PSIPROF - PSYCHOLOGY TELEMEDICINE

GOOD PRACTICE - PROJECT

European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

Contents

Introduction to the Good Practice:

PSIPROF is a novel web platform that allows users to anonymously have a consultation online with professional psychologists. The system supports chat, voice and real-time video consultations with several durations. Users can book consultations according to their own agenda, choose the psychologist that best fits their needs and pay online. The system works respecting the confidentiality between patient-psychologist and it removes the stigmatization that some patients feel from society when they need to consult a psychologist.

Problem:

Mental well-being is becoming a major issue in Europe's society since everyday stress – ranging from financial pressure and work-related problems to family/illness-problems, even, security/terrorism issues – is taking its toll mostly among the active population. This leads to the decay of the mental and physical condition of people and all together to less effective workers and distressed families with the National Health Services feeling the pressure to attend to these problems and having more costs in order to cope with the rise of patients.

Plus, there is an overall stigmatization feeling from society towards people who need to attend a psychologist which makes it harder for people in need to seek for help with a significate percentage simply quitting the idea or spending more money with private professionals.

Solution:

PSIPROF tries to attend to this problem by offer patients a convenient, safe and anonymous way to find and consult professional psychologists right from the comfort of their home and with controlled costs.

The platform offers several types of consultations, either by mail, chat, voice and video, all with distinct durations and prices, allowing patients to search and browse professionals that better suit their needs.

The solution ends-up being a telemedicine platform as professionals can keep track and maintain a history of their patients and from each consultation and public health services are taking note of these kind of solutions, since there are many remote locations that need health care services but the services can't offer a continuous offer to them. Telemedicine may be the answer to this problem too.

Impact:

The project has high impact on the sustainability of National Health Services in Europe as the active population is getting more and more stressed, with it's mental and physical well-being decaying from various reasons. PSIPROF makes it easier for people to cater for their mental well-being and stimulate them to seek for medical/psychologist advice. This removes pressure from the public health services as less patients attend to them with anxiety/panic attacks, depressions and other mental issues as well as co-related physical issues.

Also, this telemedicine solution that can easily be transferred allows public services to reach out to patients who live in more remote locations that aren't easily accessed or that aren't anywhere feasible to set a health center or a permanent health provider.

1. Relevancy of the Good Practise (GP) project

The "Relevancy of the GP project" section provides quick check and definition of its relevancy in regards to HoCare project objectives.

Good practice of quadruple-helix cooperation in R&I?	Yes, this GP project includes good practices of quadruple-helix cooperation in R&I
Good practice of delivery of Home Care R&I?	Yes, this GP project includes good practices of delivery of Home Care R&I.
If not in Home Care R&I, describtion and proof of its potential for transferability to delivery of Home Care R&I	
Generation of innovation in home care through answering unmet needs identified by formal or informal healthcare providers?	Yes, this GP project includes good practices of innovation through answering unmet needs.
Generation of innovation in home care through public driven innovation?	No, this GP project does not include good practices of public driven innovation.
Generation of innovation in home care via quadruple-helix cooperation for quicker delivery to the market?	Yes, this GP project includes good practices of innovation via cooperation for quicker delivery to the market.

2. Quick overview of the GP project

The "Quick overview of the GP project" section provides initial overview of the good practice project (GP project) and enables readers to see if this GP project idea is relevant for possible transfer to their organization potential innovation activities.

Name of the GP project	PSIPROF – Online consultations at ease
Region of origin of GP project	Madeira (PT)
5 keywords that best describe the content of the GP project	Human-Computer Interaction, psychology, clinic, e-health, anonymous
Relevant Programme name through which the GP project has been funded	This project has been 100% privately funded
Relevant support programme / intervention area name of the GP project through which it was funded	-
Single or multiple recipients?	Single recipient
Type of lead recipient and its role (SME, LME, research centre, innovation centre, network/association, university/school, municipality, other public body, other (specify)	SME. The project origins from the Portuguese SME "Psiprof Unipessoal Lda."
Types of participating partners and	1. "Wow!Systems Informática Lda." (SME). Was responsible

their roles (list all participating partner types. E.g.: hospital, social house, senior house, patient association, networks, SMEs, LMEs, research actors, business supporting organizations, public institutions/regulators, other (specify)	for all the design and coding of the webplatform. 2. "Ordem dos Psicológos Portugueses" (Public regulator). Was responsible for giving feedback and legal advice regarding the creation of online clinics.

3. Transferability

The "Transferability" section provides more detailed review of strengths and weaknesses of this GP project including description of necessary basic conditions for region and leading organization to potentially transfer it. At the end of the section, the key threats in the successful transfer open up possibility to focus on specific relevant issues important for the successful transfer.

Strengths and weaknesses of the project

What are the GP project strengths? Why it was funded?	The strengths are mainly related with the comfort provided to end-users, that is, people of suffer from a mental well-being condition and who need to consult a psychologist. Many times these people are stigmatized by the society and end up not getting help from these professionals. Psiprof being an online platform that easily allows the booking and consultation with psychology professionals in an anonymous way copes with this problem. Overall the strengths are: S1.Affordable prices for end-user and convenience of the system (from home); S2. Anonymousness of the system removes "stigmatization" that still exists in society regarding people who seek help from psychologists; S3. Platform is easily extended to other type of professionals (nutritionists, medics, etc.). The project was entirely funded by the private company "Psiprof" who has made this it's main source of income.
What are the key weaknesses of the GP project?	The major key weakness is the inability of some users to make an appointment using a computer. Altough Portugal has a very high ICT penetration rate, some people are still a bit uncomfortable or lack the knowledge to properly user a computer and internet. This is a problem that by time itself is being reduced. Overall the weaknesses are: W1.being an online platform with voice/video connection, it requires the user has a minimum of experience/know-how in handling computers and requires a decent internet connection; W2. Technology can quickly be deprecated as it evolves quickly.

Basic conditions for successful transfer

Why is this GP project transferable? – innovation, impact, financial, legal, and timeframe aspects	This project is fully transferable because being based online it depends only on a webserver to be made available in other countries. Also, it is easy to adapt the platform to other medical/clinical areas besides psychology and to add new professionals. It is also quite simple to translate the platform to other languages.
What are the basic conditions the region needs to have to be successful in transferring this good practise?	The region needs to underline which clinical sectors would like the platform to address (psychology, psychiatrics, nutrition, general medicine, etc.) and the languages to support in the platform. The region should have a dedicated webserver and domain in which the platform would be

	installed and should also have a team of professionals who are comfortable to user computers/internet.
What are the basic conditions the leading recipient from the region needs to have to be successful in transferring this good practice?	The leading recipient needs to have a formal request from the interested region/entity that desires to benefit from the PSIPROF project, containing the estimated numbers of end-users, professionals and sectors that will use the platform on that region. Funding should be secured by the destination region.

Key threats in GP project transfer

What are the key potential threats for the GP project transfer?	The potential threats with the transfer of this GP relate with the lack of a proper ICT network established in the destination region or the general inability or uncomfort of end-users to deal with computers/internet applications and making payments online. Overall, the key threats are: K1. There might exist similar solutions in other countries that makes this transfer unneeded; K2. There might be needed to adapt some minor aspects of the platform to the local reality, e.g. adding national Health numbers or other data fields that make sense on that specific country or are used in it but aren't used in Portugal.

4. Description of the GP project

The "Description of the GP project" section provides more detailed information on the Good Practice project (GP project) and enables readers to get further detailed inspiration and easy ready-to-use information for possible innovation transfer to other project applications. This includes: tackled problem, time length of the GP project, objectives, phases, activities and deliverables of the GP project, its main innovation and target group.

Description of the tackled problem

What was the problem / challenge tackled by the project?	The main problem was the increase of mental well-being problems in overall society and the increased budgets of National Health Institutions to cope with this situation without many results in the long-term.
What were the reasons for the problem?	The reasons for this problem is the increase of stress and mental fatigue in European workers and the financial crises and pressure they've felt. This lead to co-related problems in terms of psychology reflecting in a decrease of worker's productivity, unstable families and other associated problems. Plus, since the European population is getting older, other common mental well-being problems appear and overloads the national health systems with psychology and psychiatric problems.

Time length of the GP project

What was the time length of the GP project in months?	This project took 7 months to be developed and implemented.

Objectives of the GP project

Describe the overall and specific objectives of the GP project	The overall objective was the development of a web-based platform that allowed users to book consultations with psychologist in an easy and anonymous way. Specific objectives included :

	- Ability to make payments online - Support to mail, chat, voice and video consultations - Secure and anonymous system respecting private data - Ability for the administrators and professionals to control their finances and expenses

Phases, activities and deliverables

List all main phases of the GP project including their time length	A1. Research and Requirements Draft A2. Design and development A3. User testing A4. Deployment
List and describe all main activities that were implemented by the GP project	A1.1 Research on causes for users to search for help A1.2 Other online e-health platform comparison studies A2.1 Graphic design of front and backoffices A2.2 Coding and implementation of front and backoffices A2.3 Integration of invoicing and payment systems A3.1 Professional's user testing A3.2 End-user's testing A3.3 Bug fixing A4.1 Webserver installation and final delivery
List all main deliverables of the GP project	D1. Source code of backoffice and webservices D2. Source code of website frontoffice D3. Graphic materials in .psd formats D4. User and Professional Guides

Main innovation of the GP project

What was the main innovation of the GP project?	The ability to quickly and easily make appointments with psychology professionals online in a comfortable and anonymous way with respect for data privacy.

Target group of the project

Who was the main target group of the GP project? (SME, LME, research organization, university, public institution, healthcare provider, business supporting organization, other (specify)	The main target group was in the citizen-level, basically, all persons who are in need for a psychologist but also medical and health institutions.
Describe the main target group	All the users who have a need to get counselling from psychology professionals but don't feel comfortable, feel stigmatized, don't have the time to go out to an appointment. Also all health care providers who have the need to reach out to more users/patients while reducing their own costs.

5. Impact

The "Impact" section provides more detailed information on the effect of the GP project implementation and dissemination of major outputs.

Impact

What was the level of geographical impact of the GP project? (village, city, county, country, international, other (specify)	The current impact is still in county-level in terms of Madeira Island, although it's now starting to grow with professionals of mainland Portugal and Brazil.
What were the final impact indicators including their quantification?	This information is a bit confidential because it correlates with financial sensible data of this private company. However it is possible to state that the platform has more than 135 users/clients registered with around 30 psychology professionals providing consultations.
Describe the changes resulted from the project activities	It's still a bit early to confirm the changes but based on end-users comments, the changes are positive with them feeling more inclined to continue these sessions and feeling quite at ease being consulted through the web-platform. Since for many this was the first experience with a psychologist and it seems to have at least contributed for the improvement of the mental well-being of those people as they keep coming back and making new appointments.

Dissemination of outputs

Describe dissemination activities of the project outputs carried out during the GP project	There haven't been many dissemination actions yet, just some media attention in Portugal that was stimulated by the owners of the company and other social media advertising.

6. Risks

The "Risks" section provides more detailed review of potential risks of this GP project implementation including their defined mitigation strategies to eliminate them.

Describe risks involved in implementing this GP project including their mitigation strategies	

7. Budget

The "Budget" section provides more detailed review of costs regarding the project implementation as well as operational sustainability after its end. In addition, if relevant, public tenders within the project and additional generated incomes by the project are showed and explained.

Budget

What was the overall budget of the project in EUR?	The overall budget for this project was 45.000€
List relevant budget lines of the project including their % share from total budget	25.000€ for coding and development 6.000€ for design 5.000€ for indirect costs 4.000€ for webservers, payment systems and invoicing licensing (24 months)

Additional income generated by the project

Did the project create any additional income?	Yes it has.
If yes, specify which type of income and what amount in EUR?	The amount is sensible/confidential data from the private company. The income is generated by the payment of consultations made by end-users.

Public tender

Did the project include any public tender?	No.
If yes, specify what kind of contract (specific contract, general contract, other)	
If yes, specify in what amount in EUR	
Describe the public tender subject	

Financial sustainability after GP project end

Was there an operational financial sustainability plan in the project after its end?	After the project's end the company continued to follow their initial business plan.
If yes, specify where the operational funds after project end came from?	The main source of income will come from appointment's bookings and licensing of the platform to health care institutions / national healthcare systems.
If yes, specify the amount of operational funds in EUR	Confidential data

8. Other information

In this section, specific additional information about the GP project could be revealed.

Please describe any other relevant information about this GP project (if relevant)	

9. Information gathered by …

The information about this good practise (GP) project has been gathered for the purpose of the HoCare project (Interreg Europe Programme) by the following organization:

Region	Madeaira (Portugal)

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