

# The nature of social care

## Objective 5.2

To understand the nature of social care and its relation to organizational form. (15 minutes)

A central issue concerning how social care policies are designed and delivered has to do with how we understand the nature and purpose of social care itself.

In these readings and videos, we explore ways of understanding social care that challenge the prevailing notion of care as an extension of the market. These alternative approaches proceed from a radically different understanding of the qualities inherent in caring and which entail very particular forms of human relationship and interaction that lie outside the narrow frame of market forces and metrics, and also the centrist and bureaucratic demands of state systems.

First pioneered in Italy, social co-ops have emerged as a primary and influential form of community and co-operative-based care that provides a striking and quickly growing alternative to government-run care programs. While some criticism of social co-ops has arisen with respect to their lower wage rates as compared to public sector workers, in part a result of market pressures to compete with more powerful for-profit firms, social co-ops remain a key strategy for democratizing social care.

### 5.7 Read “Humanizing the Economy: Cooperatives in an Age of Capital.” (5 minutes)

Restakis, John, “Humanizing the Economy: Cooperatives in an Age of Capital,” Interview, Aurora, 2012.  
[Social Co-ops in Emilia Romagna \(https://learn.canvas.net/courses/2527/files/857874/download\)](https://learn.canvas.net/courses/2527/files/857874/download)

In this excerpt from a longer interview, Restakis summarizes the rise of social co-ops in Italy and how the transformation they generated in the delivery of social care prefigures new roles for both the state and civil society as social care is aligned with social, as opposed to market, values.

### 5.8a Watch “Fureai Kippu: Barter based health care for senior citizens.” (6:05)

Fureai Kippu: Barter based health care for senior citizens.



**uShine Video.** "Fureai Kippu: Barter based health care for senior citizens," video, 6:05, posted by the creator to YouTube, September 4, 2014.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x7bzk3DmoGk> (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x7bzk3DmoGk>)

#### 5.8b Watch "Mayumi Hayashi—Fureai Kippu" (4:27)

Mayumi Hayashi - Fureai Kippu - CCS Conference 2013



**Qoin.** "Mayumi Hayashi—Fureai Kippu" video, 4:27 posted by the creator to YouTube, July 23, 2013.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_xmyM\\_uNXkU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_xmyM_uNXkU) ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_xmyM\\_uNXkU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_xmyM_uNXkU))

The case of the elder care co-operative Fureai Kippu in Japan is one example of citizen-driven and reciprocity-based care that helps to frame a number of key themes in this section.