

Older immigrants with need for (home)care

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Presently, the first generation of “guest workers” – who came to Denmark around 1970 – is entering old age. Quantitative studies show that older, low-skilled immigrants generally use welfare provisions as homecare less often than their host country peers. To deepen our understanding of older migrants' attitudes towards, and use of, homecare, this article draws on interviews with 39 older Turks. The interviews show that some older immigrants avoid using homecare, as it is considered disruptive to their home life, because of difficulties communicating with the homecare workers, and due to dissatisfaction with the quality of services provided. The ability to avoid using homecare may depend on older immigrants instead receiving help from younger, mostly female, family members, leading to, for example, some daughters-in-law performing quite demanding care tasks. Families may seek to integrate the desire for family-based help into the welfare state structures through applying for a “self-appointed helper”, where the municipality hires a family member to perform agreed-on homecare services.