



**Selbstbestimmt leben**  
Internationale Fachmesse  
für Rehabilitation und Pflege

**Self-determined living**  
International Trade Fair for  
Rehabilitation and Care

4. – 7. Oktober 2017 | Düsseldorf, Germany

[www.rehacare.de](http://www.rehacare.de)



Press

## **REHACARE INTERNATIONAL 2017: An all-round success on anniversary year**

*39,000 visitors gained information on the specialist trade fair and conference on support and knowledge on independent living +++ Mobility aids attracted a lot of interest from our visitors +++ Expert tips on home care were in high demand +++ The topic of improving geriatric living facilities was a hot topic at the conference*

Intelligent, high-grade aids and comprehensive advisory services for people with disabilities, care requirements, chronic illnesses and for geriatrics all drew great interest from the attendees of REHACARE INTERNATIONAL, which came to a close after a four-day run on Saturday 7 October. Around 39,000 professionals, people who have additional needs and their friends and family visited Europe's leading trade fair for rehabilitation and care. They came from over 70 countries. Around 100 of the 780 exhibitors from 39 countries were associations and organizations from sectors which work to encourage independence and the social work sector. These 100 entities, along with all other exhibitors, presented innovative products and services, provided advisory services and tackled current questions on disability and health politics. "In view of the development of the demographic and the increase in people who require care, the demand for products and services for rehabilitation and care continues to rise. The interest in geriatric services has also increased. REHACARE INTERNATIONAL 2017 was the perfect marketplace and showcased all the possibilities for enabling independent living to as great an extent as possible", said Joachim Schäfer, Managing Director of Messe Düsseldorf, summing up the trade fair's run. "The presentations from all of our exhibitors and the information provided in the forums and themed sections were very well received."

  
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Bus 722: Messe-Center Verwaltung



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The Federal Association BAG Selbsthilfe von Menschen mit Behinderung, chronischer Erkrankung und ihren Angehörigen e.V [Registered Association for Independent Living for People with Disabilities, Chronic Conditions and their Relatives] celebrated its 50th anniversary this year. It has been present at REHACARE since the very beginning, 40 years ago, providing specialist knowledge here in Düsseldorf and has contributed significantly to establishing and advancing the trade fair. Dr Martin Danner, Managing Director of BAG Selbsthilfe, was particularly impressed by the multitude of new innovations in aids. He described the impression that these made on him thus: “On the 40th anniversary of the trade fair, we can see that great advancements have been made in rehabilitation and aid provision both over the last few years and over the centuries. This year, it was once again clear that many innovation opportunities are currently on the market. Digitalization, autonomous driving, new advances in material development and in product usability are the most noteworthy of these. The importance of REHACARE as an exchange platform for rehabilitation and aid provision has been proved once again, and impressively so“. BAG Selbsthilfe is a state-wide union of 120 organizations for disabled and chronically ill people and their friends and family, thus representing their interests.



One of the big topics at REHACARE 2017 was mobility. Wheelchairs, scooters, walking frames or specially converted or fitted out vehicles: the exhibitors showed the entire range of the latest technology which facilitates daily routines for disabled people. Wheelchairs that can be steered using smart glasses alone, robotic exoskeletons and cars whose gas, braking and steering functions can all be easily controlled by digital systems linked to a joystick were a few of these innovations. Overall, it was noted that international exhibitors are increasingly using REHACARE as a platform to present futuristic product concepts and to showcase prototypes that will soon be ready for the market.

One particular highlight in this vernacular was the CYBATHLON Experience, presented by The Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich (ETH Zürich). In exciting competitive games, people with physical disabilities battled it out to see which intelligent technical assistance system was the



best. The competitors ran the gamut of two different obstacle courses, one for wheelchairs and one for robotic exoskeletons. Prof. Robert Riener, the founder of CYBATHLON and the Director of the Department for Health Sciences and Technology at ETH Zürich, was thrilled by the level of participation that CYBATHLON experienced at REHACARE INTERNATIONAL, and by the huge resonance that it had with the visitors: “It’s great to be able to discuss our technology with potential users and their friends and family as well as the medical experts and industry professionals here in Düsseldorf. This exchange meant that we were immediately able to see how well our technology can help people with disabilities today and what it needs to be able to do in the future. It’s the ideal platform for our mission: improving technology for day-to-day life.”

Hall 7a housed pure action sport: it was transformed into a huge stadium, and participation was very much encouraged. This meant that many visitors made the most of this opportunity to try out sports such as athletics, archery, table football for blind people and wheelchair basketball.



The accompanying programme of REHACARE, constituted a huge range of forums and conferences, was also met with great approval this year. Whilst experts from independent living, social care, political and cost-bearer sectors focused on the topic of people with disabilities in the working world in the REHACARE Forum, the Living with Care@Home forum [Leben mit Pflege@home] from the Lower Rhine Care Academy [Pflegeakademie Niederrhein] (Willich) offered a diverse range of further education opportunities and information, intended for both care professionals and caregivers. Heike Senge, Managing Director of the Lower Rhine Care Academy, was delighted by the effect that this forum had throughout all four of the themed days: “It is clear that skilled care workers and caregivers made time to come to this forum specifically and had a lot of time for our presentations. The “Wound Day” event was particularly popular, as it addressed the topic of bedsores prophylaxis and care, which affects almost everyone who cares for someone. I hope that the knowledge that was discussed here will be taken on board by the experts in management and will thus contribute to filling the gaps that are currently still present in care



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management. If prophylactic measures are implemented in good time, both physical pain and financial cost can be reduced.” On “Dementia Day”, many visitors were once again present at the Living with Care@Home forum and gave all their attention to the experts. Comedienne Gaby Köster took to the stage with a touching yet joyful reading from her new novel and then signed autographs, dedicating a lot of time to her fans.

The REHACARE “Our Neighbourhood: Our Home” [Wir fürs Quartier] conference, led by the German Board for Geriatric Care (KDA), focused on how to finance successful living areas for the geriatric population. The economic aspects and the business models for this type of housing were clarified for the audience. In addition, exhibitors from the social care and housing sectors and financial service providers gave out information on these topics at the accompanying “Neighbourhood Housing Market” [Quartiersmarkt].



The next REHACARE INTERNATIONAL will take place from 26 to 29 September 2018, once again at the Düsseldorf Trade Fair Centre.

### **Düsseldorf, 07 October 2017**

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