



The Formentera Council Office of Social Welfare has scheduled a number of day-long training sessions for elderly-care staff of the department and of the Formentera Day Centre to enhance the workers' ability to empathise with their clients' daily reality. CiF councillor of social welfare Vanessa Parellada visited the centre, where the sessions will be held, to describe details of the initiative.

The training began yesterday and continues through today in the form of theory- and practise-based classes, during which the workers will have the opportunity to don a suit that limits their perception of sight, sound, touch and motion, putting them – explained the CiF councillor – “in the shoes of someone between 70 and 85 years old.” Parellada called the classes “a great opportunity for our own staff to better understand the situation faced by our island's elderly” and hoped the experience improved the service workers are able to give.

The course, which was held for the first time this February in Menorca, was led by Stephan Biel, a specialist in social gerontology. The idea for the advanced age simulating suit came from Volkswagen. The German automaker developed the suits in an effort to make its manufacturing process more suitable for ageing workers. Use of the suits has since caught on among elderly-care organisations as a training tool for staff. Organisation of the training sessions cost the Formentera Council 1,500 euros.