

EXPERIENCE IN DEMENTIA CARE AS A SHAREABLE RESOURCE: WITH THE PIA PROJECT IT IS POSSIBLE

The Erasmus+ PIA program is continuing its work that aims to promote the figure of the Peer Support Worker (PSW) with the role of advocacy for family members and caregivers of people with dementia in Norway, Greece, Italy and Romania.

TRAINING COURSES FOR PSW IN DEMENTIA CARE

During the initial stages of the project, partners worked to discuss the figure of PSWs and analysed their national context to understand how such a figure could be employed in dementia care. Based on these reflections, a training curriculum was prepared and each project partner then adapted it to pilot the training in their own country. In November and December 2022, the training programme for this figure was piloted by each partner of the consortium in its national context in order to test and validate it as a replicable tool. It involved 43 people with experience in caring for people with dementia, i.e., Current and former carers and volunteers.

Offering both a practical and theoretical mode, participants explored the topic of dementia and the significant consequences it entails for both those with it and, in particular, their caregivers.



It was precisely on these aspects that the discussion and sharing of experiences among peers focused, verifying how personal interaction, empathy, communication and listening can be a great help in supporting people caring for a family member with dementia.

Given the positive feedback to this testing phase, the consortium is glad to launch of **Training materials and methodology** for family members and PSW of people with dementia. Training materials are available in English, Norwegian, Greek, Italian and Romanian language and the Piloting report is available in English on the project website.

PARTNER MEETING IN GREECE

On 20th and 21st April 2023, the partners met in Thessaloniki, Greece, for the 3rd Transnational Partner Meeting. The project meeting was an opportunity to discuss the status of the project and the realisation of the 3 project results currently in the field. The partners talked about the results achieved in the various national contexts through the course pilot and how the satisfactory results confirmed the need for PSWs in the field of dementia.



In line with the aim of exchanging good practices between European countries, the days in Thessaloniki also included guided visits to dementia care services offered by the host partner Alzheimer Hellas.

NEXT STEPS

Just as dementia is a worldwide problem, so sharing experiences on how to deal with it is appropriate to cross physical boundaries. A digital platform is “the place on the web” where, through discussion forums, webinars and exchanges of information, a network is built to enhance peer support in dementia care. In recent months, the partners have developed the platform, which will be tested and validated in September 2023.

The last step will be the development and implementation of new strategies and public policies, in the form of recommendations, to improve the quality of life for people with dementia and their caregivers. These will be based on increased advocacy, user participation, and helping families better cope with the responsibility of caring for a person with dementia.

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