice sharing)



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DanceCARE at the 5th EADMT Conference

DanceCARE was presented at the **5th EADMT (European Association of Dance Movement Therapy) Conference** in Vilnius, Lithuania, September 12–14, 2025.

The oral presentation **“Dance Movement Therapy and Conscious Movement as innovative tools in emotional education and support for caregivers”** highlighted practical movement-based pathways to protect caregiver wellbeing amidst high emotional and relational demands.

Key messages from the presentation

Accessibility matters: Short, repeatable practices integrated into daily routines increase adherence and impact.

Embodiment bridges skills and resilience: When caregivers regulate in their bodies, communication improves, boundaries clarify, and empathy becomes sustainable.

Communities multiply learning: A shared platform accelerates the spread of good practices and offers continuity after initial training.

Next steps: Continue piloting, gather structured feedback, and refine resources for diverse care settings and cultural contexts.

The workshop **“Dance Movement Therapy and Conscious Movement as tools for supporting the mental health of long-term caregivers working with elderly people”** brought together professionals involved in long-term caregiving for older adults. It was a pleasure to present movement-based tools - Dance Movement Therapy and Wise Motion - currently implemented in the pilot sites of the DanceCARE project, and to engage in a meaningful exchange of experiences.

Key insights from the workshop:

Embodied exploration deepens awareness and strengthens inner resources:

Through symbolic movement, participants experienced how creativity and playfulness can gently create space for reflection, insight, and self-discovery.

Practical tools meet real needs: The training guide developed within DanceCARE was warmly received, with participants sharing that they gained both inspiration and concrete methods they can apply in their work.



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DanceCARE at the 5th EADMT Conference

Need for programs like this: Feedback highlighted a real need for programs supporting the reduction of burnout among caregivers across Europe.

If you attended the EADMT conference and would like to be part of the project, join us on the DanceCARE platform to exchange reflections and explore collaboration possibilities!



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