

SYMPOSIUM ON DIGNITY OF RISK

– APRIL 29, 2026

How can we implement and sustain innovations that promote the dignity of risk for older people?

ABSTRACT



“To live carefully, without taking risks, it’s to risk not living.”

- Wladimir Wolf Gozin, French writer and painter

Context in brief

The adoption of innovations that promote the dignity of risk is often hampered by clinicians' fear of being held responsible in the event of adverse events, as well as by the complexity of engaging older adults and their families in a risk-based decision-making process. Indeed, many clinicians report experiencing moral distress related to the ethical dilemmas raised by these difficult decisions. Furthermore, frequent staff turnover and time constraints undermine the sustainability and scalability of these innovations that promote the dignity of risk.

These observations highlight the need to clarify the ethical and legal frameworks governing the issues raised by these innovations and the social pressure exerted by the media. They also point to the importance of addressing the gap between professional obligations and care aspirations and of identifying best practices to ensure continued use and adaptability of these innovations to different living environments, cultures or vulnerable subgroups.

Objectives and Structure of the Symposium

This international symposium aims to **synthesize** and **share knowledge** to **promote the use, scaling up, and sustainability of innovations** that value the dignity of risk. It will foster the integration of ethical, legal, communicational, and gerontological perspectives, drawing on the theoretical and experiential knowledge of researchers, students, practitioners, policymakers, and citizens.

The symposium is organized around 4 segments, each addressing a specific question:

1. How can we reduce fears of accountability associated with adopting an approach that values the dignity of risk?
2. How can we engage a person living with cognitive deficits and their family in decisions that involve the dignity of risk?
3. How can we sustainably train various sectors and stakeholders in an approach that values the dignity of risk?
4. How can we adapt an approach promoting the dignity of risk to diverse clienteles and cultures?

Each segment begins with presentations from the panelists, followed by an **interactive workshop**

(in the morning) and a **question and answer period** (in the afternoon) **with online participants** (30 minutes).

At the end of the day, a graphic facilitator will summarize the points discussed throughout the presentations and the discussions with participants.

Expected outcomes of the symposium

By bringing together more than 800 participants, the symposium will identify and prioritize **proven strategies** for **sustainably** overcoming the challenges associated with implementing dignity of risk focused innovations. It will act as a catalyst for fostering the **cross-sectoral collaboration** required to ensure the long-term viability of innovations that promote the dignity of risk. This symposium will provide an opportunity to **integrate theoretical and experiential knowledge** from researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and older citizens (or their representatives) to share their solutions. This collective knowledge exchange will foster a **shared vision** to support necessary organizational and legal changes, while also leading to concrete, phased actions to better support clinicians and leaders in adopting and sustaining dignity of risk focused innovations.

INFORMATIONS – FUNDING AND RESEARCH TEAM

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