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“CAPACITY BUILDING FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH PROMOTION IN THE CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN MEMBER STATES” PROJECT

EuroHealthNet has started a new project on Capacity Building in Public Health and Health Promotion in Central and Eastern Europe on January 2006. The contract for this project is held by the Health Promotion State Agency in Latvia, and the participating institutes are the network members from Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

The project's general objective is to improve the capacity of the participating agencies to respond effectively to the major health needs in their countries. In that sense, there were organized some trainings focused on addressing socio-economic determinants of health through public health/health promotion programmes, health policy on the European level and strategic programming.

As specific objectives of the project:

- to identify the existing capacity and needs of the National Agencies for Public Health and Health Promotion in the EU Member States to address the wider socio-economic determinants of health;
- to strengthen national platforms for Public Health and Health promotion in the Member States to consult, communicate and disseminate European health and related activities;

- to develop a strategic programme for capacity building to improve health in the EU Member States (at national and regional level);
- to provide training to the National Agencies for Public Health and Health Promotion in the Member States regarding: cross cutting approaches to health promotion, health at the European level and strategic programming in health promotion;
- to discuss the knowledge, experiences and different approaches that the EU Member States can offer and bring to the network.

The first training in Lyubliana “**Cross-cutting approaches to health promotion**” was oriented on exploring multidisciplinary views on health, explaining how other public policies can have an impact on individuals' health status and introducing the concept of health determinants. It gave a theoretical background to the issue of health inequalities. The main theories were presented, and information on the knowledge resources in that field was provided. Multidisciplinary and multisectoral approaches to reducing health inequalities, including the role of health promotion were discussed. The need for Community approach to health promotion was discussed. New thinking in mental health promotion

and improving mental health, notably the importance of taking into consideration the determinants of health were considered. Examples of practical interventions at both population and individual levels were presented. A total of 26 participants took part in the training session including project partners, project team, guests and trainers.

The second training held in Brussels, “**EU key actors, institutions and policies**”, was projected as a study visit. A total of 15 participants took part in this study visit to Brussels, including the project partners and the project team.

The objective of this study visit was to introduce Health Promotion actors from new Member States and accession countries to EU actors and policies with regard to Public Health and Health Promotion. 10 different sessions were held providing participants with background information and opportunities to discuss EU related issues, potential resources and funding opportunities.

The training sessions were interactive enabling participants to share their experience and concerns and to establish contacts with relevant actors.

The third project training “**Strengthening Public Health and Health Promotion Programming**” took place at the Ministry of Health of Slovak Republic, Bratislava.

A total of 23 participants took part in this event, including health promoters from Eastern and Central Europe, representatives from the Slovak Republic, the training consultant, Spencer Haggard and the project team.

This final project training addressed strategic programming for health promotion at the national and institute level. The objective was to provide participants with the tools to further examine their position with respect to health promotion especially relatively to:

- reinforce the international coalition;
- be prepared and have the tools to organize meetings with the national coalition;
- to jointly draw with the national coalition a plan to enhance the capacity for health promotion;
- to develop a plan for their institute’s activities (in short, medium and long term).

The meeting started by looking back at the two previous training and was followed by a group discussion on the training outcomes and interest generated in the different countries.

An interactive session then took place in order to share the results of the assessments of the existing capacities and needs for health promotion in the participating countries. The session focused on the policy context at the national level, the capacity within participating institutes for health promotion and to address the wider determinants of health, the level and challenges faced with cooperation at the European and international level and the institute’s capacity in communication.

A moderated workshop session was organized in order to address key actions to enhance the capacity for health promotion. The workshop was based on the Framework for Building Capacity to Promote Health (2001)

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developed by the New South Wales Health Department and focused on 5 key action areas:

1. Organizational change (including systems infrastructures and institutions; policies and procedures, strategic directions, organizational structures).
2. Workforce development (education, workforce learning, professional development opportunities).

3. Resource allocation (financial, human and physical resources).

4. Partnership and coalition (financial, human and physical resources).

5. Leadership (technical skills, strategic visioning, organizational management).

For each of these project areas, participants were asked to discuss their existing situation and possible feasible strategies.



Work group

At the end of the training, participants jointly discussed the project next steps including the database of health promotion experts, the national or institute plans to enhance health promotion and the final publication on the Capacity building for health promotion in Central and Eastern Europe.

As a part of the capacity building exercise, each participating institute will reach out to mobilise other

stakeholders in order to jointly build coalitions for public health. Through building of coalitions the position of public health/health promotion in the country will be strengthened.

For further information please access www.eurohealthnet.eu;
www.pub-health-iasi.ro;

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