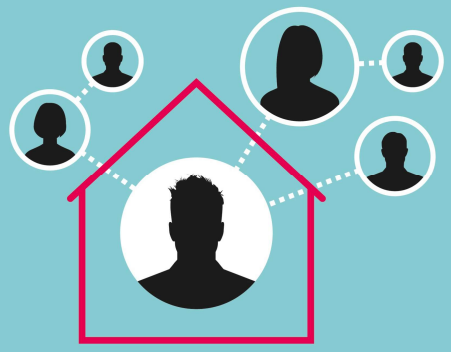
Hogeschool van Amsterdam

KENNISPLATFORM/LECTORAAT
Empowerment & Professionalisering
NOORD-HOLLAND



Social networks first?

Network support in social care

HVO QUERIDO

Leger des Heils

cordaan

perMens

Who do you text first when you have good news?

What & how?

- Shelter organizations and the municipalities of Amsterdam & Haarlem provide network support for people who are homeless

- Since 2022, research has been carried out to develop practical knowledge on how to apply network support.

Why network support?

- People who are homeless are more often lonely
- Connection is a basic need to feel well
- Network support strengthens connection

“The most important thing is that the ‘Amsterdammer’ (client) expierence he has a support group. That he has people he can rely on! [Networksupporter]

Additional goals

- Expectiations from stakeholders: network support can also reduce the demand for formal care and strengthen self-reliance .
- In practise, there are few examples of reduced formal care, sometimes even the opposite effect.
- Self-reliance is often individual, not relational.

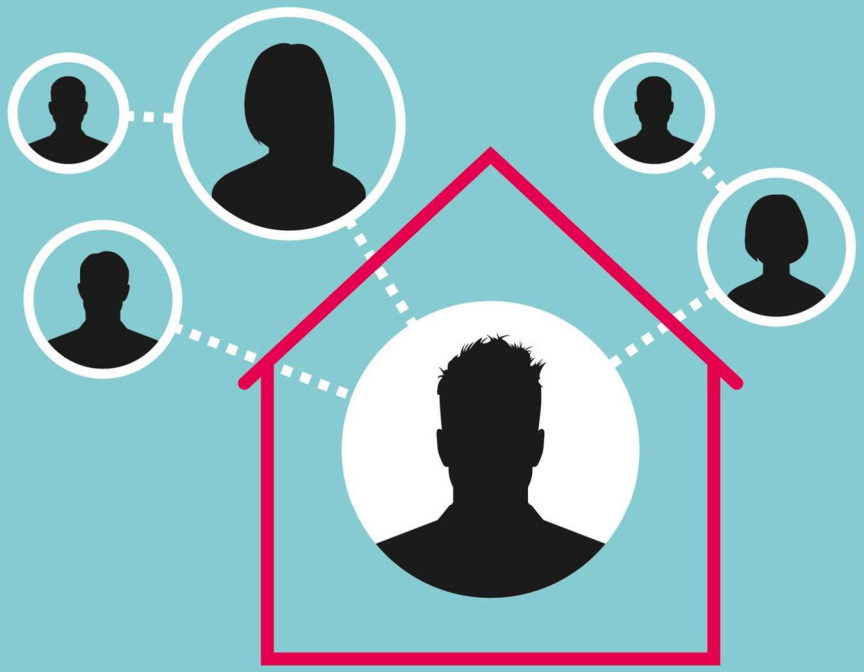
What do network supporter do?(1)

- Create the basic conditions for network support
- Promote awareness of the network
- Expand and set boundaries of the network

'These are quite normal questions to ask somebody: hey, if something happens to you, who can we rely on? That already gives you an entry point.' [network support]

What do network supporters do? (2)?

- Work on restoring or maintaining relationships
- Joint desicion-making by client, relatives and care worker
- Encourage social resonsibility
- Help strengthen social skill



Network support in an urban setting

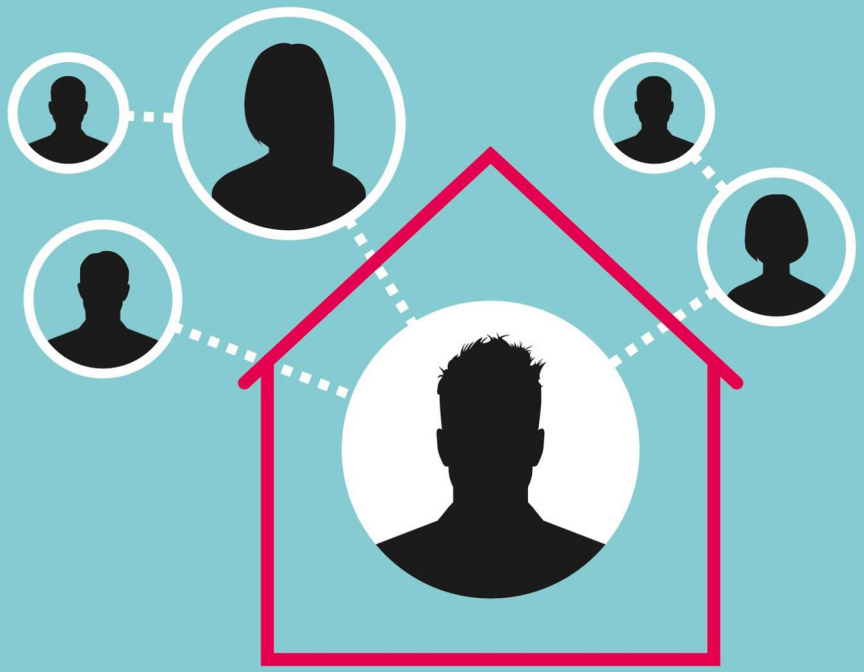
- Network support is more oriented towards a ‘village’ setting
- The urban environment requires a different apraoch
- Complex problems hinder the transfer of tasks to the network
- Housing shortage makes informal solutions more difficult

Policy and organization

- Network support is needed in all phases
- Complex care networks hinder joint and sustainable new approaches
- Policy rules prevent informal solutions for homelessness
- Care is not organized for network support: not in work processes, registration systems of meeting spaces

What do network supporters need?

- Sufficient time and attention
- Training and case discussions
- Sometimes the involvement of a systemic therapist is needed



Recommendations for further development

- It must be clear why and with what goal network support is implemented
- Implementing network support requires persistence
- Education should pay more attention to triadic support
- System-therapists should be available for advice and intervention
- Digital tools can be used more
- Connections with community-programs in the city can be strengthened
- Work processes, ICT systems and physical spaces must be adapted

Products and next steps

The report, infographics, and podcast can be found at

Inholland.nl/socialnetworkfirst

or via the QR-code

More information about the follow up project is available via m.m.de.lange@hva.nl