

Health professionals as family caregivers

Invaluable navigators in the health care system

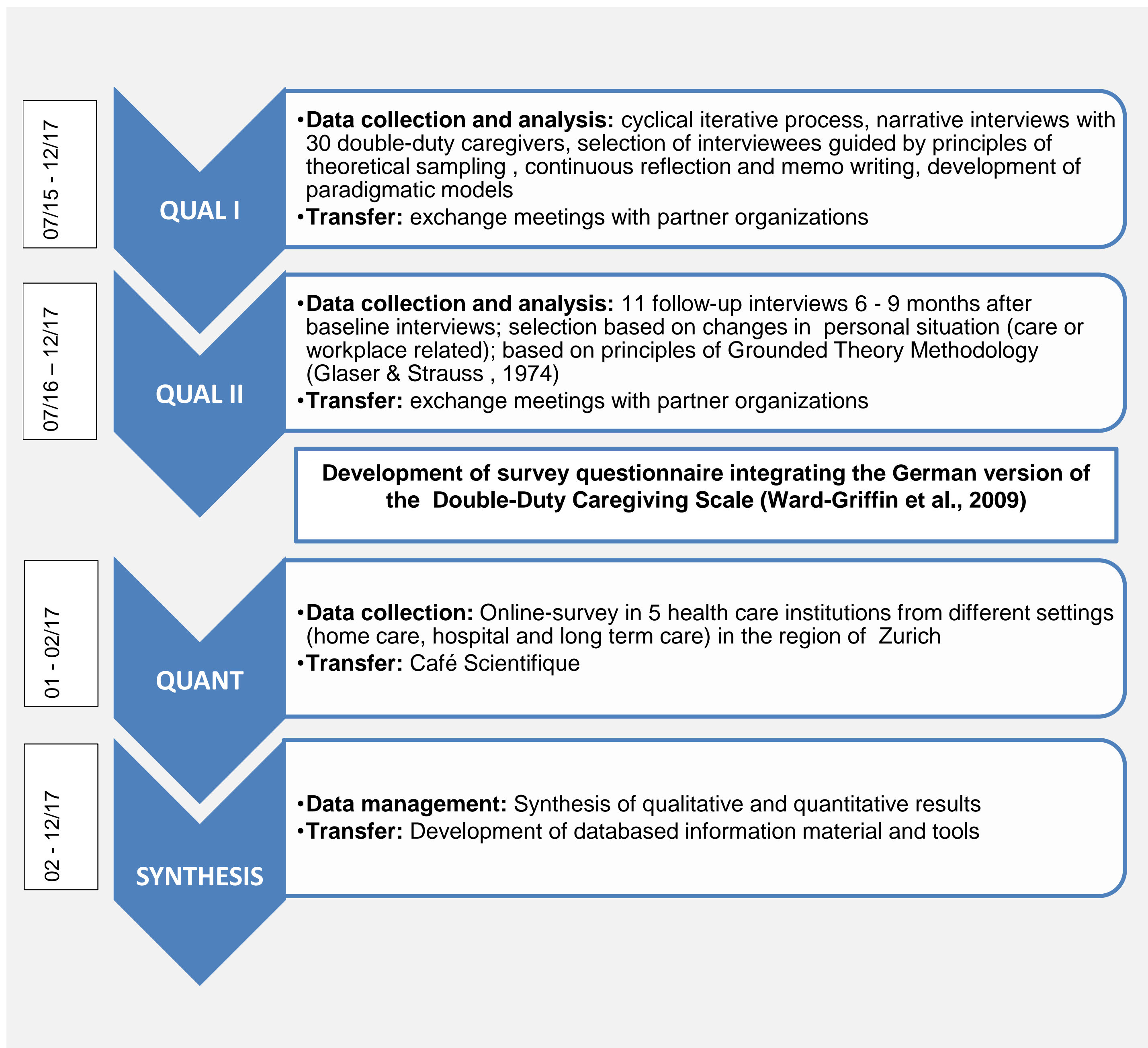
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Background - Blurred boundaries

Family caregivers, who look for their significant others, are essential providers in health care (He et al., 2016). Non-representative survey data from Switzerland show, that health care professionals take on care work more often than other professional groups (Bischofberger et al., 2012). This dual role is internationally known as «**Double-Duty Caregiving**» (Ward-Griffin, 2004).

Double-duty caregivers develop different strategies to optimize the care of their significant others (St. Amant et al., 2014). The aim of this study is to investigate how double-duty caregivers act in Switzerland within the blurred boundaries of professional and familial care.

Sequential mixed-methods design



Qualitative Results - « 3 C »

Strategies to ensure good quality of care and patient safety:

C1 - Communication:

To position as an expert, to request information, to interfere into care, to criticize care procedures, to stand for their significant others

C2 - Cooperation:

To mediate between health care professionals and the significant others, to weigh up if interventions are useful, to cooperate with health care professionals when required

C3 - Coordination:

To use expertise and system knowledge, to utilize existing and build new networks, to initiate and coordinate care

«And then I have researched whom I can reach. And then I quickly got a palliative doctor who came to him on Monday.»
 (AU 20, 50)

«So I am always the one who pulls the strings. Everything, the whole coordination is my job.» (AO 14, 30)



«And when I go with my mother-in-law, processes start rolling.» (AO 14, 22)

«It is always a matter of weighing: to intervene or not to intervene.» (AC 3, 39)

Conclusions - Navigators needed

Double-duty caregivers:

- use their professional knowledge to navigate their significant others through the health care system
- improve the quality of care and simplify care work processes based on their health professional know-how and their profound knowledge about their significant others
- prove to be essential partners for professionals in various health care settings

Project Details

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