

# TOPCARE

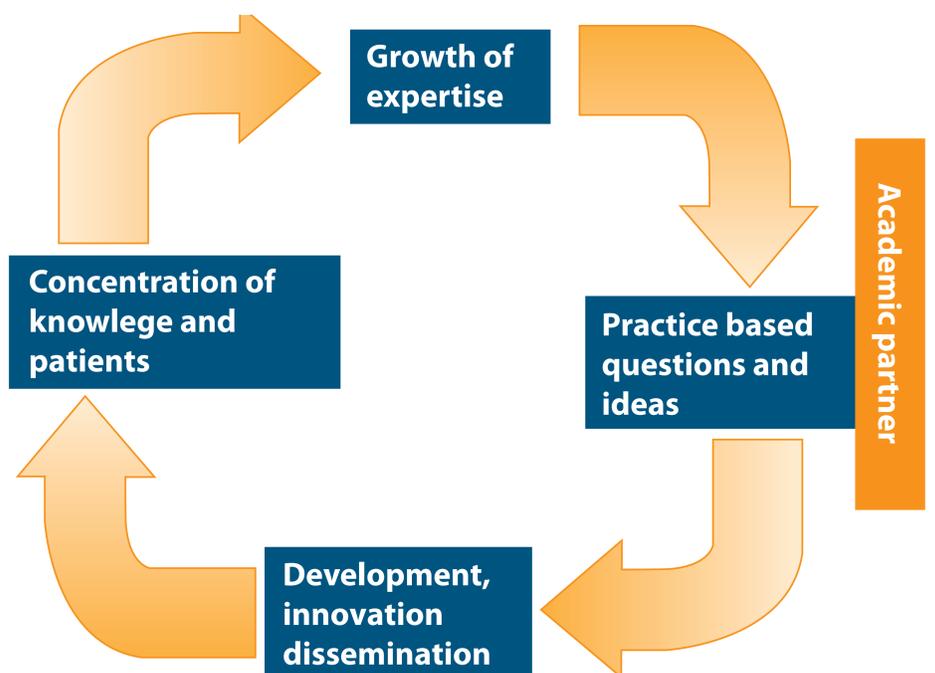
## Bridging the gap between care and research

### Introduction

Long term care facilities (LTCF), such as nursing homes, have little experience in and resources for research. Relatively little research projects are being performed in patients in the advanced stages of their chronic or progressive disease. The physical and psychosocial problems that arise in the late stages are very extensive. More knowledge on the course of these problems and effective care interventions are desperately needed. Therefore, Topaz Overduin, a LTCF with 70 beds for late stage HD patients and a large ambulatory clinic in the Netherlands, decided to invest in an initiative to create a LTC academic climate, that generates and answers research questions that are driven by day to day LTC practice. Topaz cooperates with the Leiden University Medical Center, to initiate research to answer these questions. This is the Topcare initiative, and it is about the concentration and growth of evidence based practice in LTC for HD clients (see figure).

### Conclusion

Topcare is a bridge between science and day to day care practice that under-researched themes such as the care for advanced HD patients have been waiting for.



### Methods

An interdisciplinary working group was formed, under supervision of a university professor, representing the care for late stage HD: nurses, physiotherapists, physician, dietician and psychologist.

Participants of this research class are trained in:

- the basic elements of research,
- research designs in LTC practice,
- critical reading of research papers,
- writing and presentation.

### Results

With access to University facilities, including online journals and statistic programs, care professionals are facilitated to:

- generate research questions,
- perform good clinical studies, and
- implement best clinical evidence.

Several practice based research initiatives are initiated:

- description of patient characteristics,
- swallowing and tube-feeding,
- falls and mobility,
- behavioural changes and the use of medication.