

From paper to practice: The European Drug Prevention Quality Standards in the “Three Cities Project” in Sweden

The three major cities in Sweden (Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö) have formed a cannabis prevention partnership which is in operation 2012-14.

Background

The framework for this project is the cohesive strategy for alcohol, narcotic drugs, doping and tobacco (ANDT-policy) which has been adopted by the Swedish Parliament. This ANDT-policy can be downloaded from <http://www.government.se/sb/d/574/a/180381>.

The ANDT-policy, among other areas, highlights the role of the major cities. In addition, the level of cannabis consumption is higher in these cities compared to the rest of the country which has seen a more favourable trend in cannabis smoking.

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs supports this project financially, which is created in order to generate findings of value not only to the involved cities, but also to the rest of the country.

The project

The work will be carried out on three levels: universal prevention, early intervention and treatment. The project contains a number of subprojects, supporting development in different areas. The overall aim is to increase the quality of existing and future prevention work.

The European Drug Prevention Quality Standards

In this overall project, the Standards play an important role in two respects:

I. The overall project team of the Three Cities Project is using the standards to describe each of the different subprojects which together are forming the whole project. Since the three cities by tradition have different project management protocols, the cities required a uniform description of the subprojects in order to make them easier accessible for researchers and other interested stakeholders. The Standards have provided this uniform framework. The overall project team is having a dialogue with the researchers concerning contents and layout of the subproject descriptions, testing the practical usability of the Standards.

II. Stockholm and Malmö have formed a “task force” focused on translating and adapting the Standards to Swedish terminology and context in order to make them more accessible to a broader audience than specialized prevention professionals. In this process, project team members from Stockholm and Malmö are engaged, as well as researchers and local prevention coordinators from the cities’ districts. This is a resource-intensive but important process.

Future use

After translation and cultural adaption, there are some possible areas for use of the Standards in Sweden.

1. Dissemination to prevention workers within the three cities, to other Swedish cities, to national, regional and local authorities and to other interested actors.
2. As a basis for producing shorter and targeted tools and checklists for different professionals, perhaps also for NGO’s.
3. As a learning material for higher education in prevention.

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