



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 We do not publish this information unless you agree.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

GOSHH (Gender, Orientation, Sexual Health, HIV) - Ireland

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..).

Sex Work Forum Moderator + Sex Worker Safety Forum Moderator

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).

Sex Work Services - Indoor Escorts

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

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

- 1) Find out why the majority of sex workers do not come to the service for condoms.
- 2) Improve our service provision for sex workers

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 Tool - Rapid Assessment

Stage 1 - Gathered local knowledge from sex worker clients - asked one question "most sex workers do not use our services, why do you think they do not come in for condoms?"

Stage 2 - Identified key people working with the escort community of Ireland through listening to the opposing voices of abolitionist campaigners

Stage 3 - Arranged to become a "special user" on an online escort forum, put up a post explaining the process so far, and what we were trying to achieve, and asked three questions of forum users.

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).

Stage 1 - was mind blowing. We discovered that people mainly buy condoms online but one piece of information we received turned our whole thinking on it's head...."we work hard for our money, when we spend it we like to spend it on luxury things, things that make us feel good. I go for a massage then into Brown Thomas and then when i am finished i go to boots and buy a beautiful pack of condoms, coming here to buy* condoms, loose, in a brown bag makes me feel cheap." The sex workers were also very excited to be asked their opinion and gave their knowledge to us solemnly and took it very seriously.

*condoms are bought in bulk and separated into bags for sale to sex workers at cost price (50 for •10)

1. We decided to get branded condoms in packs for sale on the website or in reception.
2. We realised that the escort community is mainly on online community, if we were to increase participation of sex workers in the decision making process of our project then we needed to be where they were, online!
3. We have been ignoring a valuable asset (sex workers) for too long.

Stage 2 - was slow and painstaking but worth it. After reflecting on the answers from stage 1, two things became obvious

1. The sex work community, being transient, is local to everywhere and it is the same people, so we can access Limerick sex workers in Dublin, Cork, England, Germany etc.
2. We only need to find the key people to work with. They had access to a wider community.

We attended local academic forums to meet with activists from around the world and establish relationships, to talk

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).

One of the outstanding things that we learnt was how much service users appreciate being asked their opinion. We work with marginalised people who are excluded on a daily basis and we have failed to offer them an inclusive service because we have not asked them what they would like, how they experience life and what they want from us. Up until now, our sex work services had run along for years, not really changing, and nobody giving them any thought or attention. After a very small amount of work, we now have direct access to hundreds of sex workers, who are happy to chat with us and in turn, they now have access to us. Up until we began this process, we were an organisation that could not be trusted and were unknown to most.

We have been visited by sex workers asking us our viewpoint on legislative change.

We had our first sex worker in for a Rapid HIV test during European HIV testing week (as a result of online promotion in the forum) and we have been invited by the national sex worker rights organisation (SWAI) to speak at their campaign press launch.

So, the practical application of this very useful tool has changed how sex workers in Ireland engage with us. It has created a sense that we might be different from all the other projects and has allowed us to begin to build bridges.

It has also prompted completely different thinking about how sex workers choose to engage with projects and ways that we can universally promote safety, non-judgemental service and support for sex workers that they get to assess.

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

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(who will then forward it to their WP 6 contact).*

Thank you!