

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 We do not publish this information unless you agree.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

Organization Against Drugs - OKANA, Greece

OKANA is governmental, self-regulated, legal entity supervised and financed by the Ministry of Health in Greece. It's main mission is the implementation of a drug reduction policy at all prevention levels, and it is the only national organisation responsible for the operation of the opiate substitution programme (OST).

### 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.)*

Litsa Lagakos, member of the Scientific Directory of OKANA, Scientific Manager of the project "Spread it".  
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Anastasia Drimousi, MD, Director of the First Aid and Support Unit of OKANA. Coordinator of a Program concerned with multiple difficulties including poverty among PWIDs.  
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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.)*

The two people mentioned above (section 2) were involved in the practical application of the quality improvement tool. However, they took into consideration the information from focus group feedback during the project implementation. (Feedback from 409 guided assessment questionnaires).

Moreover, there has been constant supportive technical assistance from HCDCP through Vasileia Konte.

### 4. Project/programme

*(Please briefly describe the project/programme to which you applied the tool.)*

The title of the project is "Spread it".

The project was a response to the HIV epidemic among PWID in Athens using the "Boulle De Neige" technique. It provided new alarming evidence concerning active drugs users.

The European "Boulle De Neige" project developed techniques to create networks between the hidden population of PWID and specialised drug care facilities. They also assess the current social status of PWID.

The basic idea for the success of the campaigns conducted consists in recruiting those who have successfully completed therapeutic programs, patients under substitution treatment and functional "active" drug users to do the job in the field (*jobistes*).

Between 2013 and 2014, the Greek "Boulle De Neige" project launched 41 outreach campaigns in Athens and Thessaloníki. In total, 368 trained *jobistes* carried out the campaigns. In total, they approached 4324 PWID (2263 in Athens and 1661 in Thessaloníki), filled in 4324 questionnaires and distributed 86480 syringes.

AIMS OF THE OUTREACH CAMPAIGNS:

- Awareness and motivation of the "marginalised"/hidden PWID concerning HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis and STI.
- Information about accessing drug addiction care facilities (e.g. drop-in-centres).
- Collection of information regarding the overall risk behavior of PWID and their needs ("Boulle De Neige" questionnaires).
- Assessment and overall improvement of the services offered by drug care organisations (e.g. OKANA), both in the field of low-threshold services and substitution programs.

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

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

"Spread it" was implemented over a two year period in 2013-2014. The aims of applying the *Succeed* tool in December 2015 were:

- Assess what went well and what possibly did not during project implementation, collect evidence that documents the work accomplished by the project and possible needs for improvement for a future project.
- Compare findings identified from the *Succeed* tool application with the findings from the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) procedure and the external evaluation that was conducted during the project period.
- Plan the second cycle of the project using the quality improvement procedure and a participatory approach in order to increase team spirit and work satisfaction.
- Network with other European stakeholders including EMCDDA, using the same "language" and professional quality improvement tools.

## 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.)*

A. Drimousi has been the coordinator of an OKANA program concerned with PWID with multiple co-morbidities, including poverty. This program consisted of three projects, one of which was "Spread it". L. Lagakos was the Scientific Coordinator and Manager of the project "Spread it". Both senior experts of OKANA were trained in the *Succeed* tool through a national training event organised by KEELPNO/HCDPC.

*Succeed* is a self-guided and self-assessed quality improvement tool addressing three widely-recognised aspects of projects: Structure, Process and Results.

In December 2015, one year after the end of the project, the two experts from OKANA, during a two day session, examined:

- What worked well
- Improvements needed, actions in potentially weak areas, e.g.: planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation for the future project.

This was possible only by taking into consideration the comments and feedback received during the focus group discussions from the 409 experts from the field who participated in the project implementation. The field experts consisted of 41 professionally trained *jobists* and 368 non-professionally trained *jobists* (members of OST programs, ex-drug users, even functional drug-users).

The tool application created a team spirit between the two senior experts who filled in the *Succeed* questionnaire, which we hope to share with our team during future implementation in order to improve the effectiveness of our intervention and the work satisfaction of our team.

## 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 use of the tool helped us to:

- Understand what went well (efficient external outreach work regarding the implementation of the project).
- Understand what went wrong (need of improvement in internal performance management concerning planning ahead for administrative support, including in the team a financial officer and line management)
- Compare the results of the *Succeed* application and identified areas for improvement with the findings from the other mechanisms (the external evaluation of the project assessed that this was an overall good implementation (quality assurance procedure) and did not point out the need to improve team and line management and to define roles).

## 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.)*

*Succeed* appears to be an excellent plan-do-check-act tool that defines the steps that should be assessed before, during and at the end of the project implementation. It offers self-confidence to those involved in planning and implementation of the project and helps identify areas for future sustainability.

We recommend using two internal facilitators for the tool application. Working together created a team spirit between us and helped us answer the *Succeed* questionnaire effectively. In the future we plan to engage the members of our team and the project beneficiaries.

Good preparation and training is needed. Training in the tool is needed in order to gain an in-depth knowledge. Asking extra assistance from the trainers is of great added value, both for the tool application and for completing the case study. They can offer tailor-made support.

We will "SPREAD THE NEED FOR USING QUALITY IMPROVEMENT TOOLS", within the network of EMCDDA. We will advocate for the adaptation of quality improvement tools to PWID-related projects (declare the use of tool: recommendation) and their relevance to improving project management skills and, in the end, the effectiveness of the intervention implemented.

### Please indicate how you want this case study to be published:

- ☒ *I want this case study to be published mentioning the names of countries, organisations, people and contact details/websites in the text above.*
- ☐ *I want this case study to be published anonymously, meaning that names of countries, organisations, people and contact details/websites in the text above will be removed by the editors before publishing.*
- ☐ *I want this case study to be published without mentioning people's names, meaning that names of people in the text above will be removed by the editors before publishing, but names of organisations and countries as well as website addresses will remain.*

Please send the filled in case study to [carolin.vierneisel@dah.aidshilfe.de](mailto:carolin.vierneisel@dah.aidshilfe.de)

**Thank you!**