
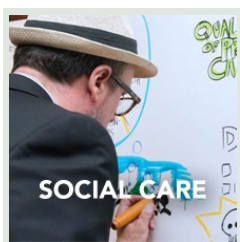


Democratizing social care

<p>Towards Cooperative Commonwealth: Democratizing soci...</p> 
<p>John Restakis. Introduction to Module 5: Democratizing social care. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ucleloqry9o https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ucleloqry9o</p>



Module 5 synopsis: From welfare state to caring society

In this opening module of segment two you will recognize themes developed in segment one of the course as we explore the erosion of the state's role in social care and the severe problems resulting from the privatization of social care services. This discouraging trend, however, is being countered by new models of social care that are organized, owned, and governed by the local community, by service users and workers, and where the role of the state is being transformed into that of an enabling partner with organized civil society.

In this module, we examine the ways in which the roles of state and civil society may be re-conceptualized to shift how social welfare is understood from the vantage point of the common good. Democratizing social care and public services through the application of user control is a central part of this vision. We explore a number of models and case studies that illustrate this principle in practice. These include the application of transition models at local, regional, and national levels of practice. We then return to the role of the state and civil society as mutually interacting forces for radical transition.

Since the end of the Second World War access to social care as a civic right has undergone a profound transformation. Commencing in the late 19th century, national policies providing universal access to social welfare became a feature of liberal democratic governments throughout the west. By the late 1960's, some version of the welfare state had become a benchmark for gauging the successful development of nation states across the globe.

Today, neoliberal policies have led to the dismantling of social welfare systems wherein public goods have become commodified and privatized in what amounts to a new form of enclosure. From basic

necessities, such as water, to the provision of public goods such as health care & education, formerly public goods & services are now in the hands of profit-taking corporations. The imposition of austerity policies and the promotion of “free markets” in all aspects of social life are now an essential aspect of this process and a cornerstone of the “shock doctrine” as described by Naomi Klein.

One response to this crisis in social care has been the introduction of civil forms of care in which organizations in the social and solidarity economies are taking the lead in the provision of social and health services traditionally associated with the state. A common feature of these civil models of care is the application of democratic organizational structures that convey control rights to users and workers - both paid and unpaid.

Questions that arise from this process of “re-socialization” include the following: What is the future of these user and worker -controlled models? How do they relate to the traditional responsibilities of the state? And more broadly, what is the role of civil society as both provider and protector of social care in the future?

This module touches on these questions and examines how co-operative and peer-to-peer systems and the principle of user and worker control can rebuild social care systems in ways that are more responsive to users, more in line with the nature of care, and more capable of serving and protecting the common good.

Objectives for this module

1. To understand the evolution of the welfare state as an aspect of liberal democratic societies and its current threat from neo-liberal ideas and policies.
2. To understand the nature of social care and its relation to organizational form.
3. To understand the strategic connection between social care, development systems, and the politics of system change.

Suggested time allocation: 5 hours total

Review of commentary, required video and reading materials, note-taking	170 minutes
Weekly exercise	65 minutes
Weekly whole group discussions (https://learn.canvas.net/courses/2527/discussion_topics/43836)	65 minutes
Total	300 minutes

Module 5 discussion forum

As you work your way through this module, be sure to post your ideas and reflections in the [Module 5 discussion forum \(https://learn.canvas.net/courses/2527/discussion_topics/43836\)](https://learn.canvas.net/courses/2527/discussion_topics/43836) and read and reply to the posts of others.

