



Breaking the Taboo II – Developing and testing  
tools to train the trainer

Breaking the Taboo II

Overview of existing train-the trainer-courses dealing with  
violence and abuse against older women in the field of  
community-based health and social services in Bulgaria

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## 1 Summary of results

The national report is concentrated upon a survey about existing trainings and modules for such ones in the social and health field, which are intended for professionals and are directed toward violence against elderly women. As a result of the surveys, it was established that such trainings are not available in Bulgaria. The reason for this is that for many years domestic violence was considered as a personal problem, and was accepted as an issue which is “taboo” for the society, but this does not mean that it does not take place. Recently discussions have started about violence against children and young women, but the subject of violence against elderly people / elderly women is not actively discussed by the society.

The professionals working in the social and health field, who are in direct contact with the possible victims of violence, do not possess sufficient knowledge and skills for adequate reaction in such situations. Their reactions are based upon personal experience and intuition. During the meeting with the advisory board, the conviction was confirmed that there exists a serious need for the introduction of such type of training in the educational programmes, as well as for improvement of the cooperation between the social and health services and the organizations for protection of victims who have suffered from violence. The institutions responsible for this expressed willingness and readiness for its inclusion.

## 2 Summary of results in national language

Националният отчет е фокусиран върху проучване относно съществуващи обучения и модули за такива в социално- здравната сфера, които са предназначени за професионалисти и са насочени към насилието над възрастни жени. В резултат на проучванията се установи, че такива обучения в България не съществуват. Причина за това е, че дълги години домашното насилие се смяташе за личен проблем и се приемаше като въпрос, който е „табу“ за обществото, но това не означава че то не се случва. Напоследък се заговори за насилие над деца и млади жени, но темата за насилието над възрастни хора / възрастни жени не се обсъжда активно от обществото.

Професионалистите работещи в социално- здравната сфера, които са пряк контакт с евентуалните жертви на насилие нямат достатъчно знания и умения за адекватна реакция в такива ситуации. Реакциите им се базират на личен опит и интуиция. По време на срещата с консултативния съвет се затвърди убеждението, че има сериозна необходимост от въвеждането на такъв тип обучение в учебните програми, както и подобряване на взаимодействието между социално здравните служби и организациите

за защита на жертви преживели насилие. Отговорните за това институции изразиха желание и готовност за включването му

### **3 Introduction**

(0,5 - 1 page)

→ will be provided by WP leader FRK (Aims of project, research questions, structure of report, background of project – relevance for country, description of the target groups, gender aspect, etc)

### **4 Methods**

The focus was the trainings with the topic violence against older women/older people in care relations. To find trainings and workshops within community-based services the following methods were used:

Web search (google and official sites of different organizations) - Keywords (trainings for home helpers and social assistance, violence, violence against older people, violence against older women in their home, awareness workshops for social assistants, awareness workshops for social workers, awareness workshops for nurses).

Personal contacts with representatives of the victim protection field organization (Center “Nadia”), universities (Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” and Medical University – Sofia), the president of the National Organization of Social workers, representatives of the National Agency for Social Support.

Telephone interviews with 4 representatives of the educational institutions and 3 professionals in the victim protection field.

Searching in the database of the Sofia University and Medical University (gerontology).

Searching in for:

Training programs for home helpers.

Training programs for social assistants.

Training programs for nurses.

Training programs for social workers.

Questionnaires for the representatives of the educational institutions (4 persons) and professionals in the victim protection field (4 persons), home helpers (38 persons), nurses (12 persons), social assistants (15 persons), social workers (52 persons).

Screening of educational offers for community – based health social services for older people concentrated on 4 professional groups: nurses, social workers, home helpers and social assistants.

## **5 Description of community-based health and social services**

### **5.1 Actors in the field of community-based health and social services**

The major providing organizations in the sector of community – based health and social services are from the NGO sector - Bulgarian Red Cross and Caritas, SANE /Social Services for New Employment and recently the municipalities.

In the field of social services, modern Bulgaria has a hard and painful heritage from the times of the totalitarian centralized state – the specialized institutions for social care. The only care provided to people in their homes was delivery of cooked meals, but this was not available to all who needed it. Until amendment of the Law on social welfare, social assistance came mainly in the form of cash transfer.

The new policy, conducted by the state, is connected with de-institutionalization and de-centralization. The Government wanted to decrease the number of people placed in the specialized institutions for social care, acknowledging that most were situated outside residential areas, in poor condition, and without a mechanism to ensure that minimum standards of quality care were met – a human rights issue.

The basic legal frame of the services in the community is regulated in the Law on social welfare and the Regulations for its implementation. The Law includes a legal definition of the term “social services”, namely: these are services rendered in a family background or in an environment close to the family one. During the modification of the social legislation in 2003 the principle was adopted that the social services in the specialized social institutions should be provided as an extreme option, after depleting the possibilities for doing services in the community. Its aim was better to reflect the needs of citizens who required help to meet basic needs, and allowed for community level social services that would make it easier for people to live independently.

In conformity with the Regulations for implementation of the Law on social welfare, social services in the community include:

Personal assistant;  
Social assistant;  
Home helper;  
Home attendance patronage / meal on wheel / ;  
Daily care centre;  
Centre for social rehabilitation and integration;  
Residential social service;  
Centre for accommodation – family type;  
Centre for temporary accommodation;  
Crisis centre;  
Passing house;  
Protected house;  
Observing house;  
Asylum;  
Professional social centre for education;  
Section “Mother and baby”;  
Centre for social support;  
Centre for work with street children;  
Foster care;  
Soup kitchen.

According to the new legislation, the social services in the community may be rendered by the state, when they are financed by the state budget; by the municipalities, when they are financed by own means of the municipalities, or by Non Governmental organizations /NGOs,/ when public financing is not used.

In general, the providers of social services may be divided in two basic groups:

public providers – the state and/or the municipalities or rather their structural sections, and the so-called private - legal providers of services. The private-legal providers / Bulgarian or foreign physical persons or legal entities /, if willing to render social services, should register at the National Agency for social support, by presenting the relevant documents. This agency is a part of the structure of the Ministry of Labour and social welfare. The number of the non-

profit legal organizations, which are involved in providing social services, compared in percentages with the other fields of activity of non-profit legal organizations, is significant – about 20%. /"Research of the practices of management of NGOs in Bulgaria" – Legal and sociological analysis, 2006, Bulgarian centre for non-for-profit law, p. 26/.

At the same time the Law envisages a legal possibility for the NGOs, registered as providers of social services, to possess the right to receive financing from the municipal budgets or from the Republican budget. This is realized through holding a competition for assigning a social service, which is organized and implemented by the Mayor of the relevant municipality. A contract is signed with the winner of the competition.

Despite the great percentage of the registered NGOs, rendering social services in the community, according to the Regulations for application of the Law on Social Welfare, the number of those willing to render the services **home assistant, personal assistant and social assistant is not great**. This sector is poorly developed, but the needs for development increase very fast, especially with the aging of the population. At present the basic providers of this type of social services are: SANE /Social Services for New Employment/, Bulgarian Red Cross, Caritas, and recently the municipalities.

The Social Services for New Employment (SANE) began as a project in 2002 in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social policy, and assisted the Government with social service reform. United Nations Developing Programs / UNDP/ supported to the development of a new social service system included developing capacities of community based services providers, helping to mitigate some of the negative effects of the most affected by unemployment. UNDP supported the Government to develop secondary legislation for newly adopted Social Assistance Act, assisting with the design of a new system community – based social services that would meet national minimum quality standards. The project also piloted a cost - sharing model for financing community based social services between the central government (70%) municipalities (20%) and beneficiaries (10%). The project helped to develop the capacities of municipalities to co - finance, outsource and supervise community – based social services.

The project was initially launched in 12 municipalities in 2006 and has proven to be a viable mechanism for decentralized social services. The government recognized its benefits and scaled up direct government funding for this approach to 150 municipalities in 2007 outside of the project. SANE also triggered systematic changes. Central government, municipalities and NGO's have joint forces in the provision of social services. The social assistant and home helper has become a registered vocation in Bulgaria. SANE contributed to developing the capacities of civil society to better meet the many new demands of providing social assistance. A handbook was produced to guide 1 700 social assistant in providing social

services to their communities / Capacity Development practice - Bratislava Regional centre RBEC, 2009, p.35/.

Three factors were critical for the success of the initiative. First of all, its long term perspectives (six years) were vital to fully institutionalize a new system. Secondly, SANE activities complemented a changes process, which was entirely driven by Bulgarian institutions. Lastly, the project took a holistic approach with activities at various level – work on the policy framework was complemented with capacity development activities for municipalities and NGOs, as well as employment creation for the once unemployed.

The Bulgarian Red Cross did adopt, in the beginning of 2003, the strategy for introducing and implementing “Health and Social Home Care Services”. This strategy is based on extensive needs assessments done in several regions in Bulgaria. The overall goal of the Home Care Centers of the Bulgarian Red Cross is to improve quality of life of older, chronically - ill and disabled people in Bulgaria. The Home Care Centers give professional provision of health and social services to beneficiaries at their homes. This strategy is based on extensive needs assessments done in several regions in Bulgaria. There are 9 Home Care Centers in Bulgaria – in Sofia, Varna, Montana, Plovdiv, Blagoevgrad, Smolian, Dobrich, Lovech, and Dobrich. All 9 Home Care centres work according to one and the same model, including equipment, work organization, documentation of cases, criteria for selection of patients, etc. The organizational structure is the same for all centres, including infrastructure; procedures, structures and management practices securing quality of service, professional skills of nurses and home-helpers, educational programs. The BRC also established a National Center for Vocational Education and training licensed in 2006. The training programs have been licensed by the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training. The trainers are lecturers from the Medical University, Sofia, specially trained for the needs of this training. This training is an obligatory requirement for the staff to be appointed at the Home-Care centers and it is followed by series of trainings in specific topics that have arisen in the process of work.

Thus the BRC was officially recognized as an organization providing training for the profession of Social Worker having two modules – Home-Helper and Social Assistant. The creation of the Centre for Vocational Education and Training at the BRC provides the opportunity to expand the knowledge and experience we have already gathered outside the BRC. One of the main tasks for 2007 for BRC was to apply at the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training in order to obtain license for the establishment of regional branches of the already licensed BRC National Training Centre. The idea behind the establishment of such centres is that they could conduct training of home-helpers and social assistants on local level. Regional branches of the National Training centre were established



in 9 regions - Plovdiv, Montana, Varna, Dobrich, Shumen, Pleven, Burgas, Kardzhali and Pazardzhik. Involved professional groups

The staff of each HC Center consists of a nurse – also a manager of the center and home-helpers. The nurses /managers/ provide health cares to the patients like giving injections, taking medicines, etc. and the home-helpers assist them in housekeeping, shopping, maintaining of hygiene, some administrative services like paying bills, accompany the patients for a walk, etc. They also teach them in how to take care of themselves in their every-day activities. The course for training of nurses consists of 160 hours (after their education in the Universities) and the course for training of home-helpers – 120 hours and they both give knowledge about the specificities of cares at home. The training programs have been licensed by the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training. The trainers are lecturers from the Medical University, Sofia, specially trained for the needs of this training. This training is an obligatory requirement for the staff to be appointed at the Home-Care centers and it is followed by series of trainings in specific topics that have arisen in the process of work.

The work of the social worker may be granted by the main activities they carry: accepts customers having problems with organizing and maintaining them; examine bits, medical, financial, social and personal reasons for this problem; examine personal and social reasons for this problem in communication or adjustment of the client to the public; assist clients to obtain social, financial, administrative or other similar assistance; the educational program for the social workers continuous 4 years in the Universities.

The social assistants support social workers in carrying out their duties within the community, hospitals and other settings such as hostels and residential care homes. The role involves working under the supervision of a qualified social worker and may also include working in partnership with other care and health professionals. Social assistants work with a wide variety of clients groups, including: children, older people, families in distress, clients with learning difficulties and mental health conditions. The typical work activities include advising clients about available recourses, assessing clients needs and organizing post-discharge domestic or personal care (hospital setting), contacting clients and setting up appointments, following up enquiries, carrying out reviews, visiting clients at home (community setting), maintaining and updating client records.

Generally, the home helpers and social assistant spend more time with the clients than the nurses and social workers during their every-day work. Only 3% of the home helpers and social assistants are male. There are no specialized persons in health and social services who deal with violence and abuse.

## 5.2 Involved professional groups

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### 5.3 Results of screening basic educational training of health and social professionals

The screening of basic educational trainings and the educational training programs of the nurses, home helpers, social assistants and social workers is not included the domestic violence.

The questionnaires for the representatives of the educational institutions, professionals in the victim protection field, home helpers, nurses, social assistants, social workers and the telephone interviews present that the topic must be implemented in the educational programs of the 4 defined target groups.

The problem with the domestic violence referred to the module **Psychological Climate in the Family**. (Training Manual for nurses in community – based health and social services). In the module are not included methods how to recognize the domestic violence or how to react in situation like this. The only recommendations to call to the police offices if they think that the person of the family is the victim of abuse (Balkanska, P. (2009), Manual for nurses, Psychological climate in the family).

## 6 Awareness raising courses for staff of community-based health and social services

The screening of awareness courses for staff of community – based health and social services showed that there are only one awareness workshop for social assistants on the topic for domestic violence, and no one training which address violence against older women and older people at all – **Violence against older people**. The aim of the training is to build the capacity of social assistants' interns of basic knowledge on the topic violence and neglecting and skills how to recognize violence and skills to deal with.

➤ Tasks:

To introduce the knowledge of the violence as a part of reality – attitudes on the topic;

Sensitivity on violence in the work of the social assistants;

Preventing the risk of violence

➤ Main topics of the workshop:

First day - attitudes and legends about violence, what is violence and forms of violence - physical, emotional and sexual.

Second day – theoretical models – cycle of violence, Karpman triangle, identify roles, linking theory and practice of the social assistants;

Third day - work on case studies and discuss the removal of ways to address situations of violence - the social assistants to customers, from consumers to social assistants, relatives and friends.

## 6.1 Setting and target group information

The target groups of the workshop *Violence against older people* were 36 social workers and about 700 social assistants from 12 municipalities of Bulgaria. In every municipality were organized trainings. 58 social assistants and 3 social workers per municipality were trained. The participants of one training were 29 persons per municipality and there were organized 2 trainings per municipalities.

## 6.2 Focus and contents

The workshop *Violence against older people* focused on awareness measures of the social assistants from 12 municipalities in Bulgaria. The focus of the workshop aimed to introduce the knowledge of the violence as a part of the reality and their every – day work, how to identify the violence and preventing the risk of violence. The training is concluded with basic information and possible strategies for intervention. The workshop starts with the definition of the problem and clarifies what is “physical, emotional and sexual abuse”. The second module of the training is introducing the theoretical models – cycle of violence, Karpman triangle, identify roles, linking theory and practice of the social assistants; the training is concluded with possible intervention strategies through work on case studies and discuss the removal of ways to address situations of violence - the social assistants to customers, from consumers to social assistants, relatives and friends.

## 6.3 Methods used

The methods used in the workshop *Violence against older people* are lectures combined with discussions between participants, role play, and small group exercises.

## **6.4 Additional information**

After conducting the training *Violence against older people* social assistants has weekly consultations with social workers, who can provide case studies. Social workers have monthly supervision and they discuss the cases, make social evaluation and social report.

## **7 Train-the-trainer courses on violence against older people with a special focus on older women**

It's not available

### **7.1 Setting and target group information**

It is not available.

### **7.2 Focus and contents**

It is not available

### **7.3 Methods used**

It is not available.

### **7.4 Additional information**

What worked out well? Possible improvements?

## **8 Conclusions for the development of a curriculum for workshop facilitators and peer advisors**

### **8.1 For staff workshops**

The target group of these workshops are home helpers and social assistants. The design of the training tools and the workshop could be “prevention of violence”. The workshop could start with a general information about the violence – how to recognize it, attitudes and legends about violence, what is violence and forms of violence - physical, emotional, financial and sexual, how to talk with the victims and build trust. This can be present to the participants through theoretical inputs and working in small groups. The topics of this first part of the training could give general definition of the problem for work settings in the field of domestic violence. The second part of the training could include training tools how to react

when they recognize violence, guidelines on how to deal with situation of domestic violence, reporting procedures and exchange the information with the stakeholders.

## **8.2 For workshop facilitators and peer advisors**

Besides the general focus on home helpers, social assistants, social workers and nurses and the situation in Bulgaria we think that the nurses and social workers will be interested in taking the charge of becoming a peer advisors are facilitators.

The training could start with a general information about the violence – how to recognize it, attitudes and legends about violence, what is violence and forms of violence - physical, emotional, financial and sexual, how to talk with the victims and build trust.

The second part of the training could include basic knowledge concerning the recognition and documentation of abuse, how to report the abuse, further steps which have to be taken after having recognized situation of violence and abuse and prevention if they have suspicious of violence or abuse.

Very important could be the discussing of the problem with other professionals and other external experts.

## **8.3 For suggestions to integrate the issue in basic vocational training**

There are a few steps to integrate the issue in basic vocational training in Bulgaria. Firstly the meetings of the advisory board – the participants are the representatives of the victim protection filed organization, National Agency for Social Support, National Association of Social Workers, Sofia University, Medical University, and National Training Center. They could support the successful implementation of the topic in educational offers. The second step will be distribute the brochure “Breaking the taboo” within educational institutions and professionals of social and health care. Very important is to have an exchange of information between victim protection organizations and social and health care field.

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## 10 Annex

List of found training courses

Type	Name of training	Institution
for staff	<b><i>Violence against older people</i></b>	Bulgarian Association of social workers, SANE
Train-the-trainers		

