

Promotion of active ageing through activities in rural settings: monitoring and trial results

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Overview

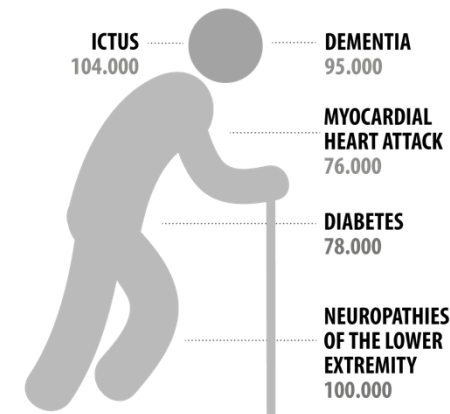
- The significance of active aging promoted by rural farms
- The "Active Longevity in Rural Areas" project desing and development
- Main findings of the research
- Conclusion and perspectives



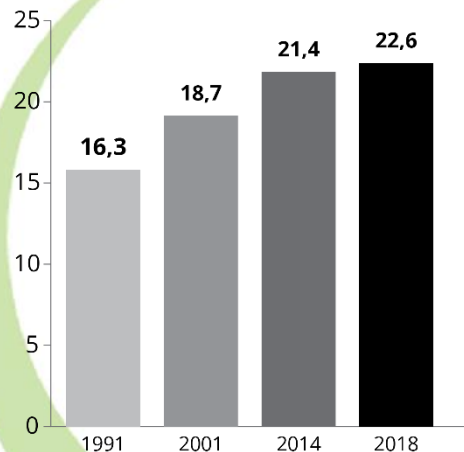
Aging society and welfare policies

- Population aging is the most relevant factor that will redirect the characteristics of the Italian welfare
- The current state raises questions about the quality of life of the elderly with particular attention to the phase of prevention of frailty
- It becomes increasingly urgent to devise appropriate solutions for the prevention of functional impairment and to compensate for the unavoidable vulnerabilities of old age

Diseases that affect the elderly every year





People aged 65 years and over (%)



Source: our calculation on ISTAT databases

Goals of the Marche Region project “Active Longevity in Rural Areas”

-  To promote cooperation between public institutions and agricultural enterprises in the development of innovative services for the elderly
-  To measure the impact of these initiatives on participants



Timeframe of the project: December 2014 - January 2016

Active Ageing Policy Framework (WHO, 2002)

Active
Aging

Positive view
of aging

- Optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age
- Allowing people to realize their potential for physical, social, and mental well being throughout the life course and to participate in society according to their needs, desires and capacities
- Adopting a new paradigm, that views older people as active participants in an age-integrated society

Social Farming

Multifunctional
Farm



Services and activities
addressed to this target
of population

- Enabling the participants to be protagonist in the various activities
- Providing for a diversification of activities in relation to user characteristics
- Offering a variety of experiences settings into the farm
- Inserting therapeutic aspects such as outdoor exercise
- Paying attention to relational aspects with regards to participants, professionals and families
- Providing for an intergenerational approach

Target and objectives of the regional programme



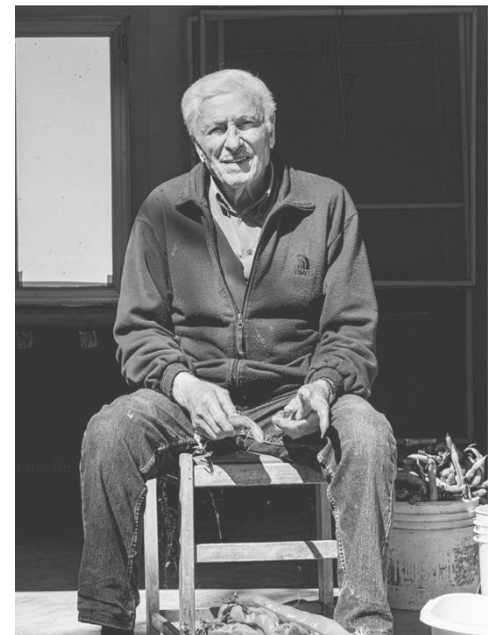
Target group

- Disability free people aged 65 years and over



Objectives

- Maintenance and stimulation of psychophysical capabilities
- Social isolation prevention
- Prevention of disability



Activities

1 Gardening and farming

Gardening and horticulture, care of the farmyard animals, training on agronomic practices, visits to the olive grove, harvesting olive or fruit, handicrafts



2 Food education and healthy cooking

Food laboratory with educational lunch, smoothies making, homemade pasta training for kids, cooking garden products



3 Leisure and socialization

Free subject talking, memory of rural traditions, journal writing, dancing, musictherapy, lunches with family members and grandchildren



Research tools



Qualitative Study

Focus groups with two follow-ups on:

- Motivation, expectations
- Long-life learning and life style
- Psychosocial aspects
























Quantitative Survey

- Cognitive status Short Portable Mental Status Questionnaire (SPMSQ) (Pfeiffer, 1975)
- Social network frequency of contacts
- Quality of life Whoqol-age (Caballero et al., 2013)
- Lifestyle habits VAOR-ADI (Landi et al., 2000)

Subjects who participated to the study



T ₀	T ₁	T ₂	Participants
			36
			12
			14
			22
			11
			10
			7



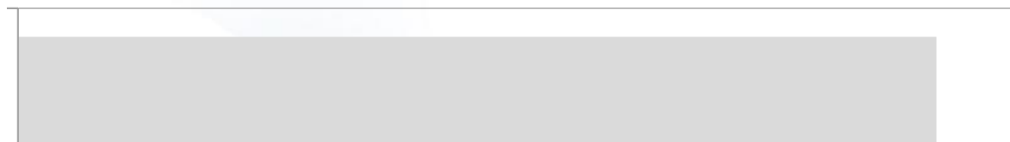
Total number of participants 112

Sample charateristics

		CARMINE	PURA VIDA	MEMORIA QUERCIA	LIBANORE	CASTELLETTA	FONTEGRANNE
N		16	10	22	25	25	14
Sex (%)	m	37.5	30.0	54.6	36.0	24.0	50.0
	f	62.5	70.0	45.5	64.0	76.0	50.0
Age	Mean	79.3	70.4	76.5	68.8	70.1	76.9
	sd	11.3	6.9	9.9	4.6	7.6	7.1
Education (%)	primary	56.3	40.0	61.9	24.0	16.0	71.4
	secondary	12.5	20.0	23.8	32.0	12.0	0.0
	high school	25.0	30.0	9.5	36.0	44.0	21.4
	degree	6.3	10.0	0.0	8.0	28.0	7.1
Marital Status (%)	married	43.8	20.0	23.8	88.0	52.0	66.7
	unmarried	6.3	0.0	33.3	4.0	12.0	0.0
	widow	50.0	80.0	42.9	8.0	36.0	33.3
Working(%)	No	86.7	90.0	95.2	92.0	75.0	91.7
	Yes	13.3	10.0	4.8	8.0	25.0	8.3
SPMSQ test	mean	8.2	9.5	7.5	9.6	9.2	9.2
	sd	2.1	0.8	2.7	0.9	1.5	1.0

Main outcomes

Social
Integration



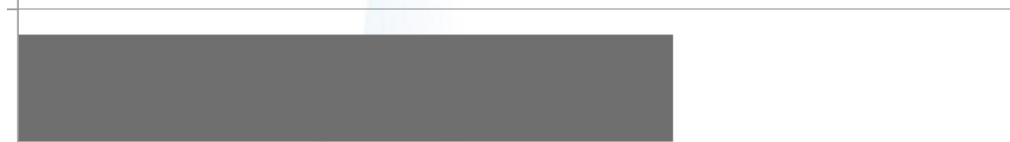
91% increased contacts
with network members

Health



63% increased exercise or
felt more energetic in
carrying out daily activities

Healthy
Diet



66% increased daily
consumption of fruit
and vegetables

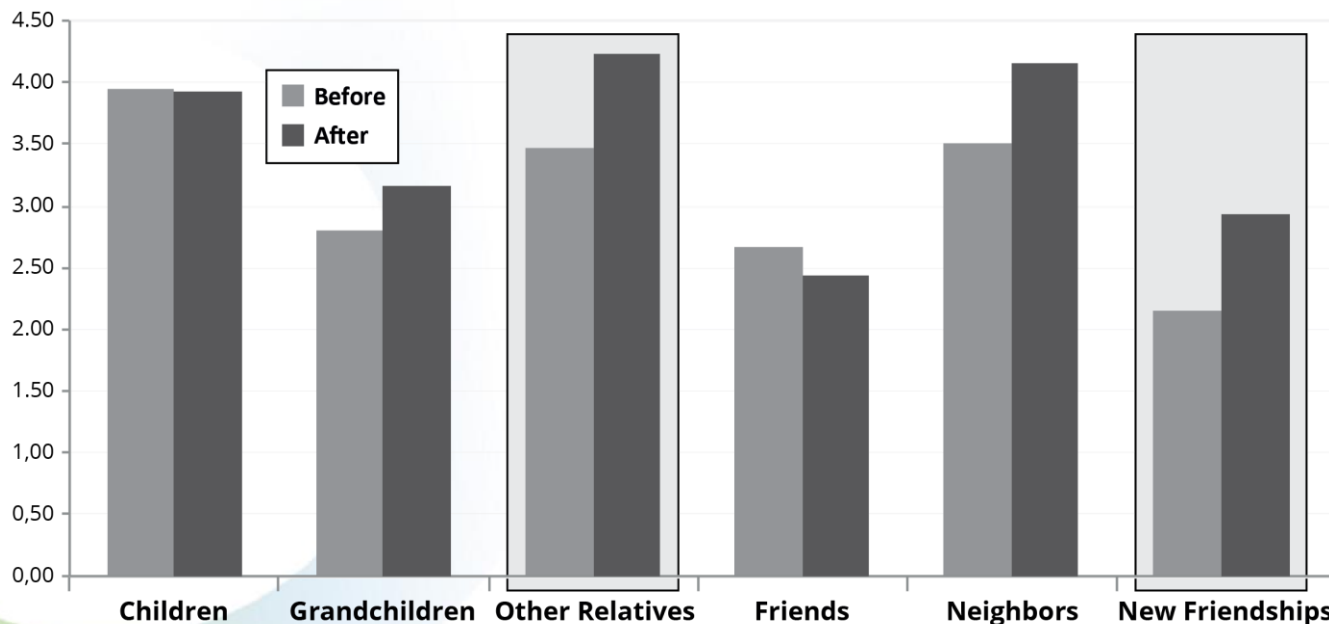
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Qualitative analysis

- Psychological dimension: *“the experience has been a sort of awakening”*
- Social dimension: *“it’s a chance of staying together”*
- Physical dimension and autonomy: *“I retrieved a bit of my autonomy”*
- Long-life learning and life style: *“I learned new things to enjoy with grandchildren”*
- Mental health/memory: *“it helps memory being reconstructed”*

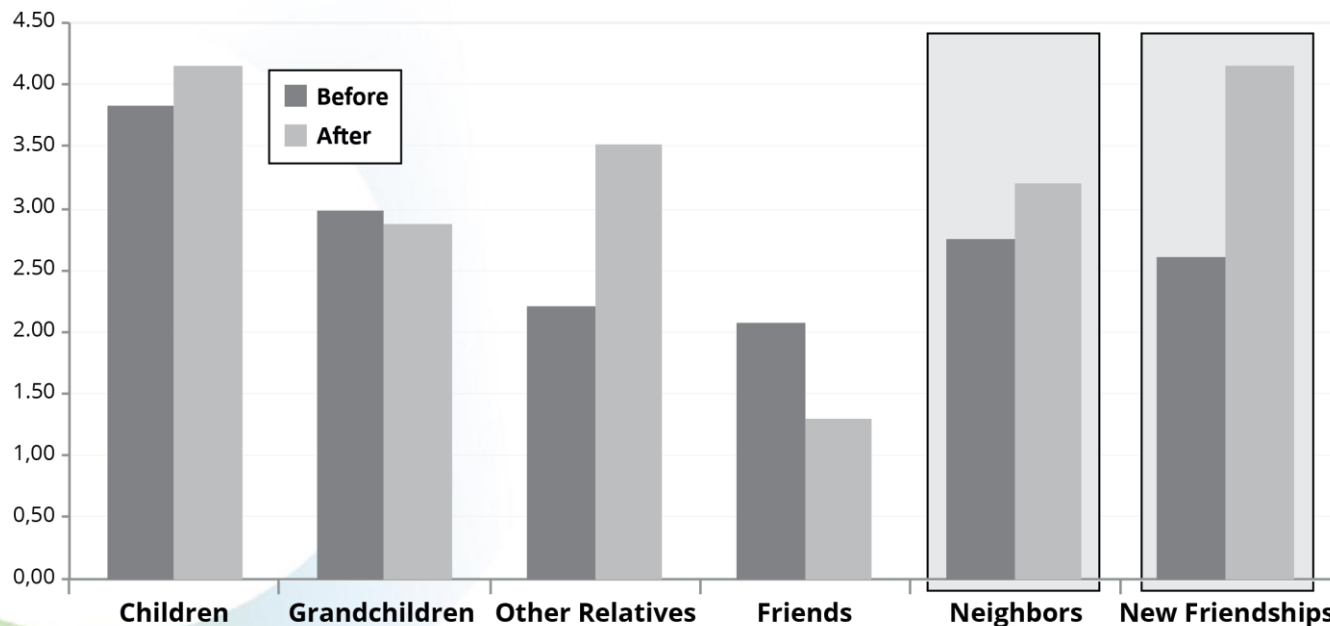


Change in network size: mild cognitive impairment group



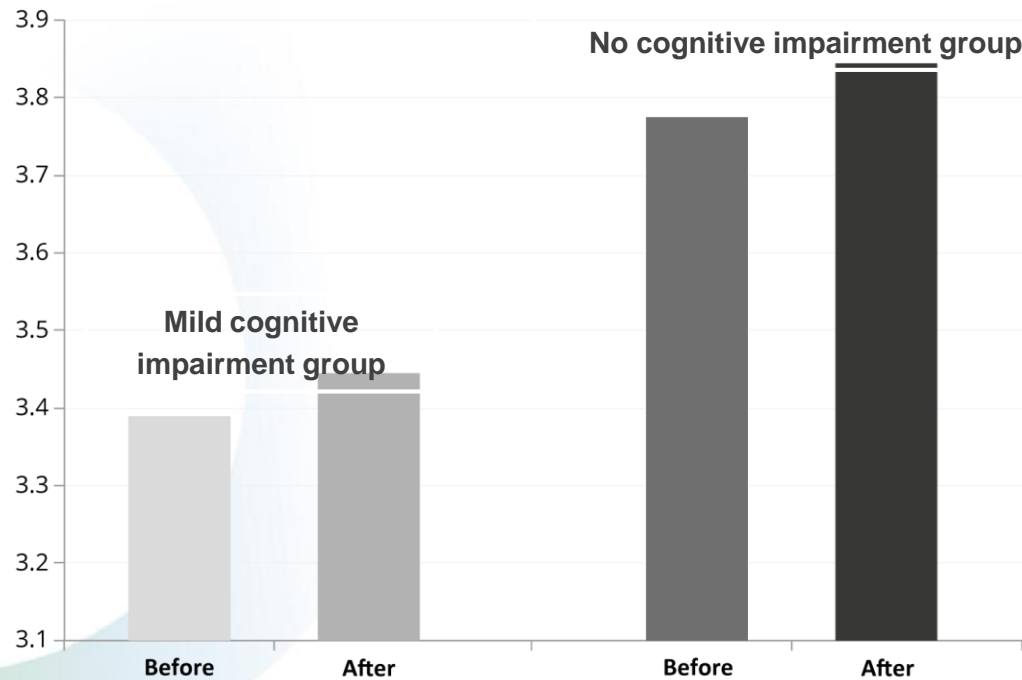
The increase is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$)

Change in network size: no cognitive impairment group



The increase is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$)

Subjective evaluation of quality of life



Conclusion and perspectives

The findings supports the beneficial effect of participating in farm based **social and educational services**: policy makers should promote programmes encouraging services for older people, together with measures to improve health and well being

The “Model of active longevity in rural areas” developed by the Marche Region and INRCA will be further applied to finance new project of social farming for older people including “**seniors cohousing**” and “**sensory gardens**”

Further steps might include the creation of a wide European partnership to develop farm based innovative initiatives for active aging

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Thanks for your attention