

C + | Be + | Be your Rights

To end (once and for all) with Hepatitis C among Drug Users

An example of Community Mobilization in a neighborhood with an open scene of drug consumption in Porto



CONTEXT

Globally contradictory signals point to fragmented futures and social cohesion pillar is needed to balance global inequities Portugal, with its progressive approach regarding drug law environment, is the context.

Porto is the city... inside the "islands", that the city produces, with an open scene of crack cocaine and heroin use.

Every day in these other geographies of the city we witness people who use drugs that are more distant from health and social services.

Most of these micro-contexts of drug use are only known and easily accessible by Peers.

To eradicate VHC by 2030 the approach must be both global, integrated and holistic, but also grassroots, local, micro... with and by people who use drugs as first person of interest. For us a strategy of micro-elimination of Hepatitis C is adequate to approach these very hard to reach communities.



More Outreach...
Be there...
where and when
needed...

Peer Work
methodology
- challenge and
opportunity.

The IDEA

- Foster the work developed among peers, hence promoting their expertise and knowledge.
- Channel investment directly to empower people who use drugs and that know these geographies of open scene drug use.
- Develop micro-projects and implement community-based intervention on this "city islands", made invisible and forgotten by many.
- Monitor and evaluate, and external evaluation done by Piaget Agency for Development an NGO with different outreach and harm reduction projects.
- Investment in relationship and development (more accurate needs assessment)



Actions

- February 2018 – capacity building action of 6 days (organized by peers) - focused on human rights, meaningful inclusion and participation, mechanisms of protection, our law and services, our needs, and the 2 last days for designing micro-projects to develop health promotion intervention in the neighborhoods with an open scene of drug use.
- March to July — Implementation phase.
Every week three days' work on the field and a Supervision meeting.
Events like "Food and talking about..." peer-to-peer support and self-organizing, infectious diseases, human rights, overdoses awareness
Workshop of T-shirt stamping. Workshop of photo portrait.
Escorting drug users to testing, to clinical consultation and to other services, and helping them in their concrete needs.
- July to September — Evaluation and dissemination: Organize all information and prepare presentation of the project and its results.



January February March April May June July August September



How

The project followed an action-research principle - promoting and reporting the involvement and mobilization of the community through outreach and immersive fieldwork activities in the identified territories – collaborative work with existing services and networks allowed us to more freely be focused on relationship building with the people that use in a logic of human relation first, local first, more vulnerable first, namely homeless and sex workers, reaching the harder to reach...

Some results

- More than 150 people contacted.
- Articulated moments with different services:
 - Outreach teams particularly the local team from ARRIMO but also Médecins du Monde and APDES.
 - Public Health Center for integrated answers to Addiction from Eastern Porto
 - Testing and referral with Médecins du Monde
- Cleaner spaces and foil and syringe distribution 24h
- Deeper knowledge on the different layers of hidden realities that these spaces have.
- A film Director and Producer is doing a documentary film on one of these "city Islands"
- Thoughts and needs: more continued monitoring and registering, more training opportunities, protection of Peer Workers, more time and a more detailed budget.

Futures

CASO will continue to Push for better access to citizenship, including health and social rights, but alone it's very hard, so we must thank to Abbvie, Lda. and all friends, partners, allies, for always keeping support, understanding and trust.

