

## TEMPLATE FOR THE DESIGN OF A SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT\*

### 1.- PROJECT TITLE

Improving the life of seniors II

### 2. PROJECT SUMMARY *(brief description 300 to 500 words)*

The project focuses on improving the overall quality of life of seniors residing permanently in non-profit care homes (NPCH). It is an extension of a previous S-L program that was implemented successfully last year as part of the CIVIS Open labs. The two main partners are the PGP "Physiology of Aging and Geriatric Syndromes" and the NGO Mission "ANTHROPOS".

In an increasingly ageing society, where more and more people are moving to care homes to spend the last years of their life, this project is addressing the real issues the seniors face: isolation, loneliness and suffering from usual geriatric syndromes. Aiming at improving their life on a psychological and physical way, the objective will be achieved in 3 ways:

1) Mobilizing seniors in NPCH:

Seniors will have regular intergenerational meetings with high-school student volunteers of a period of six months. Their mobilization and socialization will be achieved through various activities, prepared for and implemented by the students.

S-L Participants will attend the meetings and propose activities that will benefit the seniors. They will attend and evaluate their implementation and re-design the activities to improve them.

2) Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment:

A selected number of seniors that fall into certain medical criteria (based on their score on the Clinical Frailty Scale) will be undertaking the Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment: this is a multidisciplinary clinical exam, aiming at reducing their state of frailty and suggest interventions that they can implement in their daily lives to improve their wellbeing.

S-L Participants will attend the assessment and they will follow up with the seniors and their caregivers, by visiting the NPCH regularly. They will observe and report on the extend and the means that the interventions are being implemented, by discussing them with the seniors and their caregivers, and they will offer suggestions based on their findings within the NPCH and problems that might arise. They will also attend the second examination, that will be conducted 6-8 months after the first one, where the results of the interventions will be assessed medically.

3) Training for the caregivers:

The caregivers in NPCH will be offered training on the prevention and treatment of geriatric syndromes. These seminars aim at offering state-of-the-art knowledge on how to take care of seniors, and prolong their level independency. They will also help the caregivers understand better why certain interventions were suggested for certain cases in their facility, and overall improve their professional skills.

S-L participants will assist in the organization of those seminars, tailored to the caregivers' needs based on their observations within the NPCH. They will also offer their professional advice, based on their discipline, in order to help caregivers deal with similar incidents.

The students that will participate in this program are the Postgraduate students of the PGP, in their second year of studies. The students admitted are from multidisciplinary backgrounds (medicine, physiotherapy, psychology, etc) and from different age groups. Students will take part on this project on a voluntary basis, as part of their practicum.

3.- TECHNICAL DATA

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Higher Education Institution or responsible entity:                                   | Postgraduate Program "Physiology of Aging and Geriatric Syndromes", Medical School, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens |
| Person in charge of the project in the HE Institution:                                | Petros Sfikakis, Evrydiki Kravvariti   |
| Number of students participating in the project:                                      | 4-10   |
| Course/age/gender of the participating students:                                      | Postgraduate students in their second year. Age, gender and discipline of students varies  |
| Number of final beneficiaries of the service:   | about 200 seniors as well as their caregivers  |
| Project type: (face-to-face, virtual, mixed and/or international):                    | Mixed; elements will be implemented online   |
| Do the students work with social entities or with final beneficiaries of the service? | Both   |

4.- BACKGROUND (context in which it arises, if it has been carried out previously, if it is part of a project that already exists or the previous experience from the people involved)

The project is an extension of a previous program implemented in 2021-2022 by the same partners, titled "Improving the life of seniors". The program was a collaboration of the PGP "Physiology of Aging and Geriatric Syndromes" with the NGO Mission "ANTHROPOS", and was included in the CIVIS Open Labs of the NKUA. It combined the mobilisation and socialization of seniors through online meetings with groups of high-school students, with the training and empowerment of their caregivers by the teaching staff and students of the PGP. At the end of the seminars, the PGP students wrote a Good Geriatric Practices Guideline for Caregivers.

As it was evident from the Social Impact Measurement Study that was conducted,

the program was very successful and presented an index of 5,22:1, meaning for every 1€ that was invested, the program produced 5,22€ in social value. This proved that the program was useful and should be implemented again, and could be taken one step further, taking into account the experiences of everyone involved.

The program "Improving the life of seniors II" has retained the main elements of the previous one, the meetings with high-school students for the mobilization of seniors and the seminars for the training and empowerment of the caregivers. In addition, a selected number of seniors will be offered the Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment, a multidisciplinary medical examination, which will be conducted by a private health care provider, as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility.

The experience gained from the implementation of the previous program helped in carving a way for the S-L participants to be more involved in all stages of the program, and to make the program more impactful for the beneficiaries.

5.- GENERAL SOCIAL NEED FOR THE PROJECT (S-L addresses real needs in the community, it is significant and relevant for both students and community partners. Relevant topics related to civic, cultural, economic and political society are explored through the project.)

In an increasingly ageing society, where more and more people are moving to care homes to spend the last years of their life, this project is addressing the real issues the seniors face there. Firstly, the isolation, loneliness and the need for socialization outside the care home, all of which usually are accompanied by the clinical symptoms of depression. Health protocol restrictions due to COVID-19 have further exacerbated these feelings and further alienated them from the outside world. Secondly, the usual geriatric syndromes that they experience (ex. frailty, sarcopenia, dysphagia, falls, urinary incontinence, depression, mild cognitive impairment, dementia, delirium, multi-morbidity, polypharmacy, inappropriate prescribing) deteriorate their autonomy severely impact their quality of life. The knowledge of the staff in handling these cases is often suboptimal, as constant training is required. The staff at NPCHE are not necessarily well trained, and they do the best they can with limited resources, therefore individualized care is often not available to the extend the seniors need it.

The project is also very relevant for the S-L participants, who will be able to interact directly with the seniors and see first-hand some of the geriatric symptoms they are exhibiting, while experiencing the realities of non-profit care homes and the problems their caregivers face daily.

6.- SERVICE OBJECTIVES (what is the purpose of the project, what service will be provided to address the social need)

S-L participants contribute in the design and implementation of activities for the seniors, for recreation, socializing and practising different skills (cognitive, kinetic, memory etc.)

They follow up and report on the process of implementing the personalized

interventions, as they were proposed during the Geriatric Assessment Test, by visiting the NPCHE and conversing with the seniors and the staff. They propose solutions to issues that might arise, based on the realities of each NPCHE.

They contribute in the preparation and the implementation of the seminars for the caregivers by the teaching staff of the PGP and share their professional and academic experience and assisting the caregivers to address similar cases, in order to help the caregivers.

7.- LEARNING OBJECTIVES (Specific contents and competences of academic subjects or academic degree, and/or transversal (generic) competences.

S-L participants learn from observing the examination of the Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment in a professional, non-academic environment. They study in depth the field of Geriatric in order to understand the proposed interventions for each senior and the impact of their potential implementation. They learn to transfer their academically-acquired knowledge in the wider society, utilizing appropriate vocabulary to explain these to caregivers without an academic background.

They also learn from being in direct contact with seniors, caregivers and health care providers. They are emerged into the living conditions of seniors and the daily problems they face. They discuss in depth and help the caregivers, understand their problems and the realities of each NPCHE.

They exercise their critical thinking for creative implementation of the interventions and activities, develop empathy and professional, academic and social skills.

8.- SUBJECTS/CURRICULAR AREAS INVOLVED (curricular subjects/courses?, a specific S-L course?, program?, etc.)

This will be counted as their practicum/internship (40h).

Students will utilize subjects from all their curriculum in the implementation of this project.

9.- ACTIVITIES TO BE CARRIED OUT IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THE PROJECT OBJECTIVES (both inside and outside the classroom. Activities that deal with the preparation, implementation, closing and evaluation of the project.)

- 1.Meetings with partners. Finalize list of S-L participants
- 2.Presentation of the program to PGP students. Finalize list of S-L participants.
- 3.Set appointments for Geriatric Assessment, pair seniors with S-L participants
- 4.Share the results of the examination with NPCHE and S-L participants
- 5.Arrange S-L participants meetings at the NPCHE to follow up with the proposed interventions
- 6.Discussions between teaching staff and S-L participants on the conditions of seniors and ways to improve them
- 7.Organizing seminars for caregivers by the teaching staff and S-L participants

- 8. Call for high-school student volunteers. Arrange groups and appoint S-L participants to each group
- 9. Implement meetings with seniors and co-design activities that would benefit the seniors
- 10. Set appointments for second Geriatric Assessment with S-L participants
- 11. Evaluate the results from all the above
- 12. Disseminate the results

10.- LINK TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND TARGETS (Go to: <http://sdg.humanrights.dk/es/goals-and-targets>)

| SDG                          | TARGETS |
|------------------------------|---------|
| 3: Good Health and Wellbeing | 3.8, 3c |
| 4: Quality Education         | 4.4     |

11.- HOW IS THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE INCORPORATED INTO THIS SERVICE-LEARNING EXPERIENCE (Equitable distribution of tasks among man and women; use of non-sexist language and images; recognizing and value the existence of multiple gender identities)

The distribution of tasks will be the same amongst participants regardless of their gender. All students who will participate will be accepted regardless of their gender identity.

12.- ENTITIES PARTICIPATING IN THE PROJECT (social entities, Public Administrations, educational centers, etc.)

NGO Mission "ANTHROPOS"  
 Non-profit care homes for the elderly  
 Private health care provider that will offer in the Geriatric Assessments  
 Secondary schools

13.- REFLECTION ACTIVITIES (Outline how reflection will be carried out with S-L participants: Reflection about what; when and through what means the reflection will take place. Analysis of different perspectives related to the problem that is being faced, and link of the S-L experiences to the theoretical and methodological framework of the academic subject/curriculum)

Students will be asked to fill in reports after each activity, reflecting on the project as well as self-reflection and offer their suggestions for improvement.

There will be scheduled reflection sessions for all participants to share their findings and thoughts regularly throughout the program.

14.- EVALUATION (who evaluates, what is to be evaluated, when will the evaluation take place, and through what means will the evaluation be conducted)

S-L participants will be evaluated by the teacher who will be appointed to them for their practicum on their involvement and commitment to the project. The evaluation will take place throughout the project, conducted by observation and interview.

| Indicators of impact on learning                             | Indicators of social impact   |
|--|---|
| The quality of the reports the students fill                 | The satisfaction of all participants (seniors, students, caregivers)  |
| The quality of the proposals for improvement by the students | The knowledge acquired by caregivers (questionnaires)                 |
|  | Number of projects that will be implemented                           |
|  | Improvement on the condition of seniors who implemented interventions |

15.- CELEBRATION OF THE PROJECT AND ITS RESULTS (diploma award ceremony, party, meetings, etc.)

By the end of the program, certificates will be given to all participants, possibly at a meeting.

16.- COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES (use of social media, internet, YouTube, publications, conference presentation, etc.)

The events of the program will be posted regularly in the websites and the social media of the PGP as well as the NGO Mission "ANTHROPOS"

17.- CALENDAR (timeline of the project activities)

September: Signing MoU's with all parties, presentations to PGP students and finalize list of S-L participants  
 September - November: -Book and conduct appointments for the Geriatric Assessment and pair Seniors with S-L participants  
 October-May: - Follow up on implementation of interventions at NPCHE, reporting, suggesting ways to improve conditions at NPCHE  
 October -April: - Meetings between Seniors and high-school students, S-L participants propose and follow-up on activities  
 November – May: Seminars for Caregivers from the teaching staff of the PGP and S-L participants  
 April-July: Second Geriatric Assessment Test  
 June-August: Evaluation of the program and dissemination of the results  
 August: Celebration of the project

|   | Se<br>pt | Oc<br>t | No<br>v | De<br>c | Ja<br>n | Fe<br>b | Ma<br>r | Ap<br>r | Ma<br>y | Ju<br>n | Jul | Aug |
|---|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----|-----|
| Signing MoU with all parties                      |          |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |     |     |
| Geriatric Assessments                             |          |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |     |     |
| Student visits at NPCHE                           |          |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |     |     |
| Proposing at NPCHE                                |          |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |     |     |
| Second Geriatric Assessment                       |          |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |     |     |
| Seminars for caregivers at NPCHE                  |          |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |     |     |
| Meetings between seniors-teens                    |          |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |     |     |
| Suggest/implement/redesign activities for seniors |          |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |     |     |
| Evaluation of project                             |          |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |     |     |
| Dissemination of results                          |          |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |     |     |

18.- HUMAN AND MATERIAL RESOURCES NEEDED TO CARRY OUT THE PROJECT (teachers, students, administrative staff; teaching resources, furniture, etc.)

HUMAN RESOURCES:

A teacher assigned for the students for the practicum  
 3-4 teachers for the seminars  
 4-10 students  
 1 Administrative staff (from NGO Mission "ANTHROPOS")

OTHER RESOURCES

Laptop – internet connection  
 Teaching materials  
 Rapid tests for entrance in NPCHE

19.- BUDGET (income, expenses and co-financing)

The cost of the Geriatric Assessment Test will be covered by the NGO Mission "ANTHROPOS", provided funding will be secured.

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\*Reviewed by the Subcommittee of the Technical Commission of S-L in the Public Universities and the City Council of Madrid.