

**“We don’t have a choice  
– we need to change!”**

A case study on experienced efficiency and  
the manager role in the home care

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# Abstract

Efficiency requirements are today found in all Swedish municipalities and regions. With the care manager in lead, the home care organisations are today expected to find efficient solutions to organisational problems. The case of the care manager is studied through a thematic analysis of interview data and recruitment announcements. From 11 interviews with care managers and 23 care managers recruitment profiles, certain similarities and differences are found. By applying theories such as transformational leader and manager role as well as leadership behaviours on the collected material, this thesis aims at broadening knowledge on the relations between the efficiency and the manager's role, including their tasks and the organisation of home care.

This thesis shows that the care managers are well aware of the efficiency requirements in the elderly care, however, in contrast to earlier research, they do not perceive the political decisions as demanding as their fellow managers did. Furthermore, the role of the care manager is a complex position which requires different behaviours. Consequently, the managers see a new form of home care appearing, where the main tasks of the managers are to guide the employees towards a smarter use of the resources. This shows a shift in thinking and which will have to follow in the rest of the society, too.

*Key words:* in-home elderly care, efficiency, change leadership, leadership behaviour, manager role.

Words: 19 818

# Abbreviations, Figures & Tables

## Abbreviations:

FLM – First Line Manager

NPM – New Public Management

RQ – Research Question

TLB – Taxonomy of Leadership Behaviour

## Explanations:

[ ... ] - my interpretation of the sentence etc. for language purposes.

... - interruption in quote.

*cursive text* – my decision to emphasise parts of texts.

## Figures & Tables:

Figure 1: 10 most prominent attributes for a care manager

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# 1 Introduction

“We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.” (Albert Einstein)

Swedish elderly care faces challenges as a consequence of demographic and technical development. The demographic development puts great demands on management, government and organisation of the elderly care. At the same time as the population gets older, the care professions are not expected to disappear and get, likely, even more significant. However, the profession and the underlying sector finds itself in a changing environment where digitalisation and scarce resources, to name a few, drive for change. New, cheaper ways of work are needed at the same time as the resources are limited and the increasing population gets older. A new concept emerges where cost-effectiveness, austerity and smarter, more resourceful operations gather under the concept of “efficiency”<sup>1</sup>.

Efficiency measures how well an organisation uses its resources (Gandler 2013:363), while effectiveness refers to how well an organisation delivers what it is supposed to do as well as how well the services meet the needs of the people using them<sup>2</sup>. Rather similarly, Brorström and Kastberg (2006:13-14) remind that efficiency can mean a number of different things and is also found at different levels<sup>3</sup>. As commonly referred to internal and external efficiencies, the internal efficiency describes the relationship between the resources used and the results that follow (ibid.). The external efficiency instead describes the relation between the plans and the actual performance. The external efficiency is thus considered to be easy to develop, since it is seen as a comparison between planned and achieved results. Internal and external efficiency are therefore also defined as doing things right and doing the right things.

Around 46% of elderly care is inefficient (Janlöv 2010:11). How this is measured or whether it is true is not relevant nor intriguing. However, the fact that efficiency requirements are today found in all regions and municipalities is

<sup>1</sup> In English-speaking world, one usually distinguishes between effectiveness and efficiency, words that both translate to *effektivitet* in Swedish.

<sup>2</sup> As the data is in Swedish, some clarification may be needed. In this thesis, the term “efficiency requirements” is used when there is clear link between a policy and the care manager. In other situations, the word efficiency or effectiveness is chosen based on the context.

<sup>3</sup> As this thesis explores the efficiency in home care both from the manager’s perspective and based on the recruitment profiles, no exact definition for efficiency is needed in this setting.

interesting<sup>4</sup>. An efficiency requirement here is understood as a decision, policy or delegation from the strategic level, i.e. the political or higher managerial level, to the care managers who perform operational leadership (Wolmesjö 2005:34). This makes the care managers<sup>5</sup> a centre of attention as the political- and administrative levels make the requirements and generally leave the implementation to the operational level with the care manager in lead.

The trend in elderly care is that a growing number of people receive their care in their own home (Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, 2018:5). In Sweden, the organisation of elderly care is municipal competence. The above considered, this thesis researches the manager role in municipal home care<sup>6</sup> and their relations to efficiency requirements. Care managers are generally independently responsible for the staff, budget, operations and the working environment within the organisation. Furthermore, the care managers in politically governed health care organisations are found in a special position where they have to collaborate both upwards and downwards in the organisation (Albertsson 2006:177). Firstly, the politicians or the authorities in the municipality make decisions and demands on the home care organisations. Secondly, the manager has staff responsibility for the employees, who in turn have their demands regarding workload and work satisfaction. Furthermore, the organisation of home care demands the manager to act as a leader on distance, as the employees have their workplace and therefore also the working environment in their customers' homes. Consequently, the employees only occasionally interact with their co-workers or superiors. This, once again, puts pressure on the management as social interaction has been found to act as a stimulus and improve individuals' work performance and well-being in the workplace (Willemse et al. 2012:832). Hence, the management in home-based care is facing challenges.

To take a closer look at this issue, the following thesis attempts improving the knowledge on the relation between efficiency and manager role. Following the work of, for instance, Yukl (2012) this thesis applies a case study method to explore the managerial position, tasks and the organisation of home care in the era of efficiency requirements. By using both interview data and documents, a thematic analysis is conducted to contribute to the research field of public sector management and efficiency in municipal elderly care.

<sup>4</sup> For instance, the financial and operational plan for Lund municipality for 2019-21 states that “long-term efficiency work and clear political priorities are needed. All committees (nämnder) and administrations (förvaltningar, hereafter combined under name authorities) are therefore tasked with prioritising and streamlining their work at the same time as the employees' competence and willingness to develop are utilized” (Lunds Kommun 2019).

<sup>5</sup> The manager in this setting is in thesis called a care manager which in Swedish refers to *enhetschef*.  
<sup>6</sup> The Swedish elderly care is today divided between ordinary homes (sv. ordinärie boende, i.e. the old person's own house) and separate homes (sv. särskilt boende, i.e. an elderly home). For simplifying reasons, I choose to instead use the term more prominent in the spoken language, home care (sv. hemtjänst, hemvård, hjälp i hemmet).

## 1.1 The aim and the research questions

To adequately address the issue of efficiency, the manager's role and their tasks become essential. While exploring the thoughts and experiences of these managers builds the main question of this research, there similarly is interest in finding out how the managers perceive their tasks and the organisation as a result of efficiency requirements as well as how the role of the manager is perceived by themselves and those recruiting them. The aim of this study is therefore to explore the relations between the efficiency and the manager's role, including their tasks and the organisation of home care.

Earlier research suggests that there is a strong positive relationship between leadership and productivity in an organisation (Håkanson et al. 2014:78). A starting point for analysis is that efficiency requirements affect both the manager themselves and the organisation, as in a modern public sector organisation, a care manager has to balance both the budget and the wellbeing of the employees. This research therefore sheds light on how the efficiency requirements are met at the operational level. With the first research question there is a wish to explore and find an answer to how the efficiency requirements are perceived by the home care managers. Additionally, this question sheds light on the leader's role by exploring their tasks and organisation. Therefore, the first research question (RQ), reads as follows,

*RQ1: How do the home care managers perceive efficiency requirements, and consequently their role, tasks and the organisation?*

Guided by this question, this thesis explores how managers in home care experience to affect efficiency. For instance, Fellenius (2006) argues that managers should critically reflect on their behaviour and how they influence and contribute to the organisation's development and problems. Yet, important to point out is that this research question does not aim to answer whether the managers reach efficiency, only their thoughts and experiences on the issue.

Complimenting the insights from the first question, this research attempts to broaden the understanding of the manager's role and efficiency. By focusing on the recruitment, we can in greater detail understand the importance of a home care manager. For instance, public sector has been criticised for being ineffective and the lack of leadership has been stated as a reason (Hägglund & Werner 2005). Therefore, second research question is added,

*RQ2: How do recruitment documents on home care managers describe efficiency and the manager's role?*

With the second question, an organisational perspective is added. Whereas the first question focuses on the research problem from the managers' point of view, the new perspective studies the research problem from an organisational point of view.



However, in agreement with Bergström (1995:16), it is recognised that recruitments announcements give an ideal image of the manager and cannot be seen as the objective truth.

Efficiency and manager's role can be studied on different levels, ranging from the political level to manager's relation to employees and manager's personality traits (Yukl 2013:30). In this thesis, the interest lies in the manager role landing on the dyadic level focusing on the relationships between individual care managers and their subordinates. Therefore, certain up and down linkages in the organisation are made to highlight any relations, conflicts or dilemmas in the management function. Since in this thesis I have chosen to study the understanding of management and implementation of efficiency, the relation to employees gets more attention than to the clients, politicians or the authorities. In any case, the politicians and top executives' views should not be considered less important, they are just not the main interest here. Motives for posing the questions above and how the problem at hand is relevant will be covered in the next section.

## 1.2 Research- and societal relevance

The relation between efficiency and manager role in municipal elderly care is simultaneously a complex problem and an interesting knowledge gap. According to debate article by Larsson and Plesner (2019), the undefined efficiency requirements in the budget have drained healthcare, school and care resources. One explanation for efficiency requirements has been the need to guarantee functioning elderly care in the future. The elderlies should be offered a "reasonable standard of living<sup>7</sup>" as it is stated in the law. This, however, is a concept that is difficult to interpret and may lead to different results. Among Swedish citizens, the interest in health- and elderly care issues are increasing and are today among the highest-ranking topics of public interest (Martinsson & Andersson 2019:40). However, the demographical changes<sup>8</sup> imply future changes to the management of welfare services and especially those of the elderly. Following, the elderly care in Sweden is experiencing challenges with guaranteeing good care for the rising number of elderlies. Additionally, the branch reports high rates of sick leave and difficulties in recruiting staff (Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, 2018:15). Consequently, large resources are connected to health- and especially elderly care. Therefore, several reasons demand for more research in the field.

Whereas leadership has not always been the main focus in political science, its relationship to democracy has interested many political scientists (Bergström 1995:5). Even here, the main interest is the manager's role in welfare policy. The managers are individually responsible for their units. However, since the municipal

<sup>7</sup> Sv. skälig levnadsnivå

<sup>8</sup> According to Kolada (2020), both the number of people aged 65-79 and 80+ is expected to increase in 2024. For the reference, the mean age for home care is just under 83 years entailing the increased need for home care.

elderly care is a politically governed area, the manager is subject to the law. Yet, too much regulation influences the manager's scope of action. This may entail a conflict. Furthermore, care managers are found in an in-between position with politicians on one side and the employees and clients on the other. Much of the attention in efficiency debate has been the care employees' stressful situation and their working environment. For instance, workers in health and social care are most represented when looking at statistics on stress and stress-related sicknesses (Thörnquist 2013:51). Due to the high risk for stress-related sicknesses in these organisations, the managers have to carefully assess the situation when implementing the change or adding on to the workload. Hence, the need for research on how managers and efficiency requirements are perceived in the field of home care.

### 1.3 Disposition

After this introducing chapter which introduced the aim and the research questions of this thesis as well as the research- and societal relevance, a brief literature review ought to be presented. Following, the chosen theoretical stance and the methodology are put forth. Thereafter the theoretical framework will be introduced which is then followed by methodological considerations. Then the results are presented combined with analysis and followed by a short concluding discussion. Lastly, some final remarks will be raised followed by suggestions for further development of the finding in this thesis.

## 2 NPM, sick absence and the manager conflict – giving a context to efficiency

How the public sector can become more efficient is in no way a new puzzle. Yet, as it remains an issue, it suggests that there is something yet to uncover. As the relationship between efficiency and public sector leadership has not, to my knowledge, been actively researched on, this following part of the thesis will briefly describe what has been found earlier spilling on three main ideas. Covering first the change and development towards a market orientation within the municipal elderly care, the following thesis emanates from the New Public Management (NPM) as the main idea. Secondly, much indicates that an increasing number of health care professionals as well as managers at different levels seem to experience a stressed work situation and job dissatisfaction. In combination with high sick absenteeism, as is common in these professions, this is believed to contribute to existing recruitment difficulties and therefore challenges for efficiency. Appropriately, this makes the focus on research concerning issues that may compromise the efficiency in elderly care possible. Thirdly, and lastly, earlier research suggests the First Line Managers (FLMs) managers be in an in-between position with employees and customers on the one hand and the politicians and superior managers on the other. This may lead to loyalty issues and conflicts within the manager role. In this literature review, I will summarise the research, relating to these themes above, which is needed to grasp the following empirical research.

### 2.1 A changing organisational structure

In recent decades the public welfare sector has been subjected to major structural changes. Cutbacks and a growing emphasis on cost efficiency as well as more process-oriented, decentralised ways of working have changed working conditions for employees (Astvik & Melin 2012:338). At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the welfare sector underwent a bigger transformation. NPM became the new ideal of the public sector which intended emphasis on efficient use of resources, better quality and increased influence from the clients (Hood 1991; Lundquist 1998; Pollitt & Bouckear 2011; Ekstrand & Nordqvist 2015; Blomqvist 2016; Sundström 2016). NPM was to offer a solution to the problem of inefficiency and weak citizen-influence (Blomqvist 2016:39). The welfare services that had earlier been described as both bureaucratic, inflexible and unresponsive for individual wishes were to be corrected with increased competition and control (Blomqvist 2016:40). On the other

hand, Sundström (2016:146) found that instead of creating the efficient public sector, the theories of NPM have bureaucratized it more.

During the 1980s, the sector was characterised by decentralisation, reorganisation and cuts on welfare (Blomqvist 2016:43). It is visible not least in the elderly care where the focus has shifted from a care work-focused leadership to the economy-focused leadership imitating a business-like behaviour. The idea of competition as a trigger for improving elderly care entails both internal and external marketisation (Blomqvist 2016; Pollitt & Bouckear 2011). The external aspect deals with the freedom for citizens to choose which nursery home or home care to choose, while the internal aspect relates to the market that has developed as a result of individually set salaries, and the possibility for municipalities to choose between having a public or private performer. This entails a procedure whereby the individual has the right to choose the supplier to perform the service.

In a strong customer-oriented system, it is important to constantly do everything to recruit and retain customers (Thörnquist 2013:57). The increased competition requires the elderly care to face a choice with increased income on one side and more work for the nursing assistants on the other. According to the Thörnquist research (2013:58), the employees are often those who suffer when cost-efficiency comes to picture stating that “the employers have to cut costs somewhere”. This creates a vicious circle where the organisation constantly looks for new customers and yet cuts down on staff resources.

Similarly, Sundström (2016:162) notes that elderly care is a clear example of governance according to the logic of NPM. Through “open comparisons”<sup>9</sup>, the municipalities and regions are stimulated to cooperate and learn from each other by comparing each other. Even Nilsson et al. (2011:25) argue that the principle of publicity<sup>10</sup> and the municipalities’ identical activities mean that they ought to copy each other. Blomberg (2004:105-106) finds specific examples of NPM in his dissertation. For example, NPM concepts such as decentralisation translate into individual care units where managers have the responsibility for budget and discipline and frugality translate into efficiency, indicator and comparisons. Additionally, result- and quality-goals, external recruitment of managers and renaming patients as consumers are argued to play a bigger role in today’s elderly care (ibid.).

The above considered, it is no surprise that leadership too is under constant change as NPM influences the manager’s role in the public sector. Ahlbäck Öberg and Widmalm (2016:11) argue that NPM leads to changes in the managerial ideal, meaning that the ideal leader in public sector becomes a strong and professional leader, clearly seeking inspiration from private sector management. Strictly speaking, the management is seen as a profession in itself and ignores what business or field the manager acts in (Ljung & Ivarsson Westerberg 2017:52). This has been both criticised and praised. On one hand, Ekholm (2012:206) argues that the managers in elderly care are often talented nurses. However, these do not always make successful managers. On the other hand, managers who do not have

<sup>9</sup> Sv. öppna jämförelser

<sup>10</sup> Sv. offentlighetsprincipen

experience in the field, have been criticised by the employees for not being able to understand the situation of nursing assistants (Kihlgren et al. 2003:31). Furthermore, NPM leads to the managers becoming more accountable to taxpayers and service users (Foster & Wilding 2000:145). A more detailed look at the research on manager role is found below, however first a look at efficiency in the context of health- and social care.

## 2.2 Efficiency in a care environment

Efficiency and productivity are as stated no new requirements nor goals in the public sector, and they are actively researched. Even if this thesis does not propose to measure the efficiency in home care, it is relevant to look into how productivity is approached in earlier research. Furthermore, a look on starting grounds and obstacles is offered.

The earlier sections considered, whereas efficiency is often understood as cost-efficiency, Janlöv (2010:3) argues that it is hard to measure efficiency in health as inputs rarely match the outputs. Instead, he argues that it is wiser to focus on health outcomes, in other words, whether there is more health in society if more resources are placed in the care sector. Many attempts at increasing efficiency as well as organisational changes are found. In order to meet the welfare recruitment challenges, it is crucial that more employees work full time (SKR 2020). For instance, full time as norm<sup>11</sup> attempts to combat the challenge of recruitment by enabling the welfare workers to choose to work fulltime instead of, for example, 80%. Other focus areas have been the number of subordinates per manager (densification of managers<sup>12</sup>), welfare technology and focusing on the “customer time”, i.e. how much time is needed to produce one hour of care in elderlies’ homes as well as focus on sick absences. Furthermore, lately, another solution has been added to the picture. Mainstream media in Sweden reports a trend of reintroducing the municipal governance in elderly care (Sydsvenskan 2020; Helsingborgs stad 2019; Lomma Kommun 2018).

The economy is a remarkable part of the efficiency discussions. The main finding in previous research is that efficiency requirements usually appear in budgets or as a demand for cost-efficiency. Johansson (2013:30) explains that the economy steers every operation in elderly care. However, according to Svenskt Näringsliv’s report (2018:4), the municipalities have unstrict budgets that can easily be ignored. Authors of the report remind that municipalities have always the possibility of raising the taxes if they do not meet the set financial goals. This is partly confirmed by Jensen and Svensson thesis (2017). The interview study highlights the possibility to go beyond the set financial goals as long as the manager can motivate why such has occurred (Jensen & Svensson 2017:32). On the other

<sup>11</sup> Sv. Heltid som norm (önskad sysselsättning),

<sup>12</sup> Sv. chefsförtätning

hand, managers are not able to influence the budget, but were still responsible and held accountable for budget deficits (Hagerman et al. 2015:700). Similarly, when the operations end with a positive result, someone else in the municipality receives the surplus (ibid.). The endgame is the same, there may be limited motivation for the operations to work towards cost-efficiency.

In order for the elderly who need the support of society to be able to age in safety, sufficient and competent personnel are required who are given good conditions to carry out their work in a good working environment (Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, 2018:51). Much debate is directed at the working environment and the sick rates. One factor affecting the efficiency in organisations is the increased absence due to sickness. This is especially prominent in human service organisations, i.e. the organisations where the people work with people. A contributing factor is a fact that as the home care organisations do human service, the tasks can rarely be pushed back; for example, an older person cannot just be left home alone if the staff is missing. This requires strong managerial power as the care manager is responsible both for the recruitment of staff and for their wellbeing.

A good working environment is a resource for both the workplace and the individual (Åteg et al. 2005:1). Beyond the already mentioned, De Simone and Cicotto (2016:1570) recognise that stress does not only affect employees' psychosocial conditions. In fact, there is also a connection to productivity losses, absenteeism, and eventually employee turnover. This ought to motivate companies to get involved in preventive health work if it can be shown to be profitable, as well as give positive effects on production and performance in the workplace. On the other hand, Angelöw (2000:21) argues that it would be more beneficial to focus on the health rates instead of the sick rates. Similarly, Fellenius (2006:147) argues that leaders should focus on the strengths in the working group as well as on those employees who perform the best and not those who do not. In turn reduced staff turnover provides benefits for the business in the form of increased competence, better competitiveness and more stable organisation. Thus, avoiding increased stress and working for lower staff turnover ought to be on the top of the list for an efficient organisation.

Many have sought to explain what precisely is leading to stress in elderly care. Lundgren (2015:55) finds it problematic that home-based care is strictly scheduled. Due to tight schedule, the workers experience insecurity which lead to stress. In the case that one patient takes more time than planned it in turn means that the entire day runs late. Due to downsizing of staff and workload, the employees must decide what work *must* and *should* be done. Consequently, Orrung Wallin (2013:27) finds a new form of stress appearing in nursing profession – stress of conscience. This refers to feeling of inadequacy when the nurses do not feel like they can do their job as good as they hoped. This in turn leads to moral stress with frustration and apathy and eventually burn out and exhaustion (ibid.).

Hence, the above allows a connection to be made between managerial tasks and the wellbeing of the subordinates. Skagert et al. (2008:803) recognize the importance of leadership in work environment management. Especially for managers in home-based, care this sets new requirements as their employees work at their patients' homes instead of at the institution as such (Johansson & Jørgensen

2012:23). However, despite the acknowledged role of leaders in the psychosocial work environment, there are still few studies on *how* exactly the managers can affect the workplace atmosphere (Skagert et al. 2008:803). Many researchers seem to agree on the importance of creating a meaningful workplace (Nyberg et al. 2005; Angelöw 2002). However, Nyberg et al. (2005:24) find no statistical support for leadership's influence on stress and burnout. Even according to Skagert et al. (2008:804) there is usually an unclear gap between the ability versus responsibility to influence when workers feel stressed or sick, mainly due to leaders' possibility to influence the private lives of their subordinates. Yet, it is especially here the role of the leadership becomes central as factors like productivity and employee satisfaction appear as definitions for successful leadership (Nyberg et al. 2005:19).

Furthermore, much points towards an approaching recruitment challenge for the elderly care sector. The demographic development entails an increased number of elderly whereas the number of employees in elderly care is not growing at the same pace. Considering people management, the care manager's main task is to recruit and retain staff (Gander 2013:366). However, if there are no employees at sight, what can be done? This, while not alone, demands efficiency.

## 2.3 Manager role under conflicting demands

In recent years, managers and leaders in the welfare sector have been attributed to almost magical importance in how they are expected to find solutions to organisational problems (Wolmesjö 2005:9). Yet, as the care managers generally are FLMs, in other words, they have the direct responsibility for staff and operations but are subject to superior managers, the position as care manager can be experienced weak. Next to efficiency, even the definition of leadership remains to be widely debated and lacking common agreement (Yukl 2013:18-19). However, as appropriate here, House et al. (1999:13) describe leadership as "the ability of an individual to influence, motivate and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organisation".

The municipal elderly care is a politically governed organisation, i.e. the elected politicians in committees and boards have the ultimate responsibility for shaping goals and guidelines. The elected politicians in committees and boards serve, in Sweden's case, for four years. Thus, the political majority and the goals and guidelines for the organisation can quickly change (Wolmesjö 2005:28). Furthermore, the different organisational forms, administration and formal rules influence the manager's freedom of action (Karlsson 2006:51).

The successful manager recruitment strengthens the employees' faith in their working place and leads to better staff recruitment. Relating to what was earlier mentioned as the changing role of the manager, recruiting a manager is a field of interest in earlier research. In previous research of recruitment announcements, Tollgerdt-Andersson (1989:56 and onwards) finds major differences in the recruitment of managers when it comes to attitudes, values and leadership requirements. In the Swedish business community, the most important

characteristics for managers are to feel enthusiasm for their job, ability to inspire enthusiasm in others, decision-making power, the capability to take initiative and ability to cooperate (ibid.). By building his research on Tollgerdt-Andersson findings, Bergström (1995:20) contributes to the field through revisiting the recruitments announcements. Continuingly, ability to lead and cooperate is the most searched attributes for a manager. However, taking initiatives is no longer considered one of the 12 most requested managerial characteristics. On the contrary, to have a holistic view and goal orientation are emphasised in greater detail.

Ekholm (2012:206) argues that already the recruitment of a manager can lead to loyalty- and role conflicts. According to Bergström (1995:73), politicians often desire both a strong leader and a responsive follower. However, it is found that this desired strong leader might not become the responsive subordinate (ibid.). Both politicians and officials emphasise the importance of understanding the economy, but this is not as evident in the recruiting, where experience from work in elderly care is of great importance (Wolmesjö 2005:137). The increased need for managerial competence goes hand-in-hand with manager's relations up- and downwards the organisation. Yet, it is not only the politicians that require attention and action from the care manager. Being the care manager entails a large and complex responsibility, with demands from senior managers and politicians on the one hand and the demands from health care personnel, users and relatives on the other (Yukl 2013; Wolmesjö 2005; Dunér & Ringblom 2015; Albertsson 2006).

Similarly, Karlsson (2004) finds that the care manager's unique role requires loyalty to both ways. The dissertation finds that the supervisor's professional ethics are here set against each other (Karlsson 2004:99). It requires both protecting the rights of the customers and fulfilling the organisation's matter in a loyal manner. Loyalty to different groups can be affected by, for instance, who brings forward ideas that form the basis for decisions, relationships with interested parties and the manager's own values (Wolmesjö 2005:38). It is likely that the care managers feel a greater loyalty upwards towards the political and administrative domain, e.g. when it comes to achieving set political goals or "keeping the budget". In other questions, for example, relating to the work environment, loyalty downwards towards the health and social care professionals might be increased. Loyalty conflicts emerge especially when the care managers are faced with the choice of either fulfilling what they consider to be the ethical or to stick within budgeted frameworks (Karlsson 2004:52).

Thus, there appears to be a gap between political goals and reality (Hellström & Sjöström 2007:24). According to Lundquist (1998:177), political decisions should be clear enough that they can be implemented at the operational level and follow the principles of the *common good*<sup>13</sup>. However, Jensen and Svensson (2017:30) find that more unclear decisions are more suitable within their operations as they then have more freedom of action to fit the decision in their business.

<sup>13</sup> The common good is unclear and difficult to capture in an operationalised term but should help to formulate the public ethos of policy. If the solutions do not contribute to the common good, there are reasons to throw away the idea (Lundquist 1998:65-67).



Similarly, Karlsson (2004:58) finds that managers' freedom of action increases as political decisions grow more unclear. In the end, the manager's ability to communicate is crucial for successful leadership (Wolmesjö 2005:41). According to the Johansson thesis (2013) the employees in care organisation often have limited knowledge of how public sector organisations are managed and which role the politics play in the field. This leads to problems when mediating information as changes and new guidelines are hard to translate to those working on the ground. On the other hand, too little information leads to subordinates not understanding the organisational form and the decisions made. Thus, there is a fine line between the information overload and a lack of transparency.

Similarly, Dunér and Ringblom (2015) explore the care manager's complex work subject to political requirements. The findings are intriguing; while some of the managers do not experience any problems and difficulties in managing their duties and requirements, others experience great difficulties, both in carrying out their duties and living up to the requirements (Dunér & Ringblom 2015:9). They are required to be reachable at all times to guarantee good care for the customers and take responsibility for the staff. Johansson's thesis (2013) makes similar claims, finding the finances to excessively affect the care manager and their subordinates as the main task of the care manager is to balance the economics and the wishes from the individual patients (Johansson 2013:34). Thus, the conflict of loyalty becomes a fact (*ibid.*).

Conflicting demands and loyalty relations for different actors make it possible to approach what Ekholm (2012) finds in her research. The research on managers in elderly care identifies two different groups of managers on how they look upon and shape their work and leadership with regard to demands and expectations that exist from different parts within elderly care operation. Ekholm (2012) identifies one group of managers who are more inclined to the staff and one group that turns more towards their superiors. Studying how these managers handle stress brought forth interesting results. For instance, those managers that experience more stress, also experience less support and less possibility to discuss the difficulties with their superiors. However, the middle managers who report having the ability to handle the demands and expectations are more loyal to their subordinates. Furthermore, they report that their task is to get the staff to grow and develop.

## 2.4 Moving forward

There appears to be a somewhat mutual understanding that leadership, and especially good leadership, is vital both for the organisational development and productivity as well as for the subordinates' health and wellbeing. On the other hand, the branch is problematic with its earlier issues with sick rates and increasing workload. Thus, more research is needed concerning the role of management in efficiency requirements. As such, now that the knowledge gap is identified, the theoretical strands should be considered.

# 3 Leadership, manager's role and behaviour – towards a theoretical framework

The theoretical stance in this thesis is made up of different theoretical contributions, which together build the framework for the analysis. In this following chapter, the theoretical perspectives are introduced in two sections. Firstly, leadership is found to be a contributing factor in whether an organisation becomes productive. As this thesis focuses on the manager role, it is necessary to relate this to management research and theories on the manager role. Furthermore, this makes it possible to then work with a theory focusing on leadership behaviour which explains behaviours used by leaders to influence the performance of a work unit. Thereafter, this chapter ends with a summary of the theories whilst approaching an analytical framework.

## 3.1 Being a leader, manager or a combination

Effective leaders are needed to guarantee efficiency and effective elderly care (McKian, et al. 2013:2). Recent contributions to leadership theories have mainly considered the similarities and differences between the transactional and transformational leadership. The founding father of transformational leadership Burns (1978:19-20) argues there to be two leadership styles. Firstly, transactional leaders have solely an exchange relationship with their followers. According to Burns, this exchange can appear in different forms such as financial (the follower gets paid for their actions) or psychological (such as praise or loyalty) but regardless of the exchange the relationship between leader and follower lasts no longer than the exchange itself. Thus, it does not form any deeper relationship between the leader and follower. Unlike exchange, the core of transformational leadership is to build a relation between the manager and the employee, allowing the subordinates move past their own self-interests to achieve goals. According to Burns, effective leadership is best shown when subordinates do not only follow the leader but *want* to achieve the goals (Reicher et al. 2014:153). In agreement with the above, Tafvelin (2013:10) adds that effective leaders are suggested to be those who are able to adapt their leadership style to the requirements of their followers and the situation. In comparison to the traditional studies on management where leadership is thought to be a calculated, rational process, transformational leadership now emphasises emotions, values and symbolic leader behaviour (ibid.). In fact,

transformational leadership is seen as a way to create justice, loyalty and trust between the leader and the follower (Simons & Lomax 2013:75).

There are certain differences between management and leadership. Leadership refers to influencing others to fulfil the goals for high quality care, and to promote personal development among employees, whereas management is a process directed towards fulfilling the organisational goals (Håkanson et al. 2014:76). It is necessary to differ between leadership and management, as a manager can be a leader, but a leader does not have to be a manager. Management refers to formal position, whereas leadership can be of informal character referring to the relation between managers and their employees (Furåker & Nilsson 2010:34). McKian et al. (2013:5) argue that both leaders and managers are concerned with goals and budgets, but they take different approaches to get there. However, they see managers as a functional position whereas leaders resemble an abstract process (ibid.). It is one specific focus, according to Kotter (2012:28) that separates a leader from a manager and that is managing change. Kotter (ibid.) suggests that leadership defines the future, aligns the people involved with the vision and inspires them to achieve the change. Consequently, for care managers, leading change is one of their most difficult and important responsibilities (Yukl 2013:87). Keeping in mind that much indicates that leadership in the elderly care differs from leadership in the private sector (Wolmesjö 2005; Holmberg 2003), it would entail that a care manager ought to be both a leader and a manager at the same time.

However, the above considered, Hägglund and Werner (2005:37) argue that most care managers identify themselves as managers instead of leaders. Since the municipalities emphasise the tasks of managers instead of those of leaders', this leads to care managers prioritising the role of manager (ibid.). The following distinction is made between a care manager and a care leader; management has a strong focus on operations and budget responsibility and is focused on efficiency, while leadership is focused on relations, through interactivity and communication processes (Wolmesjö 2005:24). Rather similarly, Karlsson (2006:142) implies that managers are more prone to efficiency-perspective and affect the organisation vertically, whereas leaders are horizontally oriented and more often choose the communicative perspective. The efficiency -perspective, on the other hand, implies conditions where austerity meets decentralised responsibility for budget (Wolmesjö 2005:26). According to Wolmesjö (2005:26) managers in health- and social care have to balance the both perspectives together and it is somewhere here in between the modern care manager is found.

Furthermore, what a manager does and what is their function in an organisation has for long time interested researchers around the globe (e.g. Yukl 2012; 2013, Mintzberg 1975, Bergström 1995, Stewart 1982). According to Kotter (2012:28), the most important aspects of management include planning, budgeting, organising, staffing, controlling and problems solving. Furthermore, as seen in the next part, the manager has many different tasks to choose between.

This section has explained the research on managers which is used in the analysis. Firstly, this thesis assumes care managers aspiring to resemble transformational leaders. Due to the built relation, the care managers then have easier to lead the organisation towards change. Secondly, there are noticeable

differences between a manager and a leader. Both characteristics are however needed. Last but not least, the meaning of the manager's work has led to diverse theoretical contributions.

## 3.2 Hierarchical Taxonomy of Leadership Behaviours

Kotter's (2012) main aspects of management resembles another perspective on managerial behaviour. Similarly to the definition of leadership, a continuing puzzle in management research has been the lack of agreement on the specific managerial behaviours that are associated with effective management (Hamlin & Hatton 2013:365). Yukl (2012) approaches this problem with a hierarchical taxonomy of leadership behaviours (hereafter TLB, Yukl 2012), i.e. an attempt to list behaviours most prominently used by efficient leaders or managers. The TLB describes leadership behaviours used to influence the performance of a team, work unit or organisation. In this thesis this theory is chosen as these leadership behaviours highlight the wide range of tasks and responsibilities, the care manager has. However, it is noted that the same leaders act differently in different groups or situations (Yukl 2013), it should be clarified that the taxonomy is used to reason in terms of *positions* which the managers take and not as managers' traits, personalities or behaviours as such.

Table 1: Hierarchical Taxonomy of Leadership Behaviours

Task-Oriented Behaviours	Planning
	Clarifying
	Monitoring
	Problem Solving
Relations-Oriented Behaviours	Supporting
	Developing
	Recognizing
	Empowering
Change-Oriented Behaviours	Advocating Change
	Envisioning Change
	Encouraging Innovation
	Encouraging Collective Learning
External Behaviours	Networking
	External Monitoring
	Representing

The TLB divides leadership behaviours into four categories: task-oriented -, relations-oriented – and change-oriented behaviours as well and external leadership behaviours. These meta-categories, as Yukl (2012:68) addresses them, each "have a different primary object, but objectives all involve determinants of performance"

(see table 1 for summary). The primary objective of task-oriented behaviour is to carry out work efficiently and reliably. Relation-based leadership behaviour concerns work to achieve quality in human resources and -relations within the organisation. Change-oriented behaviour focuses on promoting innovation and collective learning. Last but not least, externally oriented behaviour relates to acquiring needed information and resources, as well as promoting and defending the interests of the organisation. In the following sections, each meta-category is briefly explained as well as linked to other relevant literature.

### 3.2.1 Task-Oriented Behaviours

An efficient use of people, equipment and resources is the main purpose of the task-oriented behaviours. Specific behaviours include planning, clarifying, monitoring performance and resolving work-related problems.

Planning is a broad category of behaviours that include making decisions, organising and prioritising work, scheduling and coordinating activities, assigning responsibilities as well as allocating resources among different activities in the unit. Main purpose here is to accomplish task objectives along with avoiding delays, double-work and wasted resources. The planning often requires information provided by subordinates, peers and/or outsiders (Yukl 2012:70). Clarifying, instead, refers to leaders' tactics to ensure people around understand why, how and what to do. Furthermore, the expected results, setting specific goals or deadlines are important aspects of clarifying. Even unit's policies, rules and standard procedures are part of leaders' clarifying work. The third behaviour is named "monitoring" and is used by leaders to assess whether the subordinates are carrying out their work. The information gathered by monitoring can be used to solve problems or to determine whether changes are needed in the unit policies or procedures. According to Yukl (2012:70), there are various activities that can be carried out to monitor the workforce including observation, performance reviews and examining recorded activities or communications. Lastly, problem solving aims to identify and act on work-related problems. Effective leaders provide firm and confident direction to their work unit as they cope with the problem. According to Yukl (2012:71), it is important to differ between problems that require change management and disruptions that can be resolved quickly. Furthermore, problem solving can be both proactive and reactive as well as lead to negative outcomes such as worsening the situation with unsuitable solutions.

### 3.2.2 Relations-Oriented Behaviours

To achieve quality in human resources and enhance staff skills or the leader-member relationship, the leader of the unit can adapt relations-oriented behaviours (Yukl 2012:71). These include supporting, developing, recognising and empowering.

Showing positive regard and building cooperative relationships can help people to cope with stressful situations. Supportive behaviours that leaders can conduct are for instance showing concern, listening, providing support and encouragement as well as expressing confidence in an individual. Cooperation and mediating conflicts are part of supportive behaviours. Developing increase the skills and confidence of the workforce and facilitates the staff's career advancement. Here the leader can provide career advice, training opportunities and facilitate learning from experience. An effective leader arranges practise sessions and makes use of the workforce by asking an older worker to educate the new ones. Showing appreciation builds the ground for the third specific task: recognising. By award ceremonies alternatively pay increases or bonuses, the leader recognises effective performance, significant achievements and important contributions. Empowering instead refers to giving more autonomy and influence for the staff. Common methods used include consultation, delegation and consideration of workforce members' suggestions and concerns. Consulting and delegating were separate behaviours in earlier version of the taxonomy but were then combined together in broader component (empowering, Yukl 2012:68). A goal is to achieve a situation where the subordinates can resolve work-related problems without the leader's approval.

The leaders can fail to adapt some behaviours. For instance, failing to recognise an important contribution or giving praise to a wrong person can lead to ineffectiveness. Furthermore, Yukl (2012:72) finds empowering to be sometimes used in a way that allows no real influence or by giving influence on people who are unable or unwilling to make good decisions.

Major internal transformation rarely happens unless many people assist and are involved (Kotter 2012; Yukl 2013). Yet employees will not, or cannot, help if they feel powerless and lack ways to influence. Therefore, delegating is seen as a way to create change. Wolmesjö (2005:24) argues that there are two different motives for why a manager chooses to delegate. Delegating tasks can either emerge because of 1) managers need more time for other tasks or 2) to increase subordinates' participation. Nutt (1999:87) recognises managers who take their own responsibility for change are more likely to attract change than managers who delegate the responsibility forward. Similarly, intervention, i.e. creating the need for change by identifying and justifying options as well as how to implement them, leads to more successful changes across organisational levels (ibid.).

### 3.2.3 Change-Oriented Behaviours

Leading and operating change emerges as one of the main tasks for a manager (Yukl 2013; Albertsson 2006; Nutt 1999). According to Yukl (2012:72) leaders use change-oriented behaviours to increase collective learning, innovation and enhances subordinates' possibility to adapt to external changes. There are 4 specific behaviours of which the first two component behaviours (advocating change, envisioning change) emphasise leader initiation and encouragement of change. The

second two component behaviours (encouraging innovation, encouraging collective learning) highlight the leader's facilitation of emergent change processes.

Advocating change involves explaining why a change is urgently needed (Yukl 2012; Kotter 2012). Especially in cases where there is no evident crisis or emerging threat, the staff may fail to recognise or understand the need for change. According to Yukl (2012:72), an effective leader can provide information by showing how similar units apply changes or they can explain the undesired outcomes if the change is not adopted. Advocating change includes making subordinated aware of the problems as well as consideration for the resistance that can occur. In another research, Yukl (2013:96) recognises that it sometimes may be needed to look into what resistance a change can get to know how to avoid it. Once again this elevates the importance of strategic management as all changes have to be carefully assessed to fit the organisation. Envisioning change is an effective way for leaders to build commitment to new strategies and initiatives. By linking the vision to staff's values and ideals, the leader communicates a clear and appealing vision of what could be accomplished. Instead of emphasising leader initiation, the two latter behaviours focus on easing on to change. There are many ways leaders can encourage creative ideas and innovation in a unit. Essential here is to create a climate of psychological safety and mutual trust as well as to create an atmosphere that encourages innovation and values creativity. By encouraging staff to look at problems from different perspectives, to "think outside the box" or to experiment with ideas or applying ideas from different fields, the leaders can encourage innovative thinking. Secondly, facilitating collective learning ought to improve the performance of the unit.

Combining together the relations-oriented and change-oriented behaviours, Yukl (2013:112) reminds that a major change is unlikely to become successful if it does not receive the needed support from the workforce. For example, Yukl (2013:87) notes that people have to have a vision for a better future to justify the need for change. Especially in health care, the employees have to understand the importance of the change (Albertsson 2006:183). Approaching the behaviour of empowering, Johansson and Jørgensen (2012:22) found that it is often the case that employees have both the questions and the answers to those themselves, but they need a manager's decision and maybe resources. This relates back to the relations-oriented behaviours where the goal of empowering is to have employees who can resolve work-related problems on their own. However, to get there, Johansson and Jørgensen (*ibid.*) mean that it is important that the managers show that they prioritise forums, including, for example, workplace meetings, and that they consider what the employees raise important.

### 3.2.4 External Leadership Behaviours

Most leaders cannot only act internally as they are influenced by external factors. By providing relevant information about surrounding happenings, getting necessary resources and assistance, and promoting the reputation and interests of the work

unit, leaders can facilitate performance in the organisation. The TLB supposes that the needed behaviours are networking, external monitoring and representing.

Networking refers to attending meetings and events and building favourable relationships with peers, superiors and outsiders. This includes meetings and workshops as well as socialising informally or communicating with network members. The ambition can be to provide information, resources, and political support. On the other hand, networking is time demanding. External monitoring includes analysing information about relevant events and changes in the external environment. Common ways for the leaders to acquire this information is via their network, by studying relevant publications and reports or by studying the decisions and actions of competitors and opponents. The key to relevant external monitoring is to know how much the operations are influenced by the external events. Lastly, representing refers to a leader acting as an ambassador for the unit. This includes lobbying for resources and assistance, promoting and defending the reputation of the organisation, negotiating agreements or coordinating related activities with other parts of the organisation.

Linking together the relations-oriented and external leadership behaviours, we find a clear linkage to the manager's loyalty relation towards employees, as discussed in the literature review. According to Ljung & Ivarsson Westerberg (2017:45) the manager's main job is to defend their employees.

### 3.2.5 Moving forward with the taxonomy

No leader uses only one behaviour in their work. According to Yukl (2012:76), many earlier studies have focused on the independent effects of individual behaviour, yet, in many cases the leader uses a combination or a trade-off of behaviours. Yukl (2012:76) indicates that to understand why a leader is effective requires focus on how different behaviours interact with each other. For instance, monitoring performance or external threats is not effective, if nothing is done to resolve the problems emerging. Moreover, Yukl (ibid.) suggests that some behaviours have side effects. For example, delegating responsibility for someone with little experience may increase learning for the person, but it can reduce short-term efficiency. Alternatively, developing which is considered to be a relations-oriented behaviour can also lead to successful change. Furthermore, some decisions intended to benefit employees, for instance increasing pay or benefits, may increase costs for the organisation and therefore reduce short-term financial performance.

In relation to Yukl's taxonomy, would the diverse behaviours make it possible to approach Stewart's (1982) research in demands, constraints and choices. Stewart (2003:200) recognises flexibility in jobs and especially in those of managers. Demands are those tasks that any jobholder would have to do in order to stay in the job. Constraints are those factors that affect the tasks done. They can be both tangible like finance and budgets and intangible like attitudes and the culture of the organisation, limiting what the jobholder could do. Lastly choices, which can be very large in some jobs, are the opportunities in a job for one jobholder to do the job differently from another. The choices are limited by the demands and



constraints (Stewart 1982:9). Even though the taxonomy supposes the managers having similar tasks, managers can make a difference through the choices they make (Taylor 2013:43).

Following on the work of Yukl (2012), both Hamlin and Hatton (2013) as well as Johansson et al. (2014), have criticised the taxonomy for forgetting the role of internal communication. Even Palmér (2011:29) proposes that leaders have an important role in the organisation's communication and the line manager's position is to coordinate and create meaning in what is communicated between the operational activities and the management. A communicative leader is one who engages employees in dialogue, actively shares and seeks feedback, practices participative decision making, and is perceived as open and involved (Johansson et al. 2014:155). Connecting the change-oriented behaviours, Jutterdal (2006:103) argues that change is affected by whether managers succeed in communicating the message about the change.

Yukl (2012:80) argues that additional knowledge is needed in order to improve theories of leadership. One such knowledge is how well and why these behaviours are shown, but also which leaders use them and in what context. Consequently, the TLB has earlier been approached in a Swedish research concerning preschool managers. Franzén and Hjalmarsson (2018) incorporated the taxonomy in a study on managers' tasks and daily work. The findings brought forward an emphasis on task-oriented and relations-oriented behaviours, which could be understood in relation to the strong loyalty to the staff (Franzén & Hjalmarsson 2018:12). Another knowledge gap is how the different types of behaviours jointly explain leader influence on work unit performance and other outcomes. Hence, the need for this research.

### 3.3 Beyond the manager role and the taxonomy of leadership behaviours – towards an analytical framework

Building on the manager role as well as the TLB, this section considers how the theory is applied to the collected empirical data. Firstly, the combination of politicians creating the efficiency requirements with the combination of scarce resources and staff issues are believed to affect the manager's position in a way where the manager may struggle to take the next steps. I propose that the care managers recognise and can separate between tasks that they choose to do and what is demanded or what limits their actions. For instance, loyalty to politicians respectively to their subordinates may come into question when a manager chooses what to focus on. Secondly, for a manager to be able to be innovative and make a change, the manager has to have flexibility in their work. To be able to look past the demands and expand the manager's scope for action, it is significant to know what is demanded and what constraints the manager in their daily work. Thirdly, how a manager relates to the incoming political decisions influences the

implementation of the policy. For the political decisions to be implemented, it is important that both the managers and the employees understand and support the changes.

Taking in account the above, the ground for analysis is that to understand what can be done for the efficiency and how the manager can best create an efficient organisation, the managers ought to know what is affecting their choices. The greater the job demands and stress for the manager are, it is more likely that the manager will not consider all options when making a decision or a change. Instead, the manager is more likely to choose an option that has earlier been applied in the organisation or imitate the practices of similar organisations (Yukl 2013:42). This may lead to problems remaining unresolved, as the same old methods are applied. Thus, as we know the efficiency requirements are neither new or rare, it is important that the managers have time for innovative and strategic planning.

Lastly, all actions covered, the efficiency should be reached. As this thesis does not actually measure efficiency, it is the manager's own experienced efficiency that matter. How to get this information and proceed from here will be covered in the following chapter.

# 4 Making a case of efficiency and the manager role

This thesis focuses on how efficiency is understood by the managers of home care units where the understanding of the human experience is the main focus. Therefore, the goal is to explore phenomena experienced subjectively (Simons 2009:162). This chapter considers the methodological choices made to address the issue of efficiency, the manager's role and their tasks. Firstly, the epistemological and ontological positions are discussed briefly. Then, an introduction to case study research is presented followed by critical choices made to choose a case, material and the method of analysis.

To explore the efficiency in home care organisations, one needs to collect the relevant material. Therefore, this thesis applies a case study method by combining interview studies with document analysis to explore the efficiency requirements as well as the role of the manager in home care organisation. While the efficiency requirements are found in the majority of regions and municipalities, this thesis does not suppose an objective truth. Instead, the care managers' subjective perceptions build the main focus. As such, a limited number of interviews and documents are collected and therefore no claim to make generalisable assumptions is made. As such, this thesis constructs knowledge rather than collects facts (Kvale & Brinkmann 2014:71). Furthermore, as the managers' experiences are triangulated by analysing the desired manager position, the focus shifts slightly. Yet, the knowledge remains to be based on an interpretivist epistemology (Bryman 2011:32).

## 4.1 Studying a Case

This thesis is conducted as a single case study aiming at a detailed and thorough study of one single case (Flyvbjerg 2006:12). Case study research can be conducted in multiple different ways, but Bryman (2011:74) argues that it is often the researchers end upon one or a combination of qualitative methods as they enable intensive and detailed exploration of the case. However, doing qualitative research is often criticised by some scholars mainly arguing that systematic statistical analysis is the only road to the truth in the social sciences (King, Keohane & Verba 1994:4). On the other hand, qualitative research methods enable exploring and illustrating complex relations in a more contextual manner. As such, quantitative methods were excluded. Compared to, for example, surveys, detailed, semi-structured interviews can provide more insight into how efficiency is perceived by

managers. Yet, whereas surveys would have enabled the usage of more research objects, interviews conducted in-depth rather than through formal survey mechanisms tend to be more exploratory and qualitative (Vromen 2010:258). Furthermore, a method choice did not either fall on statistical analysis, as this thesis does not aim to give an answer whether the care organisation is, or can be, efficient.

The choice of method should depend on the underlying research problem and its circumstances (Flyvbjerg 2006:10). In Sweden, the municipalities have the main responsibility for the care of old people and efficiency requirements are today found in almost every region and municipality. One could, therefore, ask why case study research, combining document analysis and interviews, is best applicable here. Qualitative research is criticised due to its tendency to being subjective (Blatter & Haverland 2012:68). However, as the interest area in this research lies in the managers' experiences, the qualitative research strategies and the chosen case remain appropriate for this thesis. On the other hand, the choice could have landed on observation or focus groups. The strength of focus groups could have been their possibility to enable learning between interview objects, by for instance, sharing strategies between managers. However, as the units of home care are individual and the managers are often individually responsible for their unit, this method didn't fit the chosen research questions. Additionally, observations could have been interesting, allowing the researcher to see the world with the managers' eyes. Furthermore, as Yukl (2012:75) reminds, most leader behaviour studies emphasise how much the behaviour is used rather than how well it is used. This is something that could have been grasped with observation yet would have required longitudinal research. As appropriate, Bryman (2011:444) argues that interviews are a better way to keep a specific focus compared to observations. As the main focus remains at human experience, it was relevant to focus on interviews instead of observations.

Therefore, the chosen method is justified and now all these considered, the method lands on case study research combining interview material and documents. But before the empirical material can be collected, a case selection has to be done.

## 4.2 Selecting a Case: Why Managers?

In this thesis, the chosen case is the manager of the municipal home care. The case being studied is thus a naturally occurring phenomenon (Yin 2014:16), something that already exists. It has been said that when it comes to elderly care, Sweden is not a welfare state but 290 welfare municipalities (Trydegård 2000:27). It is therefore relevant to focus on the municipal home care units. These care managers are individually responsible for budget, staff, the working environment as well as running and developing the operations. However, the division into the order- and executioner model means that it is the assistance officers<sup>14</sup> who make the decisions about the assistance for elderly while the managers and the home care execute the

<sup>14</sup> sv. Biståndshandläggare

work. The fact that the thesis builds a case of something contributes to connecting the theory to empirical material (Flyvbjerg 2006, Teorell & Svensson 2007). Care managers are chosen because they as FLMs are often responsible for their staff but at the same answer to someone above (Wolmesjö, 2005:185). This makes them a valuable object for research considering the chosen research questions.

Increased need for home care puts the leadership on agenda. The politicians in the municipalities delegate to care managers the right to independently make decisions according to the law. This entails that in the public sector efficiency requirements are set by politicians whereas the operating organisations are the ones who are to implement the changes. The population is getting older, and the proportion of older pensioners is increasing, alike the need for health- and social care. The trend in elderly care is that a growing number of people receive their care in their own home (Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, 2018:5), as it is a cost-efficient alternative to nursing homes.

Whereas the ordinary employees are the ones who do the work on street-level, managers are the ones who respond to politicians' decisions and requirements. Here, the role of management, or leadership, becomes central. According to Albertsson (2006:177), managers in health care organisations are special in a way that they have to collaborate both upwards and downwards in the organisation. However, as usual for human service organisations, they differ from ordinary bureaucratic organisations mainly in that they consist of people working with other people. It is the welfare of the clients that is believed to be the main focus (Alexanderson 2006:42). On top of everything, the leadership in home-based care becomes central as there is a special need for managerial competence as direct leadership is limited. As the employees work mainly on location, the manager has limited capacity to control them. At the same time, the worker does not have the possibility for support at all times either. Same applies for the manager, who does not either have the support of their manager at all times. All these considered, the relation between the manager and the employees in the home care organisations, builds up an interesting ground for deeper analysis.

### 4.3 Collecting the empirical material

't Hart (2010:104) argues that only empirical studies on personal characteristics and relationships can explain the action and choices of an individual. Therefore, the thesis material consists of interviews and document analysis.

The interviews were held with managers of home care. In accordance to the theoretical framework and what has been shown in the problem statement of this thesis, it does not seem unreasonable to assume that the care managers possess considerable knowledge and experience that may be useful in analysing the managers' perception of the efficiency requirements. The interview data was therefore collected by phenomenological interviews where the focus is on generating detailed and in-depth descriptions of human experiences (Roulston 2010:16). The qualitative interview is a key venue for exploring the ways in which

subjects experience and understand their world (Kvale 2014:47). Therefore, the focus has been on listening and concentrating on the distinctive features of situations and events, and upon the beliefs and personal experiences of the interviewees (Vromen 2010:258).

This thesis will combine the results of interview studies with an analysis on how care managers are recruited in Scania. Whereas the main interest in the empirical collection is the experiences and perceptions of the care managers, the care managers are governed by the politicians and researching on who can become a care manager is therefore interesting. The choice here is to both increase the validity of the interviews by triangulating the findings and also to give background information on what kind of managers are desired and recruited. Data triangulation refers to using multiple sources or data types to measure the same concept for a single unit (Leuffen, Shikano & Walter 2013:41). This is a common means to increase the validity of research, as combining different type of methods can produce more knowledge on the research problem. However, Bergström (1995:15-16) reminds that recruitment announcements give an idealised image of the desired manager. Even Lamont and Swindler (2014:163) argue that studying a person [or] a profession at a given moment may give the false sense that the current situation represents the full causal dynamics in play. This critique is recognised and avoided by positioning the research on the chosen managers' experiences and does not aim to give comparable results.

#### 4.3.1 Selecting individuals to interview

The selection of respondents should be guided by the aim of the study (Beitin 2014). The aim of this study is to explore the relations between the efficiency and the manager's role, including their tasks and the organisation of home care. The interviewer learns the interview method best by conducting interviews (Bryman 2011). Therefore, an early meeting the interviewees was of utmost importance. However, before the interview process can be started a respondent selection criteria has to be done.

The selection of interviewees considered mainly accessibility (see e.g. Blatter & Haverland 2012:99). Alike, Kvale (2007:56), this thesis emphasised the live interview situation where the interviewee's voice and facial and bodily expressions provide a richer access to how the manager explores their role and situation in an era of efficiency. Additionally, my requirements for the managers were that they were managers for municipal home care (i.e. not private provider), had different degrees of experience, different backgrounds, experience of systematic work environment management as well as staff responsibility for over more than 10 people.

After respondent selection and an initial contact with the chosen municipality representants, an email was sent to in total 21 managers. The interviewees were informed about the aim of this research as well as were invited to book an

interview<sup>15</sup>. Out of the original 21 contacted, interviews were booked with 11 people. There was a great variation in both the level and type of leadership experience among the selected care managers. The experience ranged from 2 years to more than 20 years as well as from prior experience in nursing to leadership professionals. To maintain the anonymity of the interviewees, following fictional names were assigned; Anton, Britta, Charlotte, Dennis, Elias, Fiona, Gabriel, Heidi, Ida, Jessica, Karin. A common critique of qualitative interviews is that due to the lower number of respondents, the interview results cannot be generalised (Kvale & Brinkmann 2014:213). Whereas, this was never the main goal of this thesis, it should be acknowledged that some more interviews could have been conducted. However, this cannot be classed as a limitation as the data collected started to saturate, i.e., there were noticeable patterns in the material, and there was no need to continue collecting the data (Saunders et al. 2017:1894).

This thesis was conducted following the general ethical guidelines (Bryman 2011:131-132). This implied informing research participants about the purpose of research, acquiring consent from the participants and making sure that the participants were aware that the participation is voluntary and could be withdrawn at any time during the research process. The participants were also informed that collected data would only be used for research purposes and nobody else had access to it. The interview data was transcribed without any references to individual participants. Consequently, the decision was made to not share the chosen municipalities, as this is not relevant ahead of exploring how efficiency or manager role, tasks or the organisation are perceived.

#### 4.3.2 Guiding the interview process

The interview guide consists of open-ended questions taking into account the research question as well as the theoretical framework. A general focus has been four themes; efficiency requirements, leadership, manager role and flexibility as well as manager-employee relation. Interviews were conducted with aspiration to cover all these themes. As the themes have been the main focus, the same open-ended questions have not been asked in all of the interviews and not either in the same order (Roulston 2010:8). Instead, the interview guide has been used as more of an example<sup>16</sup>. The choice was to enable interviewees to formulate answers in their own words while making sure that the chosen themes are included (Roulston 2010:12).

<sup>15</sup> See appendix 4 for copy of the email.

<sup>16</sup> See table 2 & the full guide in appendix 1.

Table 2: Preview of the Interview Guide

<b>MANAGER ROLE &amp; FLEXIBILITY</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What a manager can choose to do with their tasks is limited by the demands and constraints of the work (Stewart 1982:9).</li> <li>• The greater the job demands and stress for the manager are, it is more likely that the manager will not consider all options when making a decision or a change (Yukl 2013:42).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does efficiency influence your work? Tell me about your normal working day? What are your main tasks and why? How is your freedom of action?</li> </ul>
<b>MANAGER- &amp; EMPLOYEE RELATION</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaders have an important role in the organization's communication and the line manager has to communicate between the operational activities and the management (Palmér 2011:29).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are the requirements formulated and communicated? Both to you as a manager and from you to your employees?</li> </ul>

How an interviewer uses follow-up-questions affects the interview in combination with what is said by individual interviewees. Thus, this interview guide has been constructed in a way that there is a main question which is then followed by optional follow-up-questions. According to Lillrank (2012:283), it is important to allow several possibilities to explore an experience. Asking for examples underlines the respect for the interviewees and suggests that their experiences are valuable (ibid.). All the questions originate from the theoretical framework<sup>17</sup>, meaning that the asked questions attempt to either confirm, further explain or explore the theory or previous findings.

The interviews were all semi-structured and, apart from one<sup>18</sup>, recorded on tape.

#### 4.3.3 Complimentary data: focus on recruitment announcements

To explore how the managers perceive efficiency there is a need to understand their role and what is required of them. Care managers are on top of implementing efficiency requirements responsible for the economy, operations, working environment and the staff. Therefore, the interview study is triangulated with a document analysis. These documents show what is demanded of a manager as well as can shed light on how prominent efficiency mindset is. By collecting data on the characteristics and demands on the care manager, the research problem can be

<sup>17</sup> See appendix 1.

<sup>18</sup> The interview with Heidi was instead analysed through detailed notes.



triangulated. Furthermore, the analysis on the documents can show how extensive the issue of efficiency is. Based on whether the announcements emphasise efficiency or change, the spectrum of efficiency becomes evident. Consequently, if an announcement refers to efficiency, we can expect the managers to be under demands for efficiency, which gives a good starting point for the interviews and the following analysis.

Of the 33 municipalities in Scania, 23 announcements for care manager were received and analysed<sup>19</sup>. The most recent announcement for recruiting a manager in a home care organisation were chosen. As Carlsson and Siljehult (2008) argued, recruitment announcements for FLMs have changed over time, several announcements from each municipality were not considered. This was due to a risk of larger scattering in time.

## 4.4 Data analysis method: Finding themes and sub-themes

Each of the materials used resulted in written text – transcriptions from the interviews as well as the analysis on the recruiting announcements for care managers. This following part describes the process of creating these documents.

In this thesis, the coding follows a process of thematic analysis, creating a framework. Framework, i.e. a matrix-based method for arranging and synthesising data, is a way to provide a framework for analysing qualitative data and a way of managing the themes and data (Bryman 2011:528). It all starts with creating central themes as well as sub-themes that then form the basis for future analysis of texts.

The process of thematic analysis in interviews was begun with the transcriptions. After all the interviews were conducted the interviews were transcribed to facilitate the re-reading and continuous use of the data. Thereafter the data was coded, i.e. the data was reduced to conceptual elements that were then sorted into categories (Roulston 2010:151). Coding is the pivotal first analytic step that moves the researcher from description toward conceptualising that description (Charmaz & Belgrave 2012:355). To begin the coding process, a so-called initial coding was done by listening through the interviews to collect key words and key terms in the interviews. The interviews were then transcribed by listening the interviews as many times as was needed, this time with the intention of collecting entire sentences said or arguments stated by the interviewees. After all the quotes were collected, these were then sorted in categories based on theme or message that the quote entailed. When it came to the recruiting announcements, the documents were firstly read in full, and then a similar coding process was initiated.

Identifying themes does not produce generalisable assumptions, as there rarely are sets of themes just waiting to be found (Ryan & Bernard 2003:103). This requires the researcher to make a decision. In this thesis, the central themes were

<sup>19</sup> See appendix 4 for contact and details.

chosen to be “types of efficiency”, “demands/ constraints/ loyalties”, “manager’s tasks and relations” as well as “leadership”. These were then specified with sub-themes<sup>20</sup>. There are several ways to look for the themes, for instance, according to Ryan and Bernard (2003:88), themes originate both from the collected data and from the investigator’s prior theoretical understanding of the phenomenon. In this thesis, the themes have been identified by looking for repetitions, metaphors, transitions, missing data, theory-related material and, of course, similarities and differences (as suggested in Ryan & Bernard 2008:89-93). The goal of the analysis is not to end up with unequivocal and quantifiable meanings on the themes in focus (Kvale 2007:13). Instead, the task of the researcher is to clarify and to analyse whether the ambiguities and contradictory statements are due to a failure in communication or for other reasons that can then be analysed (ibid.). These could be, for instance, genuine inconsistencies, ambivalence and contradictions to the manager’s situation.

The analysis was conducted on the transcripts and the recruitment announcements. To illustrate the findings and to build arguments, quotes are included in the analysis. As the interviews were conducted in Swedish, these were translated by the author. The material was translated after the analysis was conducted and after the selection of illustrative quotes. The following chapter constitutes the analysis which is then followed by final remarks and answers to the research questions.

<sup>20</sup> See the entire coding scheme in Appendix 2.

# 5 The relations between efficiency and the manager role – analysing the results

This thesis aims to explore the relations between the efficiency and the manager's role, including their tasks and the organisation of home care. Furthermore, this thesis focuses on shedding light on how the leader role, tasks and the organisation are perceived by the care managers. This following part outlines the results obtained through the interviews and the conducted document analysis. Firstly, this chapter presents how the efficiency is understood by the managers and according to the recruitment announcements. That gives us possibility to move forward to the manager role and their tasks as perceived. Last but not least, the analysis will focus on the home care as an organisation making it possible to connect the previous research, theoretical framework and the analysis itself.

## 5.1 Efficiency requirements in home care

Efficiency measures how well an organisation uses its resources (Gandler 2013:363). Similar understanding was found in the interview data;

"Efficiency for me means doing things smarter, with the resources we have, it's not always about doing things faster or more cost-effective but using the resources you already have in a smarter way." (Jessica)

However, based on the analysis, there is more to efficiency than just resources, reflecting the difference between efficiency and effectiveness. The interviews show similarities in how smarter use of employees, cooperation with other units, focus on recruiting and digitalisation will lead to more efficient organisation. Jessica, for instance, indicates that essentially the mission for care managers is to make the employees understand that efficiency requirements will bring positive effects; to get them understand that working with a *reasonable standard of living* will be good for everyone involved and reduce stress and anxiety. In brief, the interviews point towards effectiveness perceived as developing, planning and prioritising. Equivalent is found in the documents. For instance, Burlöv aims to recruit a manager who is "responsible for driving development, prioritisation and clarification of the unit's own mission and goals based on the business plan".

Taking the above into consideration, it is interesting to in detail look into the recruitment announcements explaining the relation between the political decisions and the care manager. The announcement for a care manager in Åstorp states that as a care manager "you have the ability to create effectiveness and develop the

operations based on political goals”. Similarly, the care manager in Hässleholm is “responsible for leading, planning and following up the business and running the development work based on political missions and goals”. Exactly the same cannot be said according to the interviewees. The findings bring forward that many of the managers do not feel like the efficiency requirements come from above, from politicians or authorities in the municipality. Instead, many believe that it was mostly themselves who set the requirements in cooperation with their own manager. For example, Jessica argues that her boss has not told her that the unit needs efficiency. However, due to the unit's background, it has got some special conditions and the first years were a lot about getting everything function in the unit.

"As it has been in my unit, I have definitely had the requirements to fix things, but I have not got the feeling that we need to get efficient. Then again, it [efficiency] has kind of become the result of what I have implemented ... The things that I have done are more to get structure in the unit and that in itself has led to us being able to recover the economy." (Jessica)

Quite similarly, Britta describes the situation as more like artwork, where “the political level gives the frame, but the manager paints the picture”. Of course, contradictory experiences are present. For instance, Heidi experienced the efficiency to be alike a directive from above, mentioning that care managers rarely take part in the actual development of efficiency requirements. Ida instead sees the relation between operational and strategic levels as follows;

"I feel that I have a lot of freedom in how I do things. As long as I have that, I'm happy. But the day they control too much from the top, I have to consider whether to abandon the ship." (Ida)

Similarly, Jessica thinks she has good possibilities to influence the requirements. For instance, some decisions can be pushed back or further discussed before the implementation. However, she also reminds that sometimes the reply from the politicians is that this has to be prioritised, portraying a lack of influence from the care manager.

### 5.1.1 Perceived Similarities of the Efficiency Requirements

Findings from this study show that all of the interviewees perceive efficiency as something that was needed in the organisation. Yet, many thoughts emerge. For instance, Charlotte reminds that the home care must not “become efficient in a wrong way”. For her, this means that the organisation cannot only think of the cost-efficiency, but all the changes have to make an improvement also for the employee and the customer. In contrast to previous research, it appears in the interviews with the managers that not many managers recognise the demand from the political level to become more efficient. However, all of them recognise the will to become more efficient. Many of the interviewees argue that it is not a question of times or

becoming quicker at the job done. Instead, it is about doing the right things and not having to do things twice. For instance, Fiona says efficiency is not perceived as something negative, more like something that can elevate and evolve the home care.

"I always think that there is room for efficiency, even if you reach the goals and such, we can always be a little bit better and a little bit smarter, but we will never be perfect" (Fiona)

The positive approach is something that emerges also in the recruitment announcement from Höganäs, "You are a person who sees opportunities instead of obstacles". Similar mindset is found in the interview with Elias who mainly sees possibilities in efficiency, not challenges. Even Britta remains somewhat positive ahead of the change, stating that "we don't have a choice, we need to change". These two perceptions relate to believing in the vision and the important role of the manager in change.

Care manager's main job is to communicate the efficiency requirements. However, this can hit a rocky start when politicians and the authorities are involved. Heidi stresses that the time devoted to a new requirement is of essence, meaning that if enough time is given to the new change, the requirement will most likely succeed and if the implementation is hastened then there is a risk of bad working environment for employees. Even Gabriel recognises this. He experiences that the authorities can lack some structure and ability to long-term plan, leading to quick decisions and dissatisfied welfare workers. For instance, Gabriel refers to earlier implementation where communication from the political side has been lacking and that "it is still there, that we were not being listened to". According to him, this doesn't create a good base for further development relations between the political and operational levels. On the other hand, Jessica recognises this, saying that "if a manager cannot communicate the efficiency issue nicely, there comes sick leave" This could entail a demanding position for the manager who is left in between these two.

This and the section above have summarised how the similar the managers and the documents perceive the efficiency. Before going into the role of the manager and their tasks, some differences in argumentation ought to be discussed.

### 5.1.2 Perceived Differences of the Efficiency Requirements

Alike the previous contributions, this case study shows how efficiency can be understood in different ways. Although most of the managers agree upon the need for efficiency, there is a larger divergence as to what they don't believe to be working that well. Two main themes emerge. Firstly, the uncertainty around the efficiency bring thoughts forward. For instance, Britta perceives effectiveness as something unknown. She argues that the most of efficiency has already been done and there is not much left to change. Anton, instead, focuses on the uncertainty of staff and guaranteeing the good care. He experiences some difficulties in handling the sick absences.

“Of course, we have bad days too. We can have 4 sick absences in the morning, and we do not get substitutes. It's not so darn fun for those who work, because then you get to run around like idiots and take it all, but the next day it's fine again.” (Anton)

Consequently, uncertainty of what the future brings, emerges as a factor. This is mainly because there seems to be no clear understanding what the home care is supposed to look like in the future. According to Dennis, it is his job to get the unit from place A to place B without knowing where or what the place B is. Similarly, Jessica ties this to what even Wolmesjö (2005) argued; the managers are expected to find solutions to organisational problems. For instance, Jessica declares, there is a common belief that the home care needs to change, but *how* this is done is still unclear. She especially asks for more proactive work on the strategic level, stating that “we care managers have to take care of what is happening right now, we have absences and everything”.

Then again, the thematic analysis demonstrates diverse ideas on how stress and working environment are perceived. For instance, Jessica would prefer an introduction of softer values in the governance of the home care. She suggests looking into healthy attendance or the wellbeing of the employees instead of sick rates and financial surplus. The other managers recognise, just like the earlier research suggests, sick leaves as the main problem for the home care units. Ranging from how much absent staff costs for the organisation and how some changes lead to more sick leave, it is clear that managers are aware of the challenge. A recruitment announcement from Klippan, however, offers a different perspective writing that “the duties include leading from a salutogenic perspective”. Rather contradictory, the earlier research shows an emphasis on sick rates which traditionally is pathogenic perspective. Tied to this understanding of increasing sick leave, Karin pleads for more accountability from the employees’ side. And she’s not alone; both Anton and Dennis remind that it is actually employee’s responsibility to keep themselves healthy and workable referring to the employment contracts.

The above makes it possible to connect together efficiency and working environment.

"If you have control of it [the working environment], it gives so much more effects. If they enjoy being here, then we get better customer continuity and better quality for customers" (Anton)

This can be contrasted with what Karin argues in the quote below. According to her, the focus has in many ways been on the working environment and the lack of resources.

"I think you can exaggerate the importance a little too much, that it is [only] about finances or the work environment for the staff, but I do not think that you can always say that we need more time and resources, I think we need organisational changes. I don't think those units that have problems would be able to manage it even if they did get more resources" (Karin)

The quote above shows an interesting addition to the debate. Much of the debate earlier has focused on exactly this, how the staff is overworked and how the undefined efficiency requirements have drained the health- and social care (e.g. Larsson & Plesner 2019). The literature review finds stress and sick rates being a daily problem in elderly care. Even the managers interviewed recognise this. For instance, Gabriel claims that merely mentioning “efficiency” increases the stress in the organisation. Even Jessica recognises this saying that “it becomes very stigmatised to talk about efficiency and we have to get past this *run faster-thinking*”. However, Karin offers another perspective. She reminds that the debate on how much more demanding the work in home care has become has forgotten one aspect - it is the level of ambition of elderly care that has deteriorated.

Wrapping up, this section has analysed the perceived differences in the question of efficiency. Especially the future of efficiency splits the managers, where some see potential in efficiency and others dread what is to come. Furthermore, the working environment and the role of stress has been discussed. With the following words from Sjöbo, "as a manager, you are expected to work for efficient processes, optimised staffing and a budget in balance", we move forward to the manager role and their tasks as understood in the documents and perceived by the care managers.

## 5.2 Manager’s role and tasks in home care

“We are looking for a brave, actionable and inspirational manager for the home care” (Ängelholm). The care manager is responsible for the budget, staff, operations and the working environment, but on top of that, what kind of a leader is desired in the home care? The conducted document analysis shows in total 83 different attributes or adjectives used to describe a potential care manager. This could entail a variety of different managers. The figure below shows the 10 most prominently used words for a manager wanted.

Based on the theoretical framework, the desired attributes can be analysed from different perspectives. Firstly, there is a clear connection to both theories on managers and leaders. Attributes such as motivating, involving, communicative and cooperative resemble a transformational leader, where the relations within the organisation remain central. On the other hand, factors such as clarity, structure and experience in managing could be interpreted to better fit the category of “manager”.

Figure 1: 10 most prominent attributes for a care manager



Secondly, the attributes can also be analysed based on Yukl's theories. Here the line could be drawn between tasks-oriented behaviours and clear as well as structured leaders. Furthermore, involving and motivating leader seems to correspond with relations-oriented behaviours. Then again, development orientation and inspiring could entail change-oriented behaviours. External behaviours remain somewhat undecided. On one side, communicative leader could show external behaviours. However, Yukl's taxonomy has been criticised to forget the role of communication. Yet, the endgame seems to correspond with the theoretical framework, a care manager is expected to both be a leader and a manager. Quite similarly, Karin reminds that she as a manager has different sides.

"I have both soft and hard sides, both culture and structure, I can have these qualities as listening and being empathetic but at the same time I can focus on assignments and what we should do." (Karin)

Hägglund and Werner (2005), amongst others, find both managers and leaders in the elderly care. However, according to their research most care managers resembled the ideal managers, not leaders. Similar is found in the analysis, where



Lund is recruiting a leader who has “a strong desire to develop the business, employees and themselves”. On the other hand, Ystad wants both the manager and a leader in same, “as a manager and a leader you have a holistic view, can analyse problems and put them in a larger context in order to find constructive solutions”. Interviews, however, show that Gabriel sees himself as “more of a leader than a manager”. On the other hand, Elias expresses “of course, I'm the boss and the leader here, but I see myself as part of the group”.

Continuing on the attributes, two of the most prominently searched properties for a care manager are previous experience of management and relevant education. Based on the previous research, two kinds of experience come into play. Firstly, experience in elderly care is sometimes required from a care manager. For instance, Lund, Perstorp and Sjöbo all either seek a manager with experience from health- and social care. Some of the interviews seem to agree. Among these, Fiona considers it a clear advantage that as a manager with experience from the field knows what the staff “suffer” from. According to her, the workers feel confident that the manager knows what it is like to work in elderly care. This corresponds with the findings in the previous research where especially the non-understanding of the field from the managerial level has been a main reason for employee dissatisfaction. However, Fiona emphasises that “it [experience in social care] is an advantage but certainly not a prerequisite” and continuing with,

"I think we drain the society by turning nurses into managers." (Fiona)

The quote above ties to what Ekholm (2012) discusses in her article how talented nurses do not always make talented managers. Even Fiona adds that the same competence she has, she could have acquired by being responsive manager. Per se, NPM has led to manager becoming a profession, where experience in the field becomes irrelevant. This perspective is present in the document analysis where some municipalities such as Kristianstad and Båstad emphasise in greater detail the importance of leadership experience. Of the interviews, Dennis, Gabriel and Jessica represent this group of managers. Yet, the combination of these experiences seems to be the most prominent, where, for example, Höör and Eslöv are examples. On the other hand, another experience comes into play when talking to Jessica;

"I was raised in this era. I know that there are some managers who have been leaders during another era when you had a lot more time with customers and you interpreted a reasonable standard of living in a completely different way. It's probably quite another thing to be a manager now. " (Jessica)

This is moreover tied to Kotter's (2012) arguments on new managers bringing the change. Perhaps, more inexperienced managers could benefit the field. Exploring this, there definitely are both positive and negative factors in the question of experience. The fact that the documents and interviews seem to differ from each other, corresponds with the previous research. For example, Wolmesjö (2005) found that politicians and the care managers perceive the most important skills for a manager to be different. In this setting, the recruitment announcements that

portray the ideal version of a manager place somewhere between the politicians and managers.

As already discussed, it could be debated how experienced a care manager should be. However, yet another aspect of experience arises in the interviews; the experience and value of being a leader in the same organisation.

“But it just works because I've been here a few years. My employees have gained confidence in me, most of them. It means that they dare to talk to me about things and then it will be so that we can solve problems before they get too big.” (Anton)

In similar, yet from the opposite perspective, Jessica experiences that employees need stability and home cares where the manager is changed all the time does not lead to an efficient organisation. In her own role, she recognises the importance of working on the relations within the unit.

"Now I am the manager who has stayed here for the longest time and the employees have been waiting whether I stay or not, so our trust journey kind of starts now. Therefore, we have not yet been able to implement these things." (Karin)

Summarising the findings presented, the thematic analysis shows how the experience of leading is essential for creating efficient organisations. Furthermore, there are many different qualities to the role of care manager amongst many the experience emerges as an important factor. Carrying on, the following two sections deep dive into perceived similarities and differences of the manager's role and tasks in the home care during the era of efficiency requirements.

### 5.2.1 Perceived Similarities of the Manager Role and Tasks

The care manager has many different tasks. The perceived similarities in argumentation show that the main tasks are to monitor the performance, recognise the employees, as well as develop and represent the organisation.

Based on the theoretical framework, the task-oriented behaviours for a manager are to plan, to clarify, to monitor and to solve problems. This corresponds with the findings in the document analysis, where the announcement from Båstad reads as follows “You plan, organise and prioritise your work in an effective way and have the ability to change your approach and planning according to the needs of the [municipality]”. The same can be seen in the interviews. The managers stated that they continually monitor the progress and quality of the elderly care unit. One interesting finding is Dennis and his perception of systematic monitoring. For him it is important to follow-up and constantly improve the organisation. Even Fiona reminds that the organisation “measures everything”.

Whether the organisations are already efficient or getting there, divides opinions. For instance, Anton tells that his unit has “already gotten there”. For his unit this means that they get rewards such as new winter clothes or e-bikes and educations in different cities. This links to manager's task to recognise the

employees and reward them for a job well done. Anton continues with arguing that employees like the rewards. He perceives employees enjoying a workplace where they feel like they are being seen and are important. Furthermore, Anton explains that without being efficient, the workplace would not be able to offer these rewards. Even Dennis recognises the importance of appreciating the employees. Emphasising the importance of the rewards reaching the correct people and not the workforce in whole. The finding in the interviews brought forth that the care managers apply different strategies to achieve efficiency in the organisation.

"I want to see a workplace that grows, that takes responsibility. It is important that people take great responsibility, then everything becomes more and more effective and then it saves us money and we feel better." (Anton)

This kind of shift into a new paradigm could, according to the interview results, be challenged by the old habits. Tied to the understanding of the stress of conscience (Orrung Wallin 2013:27), the interviews show that the care workers historically work, as Charlotte puts it, "with their hearts"<sup>21</sup>. This can lead to resistance from the workforce, as they experience it to be hard to do their job due to the changed policies and regulations. On the other hand, Britta argues that this is mainly because the home care hangs on to an old tradition. Ida recognises that the staff often feel sorry for their patients, also referring to many being empathetic and experiencing it hard to do "only what is needed". She says, it's normal for the staff to do a bit too much. Even Britta shares that employees can sometimes feel sorry for their customers and question who is then going to help an elderly, if nursing assistant does not do that. A solution here, according to Ida, is to closely monitor all the help the patients get and closely work for more independent elderly who can take care of their own life as much as possible. She argues that the solution is not to cramp up the schedules, so staff do not have time to carry out the work at their users' homes. Charlotte reminds that if the staff understands why they are doing something, then it is a lot simpler to get them to do it. Even the previous contributions to leadership theories recognise this. Alike the transformational leader, the care managers have to work for more understanding from the workforce.

"If you sit at the top and decide things without informing and involving the staff then I think it is much more difficult ... If [they, employees,] understand why [they, employees,] should do things then things are much easier." (Charlotte)

The quote stated above corresponds to what Yukl (2013:112) argued; a major change is unlikely to become successful if it does not receive the needed support from the workforce. However, it is not only the workforce that needs to support the change. Lundquist (1998) argued that governance from above should be clear and follow the principles of the common good. The managers have to themselves understand the need for the change, to be able to "sell it forward to the staff", as

<sup>21</sup> i.e. the employees are empathetic.

Gabriel puts it. Britta instead seems less secure, hoping for more understanding from the society's side.

"I think we will succeed, but it will require a lot of us [and] understanding from the rest of society" (Britta)

Externally the managers act on many different forums. For instance, having meetings and planning the development with their colleagues. Yet, some managers find interest conflicts when it comes to efficiency. For instance, Gabriel mentions the labour unions and Fiona witnesses ignorance from the politicians. She points out that home care is well aware that having staff who "only has coffee with the elderly" is too costly and the fact that this is still believed to be the case shows ignorance from the other parties. Similarly, Jessica points out that conflicts can also arise within the municipality, between the home care and assistance officers. For instance, Ida reminds that the decisions that the assistance officers take are in direct correlation with how much the home care costs. When asking Jessica about the efficiency in the municipality the reply is "it is not the assistance officers at least [who seek efficiency], they run their own race". Rather similarly, Fiona points out that home care has been painted as the black sheep of the efficiency discussion, noting that if all the operations, for example, authorities at the city hall, would get the same attention in the issue of efficiency, there wouldn't be need to focus on the issue so much. Tied to the understanding of representing, or promotion and defending the reputation of the work unit or organisation, a care manager sometimes has to fight for their employees. This corroborates with the previous research conducted by Ljung and Ivarsson Westerberg (2017) who argued that the foremost role of the manager is to defend their employees. This is apparent in the following statement.

"I do not mean that we should argue with our authorities, but it helps my employees notice that I take the fight for them" (Karin)

To outline the essence of the discussion above, the main similarities in argumentation consider the importance of rewarding the employees as well as changing the culture of the home care. More about this in the section on home care, but first some differences in experience.

### 5.2.2 Perceived Differences of the Manager Role and Tasks

All interviews perceived their role to match Yukl's (2012) taxonomy, however, some differences emerge too. The perceived differences cover issues like loyalty relations, presence and connection with the employees, delegation, budget and cooperation.

Considering the managers' loyalty relations, it is evident that the managers have different priorities when it comes to their tasks. "It is kind of a small puzzle, it should be effective but also good for both the customer and the employee", reflects Charlotte. However, here too the demands from different perspectives come into

play. The document analysis shows much focus on “individuals/client’s needs in the centre of attention”. Although, the employees can de facto plan their own working day but if every customer wants breakfast at 8, there is not much to do. On the other hand, Jessica argues that a manager sometimes has to put the employees and the operations before the client. This corresponds with the theoretical framework where many earlier researchers have argued that position as a care manager entails conflicting demands and competing loyalty relations. Even the interview results point in this direction. For instance, Dennis argues that he always puts the organisation first. The opposite is shown in the interview with Gabriel who clearly points out that for him the staff always comes first. Furthermore, one main finding linking to the theoretical framework is that the task of planning has mainly been delegated to another person or a group of people.

Whilst many of the interviewees express the importance of a good working environment, almost all of them also mention its challenge in the home care. The employees work in the customers’ homes as well as move from place A to place B during the working hours. This entails a challenge for the manager who has to guarantee a good working environment for his subordinates with limited ability to control the environment the employees are in. For instance, the fact that the employees often work alone and in various locations entails different kind of problems including loneliness. Tied to this understanding of loneliness in home care, the importance of colleagues emerges as an important aspect, both for the manager and for the employees. Even this entails challenges for the manager. For instance, Britta reminds that the natural forums for socialising are limited in the home care. Instead, creative solutions are needed. Moreover, another difference between the care managers seems to be how they see their own role as leader in distance. For example, Fiona finds it hard to reach the staff when they meet so rarely. Anton instead sees an advantage in being a manager in distance referring to distance as a clear goal for the future, “the best would be if I didn’t have to come here more than a few times a year”. On the other hand, Charlotte emphasises the importance of teams and relations within the organisation.

"If you feel that you are part of the team then you also feel more responsibility for your work" (Charlotte)

According to the figure earlier, the care manager should be involving. Therefore, what Charlotte says in the quote above, brings together two interesting findings in the interview study and makes it possible to connect delegation, working environment and the wellbeing of the employees. Both relating to the task-oriented and relations-oriented behaviour, many managers report more emphasis on delegation when it comes to planning and scheduling the work in the organisation. Many announce that they have recently changed into a model where the employees mainly are responsible for scheduling their workday. Similarly, Gabriel insists on the importance of delegation. According to him, it is important that the employees are the main actors in creating the change, instead of the manager deciding what happens next. However, tied to the arguments in the theoretical framework, managers sometimes need to opt-out from some behaviours to be able to act in another way. For instance, the interviews show that even if the desired delegation

also takes time from the manager. Both Britta and Elias inform that sometimes the quickest way to implementation is to do it on their own. For instance, Britta deems that administrating some issues take so much time from the manager that it's easier to decide alone than allow employees to decide on their own. Elias reports the same, only that he sometimes cannot understand why people just don't do what's best for them. This in turn ties to clarifying roles to the employees. As Britta puts it, "it's about employees understanding their mission, understanding my mission, understanding politics ... it's about participation".

"You only talk about the budget, are we not worth more?" cites Britta her employees. Based on the previous research, much of the elderly care governance centres around the budget and even Britta admits that the position as a care manager requires the manager to "be careful with how the tax money is used". However, the remaining care managers interviewed seem to disagree. For the interviewees the budget is more of an instrument to show progress and potential. For instance, Anton announces the talk about budgets being mostly to show the differences and to let the employees see the change. Even Dennis refers to this when saying that when he shows figures or similar to employees, the goal is to allow the employees to see the same picture as he as a leader does. This relates back to the envisioning change. Even Trelleborg emphasises the importance of vision, "with a good ability to communicate you create a lively dialogue around vision and mission in which everyone comes to speak." According to Dennis, by measuring and showing the results, the unit gets immediate improvements. On the other hand, Gabriel notes that the financial framework puts more pressure on the care manager. However, with experience from the private sector, he points out that the beauty of working in the public sector is that, surely, following the budget and achieving positive results are important, but so are many more factors. This corresponds to previous research stating that the budgets are not as important as has been earlier emphasised. On the other hand, a competing understanding is provided by Jessica;

"My view is that we have governed a lot in economic terms, and it has become a bit like a competition. We should definitely aim to keep the budget, but I do not think it should be a competition between the care managers." (Jessica)

Tying together the data from the documents and the interviews, cooperation between the managers arises as central theme in the interviews. Dennis sees the cooperation of something like learning from each other. For instance, he notes that he can show how to do it and then it is up to other units and management to follow his lead. On the other hand, Ida and Elias underline the close cooperation between units. Whereas Elias says that the organisations have almost "become a one great home care", Ida argues as follows:

"Our top executives have been to a business conference and there they say that the providers who choose to coordinate their home care have proven to be a definite contributing factor in meeting the elderly care of the future ... I think it will provide much more in financial terms than what we have thought before. " (Ida)

This can be contrasted against Karin who brings forward a different perspective.

"It affects my freedom of action. If I want to cooperate more then it means that I also have to give up in certain questions ... we have a lot of freedom here in the municipality to do things in our own way. It is obvious that you do not want to give up that [freedom] but in some cases it [more cooperation] probably wouldn't hurt." (Karin)

In line with parts of the theoretical framework, manager's freedom of action emerges as an important aspect in manager's work. The quote above describes this relation in relation to cooperation. Connecting the two points above, Britta associates the freedom of action with economy.

"It is always more fun to work "in the green" [good economy], then I have completely different room for freedom with courage to try new things." (Britta)

To review the points above, it has been shown that there are different perspectives on how the managers prioritise amongst customers, employees and the organisation. Additionally, the perception on delegation as well as possibility to communicate with their employees differs between managers. Furthermore, compared to the previous research, the budget and economics are seen in a different way.

### 5.2.3 Home care as an organisation under efficiency requirements

Home care is facing changes and challenges. This following section discusses results from the organisational point of view, where especially the manager's perceptions of home care's role as an employer as well as the future of the organisation remain in the centre of attention.

Both the analysed documents and the interviews emphasise the laws and regulations surrounding the organisation of home care. The different laws that affect the organisation of home care have made sure that the home care looks entirely different today compared to before. For example, Anton reminds that the home care has to constantly consider what is the municipality's responsibility when it comes to the elderly care. The following two quotes portray the considerations.

"The city should not send qualified nurses there to cut a sandwich for you." (Anton)

"Everything will not be solved and that you [old person] will have to take your own responsibility. You must make sure you keep active and move well in advance so that the home is adapted to your physical ability." (Ida)

As shown above, Ida mentions that what is really needed is that society and the people in it start to consider their own responsibility in the question of efficiency. For her, this means that home care has to, on top of giving care, inform the society

about the changes and make sure that the future elderly is aware of the changing nature of the home care.

Much of the earlier knowledge points towards approaching recruitment challenges. A main finding in the interview results as well as in the theoretical framework is that a care manager's main job is to recruit and retain employees. To face the future, Fiona reminds that the need for technology is unavoidable; the number of elderlies is on the rise and the sector stands ahead of a challenge of not having enough care providers. Even if agreeing, both Ida and Heidi remind that the introduction of technology has to benefit both the elderly and the employees. All of them agree that the welfare sector needs to use the manpower there where the technology cannot be used. Fiona recognises the future perspective, arguing that the home care has the employees, they just need to make sure that the employees are ready for what the future brings. Jessica, on the other hand, sees a challenge in preparing the employees for the future.

"I think the biggest obstacle ahead of the future is tradition and culture, both in terms of how employees view themselves and how the society sees the home care." (Jessica)

Similar perspective is offered by Karin who especially sees the commitment and loyalty of the employees as an issue.

"In my experience, now I should not say that it is so everywhere, but I think that in many places where it [efficiency] does not work, they also do not agree on the basic question, which is that the working time is for work. There you instead think that working hours should include more time of rest and when you have a gap you can go home or to the pharmacy or do something else." (Karin)

According to Karin, all working time should be devoted to work. Similarly, how many and what kind of employees work in the care units, emerges as an important topic for the managers. For example, Heidi experiences that younger male employees are more change oriented and Dennis wants ability over education and loyalty. According to him, it is better to have "people who stay 5 years and perform 100% over someone who stays their whole life out and gives 50-70%". Equivalently, Anton suggests "making sure you work on recruiting people who want to work here and who don't call in sick every day". This quote brings together the theoretical framework and the earlier research; The care manager resembles a transformational leader and the staff issues influence the entire organisation.

To recap, there seems to be mutual understanding of the home care's changing role. The home care cannot further be seen as an all-round working service for older people, but the elderly has to take more responsibility for their own psychical and mental state. Additionally, the home care's role as an employer and the manager's task to recruit and retain the workforce revealed to be of importance. The employees of the home care are expected to take more responsibility for their employment.



## 5.3 Summarising remarks and discussions

The sections above explored the efficiency in home care as well as how the care managers perceived their role, tasks and the organisation in an era of efficiency. By applying a case study method with thematic analysis on data acquired by interviews and document analysis, the aim was to explore the relation between the efficiency and the manager's role, including their tasks and the organisation of home care.

All of the interviews perceived efficiency as something necessary. However, the earlier focus on merely budgets and scheduling was criticised by the managers. Instead, the care managers emphasised the importance of smarter use of resources as well as rehabilitation, technology and organisational changes. Closely linked to the research in the literature review, the position as a care manager entailed contradictory demands from different directions. Whether there were demands from the politicians or the authorities remains, however, unclear, since the interviewees proudly put great emphasis on their freedom of action and especially emphasised their possibility to decide how the units are run.

Alike the previous contribution to the taxonomy, this thesis also found more focus on task-oriented and relations-oriented behaviours. Whereas for interviewees there was a pressure to not only follow the political rules but also to mediate change, the change-oriented behaviours did not emerge as evident as the other behaviours. However, both the theoretical framework and the findings in the recruitment announcements emphasised the care managers' ability to encourage innovation. On the other hand, external behaviour appeared mainly in the form of cooperation and taking the side of the employees. When it came to the debate on leaders alternatively managers in the care environment, no exact result could be identified. However, this thesis managed to contribute to the discussion on experience in nursing respectively leadership. Two new forms of experience were found. Firstly, that of staying in the same organisation and secondly that of being younger in the branch. Furthermore, the role of the care manager is a complex position which requires many different traits and behaviours. Therefore, this thesis has slightly contributed to the research of manager recruiting. It has broadened the knowledge of required attributes for a care manager. Whereas the care manager was found to resemble a transformational leader, there also were connections to more manager-like behaviour. Thus, the endgame seemed to correspond with the theoretical framework, a care manager was expected to both be a leader and a manager.

The earlier debate has in great detail focused on putting the working environment and the efficiency against each other. Yet, according to this analysis they could not be seen as each other's counterparts. All the managers see the wellbeing of the welfare workers as important and especially ahead of recruiting the needed workforce one point became evident. There was still a lot to do in how to get the staff to understand why the changes are important. This is surely problematic as the staff works, according to many of the interviewees, "with their hearts". Similarly, earlier in this thesis, it was presented how the sick absences and stress could entail an obstacle for efficiency. The main finding in this thesis has been that manager see the efficiency as something positive. This, in turn, will be

beneficial for everyone involved and reduce stress and anxiety. However, there is still a long way to go as seen in the text above. For instance, merely mentioning the word “efficiency” increased the stress in the organisation. On the other hand, a new, interesting perspective was found; the debate on how demanding the home care work has become has forgotten one aspect – that it is the level of ambition of elderly care that has deteriorated.

The above considered and according to the logic of NPM, the needs of customer ought to be in the centre. As the analysis above showed, the manager role has changed and the logic of NPM could be seen in the way the managers perceived their role. Furthermore, as the document analysis shows much focus on “individuals/client’s needs in the centre of attention”, we could once again draw a connection between NPM and efficiency in the home care. However, as we have seen, there simultaneously are arguments for having employees’ and the organisation’s needs in the centre of attention. Similarly, it was earlier found that the open comparisons, as well as the idea of using competition as a trigger for change and development, were present in elderly care. This thesis has shown that monitoring and cooperation were important, which suggests, once more, that the logic of NPM remains relevant.

Concluding the findings, it is evident that the public sector has and will change – the efficiency has come to stay. With the chosen methods and the results that were obtained, there is proof of the manager’s important role in efficiency. However, whether the managers succeed here, remains unexplained until further research. Yet, as there is great variation in elderly care efficiency, it is relevant to ask one specific question. Is there best practice for efficiency in elderly care? Even though this thesis has not aimed to research whether the organisations are efficient, there surely are some findings that could be further discussed. How much *common good* does freedom of action generate when the experience of efficiency requirements vary? As the results showed, many of the interviewees did not experience the efficiency to be a requirement, more like a choice to become smarter. The question arises; why do we call them efficiency requirements? After all, it seems that it is the society that is requiring elderly care to become efficient.

## 6 Final remarks and suggestions for future research

Efficiency as a concept was found to be a complex issue. With this thesis, I wished to contribute to the public debate on efficiency requirements in elderly care, with an emphasis on manager role and their tasks. In summary, this thesis aimed to explore the relation between the efficiency and the manager's role, including their tasks and the organisation of home care. Combining the attained knowledge on efficiency there now is more knowledge on how the care managers perceive and position themselves when it comes to efficiency requirements. Furthermore, this thesis has broadened the knowledge on manager's tasks and the organisation of the home care.

A number of the points that have been made in the preceding chapters can be put to work answering the research questions underlying this study. Regarding the first research question, the efficiency requirements were understood as necessary but not excessively demanding. The care managers perceived the efficiency as smarter use of people, instruments and time. Furthermore, the care managers saw their role and tasks as the advocate of their employees, making sure that the employees understood the change but also delegating responsibility to the subordinates aiming at more independent employees. Moreover, the role of home care was perceived to be changing. The scarce resources and demographic development required a slimmer home care, where the real, equal needs of care remain in the centre.

Given the above, the second research question found efficiency, mostly in the form of change and development, be a huge part of the recruitment announces. In comparison to the interviews, the recruitment announcements emphasised in greater detail the demands to implement political decisions. Furthermore, the role of the care manager was found a complex position which required many different traits and behaviours.

One weakness of research in health care has been that it rarely contributes to real change in organisations. However, the hope is that this kind of research becomes more relevant in times when the population is ageing, and efficiency requirements are found in almost every municipality. Certainly, one aspect of the study has been that it cannot and did not aim to be generalised. However, it has been able to show relevant issues for further research. Based on these findings, it would be interesting to follow-up this research problem with contributions from the staff in home care; how do they perceive efficiency requirements and research whether these align or differ from those of managers.

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# Appendix 1: The interview guide

## Translation of the Interview Guide:

- Inform about the purpose of the essay, anonymity and the opportunity to cancel the interview. Ask if you can record the interview (If not, take detailed notes!).
- Tell about yourself, your job and how long you have been here? How many employees do you have and what does the organisation look like?
- Previous work experience? Previous experience in leadership?

<b>Manager &amp; Efficiency requirements</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to the logic of NPM, the public sector is inefficient and too expensive (Lundquist 1998:53).</li> <li>• To create change in an organisation, a manager needs to create urgency in the matter (Kotter 2012)</li> <li>• A major change is unlikely to become successful if it does not receive the needed support from the workforce (Yukl 2013:112).</li> <li>• It is relevant to look into what resistance a change can get to know how to avoid it (Yukl 2013:96).</li> <li>• Support, especially in financial issues, is limited for the managers in health care (Johansson 2013:x)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What comes in your mind when I say “efficiency”? Tell me about efficiency requirements? What is efficiency for you and your organisation? Whose responsibility is it to create efficiency? If there are any, what obstacles are there for efficiency? Are some requirements easier/harder? Examples?</li> <li>• What factors do you think will affect whether this organisation is/becomes efficient? Or is it already? Examples?</li> <li>• What are you currently working on [in terms of efficiency]? What has been done before? What is on the agenda but has not yet been implemented? Who comes up with these ideas? Examples?</li> <li>• Do you think home care needs to change? What kind of change?</li> <li>• Are efficiency improvements just about money? Budget? How much room does the economy get and good financial results? Examples?</li> </ul>
<b>Manager role and Flexibility</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managers often find themselves surrounded by conflicting demands from superiors and subordinates (Yukl 2013:49).</li> <li>• Manager’s leadership behaviours can be task-, relations-, change- or externally oriented (Yukl 2012).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does efficiency affect your work? Tell us about your work and your regular workday?</li> <li>• What are your main tasks? Why are these the main tasks? How much influence do you have in your work?</li> <li>• What and how is your relationship with the rest of the municipality and the</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Care manager's unique role requires loyalty to both politicians and employees (Karlsson 2004:99).</li> <li>• What a manager can choose to do with their tasks is limited by the demands and constraints of the work (Stewart 1982:9).</li> <li>• The greater the job demands and stress for the manager are, it is more likely that the manager will not consider all options when making a decision or a change (Yukl 2013:42)</li> </ul>	<p>politicians? Do you cooperate with other units in the municipality? Superiors / Economists In municipalities? Describe your support network? How about unions? Would you like more or less support, in what sense? Examples?</p>
<b>Leadership &amp; Manager role</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delegating tasks can either emerge because of 1) managers need to more time for other tasks (efficiency perspective) or 2) to increase subordinates' participation (communicative perspective) (Wolmesjö 2005:24).</li> <li>• Managers who take their own responsibility for change are more likely to attract change (Nutt 1999:87).</li> <li>• Manager has to show the way and believe in the change (Albertsson 2006:183).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you think are your strongest qualities as a manager (in change)? Weaknesses? Examples?</li> <li>• Stress for manager?</li> </ul>
<b>Manager- &amp; Employee relation</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaders have an important role in the organisation's communication and the line manager has to communicate between the operational activities and the management (Palmér 2011:29).</li> <li>• A good working environment is a resource for both the workplace and the individual (Åteg 2005:1).</li> <li>• Workers in health and social care are most represented when looking at statistics on stress and stress-related sicknesses and this is something that the manager has to consider at all times (Thörnquist 2013:51).</li> <li>• Care managers communication of the political goals to their employees is often unclear (Johansson 2013:30), however, the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are the requirements formulated and communicated? Both to you as a manager and from you to your employees?</li> <li>• How is the relation to your employees? Do you have support for this from your employees? How do you work for a better relationship with your employees? Recruitment? Examples?</li> <li>• How do efficiency improvements affect the working environment (for you and your employees)? What do you think are the biggest problems with the work environment? (staff turnover, illness, stress?) How are they fixed? Examples?</li> <li>• How much attention does the work environment receive in this organisation? Should it be less or more? What are you</li> </ul>

<p>change is affected based on whether managers succeed in communicating the message about the change (Jutterdal 2006:103).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The unit managers shall prioritise, for example, workplace meetings and employee interviews to create change (Johansson &amp; Jörgensen 2012:22).</li> <li>• Social interaction can act as a stimulus for and improve individuals' work performance and well-being in the workplace (Willemse 2012:832)</li> </ul>	<p>currently working on [regarding work environment]? What has been done before? What is on the agenda but has not yet been implemented? Who comes up with these ideas? Examples?</p>
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- Have I forgotten something? Anything you want to add?
- Thanks for participation. Inform about the deadline and possibility to read the results.

# Appendix 2: The coding scheme

## Central themes

Type of efficiency

## Sub-themes

- Change
- Rehabilitation
- Efficiency requirements
- Technology
- Efficiency as a concept
- Efficiency as a challenge
- Budget and finances

Leadership

- Leadership – strength & weaknesses
- Leadership – experience
- Leadership – cooperation

Demands/ Constraints/  
Loyalty

- Reference to laws, regulations or policy
- Political demands
- Working environment

Manager's tasks and  
relations

- Administration, monitoring, performance management
- Delegation
- Change management
- Recruitment, competence and staff issues
- Trust and empowerment
- Influence & we-feeling

# Appendix 3: Overview of the empirical material

## Interviews & Telephone Calls

- Chief of operations, Municipality X, on telephone
- Anton, 53 min
- Britta, 41 min
- Charlotte, 49 min
- Dennis, 1h 5 min
- Elias, 47 min
- Fiona, 1h 4 min
- Gabriel, 42 min
- Heidi, 32 min, telephone interview
- Ida, 36 min, telephone interview
- Jessica, 47 min, telephone interview
- Karin, 46 min, telephone interview

## Documents

*not available online,  
downloaded after contact  
with the municipalities,  
can be requested from the  
thesis author.*

- Burlövs kommun, Enhetschef till team om tre för Hemtjänsten, Referensnummer: A889433
- Båstads kommun, Vik. Enhetschef inom Äldreomsorg, Hemvård, 162/2018
- Eslövs kommun, C33043 - 2019
- Hässleholms kommun, Enhetschef till Hemtjänst Norr, 2019/284
- Hörby kommun, Enhetschef till hemvården, 85/19
- Höörs kommun, 3 utvecklingsinriktade Enhetschefer sökes till Höörs kommun, 26/17
- Höganäs kommun, Enhetschef hemtjänst Söder, A854787
- Klippans kommun, Enhetschef inom hemtjänsten, A776558
- Kristianstads kommun Enhetschef, ordinärt boende, OMS-2019/373
- Lunds kommun, Enhetschef till hemvården Veberöd, 2020/157
- Osby kommun, Enhetschef, hemtjänsten, 70/2016
- Perstorps kommun, Perstorps kommun söker Enhetschef Hemtjänst/HSL, SN 2003/1
- Sjöbo kommun, Enhetschef Hemtjänst, 29/20
- Skurups kommun, Enhetschef hemtjänst, A902788
- Svalövs kommun, Enhetschefer sökes till Svalövs kommun,

- vård och omsorg, A830490
- Svedala kommun, Enhetschef till Hemtjänst, 6-08024
- Tomelilla kommun, Enhetschef Brinkehem och Brösarps hemtjänst, A738694
- Trelleborgs kommun, Enhetschef Hemvård, 2020/24.
- Ystads kommun, Enhetschef till hemtjänstområde, 16-20
- Åstorps kommun, Områdeschef Äldreomsorgen, A933981
- Ängelholms kommun, Inspirerande enhetschef hemtjänst, A941240
- Örkelljunga kommun, Enhetschef till hemvården, A604145
- Östra Göinge kommun, Enhetschef till hemtjänsten, A922793

# Appendix 4: Contact with the municipalities

## First contact

Angående masteruppsats: Effektivisering inom hemvården

Hej,

Mitt namn är Alexandra Julin och i skrivande stund håller jag på med min masteruppsats vid Lunds Universitets statsvetenskapliga institution. Jag läser ett program i välfärdspolitik och management och mina intresseområden ligger inom förvaltning och speciellt inom ledarskap samt vård- och omsorgsförvaltning (hemvården). Jag söker nu nämligen hjälp med att komma i kontakt med någon/några enhetschefer. Alternativt komma i kontakt med någon annan som kan hjälpa mig med detta.

Tanken är att denna masteruppsats fokuserar på effektivitetskrav i skånska kommuner och mer specifikt inom hemvården i dessa kommuner. Med denna forskning syftar jag att undersöka hur effektivitetskraven möts på operativ nivå och hur enhetschefer reflekterar och positionerar sig när det gäller effektivitetskraven. Uppsatsen följer en interpretativ metod där syftet är inte att generalisera eller jämföra. Uppsatsen kommer alltså inte fokusera på vem som lyckas bäst med effektiviseringskraven utan fokusen ligger på enhetschefernas egna upplevelser och berättelsen.

Utifrån tidigare forskning och observation, ser jag enhetscheferna under mycket press från olika håll. Det ska vara kostnadseffektivt, men samtidigt så finns det mycket tävling om arbetskraft, vilket gör att medarbetare har relativt lätt att byta arbetsplats ifall de blir missnöjda. Jag tror att detta är speciellt intressant under en tid där kommuner och regioner i allt mer större utsträckning uppmanas till kostnadseffektiviseringar och reformer medans man samtidigt har ont om personal och andra resurser. I grund och botten är jag intresserad av ledarrollen här, vad kan en kommunal ledare (t.ex. en enhetschef) göra här?

Jag söker nu alltså din hjälp med att komma i kontakt med enhetschefer inom hemvården. Alternativt komma i kontakt med någon annan som kan hjälpa mig med detta. Cheferna får gärna ha olika erfarenhetsgrader, ha olika bakgrund, de ska ha erfarenhet av systematiskt arbetsmiljöarbete, ha personalansvar över fler än 10



stycken och ska kunna avsätta 45-60 minuter för en intervju kring hur de ser på ämnet.

Intervjun kommer att bandas för att sedan transkriberas över till text. Allt material från intervjuerna kommer att behandlas med anonymitet. I den färdiga rapporten kommer det inte att finnas någon möjlighet att utläsa de medverkandes identitet eller var de arbetar. Det är helt frivilligt att delta i intervjuerna och man kan när som helst avbryta deltagandet utan att behöva ange orsak.

Hoppas på att du tycker att detta låter spännande. Jag planerar att, efter ert samtycke, kontakta enhetschefer hos er med ett informationsbrev och därefter boka tid för intervju om även dessa samtycker.

Jag hör av mig igen nästa vecka för att höra ditt ställningstagande till kommunens deltagande i studien. Ha en trevlig fortsatt vecka och hoppas på att höra av dig!

Med vänliga hälsningar,  
Alexandra Julin

## **Information letter**

Deltagare till intervjustudie sökes!

Hej!

Mitt namn är Alexandra och jag är masterstudent vid Lunds Universitets statsvetenskapliga institution och skriver just nu mitt examensarbete om effektivisering och ledarroll inom vård och omsorg. Jag har fått \*\*\* tillåtelse att kontakta dig och fråga ditt intresse för deltagande i intervjustudie. I bifogat dokument finns det mer information om studiet.

Ifall du är intresserad av att delta, svara gärna på detta mejl så kan vi boka en tid som passar dig. Intervjun uppskattas ta max en timme.

Hoppas på att höra av dig!

Med vänliga hälsningar,  
Alexandra Julin

Informationsutskick: Masteruppsats

Denna masteruppsats fokuserar på effektivitetskrav och mer specifikt inom hemvården. Med denna forskning syftar jag att undersöka hur effektivitetskraven möts på operativ nivå och hur enhetschefer reflekterar och positionerar sig när det gäller effektivitetskraven. Uppsatsen följer en interpretativ metod där syftet är inte att generalisera eller jämföra. Uppsatsen kommer alltså inte fokusera på vem lyckas bäst med effektiviseringskraven utan fokusen ligger på chefernas upplevelser och berättelsen. Utifrån tidigare forskning och observation,

ser jag enhetscheferna under mycket press från olika håll. Det ska vara kostnadseffektivt, men samtidigt så finns det mycket tävling om arbetskraft, vilket gör att medarbetare har relativt lätt att byta arbetsplats ifall de blir missnöjda. I min masteruppsats vill jag fokusera på ledarrollen inom offentlig förvaltning och jag är speciellt intresserad av effektiviseringsarbete inom vård- och omsorg, arbetsmiljöfrågor samt relationen mellan dessa två. Jag anser att detta är speciellt intressant under en tid där kommuner och regioner i allt mer större utsträckning uppmanas till kostnadseffektiviseringar och reformer medans man samtidigt har ont om personal och andra resurser. I grund och botten är jag intresserad av ledarrollen här, vad kan en kommunal ledare (t.ex. en enhetschef) göra här?

Intervjun uppskattas ta ungefär 45–60 minuter och kan genomföras på en plats som Du önskar. Intervjun kommer att bandas för att sedan transkriberas över till text. Allt material från intervjuerna kommer att behandlas med anonymitet. I det färdiga examensarbetet kommer det inte att finnas någon möjlighet att utläsa de medverkandes identitet eller var de arbetar. Det är helt frivilligt att delta i intervjuerna och man kan när som helst avbryta deltagandet utan att behöva ange orsak. Tveka inte att höra av dig om du har några som helst frågor.

Med vänliga hälsningar,  
Alexandra Julin

## **Contact concerning the recruitment announcements**

Begäran om kopior av allmänna handlingar

Hej,

Jag vill se en dokument på en annonserad ledig tjänst som enhetschef på kommunal hemtjänst, gärna den nyaste som rekryterades. Alltså ingen ansökan, bara annonsen. Vilken hemtjänst det är spelar ingen roll. Om kommunen ej har kommunal hemvård, kan ni bortse från detta mejl.

Jag önskar få kopiorna skickad till mig via mejl. Ha en trevlig fortsatt vecka!

Med vänliga hälsningar,  
Alexandra Julin