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the European Union



# NEWSLETTER 1

September 2022

## PEER SUPPORT WORKERS: AN INNOVATIVE FORCE IN ADVOCACY IN DEMENTIA CARE

### The project

Within the Erasmus+ programme, the PIA project has recently started, which aims to promote the figure of the Peer Support Worker (PSW) as a figure for family members and caregivers of people with dementia, with a positive impact also on care recipients and policies.

In recent years, in some European health and welfare services, Peer Support Workers have been employed as a resource to promote the user perspective, strengthen the recovery orientation and better tailor the services to the needs of the users.

However, this innovative and particularly useful figure is still unused and not promoted in the field of dementia care.

### The main objectives of the project are in fact:

- Development, creation and design of training materials and methodologies training courses for Peer Support Workers and caregivers;
- Creation of a Digital platform for the network of PSWs for collaboration and knowledge exchange webinars and training videos on relevant topics and issues;
- Development and implementation of strategies to

increase advocacy and promote the user perspective in the development and delivery of services.

### The partnership

These results will be achieved during the 2 years life of the project, which will see the partners engage and cooperate to reach the expected results.



### The consortium of PIA project is composed by:

- KBT Vocational school (Norway) - Project coordinators and active in the field VET to improve health services through using lived experience by service users;
- Alzheimer Hellas (Greece) - Association of Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders providing a wide range of services to people with dementia and their families;
- Habilitas (Romania) - Organization that develops training programs for elderly home care workers and works in projects focused on the elderly involvement in the community;
- Anziani e Non Solo (Italy) - NGO working in the

field of social innovation, with a specific focus on management of projects and realization of services and products in the field of welfare and social inclusion;

- Asociatia Afect (Romania) - Association active in sustaining and stimulating the social integration of the old people.

## First Transnational Partner Meeting

In May 2022, the partnership met in presence in Trondheim, Norway, hosted by the project coordinators. The meeting was an opportunity for the partners to discuss the first stages of the project, planning the various responsibilities and tasks for the creation of the Peer Support Workers training course in the field of dementia and the development and testing of the Peer Support Workers platform. These days in Norway were particularly fruitful as in addition to the work on the project activities, there was an opportunity to get to know a Peer Support Worker in the field of dementia care and an effective method used in Norway for promoting the well-being of people with dementia. The partnership worked synergistically for 2 days, deepening their knowledge about the project and its objectives, and building relationships with the other consortium members.



## Next steps

From September 2022, the partners will complete the training curriculum for Peer Support Workers, after having carefully analysed and responded to the needs of their national contexts. In each project country, the PIA training curriculum will be tested and validated with key participants in the autumn through the pilot courses. The results of the pilot phase will be the basis for finalising the course, which will be improved and made available for replication.

To know more and stay updated on the project, visit the website <https://piaproject.eu/>



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