How does availability of county-level care characteristics shape late-life development in well-being?

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When describing lifespan individual development, context has always been considered a key component by both psychologists and sociologists. Operationalizing context as the characteristics of care services in one’s county, we use 22 waves of longitudinal reports in life satisfaction from now deceased participants (n = 3,257) from the Socio-Economic Panel Study (SOEP) and combine these with German Statistics of Care (German Federal Bureau of Statistics) to run multi-level models with two and three levels. We find that between-county differences contribute 7\% of variance to between-person differences in each level and late-life change, and that availability of beneficial care services (e.g., lower working load in inpatient facilities) contribute to more positive life satisfaction trajectories. Our results support long-standing notions that regional amenities play a role for individual late-life development, and we discuss possible routes how local care services contribute to well-being trajectories.