

Thematic Panel 23 – Collaborating with Volunteers and NGOs to Transform Care: Valuing Unpaid Care Work

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Convenor and Discussant:

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The World Health Organization defined health workers as *all people engaged in actions whose primary intent is to enhance health* and includes volunteers in this definition. However, workforce planning and management has generally focused on workers in paid roles, reflecting the prioritization of selected programs, services and outcomes. Volunteers meanwhile, are recognized as an important partner in the humanization of care environments, however, less is known about specific participation and contributions of the volunteer workforce, particularly in relation to the programmatic outcomes of interest. Leveraging community resources, specifically volunteers and NGOs, may be an innovative approach to addressing citizens' needs, particularly within resource constrained environments. Increasing our understanding of the potential roles of volunteers and approaches to intersectoral partnerships with NGOs, can support the structure and distribution of services for people across the lifespan. This knowledge in turn, can support changes in the perceived value of informal, unpaid care work. Discussion is required regarding the type, nature and extent of the relationship between non-profits and state-funded services in the provision of health and social services, and if and how cultures, values and norms are shared across these sectors and the organizations within them.

This thematic panel welcomes papers that explore issues of collaboration with volunteers/NGOs across the lifecourse, from multidisciplinary scholars, and/or representing intersectoral perspectives, focused on (but not limited to):

- Perspectives of NGOs on collaborating with health and social care organizations.
- Facilitators and barriers to collaboration with NGOs (micro, meso,

macro level), reflecting the changing policy priorities.

- Implications for redesigning service delivery, including how to address the dilemmas, solutions and conflicts germane to intersectoral collaboration.
- Current models of collaboration, focusing on the contextual factors that influence the arrangement and delivery of services.
- Benefits (at the individual, organization, system level) that are, or could be, derived from this collaboration.
- Policy Implications, including strategies to influence priorities, and the distribution of care.