



Welcome to the latest CAPHRI newsletter. Here's what you can look forward to in this issue:

- Secure your spot: CAPHRI Research Day 2026
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- Interventions for infectious diseases
- Publication alert: is more always better in spinal cord injury rehabilitation?
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- VITAL Project aims to Transform Lung Cancer Care Across the Meuse-Rhine Region
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- ZonMw funding for Dr. Ilse Mesters to Advance Nationwide Adoption of the EXPECT Risk Calculator in Maternity Care
- NWO funding to unravel the complexity of what drives lifestyle behaviours in adults with type-2 diabetes
- UM Veni pre-proposal Info Session 2026
- Europubhealth+ 2027 Visiting professors
- Upcoming funding opportunities, courses, events, inaugural and farewell lectures, and PhD defences

Dive in and get inspired by the latest from our community. Enjoy the read!

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CAPHRI Research Day

10 June 2026



**Climate Health: Care for Climate, Care for Health**

*Research and Collaboration for Health and Well-being*

## Secure your spot: CAPHRI Research Day 2026

CAPHRI News

**What role does research play in mitigating the health risks of a changing climate? And how can we collaborate to ensure well-being in an era of environmental transition?**

These questions are at the heart of the 2026 CAPHRI Research Day, where we explore the theme: "**Climate Health: Care for Climate, Care for Health.**" By diving into the vital connection between planetary health and human care, we will discover how our collective scientific efforts can protect both the environment and our population's health. Join us as we build the essential foundation for the future of healthcare through research and collaboration for health and well-being.

### **Mark your calendar**

Join us for this inspiring day of knowledge exchange, discussion, and innovation. A versatile programme awaits, including interactive sessions, PhD poster presentations, workshops, and more.

### **Event details & registration**

Don't miss this opportunity to contribute to the conversation and connect with your colleagues.

**Date:** Wednesday, 10 June 2026

**Location:** Hotel Van der Valk, Maastricht

**[Register now to secure your spot!](#)**

We look forward to an inspiring day of discovery and building a healthier future together!

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## MUMC+ Golden Heart for professor Klasien Horstman

CAPHRI News

As a token of great appreciation, Klasien Horstman (HISP) received the MUMC+ Golden Heart. Annemie Schols, Dean of FHML, awarded the Heart on behalf of the board of Maastricht UMC+. This took place during Klasien's farewell lecture on the occasion of her retirement on Friday 27 February.

Klasien Horstman received the Golden Heart in recognition of her exceptional contributions to public health, social justice, and our academic community. It symbolises the commitment, enthusiasm and connection she has embodied in her work.

As a professor at CAPHRI and one of the driving forces behind the Department of Health, Ethics and Society, she helped shape the profile of our faculty and brought together technology, healthcare, policy and citizens. Klasien built bridges between theory and practice, science and policy. She showed that innovation is not only about new technology, but about values, inclusion, justice and about the question who gets to have a say and participate.

We congratulate Klasien on this special distinction and wish her good luck in her next phase of her life.

Read more about Klasien's long career at Maastricht University, in which she explored how we can [make society healthy](#) beyond the hospital.



## Interventions for infectious diseases

CAPHRI News

How can we ensure people are able to get tested for HIV in good time? What barriers do health professionals face when trying to implement new guidelines, and how can they be overcome? Nicole Dukers (CAPHRI) studies this. As an epidemiologist and associate professor, she looks,

amongst other things, at ways to prevent infectious diseases such as HIV and hepatitis and to reduce the burden of the disease. Nicole: "Our research teaches us what effective strategies are for reaching certain groups, encouraging testing behaviour and detecting infections."infectious diseases can be reduced.

Nicole focuses on prevention. "I study what keeps people healthy and how we can prevent illness. For me, health is physical, mental and social. Our team conducts innovative research into social health: connection with others, the quantity and diversity of your contacts, support and the quality of relationships. Social contact directly influences your health, for example through your immune system and mental well-being, and indirectly, for example through such as lifestyle and vaccination behaviour. Social health is crucial in the prevention of infectious and chronic diseases, but has long been overlooked. There is much to be gained for healthcare and public health in this area."

[Read more about Nicole's research](#) and how it contributes to national and European guidelines.

## THE LANCET Neurology

Volume 25 - Issue 3 - March 2018

www.thelancet.com/neurology



### Articles

Intensive task-specific training for spinal cord injury  
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### Policy View

Prevention of cognitive impairment due to Alzheimer's disease  
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### Review

Advances in migraine prevention  
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## Publication alert: is more always better in spinal cord injury rehabilitation?

CAPHRI News

A groundbreaking international study published in *The Lancet Neurology* shows that extra intensive task-oriented training has no additional effect on neurological recovery for people with a semi-acute spinal cord injury (SCI). Dr. Charlotte van Laake-Geelen (FPR) was involved in this research on behalf of CAPHRI via the Living Lab Rehabilitation.

### The Study

This multicenter phase 3 study included 220 participants worldwide. It examined whether 10 weeks of extra intensive motor training (12 hours per week), in addition to usual rehabilitation, leads to better recovery. The results showed no significant additional effect or clinically relevant impact on neurological recovery, functional outcomes, walking ability, or quality of life

compared to care as usual.

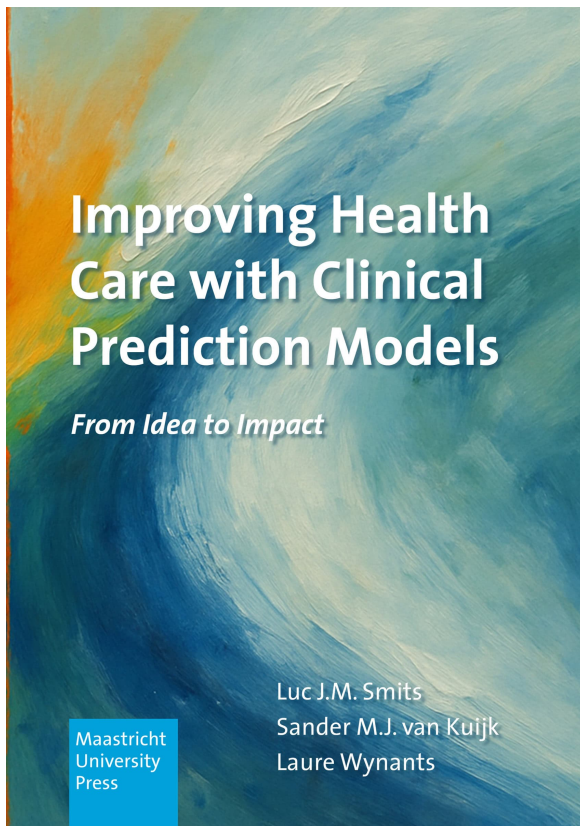
### **Clinical Implications**

The findings suggest that the intensity of current specialized rehabilitation is sufficient to achieve maximal recovery within the boundaries of the neurological deficit. For clinical practice, this means patients can be reassured that usual rehabilitation is adequate, and that residual limitations are not related to "insufficient" training.

### **Global Collaboration**

The study was coordinated by the University of Sydney (led by Prof. Dr. Lisa Harvey) and coordinated in the Netherlands and Belgium by Annemie Spooren (UHasselt). Participating centers included Adelante Zorggroep, Living Lab Rehabilitation, De Hoogstraat Revalidatie, KU Leuven, and UZ Gent.

[Read the full article](#)



## **New publication: improving health care with clinical prediction models**

[CAPHRI News](#)

Many clinical prediction models are developed, but few actually improve care. To address this recurring challenge, CAPHRI researchers Luc Smits (OPC), Sander van Kuijk (VHC), and Laure Wynants (OPC) have authored a new book: **From Idea to Impact**.

The book focuses on a critical missing link: how to turn prediction models into effective innovations that are designed with end users, evaluated for real-world impact, and successfully implemented in practice.

In short, it provides a roadmap for making clinical prediction models useful, usable, and used.

The publication is available both in print and as an Open Access resource.

Congratulations to Luc, Sander, and Laure on this valuable contribution to the field!

[View the publication](#)



## ZonMw funding awarded for nationwide implementation of decision aid on Genetic Risk and Family Planning

[CAPHRI News](#)

ZonMw has awarded Dr. Liesbeth van Osch (PHPC) with funding for her project “From Doubt to Future: Nationwide Implementation of the Decision Aid ‘Heredity and Family Planning’.”

This project focuses on making the proven effective decision aid ‘Genetic Risk and Family Planning’ widely accessible across the Netherlands. Over the next two years, the tool will be structurally integrated into reproductive counselling for prospective parents who face an increased risk of having a child with a hereditary condition. Its goal is to support them in making well-informed decisions about their desire to have children.



## VITAL Project aims to Transform Lung Cancer Care Across the Meuse-Rhine Region

CAPHRI News

**Prof. Mickaël Hiligsmann (VHC) has obtained Interreg funding for the VITAL project.**

VITAL addresses inequities and shortcomings in lung cancer care in the Meuse-Rhine (MR). Lung cancer is a leading cause of cancer mortality. In this region, lung cancer incidence spans 32–121 /100,000, with rates up to 50% higher than national averages, reflecting its industrial history. Up to 70% of patients are diagnosed at an advanced stage requiring systemic therapy, and treatment toxicities often lead to preventable emergency visits and rehospitalizations. Current follow-up is reactive and heterogeneous across Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands, leaving patients with unequal access to proactive care.

The goal of VITAL is to design, test, and prepare the implementation of a sustainable hybrid care path, ensuring that lung cancer patients have equal access to high-quality care across the MR. By combining an unobtrusive wearable with a personalized predictive early warning score, VITAL will enable earlier detection of deterioration, reduce acute care use, and improve quality of life.

The project brings together nine partners across Belgium, the Netherlands, and Germany. Prof Hiligsmann and his team will lead the evaluation of the intervention's cost-effectiveness and broader societal impact.

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## Funding to enhance Maastricht University's climate resilience

CAPHRI News

**Dr. Tuğçe Varol (PHPC) has obtained funding from the Maastricht University Sustainability Office for her project on 'Climate-ready Campuses: Building Resilience for a Warming World'.**

The project aims to enhance Maastricht University's climate resilience, with a particular focus on mitigating, and adapting to, the impacts of heatwaves and associated energy use. Climate change causes more frequent heatwaves in the Netherlands, which leads to a rise in health problems. Many UM buildings are not currently equipped to handle high temperatures efficiently, and while air conditioning offers a temporary solution, it increases energy consumption and contributes to the university's overall climate footprint. This project seeks to develop data-driven, evidence-based, and health-informed recommendations for strengthening the university's resilience to extreme heat while safeguarding the health and wellbeing of employees and students during heatwave events. This project is aligned with UM's sustainable operations, addressing the themes of energy and climate as well as health and wellbeing.

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## ZonMw funding for Dr. Ilse Mesters to Advance Nationwide Adoption of the EXPECT Risk Calculator in Maternity Care

CAPHRI News

**In 2017, the Verloskundig Consortium Limburg introduced the EXPECT risk calculator to 250 maternity care professionals. The EXPECT approach—comprising the risk calculator, tailored care advice, and 17 integrated care pathways—has proven effective in preventing complications and reducing healthcare costs, saving approximately €2,800 per supported pregnancy. Despite its positive reception at the national level, the broader rollout to other Dutch maternity care consortia has slowed. This project aims to better understand and address the underlying causes of this stagnation in adoption.**

Through surveys and interviews, insights are gathered on how maternity care providers use the approach in practice, including what elements are applied and how they are integrated into daily care. These findings will inform the development of a renewed implementation plan.

The final plan, built on principles of co-creation, is designed to strengthen user support, enhance practical

feasibility, and significantly increase the likelihood of sustainable adoption and long-term implementation across the Netherlands.

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## **NWO funding to unravel the complexity of what drives lifestyle behaviours in adults with type-2 diabetes**

[CAPHRI News](#)

**Dr. Vera Verbestel (PHPC) has been awarded with NWO funding to research the complexity on what drives lifestyle behaviours in adults with type-2 diabetes.**

Type 2 diabetes is a condition where blood sugar levels remain too high over time which harms a person's health. A healthy lifestyle with regular physical activity, sufficient sleep, limited sitting time and a healthy diet, can help to manage this condition. However, the drivers of these behaviours are not fully known. This project will identify the personal, social and environmental factors influencing lifestyle behaviours in adults with type 2 diabetes and examine how they interact. Understanding these interactions forms a crucial basis for the development of effective interventions that support adults with this condition to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

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## Progress also means sharing our knowledge on health

UM 50

During our jubilee year, celebrating 50 years of FHML, the faculty shares stories from alumni who reflect what our faculty stands for today. In this edition, Silvia Evers shared her journey from Health Sciences student to Scientific Director of CAPHRI with Mariëtte Cruijssen who followed a remarkably similar path toward becoming the Director of the FHML Institute for Education.

They both started as Health Sciences students at our faculty and whilst one is committed to education, the other is committed to research. Yet Mariëtte Cruijssen and Silvia Evers find many similarities when they talk about their careers, our faculty and what the slogan for fifty years FHML “ahead in health” really means to them.

Silvia started in 1984 as part of the first cohort of Mental Health - Health Sciences students. Mariëtte followed ten years later, specialising in Policy and Management. Both highlight the same defining feature of FHML: the active role students can take in shaping their education. Mariëtte recalls being the only student in the Education Board, which sparked her long-term commitment to educational policy.

Silvia shares a similar experience. When a key topic was missing from the curriculum, students were given the opportunity to develop the module themselves. The skills she gained then still shape her work today.

In their duo interview, Silvia and Mariëtte reflect on their student years, their professional paths and the innovative, student-centred character of FHML.

[Read the full interview on the FHML50 website](#)



### 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](#)

### CAPHRI Funding

## UM Veni pre-proposal Info Session 2026

On Tuesday 16 June from 9.00-12.00, the UM funding advisors are organizing a pre-proposal workshop for researchers considering to apply for a NWO Veni.



Veni grants are part of the NWO Talent Programme, providing pioneering researchers who recently obtained their PhD (up to 3 years after PhD) to conduct independent research for a period of three years. Since a few years, NWO has structured the Veni selection process into two phases:

1. Pre-proposal phase based on evidence-based CV and a short research idea;
2. Full proposal phase for selected applicants.

The NWO Veni round for 2026 is not yet open, but we expect the pre-proposal deadline to be early September 2026.

During the workshop, we will provide information on the Veni format and evaluation procedure and share 'do's and don'ts' with you. Additionally, a Veni laureate and evaluation committee member will share their experiences. There will be ample time for questions and discussion.

**Location:** TBD

**Registration:** You can [register](#) for the information session until Monday 8 June (17:00).



## Europubhealth+ 2027 Visiting professors

### [Call for Applications](#)

CAPHRI is a partner to the Europubhealth+ Erasmus Mundus Joint Master programme. It is now a network of 520 graduates from 85 different countries including public health professionals, academics, and researchers.

Each year, 4 international professors are selected by the consortium to join the teaching team of the integration module entitled “Building innovative and sustainable solutions to global health challenges”.

Gathering visiting professors from our partners would certainly bring an additional interest to our current students.

The Europubhealth+, visiting professors get to:

- share their experience through lectures and tutoring of a diverse group of excellent international students.
- compare their vision of public health teaching with Europubhealth+ practices and bring new ideas to the Consortium.
- enlarge their professional network to collaborate on new projects in their public health areas of interest.

Description of the modules as well as all instructions on how to apply are available on the [Europubhealth-website](#).

**Amount of the grant :** 4,800€ (intended to help cover participation costs such as travel and accommodation).

**Dates of 2027 edition:** from 14 June to 09 July 2027.

**Deadline for sending the application** (CV letter of motivation): before 31 May 2026.

For any questions, do not hesitate to contact [europubhealth@ehesp.fr](mailto:europubhealth@ehesp.fr).

Save the date and register

## Events and courses

**Science Day - Maastricht**

April 8, 2026

**CAPHRI Research Day 2026 - Maastricht**

June 10, 2026

- [Click for more information and registration](#)

**UM Veni Pre-proposal Info Session 2026 - tbd**

June 16, 2026

- [Click for more information and registration](#)

**Symposium Living Lab Ageing and Long-Term Care Limburg -  
Roermond**

June 18, 2026

- [Click for more information and registration](#)

**Symposium Living Lab Rehabilitation**

June 24, 2026

**Reablement Inspiration Day - Amsterdam**

July 9, 2026

- [Click for more information and registration](#)

**Pélerin Science Symposium 2026 - Maastricht**

October 14, 2026

- [Click for more information and registration](#)

Save the date and register

## Inaugural lectures and farewells

**Farewell symposium Prof. dr. Paul Savelkoul - Maastricht**

5 June 2026

**Farewell symposium Prof. dr. Onno van Schayck - Maastricht**

11 June 2026

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

2 October 2026

**Inaugural Lecture Prof. dr. Judith Meijers - Maastricht**

20 November 2026



## PhD Ceremonies

# March and April 2026

**Marit Schwenke** | ALTC

06-03-2026

"Insights and Initial Steps to Optimise the Needs Assessment Process in Home Care Nursing"

**Anna Roos Leerschool** | OPC

10-03-2026

"Personalised Prevention And Performance: A Mixed-methods Approach Investigating Modifiable and Non-modifiable Determinants"

**Supriya Thapar** | OPC/PHPC

11-03-2026

"Physical Activity and Lifestyle Behaviour among School-going Adolescents and the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic"

**Tadele Dana Darebo** | OPC

12-03-2026

"The Sexual and Reproductive Health Challenges of Vulnerable Populations in Ethiopia"

**Sanne van Hoogstraten** | FPR

13-03-2026

"Towards the next generation of orthopedic implants Tackling biofilm formation and biomechanical failure"

**Teresa Latham** | VHC

16-03-2026

"Implementing Novel Strategies to Promote Informatics, Research and Education (INSPIRE): Building Capacity for Sickle Cell Disease Diagnosis, Management, and Treatment in Low-Resource Settings"

**Katrin Munzebrock** | FPR

17-03-2026

"mRNA delivery for joint and intervertebral disc regeneration"

**Anna Dania** | OPC

24-03-2026

"Perspectives on the Development and Sustainability of Practice-Based Research Networks Worldwide"

**Anna Tichler** | VHC

26-03-2026

"Piecing it together: Advancing person-centered care for type 2 diabetes"



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

**Dirpo Mondal** | PHPC

30-03-2026

"Planning With Confidence: Designing Quantitative Reliability Studies Using the Intraclass Correlation Coefficient"

**Floor Pinkaers** | VHC

01-04-2026

"Aspects in stroke: From imaging to outcomes"

**Mary-ann Wagijo** | PHPC

01-04-2026

"Together is more: Evaluating the integration and impact of Centering Pregnancy in Dutch midwifery care"

**Valerie Debie** | OPC

07-04-2026

"Navigating through the landscape of chronic care: The Assessment of Burden of Chronic Conditions tool for person-centred care"

**Fran Peerboom** | ALTC

13-04-2026

"Listen Beyond Words: Unraveling the Fundamentals of Nursing End-of-Life Communication as part of Advance Care Planning for Older People"

**Eric Edelman** | VHC

15-04-2026

"Hospital-based Operational Excellence: Past, Present, and Future"

## 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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