



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 We do not publish this information unless you agree.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).

Deutsche AIDS-Hilfe e.V., Berlin, Germany

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).

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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..).

None

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

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

Every two years, Europe's biggest self-help conference on "Living with HIV / AIDS" is taking place in Germany: the "positive encounters". Based on a democratic voting procedure, the 400 participants decide on which topics they wish to work in the next period. Therefore, the national German AIDS service organization, Deutsche AIDS-Hilfe, starts different workshops where interested people can meet up to 4 weekends to come up with concrete measures and projects.

One of these workshops is devoted to the topic "degrading (internalized) stigma":

"The movement of many courageous, nonconformist HIV-positive people had a big influence on different levels of social change in the past 30 years. Is that era now over because of the good treatability of the HIV infection, the gained lifetime and the improved quality of life? Do our joint actions have to be more courageous to shake off self-stigma and to claim a life free of discrimination? We want to develop collective actions that draw attention to social evils about living with HIV and we want to create interventions to reduce stigma and discrimination."

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

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

Evaluation of what the group stands for, creating a self-understanding and defining the group's aims

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).

PQD: SMART goals and, prior to that, a huge brainstorming session

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 brainstorming session resulted in a variety of more than 60 different inputs which could be sorted into the following categories:

- * adjectives, such as: empathic, clear, engaging, inviting, uncomfortable, sustainable
- * effects, such as: writing social history, internationalization, courage
- * attitude, such as: visibility, critical appreciation, optimism
- * action (tools), such as: flashmobs, distributing gifts, forge alliances
- * concrete actions, such as: acts of solidarity with people without medical insurance, free medical treatment, theatre piece

Because of the enormous output and the many ideas that came up, it was important to focus on the aims that the group wants to achieve - and, more importantly: on the aims that the group is able to achieve. For that, the SMART goals tool was applied. Being "specific", "measurable", "attractive" and "time bound" was not the big problem. But the group had to deal with the fact that they have to be realistic about how many actions they can carry out because they will only meet 3 more weekends in the next 18 months. That's why the "realistic" criterion created the most discussions. In the end, they agreed on the following goal: "We will initiate at least 3 collective political actions before the next 'positive encounters' conference in summer 2016. We also submit the idea and the basic features for a celebratory event to the national German AIDS service organization. All actions and events are running under the theme of "20 years of antiretroviral treatment".

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).

As the group started from scratch, and as they had never met before, the application of the SMART goals tool was probably the best way to guarantee a successful workshop weekend. In this specific case it was very important to spend enough time on the creative brainstorming process before defining the aim itself.

While the group was working on the different projects that could be translated into action, they reached a dead end. As they were told in advance that failure can happen, they were confident enough to take a step back and then take the right turn.

When working with volunteers who come from all over the country for a very limited period, it is essential to do a reality check when applying the SMART goals tool. The biggest problem can be the discrepancy between (over)motivation and the lack of time. For this, defining smaller and more realistic goals can be very helpful to ensure success later.

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