
MATILDE LEONARDI**CV**

SPEAKER AT:

**IMPACT OF AGING
ON MENTAL HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING****January, 29th and 30th, Barcelona**

Matilde Leonardi, Neurologist at [Carlo Besta Neurological Institute IRCCS Foundation](#), Milan, Italy

Matilde Leonardi is a medical doctor specialized in neurology, pediatrics, neonatology, child neurology, holder of a certificate in advanced Bioethics. She currently works in the Scientific Department of the Carlo Besta Neurological Institute in Milan, where she is Head of the Neurology, Public health and Disability Unit, and Scientific Director of the Coma Research Centre. Her main duties relate to the developing and carrying out research projects related to neurology, disability, ageing, public health, ICF (WHO's International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health) and burden of neurological disorders. WHO and EU liaison for Besta Institute. WHO staff member in Geneva from 1991 to 1995, she has been cooperating with WHO at various levels ever since. She is an expert member of the WHO-FIC (Family of International Classifications) Functioning and Disability Reference Group and Director of the Italian WHO Collaborating Centre Research Branch. Since 1996, she has been working with the World Health Organization on the revision of the International Classification of Impairment, Disability and Handicap (ICIDH), to the final International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF). Co-chair of the WHO ICF children's group, which has developed the ICF-CY children's version. Editor of the Italian versions of ICF and ICF-CY. She is also coordinator of several research projects, EU- and non EU-funded such as MHADIE, MURINET and COURAGE. Leonardi is an expert for the European Commission (DG Research, DG Justice, DG SANCO) on public health, ageing, disability and neurosciences and a member of several International Scientific Organizations in the fields of Neurology and Rehabilitation. Author of several papers in the fields of neurology, disability, ageing, child neurology and public health. In December 2010 appointed by the Italian Government as President of the Scientific Committee of the National Observatory on Disability, monitoring UNCRPD. In November 2011 appointed as corresponding member of the Pontificia Academia ProVita.

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MATILDE LEONARDI**ABSTRACT**

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Determinants of Health and Disability in Ageing: the COURAGE in Europe Study

COURAGE in Europe was a three-year project coordinated by Foundation IRCCS Neurological Institute Carlo Besta of Milan involving 12 partners from 4 European countries and the World Health Organization. It was inspired by the pressing need to integrate international studies on disability and ageing in light of an innovative perspective based on a validated data-collection protocol. COURAGE in Europe Project collected data on the determinants of health and disability in an ageing population, with specific tools for the evaluation of the role of the built environment and social networks on health, disability, quality of life and well-being. The main survey was conducted by partners in Finland, Poland and Spain where the survey was administered to a sample of 10800 persons, and was completed in March 2012. The newly developed and validated COURAGE Protocol for Ageing Studies has proven to be a valid tool for collecting comparable data in ageing population and understanding and better measuring health, disability, quality of life and wellbeing and the role of health in promoting these, across the life course. The COURAGE in Europe Project has thus created valid and reliable scientific evidence, demonstrating cross-country comparability, for disability and ageing research and policy development, and allowed to recognise how well-being and quality of life change overtime and with age, and how they are affected by changing health, and factors like environment, in particular built environment, and social networks. It is therefore recommended that future studies exploring well-being, quality of life and determinants of health, disability in ageing use the COURAGE-derived methodology and protocol. COURAGE in Europe results have an important impact at research, public health and policy development as they show that diversity in functioning, especially when it occurs in later life, is a natural experience of human beings and that understanding how the environment can facilitate performance will greatly increase our ability to enhance participation, health, quality of life and well-being for persons as they age.

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