



Development of health promotion work within the primary care organisation of the County Council of Sörmland in Sweden.

The structure described in this abstract is about using methods to help the patient to find a health promoting lifestyle. Another aim of the structure is to ensure equal treatment for men and woman and for different socio-economic, cultural and ethnic groups.

The County Council of Sörmland has for a couple of years had a policy for health promotion work. This policy is for all organisations within the County Council and it focuses on three perspectives. These perspectives are patients, employees and the general population. The policy provides an important basis for all health promotion activities. The structure described in this abstract is about using methods for helping the patient to find a health promoting lifestyle. We have started to introduce this work within the primary care organisation where we have today 24 health centres within the County Council of Sörmland. We will subsequently proceed with introducing this work in the hospitals and other institutions where patients are treated.

The structure for the work at every health centre is organised in the following way:

As a basis for the work we have introduced a questionnaire that we call "Questions about your health". Every patient who has a planned visit to the health centre, that is scheduled to last at least 30 minutes, is invited to answer the questionnaire. The patients are told to bring their answers to the member of staff he or she will meet at the health centre and with whom they can discuss possible changes in lifestyle.

The questions cover the following five areas connected to lifestyle: physical activity, food habits, tobacco, alcohol and emotional health (for example, stress and sleep habits).

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The questions are documented in the patients computerised medical journal which also enables statistics to be extracted.

In each health centre there are employees that can support the patient to change their lifestyle in these five areas. These persons are trained in methods for supporting change in a particular area of lifestyle. They also further their knowledge and exchange experience in this area of work through networks, which meet at least twice a year. There is a contact person for every five networks who co-ordinates the members of the network and helps develop the work together with the person who has the overall responsibility for health promotion in the County Council.

To support this work and establish a good foundation for the treatment, it is planned that every employee who works directly with patients shall be trained in Motivational Interviewing (MI). To date almost a third of the employees have now been trained.

To further develop the health promotion work it is necessary to have someone in every health centre to co-ordinate all the persons supporting patients into a team. This means that those persons who have responsibility for different lifestyle areas do not work in isolation but gain from each other and the different areas of work are therefore strongly connected.

This person is called a health coordinator and is also part of a County Council wide network. These 24 health coordinators also work together with the person who has overall responsibility for health promotion work in the County Council.

If a health centre can show that they have met the described criteria for the health promotion work they can receive a financial reward. The level of compensation is based on the total number of patients registered with the health centre.

This organisation has been built up in order to advance the work in the area of health promotion. The compensation is



provided as support and the criteria serve to emphasize that this work really is carried out.

The work will be followed through indicators, also documented in the patients computerised medical journal, that reveal which initiatives have been addressed regarding health promotion such as: help to stop smoking, help to reduce alcohol consumption, support with weight reduction, support to increase levels of physical activity and support with, for example, stress and sleep problems.

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