

Study “Ensuring service provision to people with disabilities under emergency situations: resilience, creativity, and co-production during COVID-19”

EPR Study and Prize 2021

1st December 2021 10:00-12:45 CET

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EPR Study & Prize 2021: Elements Presentation

- Topic & Process & Timeline
- Summary information on 5 good practices from EPR members from Belgium, Ireland, Latvia, Northern Ireland/UK and Spain submitted
- Success factors – in particular in relation to “resilience”, “co-production” and “creativity/innovation”
- Challenges
- Recommendations
- EU-level policy context: European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan – European Disability Strategy – EU Funds

EPR Study: Topic & Process & Timeline

- Discussion and circulation of **template for promising practices**: June 2021
- **Thematic focus**: Services, programmes, initiatives or projects developed or adapted to the requirements of the COVID-19 pandemic, but also supporting resilience, creativity, and/or co-production
- Deadline for returning template with proposals: 8 September
- Members asked to **score 5 practices submitted**: October 2021
- Winner, runner-up and other 3 applicants informed about result of scoring (by 10 EPR members): 2 November
- Analysis of practices and writing up of EPR Study: 25 November
- **Presentation of key insights** from 5 practices received & **Presentations by winner and runner-up & Handing over of EPR Prize 2021**: 1 December

Summary Info on 5 Promising Practices (1)



- Organisation: Fundación ONCE – Inserta Empleo, Spain
- Title: Adapting training and employment services under COVID-19
- Main features
 - 1) What? => Adaptation of service provision to remote/online settings in context of organisational development & digitalisation process
 - 2) How? => Improvement of processes OR new service or programme designs & preserving quality and proximity to clients/user orientation
 - 3) “Fields” of intervention: a) Staff/Professionals; b) Training Programmes; c) Employment Services; d) Work with employers
 - 4) Priorities: a) Meeting users’ needs; b) Meeting requirements of ESF
 - 5) High satisfaction rates of jobseekers, those in training, employers

Summary Info on 5 Promising Practices (2)



- Organisation: GTB, Belgium [cooperation with Finland]
- Title: Start To Can - A better transition from school to work for young people with disabilities through the use of a user designed webtool
- Main features
 - 1) Who? => Young PWD (18 y-29 y) with health problems and/or at the risk of neither being in employment nor education nor training
 - 2) What? => Webtool with Training Manual (Teacher; Job Coach; Mediator) & Recommendations, covering job search & life domains
 - 3) How? => Methodological shift: Focus on skills, strengths & dreams of YPWD – Service design model: Individual Placement and Support
 - 4) How? => Co-production of webtool and training

Summary Info on 5 Promising Practices (3)



- Organisation: Cedar Foundation, Northern Ireland/UK
- Title: Inclusion Works – Finding Solutions in Challenging Times
- Main features
 - 1) Who? => Adults with physical disabilities, acquired brain injury, autism and learning disability
 - 2) What? => Service design to support users in remote/online setup and enable their engagement in training and social integration offers
 - 3) Objectives: Information & Preparation of re-entry after lockdown & Addressing social isolation and anxieties & Building users' resilience
 - 4) How? => Adapted & co-produced Personal Training Plans (with adapted COVID-19 pandemic specific goals) providing a framework of structure and routine when community activity was not possible

Summary Info on 5 Promising Practices (4)



- Organisation: Rehab Group, Ireland
- Title: Best Practice Reference Group – COVID19 Framework
- Main features
 - 1) Who? => Staff & Management
 - 2) What? => Setting up of “Best Practice Reference Group” to receive, filter and disseminate key information to each service & frontline staff
 - 3) Contents: Repository of up-to-date information (infection control, preventive and protective measures/OSH, staff training and support) documents, guidance, procedures compiled by a “coordination team”
 - 4) How? => Visual engagement: Visual Central Repository
 - 5) Strengths: Pooling; Speed; Coordination; Consistency => Protocols

Summary Info on 5 Promising Practices (5)

- Organisation: SIVA (Social Integration State Agency), Latvia
- Title: Social Mentoring
- Main features
 - 1) Who? => Vocational rehabilitation clients, i.e. PWD or at risk of getting a disability, with mental health conditions, older workers
 - 2) What? => Social mentoring programme to keep connections and uphold motivation for studying and training (in remote/online settings)
 - 3) How? => Attribution of specialist to each PWD as mentor; mentors asking for progress in studies, well-being and other life-related issues, demanding written feedback and offering a range of support services
 - 4) How? => Use of digital communication tools & phone

Success Factors (1)

1. **Users:** Continued/non-interrupted service provision and support for users
2. **Users:** Re-organisation of service formats (flexible; safe; adapted to online)
3. **Users:** Further development or adaptation of existing training programmes
4. **Users:** Offering financial, organisational and logistic support to users to get access to hardware and software and to participate in online service
5. **Services:** Shifting to user-based/focused design of services & tools
6. **Staff:** Upskilling & better preparing staff for new needs, challenges and (technical, social and communication) competences
7. **Providers:** Building in monitoring and evaluation procedures and mechanisms
8. **Providers:** Maintaining a strategic and operational exchange and engagement with key external stakeholders

Success Factors (2)

1. Improved **resilience** of users and providers

- a) Service offers addressing anxiety and insecurity of users
- b) Regular one-to-one contact & follow-up sessions
- c) Centralising information & Repositories + Coordination Units
- d) Post-COVID/COVID Recovery Plans, incl. rolling out of blend of online and face-to-face services, contact and engagement

2. Ensuring **co-production** of services

- a) Doing surveys with users for reshaping services and new practices/tools
- b) Collaborative elaboration of (digital) training and (re-)integration tools

3. **Creativity/Innovation** in service, programme and project design

- a) Shifting service provision online or to blended models
- b) Implementing models of “agile” working
- c) Testing and rolling out of conceptual innovations

Challenges

1. **Staff:** Getting **access to hardware & software**
2. **Staff:** **Up-skilling or re-skilling** for the use of digital communication, training and teaching tools
3. **Users:** Getting **technical and social access** to remote/online formats
4. **Providers:** Ensure **stable funding** from governments and public authorities and from EU Funds (often ESF/ESF+)
5. **Providers:** **Additional reporting, assurance and evidence of continuation of work** demanded by funders & **additional administrative and time pressures** on staff and managers
6. **Providers:** Future **integration of innovations** in “regular” service packages

Recommendations

1. **Ensure inclusive user design** for digital tools and platforms
2. **Funding of quality training services for staff and users** (adapted to their needs)
3. **Continue financial support for service providers in the fields of vocational rehabilitation, disability and mental health**, also to integrate service innovations in COVID-times into catalogue of reimbursed services and to roll out co-produced services => “Nothing about us without us”
4. **Maintaining and extending service offers to assist employers with inclusive job and workplace design**, including in context of integrated and comprehensive disability management approach
5. **Continue support of social economy/social enterprises**, incl. WISE, providing vocational rehabilitation, disability and mental health services