

Health care in bars and restaurants

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Organisation: Department of Social Services and Health Care, City of Helsinki

Country: Finland

Level of government: Local government, Regional/State government

Sector: Health, Social protection

Type: Methods, Public Service

Launched in: 2011

Overall development time: 7 months

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Description

Based on ethnographic research conducted by the firm Gemic, a service was designed that benefits restaurants, health care and customers. The service was carried out by nursing students of Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, who visited bars and restaurants at day time. Health visitor students also gained educational credits. Enrolling the target audience into health programmes combats the passive attitude by providing health care in a familiar environment.

Blood pressure and diabetes are considered as major public health issues. Finding and tackling these diseases improves life quality and makes early interventions possible. The programme provides hard to reach patients with the knowledge and means for following their own health condition on a daily basis.

Why the innovation was developed

Everyday health care in Finland is tied to institutional contexts of school and work. People outside these institutional contexts, especially the lowly uneducated workforce, are easily passive in health care. This group often have an increased health risks and do not seek medical advice before clearly visible symptoms arise. Instead, these groups frequently visit local bars and restaurants during the day hours (9:00-17:00). This plan was developed to reach this target group at a place familiar to them.

Objectives

Improve access, Improve effectiveness, Improve service quality, Improve social equity, Improve user satisfaction

- Improve service outcome by increasing the attention for health care for an excluded group.
 - Improve service quality by making healthcare available in the familiar environment instead of health care centres.
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Main beneficiaries

General population, Government staff, High-risk populations, Low-income groups

- People who are normally excluded from health care.
- Nursing students who gained valuable experience.

Results

Effectiveness

There were many health care visits in restaurants each day compared to health centres.

Service quality

Accessibility:

The service was made available to 150 people from a group who normally is quite passive in health care.

These people gained positive experiences in encounters with health care.

User satisfaction

Both customers and nurses were satisfied.

Evaluation

The results were collected through interviews with both patients and students.

Development

Design

The idea was generated by the health centre. It was known that there are people who have health threats because of using too much alcohol, who don't want to visit health care centres. This knowledge led to two lots of ethnographic research.

Design time: 6 months

Testing

This innovation can be seen as a pilot and there are no clear plans to extend it to a broader area.

Testing time: none

Implementation

Tools used:

The project was managed by Helsinki health care centre in The Healthy Borough Programme. We asked the restaurant owners if they want to join the pilot. Two of them were interested. One of the members of the project team is a lecturer in the Metropolia University of Applied Sciences. She was able to recruit students into project. Brochures about free services were distributed in these two restaurants. Then there were two hour services in restaurants with students. They measured blood pressure and sugar in blood and gave advice on how to take care of your health. The service was free. Atmosphere in the restaurants was very welcoming and most of the customers (about 150) tried out the service. People gained new positive experiences in encounters with health care. This provided them with knowledge and means for following their own health condition at an everyday level. Additionally, health issues became a part of the discourse in restaurants and their customers – this fostered an awareness about health care in places where it does not usually occur, thus lowering the threshold for public health care services.

Resources used:

- Direct cost: Over EUR 30 000 altogether (the main costs consisted of two ethnographic studies carried out by a private firm).
- Indirect cost: Working hours of a project manager in the health centre, and teacher and students in the Metropolia University of Applied Sciences.

Implementation time: 2 weeks

Challenges and solutions

The key challenges were to identify the meaning and aims of health care visits. The teacher and students interviewed people on how they felt about the service. People told them it was a positive experience. Many of them said they hadn't visited a health care centre for a long time, but after this experience they are more motivated to do so to take care of themselves. People in restaurants talked together about their measurements and discussed the benefits of healthy life.

Partnerships

Two small restaurants

Private sector

Two restaurants in suburban area near to Helsinki city centre took part in the project. They served as a venue for the service and promoted the service under their clients.

Gemic

Private sector

This is a private firm. Their field is human-centric strategy and innovation consultancy. They carried out the ethnographic studies.

Metropolia University of Applied Sciences

Academics and Research Bodies

This is Finland's largest university of applied sciences, educating professionals in the fields of culture, business, health care and social services and technology. The university recruited its students to carry out the health care services.

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

It's important to innovate new services in normal health care service structures to ensure that new innovations keep continuing in the future.

Conditions for success

It is a necessity to have partners who are motivated and of course there has to be a leadership within the organisation.

Other information

- The project was part of a larger innovation programme.
- It is cheap and quite easy to do.

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