

## **Health and Wellbeing during the Transition to Retirement: The More the Fears the Less the Actions?**

Sarah Santini (INRCA National Institute of Health & Science on Ageing, Italy)

**Introduction:** Previous literature underlines that lifestyle and wellbeing may both improve or worsen after retirement. The main aim of this qualitative study is to increase the knowledge concerning health and wellbeing during the transition to retirement. This is an important topic to study, in order to find answers on how to reduce the deterioration of health and wellbeing once the professional life is over.

**Method:** This is a qualitative longitudinal study about the transition to retirement of substantially healthy (i.e. retirement was not linked to health reasons) individuals, carried out in Italy on 40 subjects (mean age 60 years). The baseline interviews were carried out in spring 2014, some months before retirement, whereas the second ones in fall 2015, about 10 months after their retirement. Interviews were transcribed and textual data were coded and analysed using MAXQDA11.

**Results:** Three main themes/groups emerged concerning anticipated health and wellbeing after retirement: improvement; about the same; worsening. Especially the first group (improvement) was characterized by the anticipation of plans in the direction of a positive change in terms of lifestyle activities (e.g. physical activities, diet, etc) and social life. Third group (worsening) was characterized by fears and anxieties and, contrary to what we would expect, they had no substantial plans for health and wellbeing improvement. The study also clarifies the development of these themes after retirement.

**Conclusions:** Through specific strategies, stakeholders and policy makers should support older workers during the transition from work to retirement, to enhance health and wellbeing of individuals during retirement. Opportunities to this purpose should be increased especially for older workers who express health-related worries and anxieties for their future life as pensioners. Indeed, especially the latter, despite this fear, once retired could not act in the perspective of a correct lifestyle.