

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE

1. Title of the practice

- *'SENIORS OFFICE OF THE CITY OF VIENNA'* -

2. Organisation responsible for the practice

Vienna Social Fund, Austria

3. Contact person(s)

E-mail	policy@esn-eu.org
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4. Summary of the practice

In 1996 the council developed a programme to support older people called 'Help for Older People („Hilfe im hohen Alter “). The seniors' office was developed through this initiative and was founded by the mayor of Vienna. He has a nominated representative, the Viennese seniors' officer.

The municipal council provides the budget to the Vienna Social Fund, where the seniors' office is organised and situated.

5. National/regional/local context of the practice

This programme takes place in Vienna and is organised within the Vienna Social Fund in cooperation with the municipal council and non-governmental organisations such as Caritas and the Red Cross, but also sports organisations, alongside cultural and learning initiatives for older people. Every organisation offering service to older people in Vienna is involved.

The purpose of the seniors' office is to inform people about activities that they could get involved in despite being older and possibly frail. Older people can get a wide range of information about events, discounts, training, cultural events and about what care services are available to them. The idea of a platform for older people is to make seniors in Vienna visible and to create a sense of self-determination and empowerment.

Lessons learnt:

- It is important to listen to people who are using the service
- Good networking and communication is key
- Patience and persistence are crucial to establishing a new practice like this

6. Staff involved

Every seniors office has four members of staff, including the senior officer. No particular qualifications are required for these positions, but good communication skills are. The customers can contact the office by phone, by mail or in person. The phone line is open during office hours from Monday to Friday, 8 am to 4 pm. We cooperate with all local organisations that provide services for older people.

7. Target group

Retired people over the age of 65.

8. Aims of the practice

The aim of the initiative is to help senior citizens to get information about their opportunities to stay autonomous and independent, but they can also get help and advice about care if needed.

9. Issues for social services

Service Integration/ Cooperation across services	x	Service Planning		Contracting	
Technology		Skills development (of the workforce)	x	Quality of services	
Others: Prevention and rehabilitation; Participation of users					

ANALYSIS OF THE PRACTICE

10. Status

Pilot project (ongoing)		Project (ongoing)		Implemented practice (restricted areas)	
Pilot project (terminated)		Project (terminated)		Widely spread practice/rolled out	x

11. Scope of the practice

Describe the setting of the practice, considering the following criteria:

- *Micro-level practice:* a practice that involves individuals at the local level
- *Meso-level practice:* a practice that involves organisations or communities
- *Macro level practice:* a practice that involves large population groups

A micro-level initiative targeting older people for individual support.

12. Leadership and management of the practice

Description of the leadership of the practice, considering the following criteria:

- *Collaborative management:* shared between large partnerships, often of central, regional and local representation
- *Organisational management:* by one organisation
- *Professional management:* managed by a single person
- *Shared management:* shared with no defined leadership

Organisational management: The leaders of the initiative are the councillor of social affairs and health, the leader of the geriatric commission of the city council and the mayor himself. They authorised the Vienna Social Fund to run the seniors' office.

Senior Citizens Officerat (VSF) have a strategic meeting with the councillor of social affairs twice a year to reflect on the past and plan for the future.

13. Engaging stakeholders in the practice

Description of the engagement of stakeholders, considering the following criteria:

- *Individual practice:* individuals have sought practice change
- *Network approach:* one or more organisations develop a network
- *Collaborative approach:* large collaboration with relevant stakeholders

Access to services: Every citizen over the age of 65 receives a birthday card from the mayor of Vienna every five years. Starting at the age of 75, birthday cards are sent annually. In those letters, a card from the seniors' office is enclosed, encouraging people to contact the office for information and help.

Since 2011, we celebrate the "month of seniors" every year from September 15th to October 15th. During that time, we put on more than 1,000 events and initiatives, for instance, open days in care institutions, computer and internet training, opportunities for charity work etc.

The interactive calendar on our home page includes information about the initiatives, which are mostly free of charge or have affordable prices.

14. Involvement of service users and their families

Description of the involvement of service users, considering the following criteria:

- *Team involvement:* service users and carers were part of the practice team
- *Consultative:* a consultative body of users was set up for an ongoing dialogue and feedback • *Involvement in care:* person-centred approaches to care/support

There are approximately 5,000 phone calls and about 70,000 information sheets and booklets to our customers are being sent to customers each year. They can download material from the project website as well: www.senior-in-wien.at

15. Costs and resources needed for implementation

Description of how the practice is financed, considering the following criteria:

- *Within existing resources:* staff time and other resources are provided 'in-house'
- *Staffing costs:* costs for staff investment
- *Joint/Pooled budgets:* two or more agencies pool budgets to fund services • *Funded project:* external investment

Funded project: Approximately EUR 700,000 per year

Other resources:

Staff training;

Public relations activities;

Frequent meetings with the politicians who are responsible for the initiative.

16. Evaluation approaches

Description of the evaluation method of the practice, considering the following criteria:

- *Multi-method*: use of both a qualitative and a quantitative approach
- *Single method*: a qualitative or quantitative approach
- *Audit*: looks at data sources such as existing medical records and/or other routinely collected service data.
- *Informal*: refers to in-house service evaluation using locally designed tools and/or collecting opportunistic feedback
- *No evaluation*
- *An evaluation is planned*

Informal, audit, and evaluation planned:

Statistical analyses of the calls, emails, and other contributions;

Informal client feedback (a formal survey is planned);

Data is collected on the number of calls and contacts and entered into an electronic database which is the main reporting system of the Vienna Social Fund.

17. Measurable effects of the practice and what it has achieved for...

Service users	The older person receives improved information and supports to stay independent.
Formal caregivers	n. a.
Informal carers	n. a.
Organisations	Cooperation and good communication between all players was important. The partners also have the benefit of an office and can learn a lot about their customers and about the services and tools of other partners.
Other	Public relations and advertisements could have been more effective. However, there needed to be more funding/financial aid available.

18. Anticipated or 'aspirational' effects of the practice and what it has achieved for...

This category can include outcomes which are not documented, quantified, or properly evaluated. They can include such elements as improved knowledge, quality, workforce, etc.

Service users	n. a.
Formal caregivers	n. a.
Informal carers	n. a.
Organisations	n. a.
Other	n. a.

19. How the practice has changed the way the service is provided (lessons learned)

The project has not changed the way care is provided but constitutes an effective way for older people to access information about care options as well as social and physical activities taking place in the community.

20. Sustainability of the practice

Description of whether the practice is sustainable, considering the following criteria:

- *Potential for sustainability:* practice was newly started or is ongoing/not yet mainstreamed. How could the practice be sustained (in terms of resources)?
- *Organic sustainability:* service users have been empowered to take the practice forward •
Established: the project has been operational for several years

Established: The seniors' office was first established in 1996.

21. Transferability of the practice

Description of whether the practice has been transferred, considering the following criteria:

- *Transferred:* transfer to other regions, countries, service user groups, etc.
- *Potential for transferability:* there is interest from the outside; elements of the practice have been taken up and used elsewhere; material for transferability (for ex. training material) has been developed

Potential for transferability: It is a great resource for older people and for different organisations to work together and benefit from each other.