The Queen calls for more knowledge about carers’ situations and needs

**– Demographic trends indicate major challenges. We are getting older, which is fantastic. But although many live a long and healthy life, the number of age-related diseases and disabilities increases. This will place heavy demands on health care, social care and the family.**

With these remarks H.M. Queen Silvia inaugurated the Sixth International Carers Conference in Gothenburg on Friday where over 630 participants from 32 different countries attended the opening plenary. Over the next three days delegates will discuss how welfare services such as health and social care can be guaranteed in the future, and what role carers will have.

In her address the Queen emphasized that smart and sustainable solutions within different areas are needed in order to meet the coming challenges.

– In order to be able to better support carers, we must acquire more knowledge about their situations and needs. Carers are not a homogenous group. Some are older, while others are younger and are working full-time. Different solutions are needed. Therefore this conference is so important. It focuses on carers using a broad perspective, said the Queen.

She also touched upon her own experiences of being a carer. She stressed that the family needs support and information.

– And when the illness progresses, one needs advice and information to be able to handle the situation. That was missing twenty years ago when my mother suffered from dementia, stated the Queen.

Given this background, the Queen took the initiative to establish Silviahemmet Foundation in 1996, where one of the cornerstones is to support carers of persons who suffer from dementia.

In conclusion the Queen emphasized that society cannot afford not to support carers.

The work that carers perform cannot be overstated. And the carers’ own health and well-being are just as important as the health and well-being of those they care for. I hope the conference can be the kick-off for many future collaborations. I also hope that you who are here will become part of a global action, with the goal that we should be able to live and age well - regardless of whether we ourselves have an illness or take care of a loved family member, expressed the Queen.

Other presenters at the opening were Åsa Regnér, the Swedish Minister for Children, Older People and Gender Equality, Professor Elizabeth Hanson, The Swedish Family Care Competence Centre (Nka) and Linnaeus University, and the baroness Jill Pitkeathley, a prominent person in Carers UK in the United Kingdom. See their presentations at Nka Play.

http://www.anhoriga.se/nkaplay/6e-internationella-anhorigkonferensen/opening-plenary/opening-plenary/

Pictures from the opening plenary are available for downloading at [www.anhoriga.se](http://www.anhoriga.se)/anhorigkonferens

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