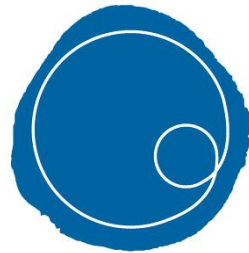

Quality Standards- The experience of Cyprus

FENIQS-EU Quality Champions Event, 5th May 2022



CYPRUS NATIONAL
ADDICTIONS AUTHORITY

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SUMMARY

- Introduction on Cyprus National Addictions Authority and its role
- Context of developing our system
- Procedure of Quality Standards
- Impact and consequences



Cyprus National Addictions Authority



ΑΡΧΗ ΑΝΤΙΜΕΤΩΠΙΣΗΣ
ΕΞΑΡΤΗΣΕΩΝ ΚΥΠΡΟΥ

Main coordinating body in the field of licit and illicit substances as well as pathological gambling, responsible for, inter alia:

- Drafting and monitoring the national strategy and action plan on addictive substances and gambling,
- Coordinating all activities in the field carried out by the various government services, NGO's and the private sector
- Accrediting, evaluating and funding (where possible) all related programmes, actions, and activities
- No person or entity shall apply any measure or intervention without obtaining NAAC's authorization



National Strategy for Addressing Addictions

- Covers the period 2021-2028
- Integrated Strategy: licit and illicit substances + gambling

Pillars:

- Prevention
- Treatment
- Social reintegration
- Harm Reduction
- Supply Reduction
- Research, Evaluation, Training
- International Cooperation

Priority:

improve the quality and effectiveness of treatment and prevention programmes and services



Context of developing our system



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Setting up the guidelines

- 2000- Prevention of the Use and Dissemination of Drugs and Other Addictive Substances Law (amended in 2017)
- EU pre-accession phase => prerequisite
- Sets up the Cyprus Antidrug Council (which was renamed Cyprus National Addictions Authority in 2017)
- Its role to accredit, evaluate and fund related programmes/ activities created the need to develop quality standards to facilitate these processes



Setting up the guidelines

- Political decision by the Management Board to publish the **Treatment and Prevention Guides (2010)**, that set the criteria for quality assurance
- These guidelines provide a nationwide system assuring drug treatment and drug prevention minimum quality standards
- HARM REDUCTION interventions are included in the Treatment Guide



Treatment Guide (incl. Harm Reduction)

- First developed in 2010
- Updated in 2019
- Incorporates the European minimum quality standards in drug demand reduction as well as guidelines for gambling addiction



Treatment Guide (incl. Harm Reduction)

Consists of two parts:

- the general quality standards (quality criteria for all types of treatment centres, such as structural/ service process and system efficiency quality standards) and
- the guidelines for specific treatment programmes / centres



Procedure of Quality Standards



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Implementation

- All treatment programmes/ centres (incl. harm reduction) are obligated to adhere to these standards to be licenced by NAAC
- Licence has an expiration date of 1 to 3 years depending on years of experience (one year for newly established programmes and then they must re-apply and a three-year duration after renewal)
- NAAC must ensure that once approved/ funded, these programmes implement the quality standards in practice



Obligations by the programmes/ centres

- Send progress reports at least twice per year
- Meetings in order to be informed on the progress
- NAAC visits the programmes to inspect their premises, their progress and whether they have any difficulties or needs
- All programmes are being monitored by NAAC



Conclusions



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Added Value

- These documents are extremely **helpful for NAAC** at a policy level to assure quality as well as for ensuring that programmes being implemented are evidence-based
- Also **helpful for the key players** that implement the programmes to know on which grounds they are being evaluated to be approved and/or funded
- **Helpful for service users**=> they receive care from evidence-based services



Impact

- All programmes being implemented in Cyprus (treatment, prevention, harm reduction etc) have to be (are) approved by NAAC, according to the legislation
- The legislation provides for specific sanctions to be imposed in case someone or a body implements actions without informing the NAAC for approval



Challenges

- Inform and convince the public and the relevant actors that no one could implement an action/ programme without obtaining NAAC's approval
- Providing training for all relevant actors (this is valid more for prevention)
- Concerning treatment/ harm reduction: individual meetings and information on the approval process and which are the criteria a treatment service must fulfil



Challenges

- Ensure that all programmes that are approved implement the quality standards in practice. To facilitate this process, NAAC requests progress reports to be sent, arranges meetings with all key stakeholders and visits at the spot for “inspection”
- An evaluation on the quality standards implementation process has not yet been implemented



Transferability potential- Lessons learned

- The most important aspect in the case of Cyprus is that there was a legislation to support this effort and ensure the implementation of the quality standards
- All relevant actors have the need to be trained on these matters, especially in the beginning of introducing the criteria of quality standards
- Cyprus is willing to share knowledge and experience on QS, provide more details to improve our example



Thank you for your attention!



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