



### Board of examiners

**Prof. dr. Klaus Wegleitner**

University of Graz, Austria

**Prof. dr. Koen Hermans**

Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium

**Prof. dr. Deborah De Moortel**

Brussels Institute for Social and Population Studies, VUB

**Prof. dr. Free De Backer**

Brussels research centre for Innovation in Learning and Diversity, VUB

**Prof. dr. Dorien Brosens**

Participation and Learning in Detention, VUB

**Prof. dr. Johan Vansintejan, Chair**

Department of Family Medicine and Chronic Care, VUB

**Prof. dr. Joachim Cohen, Supervisor**

End-of-Life Care Research Group, VUB

**Prof. dr. Tinne Smets, Supervisor**

End-of-Life Care Research Group, VUB

**Prof. dr. Lieve Van den Block, Supervisor**

End-of-Life Care Research Group, VUB

**Prof. dr. em. Luc Deliens, Supervisor**

End-of-Life Care Research Group, VUB

## INVITATION to the Public defence of

### Bert QUINTIENS

To obtain the academic degree of

### 'DOCTOR OF SOCIAL HEALTH SCIENCES'

### "The development and evaluation of two Compassionate Cities"

The public defence will take place on

**Friday, 15 November 2024 at 4 p.m.**

**In Auditorium Piet Brouwer**

Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy, Laarbeeklaan 103, 1090 Brussel

**and can be followed online**, accessible through the following link:

[https://gf.vub.ac.be/redirects/PhD\\_defense\\_Bert\\_Quintiens.php](https://gf.vub.ac.be/redirects/PhD_defense_Bert_Quintiens.php)

## Summary of the dissertation

This research concerns the development and evaluation of two Compassionate City programmes in Flanders, Belgium. To inform the development of Compassionate City programmes, I conducted a systematic integrative review to describe the contextual characteristics, development processes, and evaluations of existing Compassionate Cities and Communities around the world. Next, to describe attitudes and experiences of citizens in the general population regarding serious illness, dying, caregiving, and providing support, I conducted a questionnaire survey in a representative sample of the general population in four municipalities and described the discomfort people feel towards the suffering and dying of others and their willingness to support their neighbours practically or emotionally. Finally, guided by a study protocol allowing a flexible and adaptive evaluation in support of development, I supported the development of Compassionate City programmes in two municipalities (Bruges and Herzele) and evaluated their development process.

## Curriculum Vitae

Bert Quintiens is a registered nurse and holds a Master of Science degree in Healthcare Management and Policy from Ghent University. Bert has worked for several years as a nurse and as a clinical trial coordinator. In May 2019, he started his research project as a doctoral researcher at the End-of-Life Care Research Group (Vrije Universiteit Brussel and Ghent University). His research was part of the CAPACITY project (Flanders Programme to Develop Capacity in Palliative Care Across Society), a collaboration between the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Ghent University, and the Catholic University Leuven, Belgium. The research project was supported by a grant from the Research Foundation Flanders. Bert's research revolved around the development and evaluation of two Compassionate Cities in Flanders, Belgium.