



Quality Action
Improving **HIV** Prevention in Europe

Quality Action CASE STUDY

1. Name and country of the organisation

(Please state the name and the country of the organisation that implemented this practical application of a QA/QI tool as part of Quality Action. We do not publish this information unless you agree. You can remain anonymous by adjusting the settings at the end of this form).

GAT, Portugal.

2. Authors of the case study and contact details

(Please provide then name of the author(s) of this case study and any contact names, Email address or websites where readers can access more information about this practical application of a QA/QI tool).

www.gatportugal.org

www.facebook.com/inmourariareducaodedanos

3. External support (facilitators/partners/technical assistance)

(Please list the names of other organisations and/or people who were involved in this practical application of a QA/QI tool, e.g. project partners, technical assistance, external stakeholders etc..).

No external partners were involved.

4. Project/Programme and key population/target group addressed

(Please describe the project/programme and key population/target group addressed to which you applied the tool).

IN-Mouraria is a low threshold harm reduction centre, focused on health and rights promotion. Its aims are to develop and implement integrated health and social responses for people who use drugs, but it also addresses other vulnerable populations such as sex workers and homeless people. Based on a harm reduction philosophy, the project provides services in a non-discriminatory way and is committed to public health and human rights principles.

Services provided:

- Distribution of injecting and smoking material (syringes, pipes)
- Distribution of condoms and lube
- Rapid testing for HIV, HCV, HBV and syphilis
- Basic healthcare
- Social and legal support
- Peer counselling
- Referral to other social and health services
- Accompaniment to medical appointments
- Drop-In centre

All services are free of charge and testing services are open to the general population.

5. Goals/aims of applying the QA/QI tool

(Please list the goals you wanted to achieve with the practical application of the tool).

The goals of applying the Succeed tool were:

1. To identify aspects/areas for improvement;
2. To discuss proposals for improvement in target areas;
3. To develop a quality improvement plan to be implemented in 2015.

6. Tool and methodology used

(Please indicate which of the five tools you used (Succeed, QIP, PQD, PIQA, Schiff) and briefly sketch out the steps and measures of how you applied it).

Tool used: Succeed Participants: operational team (including the project coordinator and an internal facilitator)

Step one - Preparation: The NGO board and management team agreed on the format for practical application - a two-day workshop held outside the workplace - and approved all the resources needed. The objectives and methods of the practical application were then presented by the internal facilitator and project coordinator in a team meeting and all team members were invited to fill in the questionnaire individually and send it back to the facilitator for analysis. Additional assistance had been offered and individual meetings with the facilitator were arranged upon request. The results of individual questionnaires were pooled together and quantitative and qualitative outputs were prepared for group discussion.

Step two - Two-day workshop: The group discussion was organised in five sessions over two days: two sessions dedicated to the project structure, one to the process, another to the results, and the last one to define the quality improvement plan. In each session, the questionnaire results had been used to guide and encourage the group discussion. At the end of the workshop, the team presented briefly the main output - the quality improvement plan - to other organisation members who were not involved in the practical application.

Step three - Implementation of the quality improvement plan: The plan comprises mainly actions related to the project structure, e.g. redefining objectives and priorities, reassigning tasks and responsibilities, improving data collection tools or reviewing intervention protocols. All actions were assigned to specific team members in a timetable.

7. Results and benefits of applying the QA/QI tool

(Please describe what resulted from applying the tool and if and how your project/programme benefitted).

The main output of the practical application was the quality improvement plan. Areas or aspects for improvement had been identified and the team was able to find common solutions to be implemented. The tool was the basis for an open but guided group discussion. It helped the team to reflect in a more structured way on what was working well and what was not. And it also helped to redirect the team's actions to the core objectives and activities of the project. It was useful to not only evaluate past performance, but also to plan more specialised and structured interventions.

Another benefit of the practical application was the involvement of all team members in the process of improving the project. Some changes are already visible: better distribution of tasks and responsibilities, better communication (regular meetings, internal reports), and enhanced motivation. Overall, the project gained greater coherence and consistency.

8. Recommendations

(Please describe the lessons learnt from positive and negative experiences during the process of using the tool itself and about the quality of projects/programmes like yours).

Lessons learned:

- It is important to get support from the management and prepare in advance and detail the practical application. Can be useful to fill in the tool individually before the group discussion. And it can be productive to have more than one session to apply the tool and have enough time for discussion.
- The tool is not user friendly and can be a barrier to participation, especially for those who do not have an high level of education.
- Ensuring change over time can be very difficult, so it is very important to have a strategy and methodology for the follow-up of the practical application of the tool.

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