

BUILDING ON JA-CHRODIS

What can we do to plan and implement practices to reduce the burden of chronic diseases?



It is evident that European health systems must become more efficient in the future. The ageing society, coupled with the increasing incidence of chronic diseases, play major roles in governments' decisions about healthcare and public health investments. Chronic diseases, like diabetes and cardiovascular diseases, affect 8 people out of 10 over the age 65 in Europe. Approximately €700 billion are spent every year across the EU on the treatment of chronic diseases.

The three-year EU Joint Action on **Addressing Chronic Disease and Healthy Ageing across the Life Cycle** (JA-CHRODIS), co-funded by the European Commission and Member States (plus Iceland and Norway), and including 73 Partners, aimed to contribute to reduce the burden of chronic diseases by facilitating the exchange and scaling-up of good practices, which address chronic diseases and healthy ageing.

JA-CHRODIS adopted the following definition of “good practice”: “A good practice is not only a practice that is good, but a practice that has been proven to work well and produce good results, and is therefore recommended as a model. It is a successful experience, which has been tested and validated, in the broad sense, which has been repeated and deserves to be shared so that a greater number of people can adopt it”¹.

Four main areas were identified and need to be continuously developed:

- Health promotion and primary prevention of chronic disease;
- Organisational interventions focused on dealing with people with multiple chronic conditions;
- Interventions for the empowerment of patients with chronic conditions;
- National diabetes plans.

¹ <http://www.fao.org/docrep/017/ap784e/ap784e.pdf>

12 STEPS TOWARDS IMPLEMENTING PRACTICES TO REDUCE THE BURDEN OF CHRONIC DISEASES



1. DESIGN YOUR PRACTICE

Design the practice you want to implement or improve, based on existing evidence or good practices, and develop a specific plan to achieve this goal. Include monitoring and evaluation as integral part of the plan.



2. EMPOWER TARGET POPULATION

Identify your target population and involve them in designing and evaluating the practice as appropriate.



3. ENSURE ADEQUATE INVESTMENT AND RESOURCING

Make sure that the practice has the funding necessary to incorporate the elements that are essential to be effective. Try to achieve the highest coverage possible while keeping the practice effective.



4. BE COMPREHENSIVE BUT NOT TOO COMPLICATED

Try to address all relevant determinants (including social determinants) and use different strategies adapted to different settings and local situations as appropriate to the scope of the practice. JA-CHRODIS' multimorbidity care model is the recommended way of addressing groups of patients with the highest healthcare needs.



5. INTERACT REGULARLY WITH RELEVANT SYSTEMS

Ensure a strong, well-resourced monitoring and liaison component for intersectoral coordination. Implement effective partnerships: Health in all Policies approach in health promotion, multidisciplinary and intersectoral teams in healthcare, public-private partnerships. More can be achieved together with social care, agriculture, transport, education, employment and finance sectors, for example.



6. EDUCATE AND TRAIN

Educate those professionals and actors involved in the practice's implementation on its overall and long-term goal, including for instance care givers. Train them to perform their activities with the highest quality and to coordinate with each other.



7. RESPECT ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Implement interventions proportional to needs. The objectives and strategy should be transparent to the target population and stakeholders. Preferences and autonomy of target population should be respected and promoted.



8. APPLY GOOD GOVERNANCE

Define and describe organisational structures clearly. Ensure they are transparent (i.e. responsibility assignments, flows of communication, work and accountabilities). Create ownership amongst all stakeholders.



9. ENSURE SUSTAINABILITY AND SCALABILITY

Have a long-term concept for your intervention and make it as cost-effective as possible. Take into account that health promotion and disease prevention are proven to be cost-effective measures.



10. MAKE SURE EQUITY IS ADDRESSED

Take specific actions to tackle the social determinants of health and consider the equity dimension, as well as populations at greatest risk of inequalities (e.g. gender, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, rural-urban area, vulnerable groups)



11. EVALUATE

Monitor and evaluate your intervention/good practice constantly. Make sure there is a defined and appropriate evaluation framework assessing structure, process, outcomes and results.



12. MAKE USE OF THE CHRODIS PLATFORM

Upload your practice to the CHRODIS Platform and have external reviewers evaluate it. Receive feedback to improve your practice. Disseminate your practice to a wide audience through the CHRODIS Platform. Learn from others registered on the CHRODIS Platform and contact and cooperate with them on issues of common interest.

