



## Caring Society

**In the thematic field 'Caring Society', we focus on the relationships between health, lifestyle and social circumstances. Promoting the quality of life and health of people of all ages is the goal of a caring, inclusive society.**

BFH highlights the challenges of an increasingly diverse society in five focus topics. We research the social conditions that are conducive to a healthy lifestyle. Together with practitioners and users of care services, we seek technological, social and organisational innovations to promote people's health and well-being.

### Our focus topics

#### Care@home

The Swiss healthcare system faces numerous challenges, including an ageing population, increasing chronic illness, diversity, a shortage of skilled workers, and cost pressures. At the same time, continuous advances are made in technology and digitalisation. Alternative care models such as Care@home are gaining in importance. For these to be effective, practical and economical, certain social and technical conditions are needed. The focus topic Care@home carries on research on existing models of care at home (medical, economic, technical) and seeks to determine which are feasible in the future and how they bring added value to those affected and their social environment.

A [Care@home competence centre](#) is currently being set up in the canton of Bern under BFH leadership.

#### Generations and old age

Our ageing society and the impact of demographic change affect living conditions across all generations, influencing a host of social, economic and health-related topics. Debates about the consequences of demographic ageing on our society involve many different stakeholders. The focus topic Generations and old age revolves around what is taken to promote the physical, mental and social well-being of people of all ages, as well as their active participation in society.

#### Mental health and well-being

Mental health is important for overall well-being and quality of life. It is crucial for people's development and full participation in social life. The focus topic Mental health and well-being places an emphasis on fostering innovative practices of social participation, on the destigmatisation of illnesses and impairments, on social support and on health-promoting living environments for all.

#### Caring Spaces

Space planning, design and utilisation influences the possibilities and forms of social interaction. Moreover, social inequalities in the access to and use of different types of space create barriers that need to be overcome. The focus topic Caring Spaces addresses these issues and investigates how diverse spaces can serve users while contributing to solidarity, social inclusion and care. Moreover, it examines what conditions need to be met for people to take on more responsibility and create and maintain new caring spaces.

#### Social justice, diversity and participation

A caring society is highly sensitive to social justice and strives to allow as many people as possible to participate in everyday social life. Social inequalities influence both the need for care and access to it, and determine the status that care work enjoys. The focus topic Social justice, diversity and participation addresses how to enhance the political recognition of care work and thus counteract the shortage of skilled labour in various care professions. It also examines how to promote diversity and equality of pay.