



Welcome to the newest edition of the CAPHRI newsletter. This month, we're delighted to showcase a diverse array of accomplishments, innovations, and opportunities from our dynamic research community. Here's what you can look forward to in this issue:

- CAPHRI Annual Report 2024
- WHO Designates Two Collaborating Centres at CAPHRI
- Investing in Prevention: Mickaël Hiligsmann on the Economics of Staying Healthy
- Prof. Dr. Guido de Wert Honoured with Prestigious MUMC+ Medal Upon Retirement
- From Knowledge to Impact: National Evaluation of Academic Elderly Care Networks Delivered to VWS
- Addressing the Health Gap: Why Collective Prevention is Key, According to CAPHRI Researcher Rachelle Meisters
- How to Prevent a Total Collapse of the Healthcare System
- Supporting Patients and Informal Caregivers: Matthijs Bosveld on the Future of Self-Management Support in Healthcare
- CAPHRI Researchers Host Symposium on STI Care Reform at IUSTI Europe Congress
- UNITY-project has Officially Launched!
- Access to Sexual Health Care Among Young Ethnic Minorities in the Netherlands
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- Upcoming Funding Opportunities, Courses, Events, Inaugural and Farewell Lectures, and PhD defences

Join us as we celebrate these accomplishments and explore the cutting-edge research shaping the future of care and public health. Happy reading!

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A graphic for the CAPHRI Annual Report 2024. It features a dark blue background with a glowing orange and yellow arc on the right side, resembling a comet or a galaxy. The text 'CAPHRI ANNUAL REPORT 2024' is written in white, bold, sans-serif font, stacked vertically on the left side.

# CAPHRI ANNUAL REPORT 2024

## CAPHRI Annual Report 2024

### CAPHRI news

The CAPHRI Annual Report for 2024 has been released. This comprehensive document reflects the strategic developments and impactful research carried out across our institute over the past year.

We truly believe 2024 was a “year of impact,” demonstrating the strength of our collective mission and vision. The report highlights many successes, including:

- The official introduction of our newest Chairs: Prof. dr. Matty Crone, Prof. dr. Jeroen Hendriks, Prof. dr. Marieke Spreeuwenberg, and Prof. dr. Chris Arts.
- Our practical research in action, showcased in five detailed Case Studies on topics such as Reablement, Capacity Building in Ethiopia, Work-Related Care, Measuring Labour Costs, and Personalised Dementia Prevention.
- The dedication and contribution of our PhD community, marked by the comprehensive overview of all completed PhD Theses.
- Highlights from the successful CAPHRI Research Day and the essential facts and figures that demonstrate our growth in ‘The numbers tell the story.’

We thank you all for your dedication and we encourage you to read the full report and see what lies beyond...

Silvia Evers (Scientific Director CAPHRI) and Sabina Bulic (Managing Director CAPHRI)

[Read the full CAPHRI Annual Report 2024](#)



## WHO Designates Two Collaborating Centres at CAPHRI

CAPHRI news

**The World Health Organization (WHO) has officially designated TWO new Collaborating Centres at CAPHRI. This dual recognition, launched on 10 October 2025, creates a powerful, synergistic commitment to regional health.**

The WHO CC Regions for Health & Cross-Border Public Health will tackle immediate, complex challenges—including Infectious Disease Control, Youth Mental Health, and Environmental Health—providing crucial evidence-to-action for the 125 million citizens living in Europe's border regions. As Prof. Dr. Christian J.P.A. Hoebe (HISP) states: “It is an engine to turn evidence into action... across borders.”

Complementary to this, the WHO CC for Public Health Leadership and Workforce Development will focus on long-term systemic change: advancing the professionalisation and leadership competencies of the entire public health workforce across the WHO European Region. As Prof. Dr. Katarzyna(Kasia) Czabanowska (VHC) noted, we must "recognize, strengthen, and build capacity" in the people who drive public health.

This four-year partnership reinforces CAPHRI's critical role in delivering sustainable improvements in population health.

[Read the full article on the CAPHRI website →](#)



## Investing in Prevention: Mickaël Hiligsmann on the Economics of Staying Healthy

CAPHRI news

Preventing disease is not always cheaper than treating it — but it can be vital for keeping healthcare affordable and accessible.

Professor Mickaël Hiligsmann (VHC), newly appointed Professor of Health Preferences and Economics of Prevention at CAPHRI, studies how preventive measures can deliver both health and economic benefits.

“Prevention,” he explains, “means everything that helps to avoid health problems,” from vaccinations and smoking cessation support to screening programmes for cancer. His research focuses on assessing the value of prevention — not only in euros, but also in terms of public needs and preferences.

Together with his team, Hiligsmann is currently contributing to a new assessment tool with the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) to evaluate preventive interventions. One of the case studies looks at what might happen if fast-food restaurants were banned within 400 metres of schools or parks: What would that cost, and how much could it save in terms of public health?

“Prevention demands sustained effort and long-term investment,” Hiligsmann says, “but it’s essential if we want a sustainable healthcare system for everyone.” His work supports the ambition of Maastricht UMC+ and Maastricht University to lead the way nationally in prevention and vitality.

[Read the full story on the CAPHRI website →](#)



## Prof. Dr. Guido de Wert Honoured with Prestigious MUMC+ Medal Upon Retirement

CAPHRI news

In a fitting celebration of his career, Prof. Dr. Guido de Wert (PHPC) was honoured with the MUMC+ Medal during his farewell lecture on Friday, 3 October. He received the prestigious medal from the Dean of the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences, Annemie Schols. This award recognises individuals who have made a major and lasting contribution to Maastricht UMC+ or demonstrated exceptional merit beyond their own professional field.

Since the 1980s, Guido de Wert has been a pivotal figure in establishing the ethics of reproductive medicine and genetics as a crucial academic discipline. His foundational work in Maastricht laid the ethical groundwork for how society manages technology, responsibility, and humanity in healthcare today. Crucially, he was a co-founder of Pre-implantation Genetic Testing (PGT) in Maastricht, helping to elevate the institution's international reputation in this domain.

Prof. De Wert's career is marked by his ability to connect research, policy, and clinical practice. He significantly shaped national and international policy, notably through his roles as a Crown member of the Health Council and Chair of the Task Force Ethics & Law for the European Society for Human Reproduction and Embryology (ESHRE).

His enduring vision advocates for embryo selection not as a quest for perfection, but as a critical means of preventing serious hereditary suffering. This ethical perspective has had tangible results, contributing to the birth of over 1800 children in the Netherlands who are free from severe inherited conditions.

This award affirms his exceptional contribution to medical ethics and the lasting impact of his sharp analyses on healthcare, policy, and society.

[Watch Prof. Dr. Guido de Wert's farewell lecture here →](#)



## From Knowledge to Impact: National Evaluation of Academic Elderly Care Networks Delivered to VWS

CAPHRI news

On International Day of Older Persons (1 October), the evaluation of the Dutch Academic Elderly Care Networks (AWO), which are also known as Living Labs for Ageing and Long-Term Care, titled "From Knowledge to Impact," was presented to the State Secretary for Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS), accompanied by the attached report for your information.

Living Lab for Ageing and Long-Term Care Limburg, was evaluated, alongside the five other national networks (Amsterdam, Nijmegen, Leiden, Tilburg, and Groningen), as part of the structural funding from VWS. The evaluation was conducted by an external committee following the Standard Evaluation Protocol (SEP), similar to research institutes.

The report includes several recommendations for various parties, including universities. These recommendations touch upon structural embedding, recognition and rewards, and making impact visible.

We anticipate that this report will be helpful for our institute, for example, in clarifying and demonstrating our impact.

[Read the full evaluation "From Knowledge to Impact" \(in Dutch\) →](#)



## **Addressing the Health Gap: Why Collective Prevention is Key, According to CAPHRI Researcher Rachelle Meisters**

[CAPHRI news](#)

**Dr. Rachelle Meisters (HISP) recently featured on the national current affairs program EenVandaag to discuss the persistent and widening health disparities between the wealthy and the less affluent in the Netherlands. Meisters, who holds a PhD on regional health inequalities and is also a researcher at the Public Health Service (GGD) in Heerlen, stressed that purely individual lifestyle interventions often fail to reach the most vulnerable, potentially increasing the existing gap.**

Citing figures from the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), Meisters noted that people with the lowest socio-economic status live an average of nine years shorter than those in better circumstances. A key message from the broadcast, following a full report on the EenVandaag website, is the urgent need for a collective, group-based approach to prevention and policy.

Meisters explained that poor health is an "accumulation of circumstances," including stress from poverty, debt, unemployment, and substandard housing quality (e.g., damp and mould), which contributes to higher rates of asthma, COPD, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. She advocates for structural solutions that focus on social safety nets and improving disadvantaged neighbourhoods, rather than solely on individual behaviour.

Meisters argues that political efforts should prioritise collective prevention—such as providing healthy school lunches or supporting young parents in groups—to build networks and effectively address the roots of inequality. She emphasised that while political parties express commitment to bridging the gap, concrete, effective policy must move beyond an individual-focused approach.

[Read the full EenVandaag publication \(in Dutch\) →](#)



## How to Prevent a Total Collapse of the Healthcare System

CAPHRI news

It sounds ominous, but the numbers don't lie: within 10 years the Dutch healthcare system could face collapse, with no guarantee that people will receive the care they need. Nursing home care is set to be hit hardest. Yet despite these forecasts, full professor Angelique de Rijk (HISP) and assistant professor Petra Erkens (ALTC) remain optimistic. "There are so many levers we can pull."

With a projected shortage of 265,600 healthcare professionals by 2034, the challenge is immense. The crisis is fuelled by an ageing population requiring more complex care alongside a dwindling staff supply. Currently, problems often fly under the radar as dedicated staff patch up gaps, which inevitably leads to burnout. Erkens notes that nurses and carers leave because, due to workload, they lose the essential patient contact that motivated them to join the profession.

However, the researchers propose a multi-faceted approach. To retain staff, recognition—from shared meals to thank-you emails—is key. Opportunities for professional development, such as combined research positions where caregivers' combine their clinical practice with research, also help keep staff engaged. To recruit new workers, flexible 'learning and working' lowers the entry threshold, and De Rijk suggests exploring the potential of people with occupational disabilities for support roles.

Beyond staffing, the focus must shift to 'appropriate care'—only delivering what's truly needed. This can be aided by Artificial Intelligence to analyse patient data and spot complications early. Ultimately, tackling the labour shortage requires systemic reorganisation, but De Rijk remains hopeful: "Now that the urgency is clear, we can share that knowledge more widely."

[Read the full article on the CAPHRI website. →](#)



## Supporting Patients and Informal Caregivers: Matthijs Bosveld on the Future of Self-Management Support in Healthcare

CAPHRI news

Researcher and medical doctor Matthijs Bosveld (PHPC) has spearheaded a grant application for the Academy for Self-Care, a transformative initiative recently featured in an interview with Nummer1 magazine. €11,4 million was granted by health insurers CZ and VGZ from the Integraal Zorgakkoord (IZA). The goal is to support patients in maintaining independence and self-management, addressing both the mounting pressure on the Dutch healthcare system and the desire of people to stay autonomous.

### Promoting self-management

With an aging population and rising chronic conditions, the demand for care is outstripping supply. Bosveld's research focuses on enabling patients and informal caregivers to take a more active role, when deemed possible by both professionals and care recipients.

He notes that both professionals and patients find this shift unfamiliar. Professionals are trained to take care of patients, and patients often aren't aware of the benefits of an active role. For example, one participant in his research suggested that some patients wait all day for home care to administer simple, multiple daily tasks like eye drops, feeling "locked up, as compared to when receiving a parcel". Executing this simple task independently can lead to more freedom.

### The Crucial Role of Instruction Nurses

The solution involves Instruction Nurses, experienced formal care professionals who work dedicated to teaching and explaining procedures to patients and informal caregivers. This transfer of skills is already standard for tasks like insulin injections. The nurse only transfers a task if all parties are confident it can be performed safely and correctly.

Instruction nurses ensure the quality of care, the availability of instructions, and the uniformity of

instructions. Bosveld compares them to a maternity nurse: providing temporary guidance and building confidence, which many young parents have experienced after having their firstborn.

The South Limburg project, involving 18 parties, is a "win-win": patients gain independence, Instruction Nurses find valuable roles, and formal care is used more efficiently. As Bosveld concludes, reflecting on the necessary effort for change: "Friction is the cost of motion."

[Read the original interview with Matthijs Bosveld in the regional magazine, Nummer1 \(in Dutch\) →](#)



## CAPHRI Researchers Host Symposium on STI Care Reform at IUSTI Europe Congress

[CAPHRI news](#)

CAPHRI researchers dr. Nicole Dukers (PHPC) and dr. Zoïe Alexiou (PHPC), together with Dutch colleagues including Inge van Loo (MUMC+), shared the Dutch experience of de-implementing routine chlamydia testing for asymptomatic individuals at the European Congress of the International Union against Sexually Transmitted Infections (IUSTI Europe) in Athens. This represents a major shift in public health practice, aimed at reducing unnecessary testing.

With 120+ international STI professionals, they held a lively discussion on lessons learned, ongoing challenges, and the implications for evidence-based STI care globally. They highlighted the importance of a structured, theory-informed de-implementation process, grounded in scientific evidence, which provides a roadmap for translating research into effective policy change and practical public health action.

In addition, Zoïe Alexiou was recognized with the prize for best oral presentation for her work on implementation research surrounding this policy change.



## UNITY-project has Officially Launched!

[CAPHRI news](#)

Funded by ZonMw with 2 million euros and led by Dr. Anja Schreijer of the Pandemic Disaster and Preparedness Centre, the UNITY-project aims to create an integrated assessment framework that unites biomedical, socio-economic, and societal perspectives to give policymakers timely, evidence-based guidance for pandemic preparedness and response. Within this project, Prof. dr. Christian Hoebe (HISP) and dr. Chrissy Moonen (HISP) of CAPHRI and AWPG Mosa will explore the framework's practical feasibility through stakeholder surveys and interviews. The project will run until the end of 2026.



## Access to Sexual Health Care Among Young Ethnic Minorities in the Netherlands

[CAPHRI publication alert](#)

**Migration can have an impact on sexual health and reproductive outcomes in young people, leading to a higher burden of sexually transmitted infections, unintended pregnancies, and sexual violence. This vulnerability arises from diverse cultural, political, and psychosocial factors, such as stigma and discrimination, poor travel, living, and working conditions. Equitable access to sexual health care is therefore crucial, but structurally challenged.**

In this large retrospective cohort study, we evaluated the proportional representation of migrants under 25 years at the Dutch Centers for Sexual Health. We used national health records data of all Centers for Sexual Health ( $N=270,927$  patients under 25 years) and nationwide census tract data from Statistics Netherlands to compare consultation rates in migrant groups to native Dutch people. Additionally, we calculated incidence rates in first repeat visits.

We showed lower consultation rates among first- and second-generation migrants from Turkey, Morocco, Eastern Europe, Asia, and among first-

generation migrants from Africa. Incidence rates in first repeat visits were higher among first- and second-generation migrants.

We concluded that initial access to sexual health care is limited for several migrant groups indicating a need for culturally tailored approaches to ensure equitable access to sexual health care for all young people. Higher incidence rates in repeat visits indicate that migrants were not disadvantaged in continued use of sexual health care. Using consultation rates by combining population numbers and sexual health centre patient data helps to inform for which population groups targeted approaches are needed to increase access.

#### Authors

Ymke J Evers (HISP), Amanja Verhaegh-Haasnoot (HISP), Aiman Ibrahim, Charlotte Peters (HISP), Nicole HTM Dukers-Muijrs (PHPC), Rianne Reijs (HISP), and Christian JPA Hoebe (HISP).

#### Organisations

CAPHRI, Maastricht University; AWPG Mosa; GGD Zuid-Limburg; GGD Rotterdam Rijnmond.

[Read the original publication in the Journal of Migration and Health →](#)

## CCC Online Workshop: EU Advocacy

### CCC events

**Date:** November 13th 2025, 15.00-16.30 CET

**Location:** Online (MS Teams)

**Speaker:** Anne Wagenführ-Leroyer, Programme Manager EuroHealthNet

**Title:** EU Advocacy Workshop: Advancing Health Equity through EU Policy Engagement

#### Why this workshop?

This workshop is the result of the formal collaboration between CAPHRI (Maastricht University, the Netherlands) and the Centre for Health and Society (Heinrich-Heine-University Düsseldorf, Germany)\*. Both institutes are proud members of EuroHealthNet.



### What to expect?

This workshop offers an opportunity to become more familiar with the work of EuroHealthNet. Together, we will explore how their expertise in EU policy, advocacy, and health equity can support and inspire our own activities. Furthermore, the workshop contributes to a deeper understanding of the European (policy) landscape and effective strategies for advocacy in the field of care and public health. Finally, it creates space to strengthen connections between colleagues from both institutes (and EuroHealthNet), exchange perspectives, and identify potential opportunities for collaboration and action.

[Register now!](#)



## Brightlands Academy

### Brightlands news

Are you a researcher or professional looking to accelerate your career? Are you seeking new skills, inspiration, or a valuable network? Join the Brightlands Academy Masterclasses Entrepreneurial Skills this year!

[Find out more about the Brightlands Academy →](#)



### CAPHRI Funding

## Streamlined Access to Research Funding Opportunities

Researchers can access an extensive overview of national and European fellowships, health funds, and mobility grants on Umployee. For tailored searches, Research Connect is available through individual UM/MUMC+ accounts. To stay up to date with calls, deadlines, and training opportunities, join the

[FHML/MUMC+ Research Funding Support group](#) on UMPLOYEE. This group provides weekly updates, ensuring you never miss relevant funding news.

[Visit the UMPLOYEE Funding Page](#)

This is your Call

## Upcoming Funding Opportunities



### Rubicon 2026-1

- **Deadline:** 24 March 2026
- [More details](#)

### SSH Open Competition XS 2026-1

- **Deadline:** 20 January 2026
- [More details](#)

### NWO (ENW) Scientific Meetings and Consultations

- [More details](#)

### Caribbean Research - Open Competition 2025

- **Deadline letter of Intent:** 20 January 2026
- **Deadline full proposal:** 21 April 2026
- [More details](#)

### KIC - Early detection and impact forecasting of (threatening) infectious diseases outbreaks

- **Deadline full applications:** 16 June 2026
- [More details](#)

### European Partnership for Brain Health to Launch Two Multinational Translational Calls for Proposals in 2026

1. Biological, social and environmental factors that impact the trajectory of brain health across the lifespan - in the field of neurological, mental and sensory disorders.
2. Biological, social and environmental factors that impact the trajectory of brain health across the lifespan - in the field of neurodegenerative disorders.

- [More details](#)

### Fulbright-Schuman Opens 2026-2027 Grant Cycle for Research and Study in the United States

- [More details](#)

[Save the Date and Register](#)

## Events and Courses



**UM Pension Event: A Little Something for a Rainy Day - Maastricht**  
November 11, 2025

- [Click to explore the details](#)

**CPE Pre-Conference Workshop | EPH Conference 2025 - Helsinki**  
November 11, 2025

- [Click to explore the details](#)

**BrightMinds: Impact Beyond Gender - Maastricht**  
November 12, 2025

- [Click to explore the details](#)

**CCC Online Workshop EU Advocacy - Online**  
November 13, 2025

- [Click to explore the details](#)

**ResearchConnect Info Session - Online**  
November 25, 2025 - 13:00-14:00 (CET)

- [Click to register and find out how to find funding opportunities in a database](#)

**BiBB Career Day - Den Bosch**  
26 november 2025

- [Click to explore the details](#)

**Advanced European Bioethics Course - Nijmegen**  
March 24-27, 2026

- [Click to explore the details](#)

**Public Health Strategy Seminar October June 2026 - Salzburg**  
June 28 - July 4, 2026  
Application Deadline: January 31, 2026

- [Click to explore the details](#)

**CAPHRI Research Day 2026 - Maastricht**  
June 10, 2026

[Save the Date and Register](#)

## Inaugural Lectures and Farewells

**Inaugural Lecture Prof. dr. Jeroen Hendriks - Maastricht**  
4 december 2025

**Farewell symposium Prof. dr. Klasien Horstman - Maastricht**

27 februari 2026

**Farewell symposium Prof. dr. Stefan Wilm - Düsseldorf**

6 maart 2026

**Inaugural Lecture Prof. dr. Mickael Hiligsmann - Maastricht**

2 October 2026

## PhD Ceremonies

# October and November 2025

**Dennis Cornelissen** | VHC/FPR

08-10-2025 | 13:00 (CET)

"Improving osteoporosis care and fracture prevention with emphasis on adherence. One size does not fit all"

**Lianne Zondag** | PHPC

09-10-2025

"The midwife as influencing factor in clinical decision-making: Exploration of the relationship between personal and professional factors and midwives' clinical decisions about childbirth interventions"

**Jeffrey Chan** | HISP

16-10-2025 | 13:00 (CET)

"The Impact of Neighborhood Environments on Lifestyle, Socioeconomic Health Disparities, and Cardiovascular Disease"

**Laura Damen** | VHC

27-10-2025 | 13:00 (CET)

"Organising the right care in the right place: Exploring healthcare relocation in the Netherlands from multiple perspectives"

**Lieve Vonken** | PHPC

12-11-2025

"Unraveling how healthcare professionals perceive antibiotic resistance: From perceptions to practice"

**Ganesh Babu Balu Subburaman** | VHC

13-11-2025

"Evidence-Based Management In Eye Hospitals: Drivers, Practices, And Organizational Outcomes"

**Carlijn Wiertz** | FPR

19-11-2025

"From struggle to strength: Post-COVID rehabilitation"



*Good luck and congratulations  
to the CAPHRI PhD's*

Chitegetse Archangela Minanago | PHPC

27-11-2025

"Exposure to Inter-Parental Violence and Child Development: An Exploration in the Context of Tanzania"

## Communication

### Your project, publication or event in this newsletter?

Have you recently contributed to a podcast, given an interview, or presented at a conference? Reached a significant milestone in your research? Perhaps you're organizing an event or have an exciting project in the pipeline?

Contact us to explore opportunities for featuring your work on our social media channels and in our newsletter. Let's collaborate to amplify your voice and celebrate your successes within our international academic community

**Please note:** you cannot reply to this email. For questions, newsletter topics, ideas, announcements, feedback and more please email [info-caphri@maastrichtuniversity.nl](mailto:info-caphri@maastrichtuniversity.nl).



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