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HOOD – Homeless’s Open Dialogue

Intellectual Output 1

Phase 3 | Profile Study creation

Toolkit

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The Hood IO1 toolkit

The IO1 Hood toolkit was developed within the frame of project [HOOD – Homeless’s Open Dialogue](#), co-financed by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Commission. The project involved five countries – Portugal, Italy, Denmark, Greece and Spain – and has been jointly developed by six organisations - Ufficio Pio (IT), Sant Joan de Déu (ES), Projekt Udenfor (DK) and Klimaka (GR), as operative partners; CESIS (PT) and UNITO (IT) as scientific partners and FEANTSA, Fio.PSD and HOGARSÍ, as associated partners.

The toolkit is divided into two main sections. The first section consists of a brief review over a few relevant concepts and orientations worth bearing in mind while using the Hood grid included in the second section. The grid intends to assist professionals providing support to people who recently became homeless, aiming at contributing for moving the paradigm of support from an emergency-centred to a prevention-centred approach.

The main objective of the tool is to help the professional to collect and discuss relevant information about the beneficiaries, as well as their competences, strengths and weaknesses, in a close and shared way, for achieving support better corresponding to their needs. When filling out the tool, the approach should be person-centred. The person should be heard and respected in a non-judgmental environment.

For more information about the project and a better knowledge about Hood methodologies please visit the website <https://hoodproject.org/>, where you can find, for instance, some relevant documents ([bites](#)) and [videocasts](#). These offer an introduction to two approaches to be adapted to the homelessness field within the timeframe of project HOOD: i) the Dialogical approach and ii) the Enabling Co-planning approach. They discuss topics ranging from epistemology at the basis of the approaches, the core principles of the two methodologies mentioned, and the key elements that characterise them. Overall, they facilitate the progressive comprehension of the two approaches considered, also providing tips for further readings.

Promoting the importance of early intervention and developing a new methodology based on the Dialogic Practices and on the Enabling Co-planning Approach in the work developed with people who recently become homeless are essential cornerstones of project HOOD.

Early intervention is crucial for tackling homelessness. Time is a core factor that shapes the person’s ability and identity elements. People who spend a longer time living in the street and in low-threshold services tend to progressively lose resources and abilities and moving into a more and more vulnerable condition. Beyond a certain amount of time spent in the streets people tend to standardise their behaviours. In order to develop coping strategies with the situation they are faced with, the homeless person tends to lose abilities, to reduce his/her social networks and to narrow future perspectives, becoming ‘trapped’ in the present dimension.

Early intervention can also be a strategy adopted to facilitate the progressive shift of paradigm from an emergency-centred to a prevention-centred approach.

Additionally, the heterogeneity of the homeless population should be acknowledged as well as the complexity of the connection between structural and individual factors. Interventions should consider the person’s resources, interests, personal values, etc.. Involving users, working with them individually with a focus on positive relations, creating community-feeling among the participants, self-determination and recognising the participants’ perspectives; these are all important aspects.

When early intervention also aims at promoting empowerment, it is necessary that the professional adopts a dialogic position: they will no longer assume that they know better both as far as the goal is concerned and as how to get there and they will adopt a position not of orientation but support. Only in

this way will the person be sustained in imagining their desired future, which will be developed slowly in their minds when an authentic space (of aims, things to do) appears empty without this imagined future.

Within the scope of Dialogic Practices and of the Enabling Co-planning Approach, the power relation changes and is redistributed. The dynamic whereby the social worker defines the best path for the person and expects him/her loyalty to this proposal is removed. The person has the power to steer the intervention and social workers become tools for sustaining it. In each dialogic activity, the discourse's object (the problem, the need, the intervention...) is defined not by a unique voice, but rather by a multiplicity of voices. They are in an equal relationship with each other: none of them is entitled to provide the unique, ultimate account of the event or the situation. Indeed, each person needs the others to collectively shape meanings. The opening of spaces without predefined answers, the happening of things that were not planned, the rethinking and changing of his/her path by the person are welcomed elements. They are all part of the process of meaning remaking that the professionals have to promote, not to hinder.

For a deeper understanding of the early intervention approach, read the [factsheet](#) on our [website](#), and assist to the [videocasts](#) shot with Doctor Pedro Perista, from CESIS.

A few relevant concepts and orientations worth bearing in mind

EARLY INTERVENTION

The method tries to reduce the time spent in reception facilities or on the street or in improper housing conditions to support the person in the short term to relocate in the job market and find housing independently, according to the guiding principles also of Housing Led.

CAPABILITIES APPROACH

Having capabilities implies that a person has the freedom to achieve functioning's he/she has reason to value as an active agent, and not because he/she is coerced to do so. According to the Capabilities Approach, social policies should primarily have an empowering role. They should try to safeguard and strengthen the capability set of people so that these people can make their own choices and live a meaningful and fulfilled life. The so-called functioning's refer to the things that are feasible for a person to achieve and that the person may value being or doing.

STRENGTHS-BASED PERSPECTIVE

With close links to the Capabilities Approach it is an approach to social work that provides pathways based on the strengths and resources of people, communities, and their environments, rather than their problems and pathologies, at the centre of the helping process.

ENABLING CO-PLANNING

The purpose of the Enabling Co-planning is not exclusively to organise a set of supports for the person in need, but mainly to build the support needed through enabling processes, in order to allow the supported person to take over the direction of his/her life. The guiding principle is the concept of self-determination in terms of opportunity and freedom to make choices for one's own well-being. This approach is even better defined in the concept of "capacitation" that is the assumption of the concrete possibility of determining the course of one's own existence.

OPEN DIALOGUE

The open dialogue approach reflects a way of working by encouraging dialogue between the professionals, the individual and the wider social network. The approach includes three main principles: "tolerance of uncertainty", "dialogism", and "polyphony in social networks" which has been furtherly developed in enabling co-planning methodology.

INTERVISION

Intervision is a share learning method in a group of equals, focusing either on improving personal functioning of staff on improving treatment / care work.



The following grid is intended to be a support tool for professionals. The column on the left identifies a wide range of indicators that should reflect the current situation of the person experiencing homelessness. In the central column, the professional should, in a dialogical approach, write down the difficulties, problems, goals, ambitions etc. of the person experiencing homelessness, in a non-judgmental way. The column on the right may be used by the professional to include the results of the shared interactive process of discussion with the recipient regarding the priorities to choose; the identification of possible institutional contacts; on how to better respond to the recipient's needs, ambitions, etc. and to define objectives to be achieved in the short and long term.

HOOD grid

Current situation

Person

Professional

Sex &
gender

Male

Female

Other

HOOD grid

Current situation

Person

Professional

Age

< 18

18-29

30-49

50-64

65-80

80+

HOOD grid

Current situation	Person	Professional
Family situation	<input type="checkbox"/> Lone person	
	<input type="checkbox"/> With a partner	
	<input type="checkbox"/> With child(ren)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> With partner and child(ren)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other situation	

HOOD grid

	Current situation	Person	Professional
Current situation of homelessness (ETHOS typology)	<input type="checkbox"/> Person Living Rough		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Person in emergency accommodation		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Person in accommodation for the homeless		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Person in Women's shelter		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Person in accommodation for immigrants		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Person due to be released from institutions		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Person receiving longer-term support (due to homelessness)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Person living in insecure accommodation		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Person living under threat of eviction		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Person living under threat of violence		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Person living in temporary / non-conventional structures		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Person living in unfit housing		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Person living in extreme overcrowding		

HOOD grid

	Current situation	Person	Professional
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For how long does hes/she experience a condition of homelessness?	<input type="checkbox"/> < 3 months		
	<input type="checkbox"/> 3-6 months		
	<input type="checkbox"/> 7-12 months		
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-4 years		
	<input type="checkbox"/> 5-9 years		
	<input type="checkbox"/> 10+ years		

HOOD grid

	Current situation	Person	Professional
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	(Un)employment [formal and informal]		
Problems and/or strengths/ capabilities	Income [formal and informal]		

HOOD grid

Current situation

Person

Professional

Problems
and/or
strengths/
capabilities

Relationships
[family,
neighbourhood,
friends]

Significant
persons
[who are they;
where do person
meet them; why
they are
significant]

HOOD grid

Current situation

Person

Professional

Problems
and/or
strengths/
capabilities

Health
[mental and
physical /
addictions]

HOOD grid

Current situation	Person	Professional
Problems and/or strengths/ capabilities	Skills [Autonomy, attendance, punctuality, responsibility, communication]	
	Qualifications / Education	
	Housing situation	

HOOD grid

Current situation

Person

Professional

Organisational
practices
(problems
and/or
strengths)

Promoting an active
participation about
matters concerning
him/her

Promoting an active
participation, by
giving him/her the
opportunity to
choose from
treatments and
services

HOOD grid

Indicators

Person

Professional

Organisational
practices
(problems
and/or
strengths)

Promoting an active
participation by
integrating him/her
in the decisions
about his/her
situation

Involving significant
persons identified
by him/her in the
intervention
process

HOOD grid

Indicators

Person

Professional

Organisational practices (problems and/or strengths)	Involving the person in the scheduling of the meeting (place, time, etc.)		
	Other		

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