



## WHO HEALTH IN PRISONS PROJECT(WHO HIPP)

### BEST PRACTICE AWARDS SCHEME 2009

#### APPLICATION FORM

Before filling in the form please visit the web site of the Collaborating Centre of the Health in Prisons Project (which is hosted by the University of Central Lancashire) at the following web address, where you will find useful background information on the award: <http://www.uclan.ac.uk/health/schools/sphcs/wcc.php>

When completed please return the form electronically to your WHO Health in Prisons Project National Counterpart for consideration. The decision to forward applications to the International Judging Panel rests with your National Counterpart.

Please indicate the category (you may choose only one) for your application, by typing an **X** in the box against the correct category

**Category 1: an example of best practice regarding *health care services provided to prisoners*.** This category includes any aspect of the clinical care provided to prisoners by doctors, nurses or other healthcare professionals.

**Category 2: an example of best practice regarding any of the following, or a combination of the following: *prevention, health education or health promotion services provided to prisoners*.** For example, members of staff (not necessarily medically trained staff) working within the prison might provide the service, or it may involve peer education i.e. using specially trained prisoners.

**Category 3: an example of best practice, which demonstrates *effective co-operation between a prison and the outside community, in the area of health improvement*.** This category includes any aspect of improving the health and well being of prisoners.

Contact details of the person in the prison managing the application:

Name: Isabel Escartin Duaso  
Job Title: Nurse  
Address:  
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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Title of your piece of work: Workshop on HEALTHY MENTAL HABITS IN PRISON

Name of country: Spain

Name of prison: Penitentiary Centres of Daroca and Zuera

Brief description of the prison and prisoners (not more than 200 words):

Workshops to promote mental health have been taking place for three years in two penitentiary facilities, Zuera and Daroca, both located in Zaragoza. The first one is what we call a "model" facility with 1600 inmates, organised in 14 independent modules where 40% of the inmates wait for trial and 60% are already convicted. There is also a module for women (9%). The second one is a smaller facility with 600 inmates, all of whom are already convicted. The average profile of inmates is 35 year old men with primary education, lack of training, few work experience and 30% of them are foreigners.

## PURPOSE OF THE WORK

1. What is the **aim** or **general objective** of your initiative or piece of work (in just one sentence please)?

Promoting mental health amongst inmates, in order to reduce risk factors related to mental disorders and promoting protection factors of such disorders in prison.

2. What are the main characteristics of the **target group(s)**?
  - Is it targeted at all prisoners, or a particular group or groups? e.g a particular age group.
  - Are **others being targeted** e.g. such as staff involvement or involvement of families.
  - What is the coverage of the work e.g. how many persons are being reached?

The Project targets all of the inmates, no staff nor relatives. It covers 2000 inmates, 2 facilities, Daroca and Zuera in Zaragoza, in the autonomous region of Aragon, Spain.

3. Why this initiative is important?
  - What is the health need you are addressing?
  - Has there been any form of needs assessment undertaken?
  - Were you drawing upon any evidence or research to inform the piece of work? If yes please briefly refer to it here.

This is an activity promoted by the NGO Asociación Ríos de Libertad, made up by volunteer psychologists and psychiatrists.  
Deprivation of liberty is by itself harmful to mental health and imprisonment can

potentially cause significant mental damage. Prior work took place amongst inmates for one year, where, by means of qualitative techniques, a group of inmates without diagnosed mental disorders expressed their needs, explaining which were the risk factors to suffer mental illness in prison and which were protection factors for a good mental health. This project has used the recommendations of the European Commission IMPHA Project ([www.Impha.net](http://www.Impha.net))

4. What did you set out to achieve, and how successful were you? Please list your specific objectives in order of importance, and any indicators used to help you measure progress. (NOTE any evaluation should refer back to these objectives and indicators, indicating progress towards meeting them.)

The proposed objectives are:

- 1-Reducing risk factors related to mental illnesses and promoting protection factors amongst the imprisoned population
- 2- Improving users' capacity to be responsible for their health and supporting them in order to develop their individual protection abilities in mental health and to avoid risk factors to suffer mental illnesses in prison.
- 3- Promoting mental health care professionals' capacity to establish two-way communication (surveillance officers, health workers, etc.)
- 4- Creating mental health promotion materials in order to replicate the sessions in other facilities.

There is qualitative data both from inmates and mental health care professionals, based on surveys on general satisfaction achieved with these sessions, which show beneficial effects for both groups.

Except for the last objective, with which the team is busy this year, the Project is taking place successfully with satisfaction rates amongst users and attendance rates to sessions which exceed 75%.

#### WHO WAS INVOLVED / WHAT WAS THE TIME FRAME?

5. Please describe:
- Those involved in delivery of the initiative? Give names, job titles and the employer of key people involved.
  - Any prisoner involvement in the planning or delivery of the work.
  - The time frame: When did the work commence? What did you do and when? Is there a finish date known yet?

The people who have taken part in the Project are the following:

Isabel Escartin Duaso	4 hours	Introduction to the course
Dr. José María Civeira Murillo	6 hours	The Human mind. Development.
Dr. Alfonso Pérez Poza	4 hours	Stress and anxiety. Relaxing
Dr. Manuel Corbera Almajano	4 hours	Techniques to control stress
Dr. Eduardo Ortega Martínez	4 hours	Values to deal with problems
Dra. Cristina Soler Gonzalez	8 hours	Self control in adverse situations
Dr. Ignacio Alvarez Madorran	4 hours	Abilities to solve problems.
Dra. María Lopez Acosta	4 hours	Solving problems
Dra.Pilar Calvo Estopiñan	4 hours	Abilities in emotional relationships
Dra. Elena Andrés Bergareche	4 hours	Abilities to control consuming psychoactive drugs
Doña Yolanda de Juan Ladron	8 hours	Self.esteem. Techniques
Doña Eva Alcubierre Abadías	8 hours	Cognitive restructuring of thought

D. Pedro Lacal	8 hours	Interpersonal relationships
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Adapting to adverse environments  
José Manuel Gómez, Educator, coordination of Zuera  
Carlos Izquierdo, Educator, responsable for the course in the facility. Zuera  
Dr. José Luis García, Health deputy director, responsible for the course in the facility: Daroca

The Project took off on September 2006 and has no planned end date, it is set out from September to June every year in 16 week series. During the first year, sessions were able to explore the need of mental health protection that inmates requested. A list of risk and protection factors identified by inmates was then drafted. Sessions took place from September 2006 to June 2007, in both the facilities of Zuera and Daroca, once a week, up to 16, two hour long, sessions in each one.

Next year, specific protection health sessions took place, throughout which therapists worked on the abilities of inmates to develop protection factors and avoid risk factors. The sessions were scheduled the same way last year's sessions, taking off in September 2007 and ending in June 2008.

## EVALUATION

6. Was there an evaluation? If yes please detail findings (not more than 300 words).

You may want to consider:

- Formative or **process evaluation**, concerning the quality and acceptability of your **programme's implementation** with the target group.
- Summative evaluation: what were the **outcomes and impacts** in relation to your Specific Objectives and indicators as listed above.

The Project has been evaluated every year:

1- Attendance to the sessions exceeded 80% of the expected average people, in both facilities during the 7 months of the Workshops, throughout the 3 years in which it has taken place.

2- High satisfaction rates of assistants, 75% of which state that they are pleased or very pleased with the workshop.

3- According to the objectives, therapists have observed that proposed techniques are carefully noticed and correctly put into practice by attendants, who even pass on what they learn to other inmates. Throughout these years a greater concern on mental health issues is observed, both amongst inmates and officers.

## ABSTRACT

7. Now tell us in your own words about your piece of work or initiative and why it is important (not more than 500 words):

Both because the specific characteristics of imprisonment imply a high risk of causing mental disorders, and because imprisoned population mostly comes from the most

vulnerable sectors of society to suffer psychic problems, mental health promotion is one of the activities with the best cost-benefit rate. Inmates need to train their psychological resilience in an adverse environment for mental balance and has little abilities to do so. This activity pretends to revert this situation in order to improve the psychological resilience of those who need it most. The project first analyzed the requests of the targeted group so that they could be later satisfied with specific sessions to reduce the effect of identified risk factors and to promote protection factors. During that year meetings were held with a representative group of inmates and they were recorded on video. From the second year on, sessions were prepared with the chosen issues. All the 16 sessions were directed by specialized psychiatrists and psychologists, in 90 minute sessions, throughout a 6 month program. At the end of every course, the program is evaluated and the results are analyzed amongst the professionals who have taken part.

The next objective is editing a health promotion protocol, in the form of a handbook, with all the information that a trained assistance staff, no matter their specific training in psychotherapy, can need to replicate the promotion activities in other prisons

### LEARNING POINTS

8. Finally, what are the most important specific learning points from your piece of work that you would like to share with others working with prisoners? (not more than 500 words)

- It has a beneficial effect on Psychoeducation, the first step to control risk factors.
- It improves inmates' both physical and mental health, therefore improving their quality of life.
- It protects them from mental disorders and it improves disorders such as anxiety, reactive depression, which are frequent in prison.
- It improves the psychological resilience, the ability to resist mentally pathogen environments where stress factors are plentiful.
- It has identified the needs related to mental health promotion requested by inmates.

Note: please attach supporting photographs electronically to this application if you wish. They may be used in any subsequent publication of the awards.

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