

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE

1. Title of the practice

Project 'Long-term Unemployed take the lead'

2. Organisation responsible for the practice

City of Aarhus, Denmark

3. Contact person(s)

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4. Summary of the practice

The project 'Long-term Unemployed take the lead' is the result of cooperation between Aarhus Municipality, the University of Aarhus, the Social Development Centre and the Velux Foundation.

It provided 100 long-term unemployed citizens a cash grant of up to DKK 50,000 (approximately €6,700). Recipients were personally responsible for how they spent the money.

The citizens were seen as experts by experience and experts in their own lives, with views on how to find a job. The aim of the project was to provide long-term unemployed with more options than welfare benefits, such as the possibility of self-ownership and self-management.

The project is organized into three parts:

- Testing and developing a model for self-budgeting in employment activities.
- Developing tools for case managers and supporting them in this new way of working with citizens.
- Validation and analysis of the data collected by Aarhus University.

One of the key insights of the project is the desire among the participants to start their own businesses. However, within the current legislation there are few tools to help unemployed citizens who want to start their own business. Another important result is that citizens feel that they are consulted and involved to a much greater extent than in normal employment services.

5. National/regional/local context of the practice

The 2008 -2009 global recession and the Eurozone debt crisis significantly affected European economies, decreasing growth and increasing unemployment in many EU countries. Despite some signs of recovery, many EU countries continue to struggle with sluggish growth, high unemployment (especially among young people) and dissatisfied citizens.

Denmark is in the middle of a fundamental transformation of the welfare state. There is a break away from the traditional conception of welfare as a standard benefit or service, and a challenge to the conventional approach of a case manager who offers a standard product to all citizens. Instead, there is growing belief that welfare should be created in the space between citizen, companies, businesses, the case manager and civil society.

Municipalities are making experiments with new forms of welfare – co-created with citizens and businesses. ‘Long-term unemployed take the lead’ is an example of how Aarhus is trying to make the vision concrete.

There is a need for methods and activities that support the citizens as experts in their own lives. There is also a need for new thinking to challenge the traditional approaches on the activation, motivation, and qualifications of long-term unemployed citizens.

Unemployment has a significant financial impact in the short and long term for people. But unemployment - and in particular long-term unemployment – also have social and personal consequences. The project addresses these challenges in an innovative way, with the main objective to create new solutions.

According to a [Danish study](#), in 50% of cases unemployment has negative consequences for a person’s close relationships. Furthermore, 25% of unemployed people have avoided social events in order not to answer questions about their work situation.

New [Danish research](#) shows that for long-term unemployed people the risk of suffering a major depressive disorder is about 11 times greater than those who have a job.

There is also a statistical link between unemployment and suicidal behaviour. Long-term unemployment is associated with a greater incidence of various self-destructive behaviours, including alcohol and drug abuse, and risky behaviour.

6. Staff involved

One team consists of approximately 12 members of staff.

7. Target group

Long-term unemployed people

8. Aims of the practice

Provide long-term unemployed people the opportunity to decide how to move forward their professional careers, by providing a cash grant.

9. Issues for social services

Service Integration/ Cooperation across services		Service Planning	x	Contracting	
Technology		Skills development (of the workforce)		Quality of services	
Others: _____					

ANALYSIS OF THE PRACTICE

10. Status

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

11. Scope of the practice

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

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

Micro level practice: practice that involves individuals at local level

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

Collaborative management: municipality of Aarhus, University of Aarhus, Social Development Centre and Velux Foundation

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

Collaborative approach: large collaboration with relevant stakeholders

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 on-going dialogue and feedback
- *Involvement in care:* person-centred approaches to care/support

Consultative: The City Council of Aarhus decided on the 6 November 2013 to set up a Citizenship Committee with citizens and politicians.

The role of the Citizenship Committee was to inspire a new practice for citizens' participation, collaboration, and co-creation in the municipality's work.

The result of this work is a new Active Citizenship Policy. On several occasions, the Committee has helped to inspire the work in this project. Both individually and in groups, they facilitated citizen perspectives and have made several concrete proposals which have been adopted in the project.

As stated in the Citizen Policy, managers and employees in the municipality demonstrate openness to new initiatives, help citizens to help one another, and are prepared to adapt to new expectations regarding Aarhus' cooperation with citizens. Both during the planning of the project and afterwards there has been a high degree of co-creation and participatory activities involving citizens.

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

Joint/Pooled budgets - Funded project: the project has been financed by a combination of public and private funding. The Velux Foundation has contributed financially to the project:

Direct costs: €785,000

Indirect costs (e.g. staff): €680,000

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:* 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*

An evaluation is planned: the project is assessed and documented by the University of Aarhus (AU). AU is responsible for externally evaluating the impact of the project, including the initial design and implementation of the evaluation. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches are used.

The quantitative evaluations will be carried out during the summer of 2019 and the summer of 2020.

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

Service users	<p>A total of 97 citizens participated in the project and received grants. They used the grants to start a business, obtain a driver's license, take Danish classes, go to the dentist, and many other activities.</p> <p>As a result 85% of the participants are more hopeful of finding employment than before the programme.</p>
Formal care givers	
Informal carers	

Organisations	
Other	
18. Anticipated or 'aspirational' effects of the practice and what it has achieved for... <i>This category can include outcomes which are not documented, quantified or properly evaluated. They can include such elements as improved knowledge, quality, workforce, etc.</i>	
Service users	Improve the possibility of long-term unemployed people to enter the labour market by giving them the ability to customise their own strategy through a grant.
Formal care givers	
Informal carers	
Organisations	
Other	
19. How the practice has changed the way the service is provided (lessons learned)	
<p>Participant budgets for groups or whole cities are already a well-known tool in several European cities.</p> <p>But with this project, the concept was taken a step further - an experiment with participant budgets on an individual level. The project differs from others because individual citizens contribute to managing their own budgets giving them more control and influence on their development.</p>	
20. Sustainability of the practice <i>Description of whether the practice is sustainable, considering the following criteria:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Potential for sustainability:</i> practice was newly started or is on-going/not yet mainstreamed. How could the practice be sustained (in terms of resources)? • <i>Organic sustainability:</i> service users have been empowered to take the practice forward • <i>Established:</i> the project has been operational for several years 	
<p>Potential for sustainability: practice was newly started or is on-going/not yet mainstreamed.</p> <p>The project ended in June 2018. For now, the project is being evaluated in order to determine how to continue.</p> <p>The project is sustainable in that participants may continue to benefit. For example, knowledge gained from participating in training will continue to be of use.</p> <p>According to the preliminary results 85% of the participants are more positive about their chances of getting a job after the project.</p>	

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

The project has not been transferred to other municipalities yet as the final evaluation is being completed. However there is great potential for transferability.