Theoretical background
The capability approach (CA) developed by Amartya Sen has become increasingly prominent in the field of research in regard to ageing and policy making. The framework of the capability approach emphasizes the need for evaluation and assessment of each individual’s abilities based on actual achievements i.e. what the unique person is able to do and achieve, since it affects quality of life and constitutes a person’s well-being.

The core concepts of CA
In the theoretical framework of CA, well-being is constituted by a person’s unique way of functioning and capabilities. This means that a person’s well-being is personal and involves freedom of choice which in turn means they have a number of options. Although many people may have the same resources, it is of importance to study how these resources are converted into how they function. Thus, well-being is about the person’s freedom to achieve in general and the capabilities to function in particular (Sen, 1995).

Functioning’s achieved
Resources
Resource value depends on the individual’s ability to convert them into valuable functioning
Capability set
Functions available to choose from
Utility subjective well-being
Personal utilization
function
Considering the interpersonal differences
Physiological, physical and social environment

Structure of the CA

Critiques against the CA
The capability approach has been criticized for being too individual-centered and not taking sufficient account to social structures in society. It is difficult to know what a person would choose to do if other options were available. Therefore, to operationalize abilities involves uncertainties.

Introduction
The discourse of today’s healthy ageing emphasizes each individual’s responsibility for achieving good health, often ignoring broader circumstances (Stephens et al., 2015). Therefore, there is a need for a perspective including several dimensions in healthy ageing, e.g. the physical and psychological changes of ageing, and the personal view of the elderly of what is valuable for their healthy ageing.