

ELECT

European Learning Communities for Training of People with Mental Illness

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www.elect-project.eu



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Introduction to the ELECT project

This is the first newsletter of the ELECT project. It presents the recent activities within the project.

The Elect project sets out to strengthen Clubhouses as learning communities and to promote access to education and the labour market for people recovering from mental illnesses. The ELECT-consortium includes Clubhouses, Clubhouse Coalitions and Training bases from seven European Countries. STAKES will act as the project co-ordinator.

In the Elect project Clubhouses provide an alternative training setting and learning possibilities for people recovering from mental illnesses. Clubhouses can improve learners' basic skills and learning-to-learn abilities by activating and motivating them to take part in different kinds of short courses, e.g. on career guidance, ICT and languages. Clubhouses help identify learners' educational goals and enable them to follow individual learning pathways.



Coffee break at the project's kick-off meeting in Malmö.

The project enhances co-operation and awareness raising between Clubhouse learning-communities and educational institutes in consortium countries. The project creates a set of supported educational methods for Clubhouse members who have aspirations to study in educational institutes and for students whose studies have been interrupted because of mental illness. Supported education improves the possibilities to begin and continue studies successfully in educational institutes.

In the final phase of the project, ELECT will organize a Supported Education pilot course that will summarize the project's experiences and preliminary outcomes.

The project has been funded through the support of the European Commission's Lifelong Learning Programme. The ELECT project started 1 November 2007 and will last for 24 months. Please find more project info from our website www.elect-project.eu.



Lifelong Learning Programme

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This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

In this issue:

Introduction to the ELECT project	1
Need for the innovative actions in the field of mental health and studies	2
Kick-off meeting of the ELECT project	2
Activation and Motivation	3
Support Methods	3
Training of Trainers	3-4
EPCD - European Partnership for Clubhouse Development	4
Second ELECT project meeting in Helsinki 5th-6th June	5



ELECT project meeting begun at the Sailors church of Malmö. Meeting gathered 38 participants from eight countries and 13 organizations.

Need for the innovative actions in the field of mental health and studies

According to a report “New thinking about Mental Health and Employment” (Radcliffe Publishing, Oxford 2005), the need for professional training and support for employment are urgent in the UK: Most people who suffer from periods of mental ill health would like to work and yet less than 20% are in employment. For those with a diagnosis of schizophrenia, the unemployment rate is nearer to 95%.

People with mental health problems are the least employed of any group of disabled persons. As to aspirations to education, while nearly

70% expressed a desire for education and training, only 18% were in education.

The gaps between those who wanted and those who received help and support are nearly the same. In terms of significant barriers to employment, 51% of respondents identified a lack of skills and qualifications, 54% a lack of work experience, and 53% a lack of appropriate support (ibid. pp. 12-14).

According to the mental health experts, these kinds of findings are available in other European countries too.

By developing supported education and assisted-learning methods, individual pre-training and “learning-to-learn support”, the ELECT project improves the quality of lives of people with mental illness and their access to adult education and training. Specially designed support methods are needed for the education of people with mental illness, because existing support methods are designed mostly for other groups of disabled persons.

“As to aspirations to education, while nearly 70% expressed a desire for education and training, only 18% were in education.”

Kick-off meeting of the ELECT project was organized in Malmö 3–5 March 2008

The kick-off meeting of the ELECT project gathered 38 participants from eight countries. Participants represented 13 different organizations.

The project meeting was hosted by Clubhouse of Malmö, while the program included general sessions which took place in the Sailors church of Malmö and workshop session which were held in the Clubhouse of Malmö. A social evening was organized at the Clubhouse as well.

The kick-off meeting was opened with an introduction to the ELECT project given by the Project

Manager Mr. Ville Grönberg from STAKES (Finland). He spoke of the told about project's background, financing and activities and the supposed outcomes.

Mr. Esko Hänninen, a Director from STAKES presented the Future Clubhouse development in the larger European context and Mr. Magnus Karlsson from Esrta Sköndal University College (Sweden) spoke about the evaluation process of the project.

After some general lectures, participants divided into working groups. The ELECT pro-

ject consists of four working groups: Activation and Motivation, Support Methods, Training of Trainers, and Evaluation. These working groups have an essential role in the project implementation. The first task for each working group was to discuss tasks, create plans for the next steps and to delegate responsibilities in the working group.

This newsletter will present some of the results from first working-group sessions.



Working groups gathered at the Clubhouse of Malmö.

Activation and Motivation

One challenge for the Activation and Motivation working group is to identify the Clubhouse members' educational needs and goals.

The working group will modify a questionnaire that summarises information from the different European Clubhouses. As a final outcome of this inquiry, the working group will produce a survey on the needs and goals of the members. Preliminary results from the survey will be presented in the next project meeting in Helsinki.

Support Methods

This working group's task is to develop on-site and mobile support methods for students whose studies have been interrupted or have not yet begun because of a psychiatric disability.

In order to do this, it is important to enhance the co-operation between Clubhouses and educational institutes. One way to achieve this goal is to

Another task for the working group is to explore the good practices currently available in consortium countries. From this perspective, the working group is trying to describe how the Clubhouses provide learning opportunities for members.

The working group agreed that learning is a very essential part of the Clubhouse activities. The clubhouse motivates members and staff to learn every day. This activation and motivation process has to be made

organize co-operation meetings and study visits to educational institutes in consortium countries.

The Support Methods working group will produce a review of the supported education methods that assist people recovering from mental illnesses so as to study successfully in educational institutes. The working group has already generated a

questionnaire the objective of which is to identify those study support methods available in Consortium Clubhouses.

visible by describing the process in detail. As a second main outcome, the working group will create a report of prevailing good practices.

The Swedish Clubhouse Coalition is operating as a leading partner of the Activation and Motivation working group. The other partners are the Clubhouse of Oslo (Norway), Clubhouse Geysir (Iceland), the German speaking Clubhouse Coalition, the Danish Clubhouse Coalition and the Finnish Clubhouse Coalition.

The Danish Clubhouse Coalition is operating as a leader of this working group. Other partners are the Clubhouse of Oslo (Norway), Clubhouse Geysir (Iceland) and the Finnish Clubhouse Coalition.

equal to employment and it will encourage an additional way back into society for Clubhouse members. The project will provide partners with an opportunity to share 'good practice'.

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(To be continued on page 4)



Support methods working group at the Clubhouse of Malmö.

"The Clubhouse motivates members and staff to learn every day."



Training of trainers working group in process.

Training of Trainers

The Training of Trainers working group will organize a supported education pilot course for Clubhouse trainers and peer trainers and develop a curriculum of the supported education training course for the European Clubhouses.

During the first project meeting, the working

group discussed participants' expectations about the project and summarised their experience in the field of supported education.

Participants thought that the project will promote and develop the Clubhouse Model in Europe with education being



Social evening at the Clubhouse.

(Continues from page 3)
there was a wide variety of educational opportunities available within their Clubhouses. These ranged from the informal mentoring of members and staff learning new skills from each other during the work-ordered day, to more formal sessions covering job skills courses, literacy, numeracy, and even computing, with tutors from local colleges delivering classes in the Clubhouse. Generally, all Clubhouses supported members in being able to access educational opportunities in their local communities and educational establishments.

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Behind the scenes of the ELECT project: EPCD - European Partnership for Clubhouse Development

An agreement was reached between partners on the formation of an open European Partnership for Clubhouse Development (EPCD). Those partners were the International Center for Clubhouse Development (ICCD), the National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (STAKES) of Finland, the ICCD-Certified Training Bases in Europe, the European Clubhouse Coalitions and some independent Clubhouses.

The overall goal for this agreement is to improve the social inclusion, educational and labour market integration and participation of people with mental illness and psychosocial problems in Europe and to increase

that jobs are becoming scarce in consortium countries and that education provides another viable route into employment. As the labour market becomes ever more 'qualification-driven', entry-level jobs are becoming harder to find.

After these discussions, the working group formulated a first draft of the pilot course for supported education. According to the draft, the pilot course would last one week (5 days). The main topics in the pilot course would be an introduction to the Clubhouse model and supported education, a visit to an educational institute, stories from students &

members, activation and the motivation in the Clubhouse environment, and supported education methods. The content of the last two topics will be developed in co-operation with the other working groups of the ELECT project. The timetable for pilot course will be agreed during the next meeting in Helsinki.

The Mosaic Clubhouse Training Base from London is leading the development work of this working group. Other partners are the Clubhouse of Malmö (Sweden), the Clubhouse of Helsinki (Finland) and the Scottish Clubhouse Coalition.

the opportunities of mental health service users and ex-users in European Countries to participate in the empowering and supportive Clubhouse communities.

The ELECT project has been planned and established by the EPCD partners. The project is co-ordinated by STAKES, whose work will follow closely the remit set out in the EPCD agreement. STAKES is also exploring possibilities to create new development projects with current and future EPCD partners.

STAKES plans to establish a Grundtvig network project to follow on from the multilateral ELECT project. The network project should include part-

ners from 10 European countries. This means that the ELECT project consortium should be enlarged by 4 new countries. The deadline for the new network proposals will probably be the end of February/March 2009.

Any European Clubhouse or a future Coalition of Clubhouses have the right to join the European Partnership for Clubhouse Development by signing the agreement. Any initiative for joining this agreement or resigning from it will be dealt with by STAKES. For more information, please contact Mr Esko Hänninen or Mr. Ville Grönberg from STAKES. You can download the EPCD brochure from the website: www.elect-project.eu.



One important goal of the EPCD agreement is to increase the opportunities of mental health service users and ex-users in European Countries to participate in the empowering and supportive Clubhouse communities.

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knowledge for welfare and health

Preliminary program for the Helsinki meeting

DAY 1, 5TH JUNE 2008

From 9am to 4:30 pm

- Opening of the seminar
- Presentations of the working groups (workpackages)
- Coffee break
- Lecture: Mental health and learning problems (Topic and lecturer to be confirmed later)
- Lunch at STAKES
- Working group sessions
- Summary of the day 1

SOCIAL EVENING (5TH JUNE):

From 6:30pm to 9:30 pm.

- Helsinki sightseeing cruise & dinner

DAY 2, 6TH JUNE 2008

From 9am to 5pm

- Lecture & rehearsals: How to alleviate stage fright? (topic and lecturer to be confirmed later)
- Coffee break
- Working group sessions
- Lunch at STAKES or lunch and tour at Helsingin Klubitalo (optional)
- Working group sessions continue
- Coffee break
- Working group summaries & conversation
- Greetings from the ICCD board of directors
- Summary of the second project meeting

Second ELECT project meeting in Helsinki 5th-6th June 2008

STAKES will be hosting a second project consortium meeting in Helsinki on 5-6 June 2008. The meeting will be organised together with the Clubhouse of Helsinki and the Finnish Clubhouse Coalition. The ELECT project partners have been invited to take part in this event. The project has also invited the ICCD Board of Directors so that they can familiarize themselves with the ELECT project (ICCD - The International Center for Clubhouse Development).

Seminar guests may benefit from the accommodation quota offered by the Sokos Hotel Vaakuna, Helsinki (offer valid until 7th May).

The meeting venue is: STAKES - Lintulahdenkuja 4, FI-00531 Helsinki, Finland. For more details, please contact the project management. Welcome to the Helsinki!



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