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## Mental Health Center, Agrinio, Greece

# The Meaning of "A Positive Journey"

A Positive Journey" (APJ), through European cooperation, will address Stigma that disadvantaged groups face in their life's journey – it will demonstrate that there is life beyond disadvantage.

Partners from UK, Greece, Lithuania and Italy will exchange best practice and create a media and communication learning toolkit to help tackle stigma. APJ will empower target groups in having a voice to record their recovery from whatever challenges they are facing or have faced in their life's journey. APJ will provide an online platform to engage those who are, or at risk of, social exclusion to

give them the opportunity to highlight their achievements in overcoming their personal challenges. Each partner will engage 12 disadvantage learners who will create the positive journeys using positive images: – this will include poetry, art, music, articles, videos and any means that they wish to learn to use to promote their positive journey. Participants will develop a variety of skills and also gain confidence in promoting their achievements that will be used to inspire others (for example, within PADMA's Recovery College) to follow in their path and also to help participants re-engage in informal and formal learning

in the future as a consequence of increased levels of confidence.

The project will:

- Lead to increase levels of confidence and self esteem
- Directly address stigma
- Increase media and communication skills for target group
- Address social anxiety and provide a platform where participants can voice their successes
- Share best practice from EU partners in working with all media and communication platforms

Service users will speak about their experience at respective partner workshops, both during, and after project completion.

## The 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting in Agrinio City

On 10<sup>th</sup> December 2013, within the framework of the European Project GRUNDTVIG "A Positive Journey", the first meeting of the project partners was held in the city of Agrinio.

The meeting was attended by members of the delegations from Lithuania, Italy, England and Greece. At this meeting, the Manager of the General Hospital of Agrinio, Mr Vlahos G. welcomed all the participants and after that the

Director of Agrinio's Mental Health Center Mr. Skamnelos C. took the floor and after welcoming the participants, wished everyone to have a good start and good cooperation.

At this meeting, which was held in good organizational and collaborative climate, issues related to stigma were discussed and, in addition, issues on how to help disabled people to prove that there is life beyond the

disadvantage of their condition were elaborated. Also interventions and practices were discussed, such as creating web-based tools, for example an online platform, which will bring together people who believe they are experiencing or will experience social exclusion because of their condition and can share their experiences with other people and those who are disadvantaged.

## Žmogiškųjų išteklių stebėsenos ir plėtros biuras - LITHUANIA



Zmogiskuju istekliu stebesenos ir pletros biuras (ZISP B) was established in 2010 in Siauliai, Lithuania. We have 7 employees. In order to fulfil its aims ZISP B has a lot of partners in various areas: social, educational, management. Main objectives: Observation, analysis and assessment of various social phenomena and processes in the field of social and educational policy. Creation, adaptation and

implementation various innovative social and adult educational initiatives and projects in the field of formal and non-formal education and social work providing training services to professionals and different target groups such like families at risk, offenders, ex prisoners.

Currently the main activities of organization are:

- Development and implementation of local and

international projects mostly with socially excluded target groups.

- Development and accreditation of different programs for post-graduated social workers, social workers assistants, nurses, manages, employers, volunteers.

- Training courses for post-graduated social workers, social workers assistants, nurses, manages, employees, volunteers.

## Volunteer Cornwall – UNITED KINGDOM



Volunteer Cornwall (VC) is an organisation dedicated to developing active and engaged citizens through volunteering. Our Volunteer Centers, situated in Liskeard, St Austell and Redruth, match people who want to volunteer with organizations that need volunteers. We employ 47 staff and have an annual turnover of £2.7m. We have a range of projects and services - all designed to support and develop volunteers and host organizations.

1. Transport - VC run a social transport scheme with around 270 drivers doing approx. 2 million miles per year transporting children, elderly and vulnerable people to and from essential services and appointments.

2. Training - the training team work with individuals and organizations to meet their training needs with a cost effective and appropriate training plan.

3. Time Banks - We have Time Banks in 7 locations

across Cornwall. People exchanging their skills through the currency of time.

4. Last Minute Hero's – responding to specific emergency events

5. Winter Friends – assisting vulnerable people over the winter period

6. Bereavement Befriending Advocacy Support Service

7. Viva - Adult Care and Support. The project focuses on people with a physical, mental, learning or sensory disability.

## Cittadinanza Onlus - ITALY



Established in 1999 in Rimini, Cittadinanza is an Italian association that develops and supports, together with the World Health Organization (WHO), psychiatric rehabilitation and psychosocial projects in low income countries. Cittadinanza operates with a public health approach and with the aim of promoting and defending the rights of people with mental disorders

and their families.

In Italy, Cittadinanza organizes meeting of experts on mental health in order to share good practices and start new collaborations in this field and events open to all the community in order to sensitize about the importance of mental health for the complete well being of the individuals.

Cittadinanza also operates with the local Mental Health

Department and other organization of the territory to develop projects for the inclusion of people with mental disorders in the labour market: for example, Cittadinanza supports a tailor's shop, where 6 women suffering from psychiatric pathologies and living in distress are learning a job and are regaining their self-esteem and self confidence.

## Plymouth & District Mind Association – UNITED KINGDOM

Mental health charity, Plymouth & District Mind Association: formed in 1984 and delivers mental health support to the people of Plymouth. In 2004 Plymouth Mind led a local consortium of 5 organizations, including the local office of a national organization, Working Links, who have extensive experience in delivering Work Programme initiatives across the England, including Plymouth, in an EQUAL project looking at barriers to employment for refugees and migrant workers. This was, in turn, part of a transnational partnership that ceased in 2007. We assisted refugees and migrants in solving their social issues as a holistic approach to supporting them

into the labour market. PADMA also operates a UK Online Centre, helping people learn to use computers and the internet and networks regularly with the Chamber of Commerce and the Job Centre at strategic levels, locally. Plymouth Mind employs 13 staff, currently and many of them empower support groups, such as "Military in Mind", "Explore Your Anger" and "How to manage your money". Members of staff responsible for creating these groups have developed their own expertise in these niche areas. In January 2013 PADMA opened its "Plymouth Recovery College" to facilitate inclusion of disadvantaged

participants who are willing to attend a "recovery college" but shy away from going to a mental health centre. The aim of the Recovery College is to help people move forward in their journey, fulfil their potential and attain a better quality of life. PADMA will lead the project: "A Positive Journey" and be responsible for all communication between partners and overall project management, including reporting back, on a regular basis, to the UK national agency. PADMA will host the project website: <http://www.apositivejourney.com> and train all partners in updating sections of the site in own partner languages.



For better  
mental health

## Mental Health Center of Agrinio - GREECE

MHCA is a Regional Public Organization that belongs to the National Health System in Greece. We are funded only from the Greek Government. MHCA has 14 employees: psychiatrist, psychologist, sociologist, social worker, nurses, health visitors and so on. It offers not for profit mental health services to our regional province Aitolokaranania (270.000 inhabitants) to teenagers and adults who face mental health problems. We are plan programmes that target the prevention, reconnaissance and therapy of the mental health problems relevant to declared community needs. All our services target the most appropriate therapeutic intervention for every person on an individual basis in cooperation with colleagues

and look for best practices that deliver best results. The services include:

1. Psychiatric Diagnosis, and systematic follow up and therapeutic – pharmaceutical confrontation.
2. Psychotherapeutic intervention to individual and groups.
3. Psychological support.
4. Psychosocial support and rehabilitation.
5. Research.
6. Crisis intervention.
7. Visit at home – mobile psychiatric team.

In addition, a very big part of our job is the intervention to the community in order to inform, to sensitize the public for mental health issues. These services in cooperation with other local or national organizations are target to the prevention of the

mental health problems through health and mental health educational programmes that take place to the primary and secondary education. We also target the prompt recognition of mental health problems through scientific information and removal of ignorance and fear (stigma) surrounding mental health issues through provision of training and education.

We have a lot of experience (more than 20 years) in education - more than 2,000 people in our province have been educated in small group work (15-20 persons per group). Also we are in collaboration with local and neighborhood public organizations who work in the field of mental health.





## The Rationale of the Programme

As full citizens, our client groups have equal rights and are entitled to dignity, equal treatment, independent living and full participation in society. Enabling them to enjoy these rights is the main purpose of the EU's long-term strategy for their active inclusion. Centre piece of the European Disability Strategy (2004-2010) is the Disability Action Plan (DAP).

The active inclusion and full participation of disadvantaged people in society, is at the core of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disability, to which the European Community is a signatory.

People with mental health problems can experience prejudice, stigma and discrimination in many spheres of life including education, civil society,

employment and housing. Stigma toward people with mental disorders is a complex issue with the capacity to affect all facets of a person's life, such as the opportunity to find housing and employment, engage in education, obtain insurance, and get fair treatment in the criminal justice or child welfare systems. Thus, stigma robs people with mental illness and disability of particularly important life opportunities vital to achieving life goals, obtaining competitive employment, and living independently in a safe and comfortable home. The challenge of combating stigma is very prominent in the mental health and disability fields and much more needs to be done. The fight against stigma is a complex endeavor, with multifaceted implications,

and must be examined from multiple perspectives.

The aim of this project is innovative in the sense that the main objective is to try to fight stigma starting with the day by day life of the people that are suffering from this discrimination and starting from their perspective. It is not only to create a correct information set about stigma, but to create a tool starting from the real life of the people living in this condition of exclusion, taking also in consideration the point of view of their families, friends and the mental health workers. Inclusion begins from including the people affected from the stigma in fighting it. It is also necessary to give those suffering from stigma, the learning tools they need to challenge it through positive imagery.



## Project Objectives and Strategy

APJ will address the problem of stigma, for those who are socially excluded or at risk of being socially marginalized. Each partner works with a range of disadvantaged groups, for example: mental health, learning disability or ex-offenders. APJ will give our target groups the opportunity to tell everyone their positive journey in overcoming challenges in life.

Objectives:

- Toolkit (including Positive Journey Plan) for engaging and working with

disadvantaged groups to help develop their communication skills.

- Exchange best practice through mobility partnership meetings.
- Create service user online network of commonality related to interests, not diagnosis.
- Build confidence and raise self esteem for clients.
- Monitor and evaluate the project as part of the toolkit.
- Disseminate the project through local stakeholders

and media with finale at the Eden Project, Cornwall.

- Participants will meet, engage and discuss promotion of their positive journeys, learn and share best practice from other cultures.
- Create a self-sustaining web based platform to inspire others to take a positive journey.
- Empower service users to create positive images as a means to combat stigma.
- Interview local “disadvantaged” celebrity.



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## Visiting A Mobile Mental Health Unit...

Within the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting we visited the first complete Mobile Mental Health Unit in Greece, in the city of Amfissa, where we met with mental health professionals and exchanged views concerning issues of prevention, care, and

psychosocial rehabilitation. We also visited a shop with organic products in which work people with mental health problems who have reintegrated into the community.



## Visiting A Greek Prison...

On 12<sup>th</sup> December, three members of the Lithuanian delegation, who work in prisons in their country, visited with the general Medical Doctor Mitsos D. the prison of Malandrino.

The purpose of this visit was for the Lithuanian partners to see how greek prisons operate and to exchange views on their professional experience in Lithuania.

## Visiting Delphi...

On 12<sup>th</sup> December 2013 an educational and a recreational trip was held in Delphi. At the foot of Mount Parnassus, within a natural landscape that is formed between two rocks of the Phaedriades, lies the Pan-Hellenic sanctuary of Delphi, the most famous oracle of ancient world. Delphi was the navel of the earth, where, according to mythology, the two eagles sent out by Zeus from the ends of the universe met to find the center of

the world. Delphi's role as an ancient Greek city was strengthened and developed on a national center and sacred city of the ancient Greeks.

We visited the museum and the ancient sites, as the ancient theaters, the Temple of Apollo, the ancient stadium, the Tholos of Athena and other ancient sightseeings.



## Visiting A Traditional Greek Village...

In the evening of 11<sup>th</sup> December after the invitation of the house owner and doctor Mr Sideridis J. we visited the beautiful and traditional village of Gavalou, which is located high above the largest lake in Greece, Trihoniada. There, we prepared traditional Greek dishes, drinks and desserts. We partied and danced Greek and foreign songs and at the end we tried a Greek flavor sweet, galaktompourekko, which includes: 1/2 pound of pastry, **For the cream:** 1 cup fine semolina, 1 1/2 cup sugar, 700 ml fresh milk, 300 ml milk cream, 4 eggs, 3 tablespoons fresh butter cow, 2 vanilla, zest of one lemon, 1 packet fresh cow melted butter for brushing the leaves. **For the syrup:** 700gr sugar, 400gr water, two tablespoons of glucose syrup, peel of one lemon, 1 tablespoon lemon peel and juice. **Prescriptions:** Put all the ingredients for the syrup in a saucepan. Boil for 4 minutes syrup us and removed the pot from the heat leaving the syrup to cool us. Take the baking pan and Grease well the bottom with a kitchen brush and the side begins to lay just 5 leaves in baking pan that the Grease well and sides of the leaves. We start now to make our cream. In saucepan add milk, cream semolina, sugar, vanilla, zest from the lemon and opening the stove on low mix well. We take the eggs and divide the yolks from the whites. Beat the egg whites in a mixer to make good meringue In a separate bowl, beat the egg yolks with wire. Joining gently whip the egg yolks into the bowl. Pour the mixture from the bowl into the pot slowly, stirring it with a wooden spoon. Add 3 tablespoons of fresh butter stirring continuously circular and the center of the pot until combined materials and begins to thicken cream us to become thick, velvety, fluffy and remove from the fire pot us. We take our cream and pour into the pan that we have paved the first leaves us Spread the cream. Spread the remaining cards one at a well buttered. Collect all the sides of the top panel and fold it underneath the bottom. Divide carving epifaniaka the sheet into pieces custard. Drizzle with lots of butter the surface and then sprinkle well with plenty of water, do not be afraid. Bake in a preheated moderate oven 180 degrees 1 hour to brown well. As soon as we get out the sweet from the oven is hot and we get our syrup has cooled and a tablespoon starting to pour slowly onto the leaves. Important to thoroughly wet leaves us with the syrup. We leave to cool completely sweet and of course we drink and the syrup.

