

Knowledge Transfer - Puglia

(extract from D7.1 Knowledge Transfer Programme)

Informed by the outcomes of maturity assessment on strengths and weaknesses in integrated care in Puglia region, the following dimensions of SCIROCCO Exchange Maturity Model for Integrated Care were identified as priorities for the knowledge transfer:

- **Dimension(s) for coaching:** these are areas in which the maturity assessment revealed strengths which could be of interest for other regions to increase knowledge: Q7 - Population Approach; Q4 - Process Coordination; Q8 - Citizen Empowerment; and Q3 - Digital Infrastructure.
- **Dimension(s) for improvement:** these can be either weaker points, or relatively strong areas on which the region intended to improve further: Q6 - Removal of Inhibitors; Q5 - Finance and Funding; and Q9 - Evaluation Methods

Implementation of Knowledge Transfer Programme in Puglia region

The following knowledge transfer and capacity-building activities were conducted in Puglia region:

a) Participatory webinar

The maturity assessment (conducted in WP5) allowed to identify strengths and weaknesses of health and social Apulian care system in integrated care. Starting from the data acquired, a **participatory phase** was launched to better understand the priorities for the future improvement and capacity-building activities. The participatory webinar was held in Italian, online in February 2021. All the participants who conducted maturity assessment process in Puglia Region were invited along the following different categories of stakeholders:

- LHA Top management (e.g., CEO, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), Chief Medical Officer (CMO));
- Representative of the Health and Social Care District;
- Representative with medical background (e.g. Care Manager, Chief Nurse);
- Representative of the ICT Team; and
- Patients' group representative.

34 stakeholders attended the meeting. The workshop was facilitated by the Assembly of European Regions (AER) and representatives of AReSS Puglia. As a result of this webinar, the stakeholders decided that among the 3 main dimensions identified as weaknesses, **the "Funding" dimension was the priority to be addressed by a knowledge transfer program in the region**. Although Puglia is one of the Italian regions with the highest level of performance in the use of European funds, the healthcare sector suffers from the lack of specialised human resources and / or dedicated human resources to be appointed to these activities.

b) Analysis of training opportunities

The second step in the implementation of the SCIROCCO Exchange Knowledge Transfer Programme for Puglia, was **an organisational phase** with an objective to benchmark and analyse the training opportunities which were already in place in Puglia, then online in Italy,

to understand this gap of lacking specialised human resources and/or dedicated human resources embedded in the “Funding” dimension.

A Master in «European Project Planning and Management» organised by a private regional university, the LUM University and its School of Management, appeared particularly tailored to the identified needs; as a consequence the local SCIROCCO Exchange project team started the co-creation of the Knowledge Transfer programme with the University’s scientific board.

The Master Programme gained a specific module dedicated to programs and initiatives within the Health and Social care domains in order to allow participants to acquire full knowledge of the opportunities available both in consideration of the Next Generation Europe (the European initiative to provide financial support to all member states to recover from the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic) and other chances resulting from the pandemic period.

c) Development of Memorandum of Understanding

The “implementation phase” was an additional step forward to co-creation of the Master Programme. The objective was to foster capacity building and to improve selected skills inside the healthcare professionals’ organisations: a Memorandum of Understanding was therefore signed between AReSS and the 6 LHAs; thanks to SCIROCCO Exchange Project AReSS supported LHAs financially to select their stakeholders and let them to attend the Master by a dedicated grant. Each LHA selected a dedicated human resources with adequate background to attend the training course and to become the reference point for future projects, trying to solve the lack of specific competences to promote integrated care by intercepting and catching funds from national and European funding calls, that emerged from the assessment; in fact what the assessment revealed was that usually human resources in charge of the projects often change without developing specific skills, or they are external expertise outside the organisation. The Master Programme is anticipated to end in April 2022. It will be repeated in its new 2022 edition maintaining the module focusing on the Health and Social Care domains planned and experimented in collaboration with AReSS Puglia in 2021 under the framework of the knowledge transfer program. The efficacy of the intervention will be assessed concretely by monitoring the LHAs’ performances in flanking AReSS in future projects.

Challenges in the implementation of SCIROCCO Exchange Knowledge Transfer Programme in Puglia region

The COVID-19 pandemic caused several changes in implementation of SCIROCCO Exchange Knowledge Transfer Programme in Puglia region. Initially, a knowledge transfer program was targeting a wider stakeholder group which participated in the maturity assessment process in 6 LHAs in Puglia. The engagement of local stakeholders proved to be more difficult due to changing priorities of these stakeholders in response to COVID-19.

Secondly, a number of face-to-face study visits were foreseen for these stakeholders in order to facilitate more in-depth learning about the dimensions identified as weaknesses in the maturity assessment process and the dimension of “Funding” specifically. All these foreseen activities were changed to online knowledge exchange activities due to pandemic. It is envisaged that potentially face-to-face learning activities, including the participation at Master program, could have different impact on embedding the learning from knowledge transfer activities locally. However, as repeatedly mentioned by stakeholders, even this online programme of activities was highly appreciated to address the local needs and priorities for improvement in integrated care. The online option of conducting the Master

course for example allowed the training without any interruptions and meeting the given project' deadlines, despite all the COVID-19 related measures.

Impact of SCIROCCO Exchange Knowledge Transfer Programme

In terms of the local impact of learning embedded through SCIROCCO Exchange Knowledge Transfer Programme, the following achievements can be highlighted:

- Stakeholders have completed their one-year Master Programme developing new skills and knowledge.
- A working group with one stakeholder from each LHAs coordinated by AReSS has been planned with an objective to create a network at regional level in order to launch and coordinate actions for future projects and to improve Integrated Care EU project already in place; build a collaborative culture in the region.
- Cultural and organisational impact with tangible outcomes to be foreseen in medium to long-term. With the training carried out, it will be possible to benefit from trained and dedicated human resources who will be able to intercept new resources for integrated care, or to efficiently flank AReSS in new initiatives to promote integrated care. Networking and cooperation among the Region will be strengthened.