Social and sanitary services: A voluntary quality system

National Association for Public Assistance
Tuscany Regional Committee

Regione Toscana

ASL 11 Empoli Agenzia per la formazione

Regional Health Agency (ARS) of Tuscany

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Psiterra Member

Cultureel Doirp van Europa 1999 Wijk aan Zee
Project Goal

The project intends:

To define quality standards to apply in a voluntary way in managing the social and sanitary services for the elderly who are not self-sufficient.
Target

The proposal specifically concentrates on not self-sufficient elderly people:

We have worked on various levels of not self-sufficiency and situations of different accessibility to the services according to the residence of urban or rural zones.

The project thus experimented organising a local welfare system capable of protecting not self-sufficient people and their families.
Analysis of the ex ante situation

Definition of procedures
Application of VS

Experimentation

Constructing a voluntary standard

Strategic Comparison
Activity 1; **Analysis of the ex ante situation**

**Objectives of the phase**

- To analyze the existing documentation on Social Services concerning elderly not self sufficient people, considering the data published from 2007 to 2009 as reference period.
- To define the reference principles on a domestic and community level.

The modernisation process must ensure that the services respond to the main social and economic challenges:

- Ageing of the population,
- Equality of sexes,
- Social integration,
- Labour market flexibility and efficiency, and finding a balance in respect of standards of competition and on the internal market and safeguarding the European social model.
Activity 2; **constructing a Voluntary Standard**

The objective of this phase is to:

Establish a shared Voluntary Standard (here in after V.S.), which takes into account the difficulties regarding transferring innovative experiences from a research phase to a concrete application phase which is shared between the different actors involved in the project.
Activity 2; **constructing a Voluntary Standard**

The V.S. specifies the requirements to perform the services in a social-sanitary sector to assure:

1) social cohesion in the territory;
2) effective and efficient planning of the Service;
3) respect of the needs and protection of the user’s rights;
4) effective collaboration between public authorities and organisations (private or Voluntary);
5) an integrated approach
6) universal access to social and health assistance:
Activity 2; **constructing a Voluntary Standard**

The V.S. was established by “the world café method”:

In order to favour the creation of a shared V.S. we have developed an active comparison between various actors and experts of the sector involved through the method of the “**world cafés**”

In each domestic meeting about 30 people were divided into groups of 4/5 participants and each groups met around a table. The conversation lasted about 20 minutes and started from a question, which was the same for all the tables. The reply was given collectively by all the participants. In the subsequent session there was a new question and we have created a new groups of 4/5 person. At the end of the experience all the participants met amongst themselves and the project staff summarised the ideas emerging and this gave rise to a general discussion.
Activity 2; **constructing a Voluntary Standard**

Questions made in the meetings:

- What characteristics must a service aimed at inclusion have?
- What are the criteria determining the accessibility of the service?
- What are the characteristics of a communication which reaches citizens?
- What are the main elements for drawing up an appropriate service (reference to timing)?
- What are the aspects that define the outcome of the assessment of the service, from communication to realisation?
- What are the methods and instruments for understanding the user’s indications?
Activity 2; The Voluntary Standard

The V.S. applies in the social-sanitary services, which means activities that promote the inclusion of long-term assistance services towards not self-sufficient elderly people.

The requirements are general ones and are envisaged to be applied to all the organisations which manage services whether they use paid or voluntary staff.

When applying the V.S. the organisation must assure a service which favours the social cohesion of the territory on which it is realised.
Activity 2; **The Voluntary Standard**

**How the service favours cohesion and social inclusion**

- **pro activity**: researching the need;

- **prevention**: that is, how activities are performed which prevent the elderly person from running into organic functional difficulties;

- **capacity for creating a network**: the service must be connected, both formally and informally to other services active on the territory;

- **sustainability**: broken down into economic and organisational sustainability: meaning how the resources allocated must be sufficient to guarantee the performance of the service in a defined time range, in the medium-long term. In case of co-participation this must be fair and accessible for the users.

- **social sustainability**: or how the service contributes to activate family and neighbourhood networks;

- **capacity of the service to allow the user to reach a minimum level of quality of life**: the organisation must specify the requirements associated to an essential level by referring to the reality in which the user and their family live.
Activity 2; The Voluntary Standard

How the service allows the users to benefit from their fundamental rights

**visibility**: that means the ease with which the user identifies the service;

**governing the demand**: the organisation must document how the assistance plan derives from analysis of the users’ needs, and from a joint process between the needs of the service and those of the user.

**flexibility**: it must document the mechanism by means of which the plan is re-designed when the users’ needs are modified;

**active participation of the user**: the organisation must ensure each user active insertion in each phase of the service;

**capacity of providing quick replies to the problems**: the organisation must demonstrate that it is capable of providing exhaustive responses quickly.
Activity 2; The Voluntary Standard

Criteria to which the various phases of the service must respond

- **Criteria of the communication activity**
  - **Timeliness**
  - **Clarity of content**, with indication of the reference person to contact;
  - **Understandable language**, even for people with a low level of education;
  - **Encouraging messages**, considering the difficulty in which the users find themselves;
  - **Multichannel**

Accessibility criteria to which the service responds

**geographical proximity**: the access points must be easy to reach by the users;

**absence of architectural barriers**:
- **reachability**: the front office services must be easy to reach using public means of transport;

**adequate information**: easy to find by means of the various channels; complete and exhaustive

**opening the service**: the service must have access times suited to the needs of the families.
Activity 2; The Voluntary Standard

Intangible accessibility criteria;

**reception**: the personnel must be welcoming, understanding of the difficulties of the users and of the family members, above all those of different languages and cultures;

**bureaucratic transparency and simplicity**

**clear and understandable language**

Needs assessment criteria

**multi-dimensional**: that means it must be performed by a multi-disciplinary staff made up of operators with different professional skills who assess in different situations;

**performed in certain times.**

**shared**: it must be shared by the user and by the family members by taking account of the needs and the context in which the user him or herself lives;

**objective**: based on objectively assessed standards and procedures.
Activity 2; The Voluntary Standard

Criteria on which the assistance project is based

customised

Shared

structured: that means it must define short, medium and long term objectives, indicating the operations that must be performed and the results to be achieved. A reference operator must be determined within the service;

assessable and re-plan: the way of assessing and the procedures for redefining the plan must be indicated.
Activity 2; The Voluntary Standard

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STAFF INVOLVED IN THE SERVICE

- Knowledge and skills of the operators

The staff involved in the service influence the service itself and thus is a “critical” element. The organisation must establish the skill and the knowledge necessary for the staff, The skill and knowledge must be defined in accordance with the activities to be performed.

- Characteristics of the professional training programs

The organisation must provide training and teaching in the following each areas of activity
Activity 2; The Voluntary Standard

ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER FOR ASSESSING THE SERVICE

The service shall be assessed by using indicators which allow the capacity of responding to the real needs expressed to be evaluated and to involve the users.

The organisation must prepare both quality and quantity assessment instruments and procedures to define and process the data, involving the different target groups interested, that is users, operators, family members. The organisation must document how the data of the assessment is used to re-plan the intervention.
Activity 3 **Defining the Voluntary Standard application procedures**

Each organisation must establish, document, actuate and implement a system which demonstrates the conformity of this V.S. to the requirements.

The management system documentation is contained in a *Manual of the service*.

Each organisation must demonstrate to be able to manage the service according to the requested needs and to be capable of developing improvement itineraries.
Activity 4 experimentation

In Italy, Spain and Romania a long term Home service shall be experimented.
We have experimented the application of V.S. in different phases of the service.

The experimental phase first, and then assessment allow the Universalistic system setup which guarantees certainty of the performance, appropriateness and timeliness of the service.
Activity 5 strategic comparison of the results

. Objectives
To verify the application of the criteria of the V.S. in the three territorial areas Italy, Spain and Romania-

Methods
We have verified the possible differences in the assistance system of not self-sufficient people thanks by the experimentation of V.S
The investigation instrument is a structured questionnaire. In particular three questionnaires have been defined in the criteria concerning:
The social and economic context in which the service is realised;
Contribution of the service to social cohesion;
Uniformity criteria for the different service phases:
• for the communication activity;
• for accessibility to the service;
• for assessing needs;
• for defining the assistance project.
Activity 5 strategic comparison of the results

The first questionnaire is aimed at the service chief, it contains open questions and its purpose is to highlight the context and organisational aspects.

The second questionnaire is aimed at the operators regarding the network of services.

The third questionnaire is aimed at the users of the service.

In each territorial area were interviewed 40 elderly people: 20 users taken into care before the experimentation of the V.S, other 20 users taken into care during the experimentation. They were over 64 years-old residents with a medium-serious disability. By making a pre/post comparison we tried to highlight any differences in the impact of the service on the users.
Main results emerging

The impact of the V.S. was greater in the territorial areas which had a less structured assistance system for non self-sufficient people.

In Italy the timeliness of giving information and the simplification of the bureaucratic procedures for starting up procedures is improving.

In Spain and Romania the information about the service, the availability of the staff and ease of access is growing.

The rural reality, represented by Spain favours the sense of community and social cohesion as well as the capacity to create a network.

Social-sanitary integration is strong and institutionalised in Italy, absent in Romania, whereas in Spain it requires legislative formalisation.

Further initiatives must be carried out within pro activity.

**Long-term economic sustainability worries the operators and the service chiefs.**
Table 1. SWOT Italy

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<tr>
<td>Social and sanitary integration</td>
<td>Proactivity</td>
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<td>Network collaboration</td>
<td>Lack of opportunity for comparison between the operators and the network management</td>
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Economic sustainability in the long term
Greater involvement of the general practitioner in the network
Social and sanitary integration
Network collaboration
User participation

Threats
Opportunities
Weaknesses
Strengths
### Table 2. SWOT Spain

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<td>Only sufficient home helpers</td>
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Long term economic sustainability

Institutionalising the social-sanitary and network integration

Threats
Absence of social and sanitary integration
User participation
Service response times

Opportunities
Institutionalising the social-sanitary and network integration

Strengths
Pro activity

Weaknesses
Long term economic sustainability

Table 3. SWOT Romania

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