

Frazzica, Rosa Giuseppa, MD, Caltanissetta, Italy

Director General of the Centre for Training and Research in Public Health (CEFPAS), Caltanissetta, Italy; Member of the Executive Committee of the European Association of Public Health Schools (ASPHER); President of the Sicilian Chapter of the Italian Society for Quality Assurance in Health Services (VRQ); Member of the Ethical Committee of the Italian Federation for Personnel working with Alcohol- and Drug Abusers as well as HIV/AIDS infected (FEDERSERT)

Generaldirektorin des Bildungs- und Forschungszentrums für das Gesundheitswesen (CEFPAS), Caltanissetta, Italien; Vorstandsmitglied der Vereinigung der Ausbildungsstätten für Öffentliches Gesundheitswesen in Europa (ASPHER); Vorsitzende der Sizilianischen Sektion der Italienischen Gesellschaft für Qualitätssicherung in der Gesundheitsversorgung (VRQ); Mitglied der Ethikkommission des Italienischen Verbands der Personen, die mit Alkohol- und Drogenabhängigen und HIV/Aids Erkrankten arbeiten (FEDERSERT).

Excellence in training for health and social personnel in Sicily: CEFPAS' role as a Non for Profit Organisation

Abstract

Hintergrund: CEFPAS ist eine öffentliche Einrichtung der sizilianischen Regionalregierung, die sich zur Aufgabe gesetzt hat, zur Entwicklung einer Kultur der öffentlichen Gesundheit beizutragen, die ständige Verbesserung der Gesundheit der Bevölkerung zu fördern und vorbeugend gegen Krankheiten, Behinderungen und vorzeitige Todesfälle zu wirken.

Für seine Aktivitäten hat das CEFPAS in qualitativ hochwertige Methodiken der Erwachsenenbildung investiert und so seine Programme und Projekte strategisch auf den Grundsätzen von Wirksamkeit, Effizienz, Gerechtigkeit, Angemessenheit, wissenschaftlichen Fundiertheit, Forschung, Innovation, Offenheit und Transparenz aufgebaut.

Seit dem Jahr 2000 ist das CEFPAS nach ISO 9001 zertifiziert.

Strategien: Für das CEFPAS war und ist die **Bedarfsanalyse** als Ausgangspunkt und operationelle Basis des Ausbildungsprozesses von größter Bedeutung. Ferner erachtet es die **Planung** stets als einen der wichtigsten Punkte in der Kette an Aktivitäten der Einrichtung.

Ein wesentlicher Aspekt in der Arbeit des CEFPAS besteht im Ausbau seiner Ausbildungstätigkeit **vor Ort**, d. h. direkt in den Gesundheitseinrichtungen selbst.

Das umfangreiche **Ausbildungsprogramm für TrainerInnen** hat zur Verbesserung der Qualität von Ausbildungsmaßnahmen durch interne und externe ExpertInnen in Sizilien beigetragen. Einige der TeilnehmerInnen sind nach Absolvierung dieses Programms in ihren eigenen Organisationen in führende Positionen im Bereich der Ausbildung aufgerückt.

Das **Evaluierungssystem** des CEFPAS beruht auf vielfältigen Instrumenten sowie qualitativen und quantitativen Analysen. Gegenstand der Evaluierung durch das Zentrum sind Projekte, Prozesse, TrainerInnen, TeilnehmerInnen und Auswirkungen.

Schlussfolgerungen: In zehn Jahren intensiver Arbeit hat das CEFPAS Konzepte, Methoden, Instrumente und Fähigkeiten auf sehr hohem Niveau entwickelt und validiert, deren Wert auch auf internationaler Ebene anerkannt ist.

A Centre of Excellence for Training

CEFPAS, the Centre for Training and Research in Public Health is a public institution under the jurisdiction of the Sicilian Regional Government. CEFPAS' mission is to contribute to the development of a culture for Public Health, to promote the continuous quality improvement of the health of the population, to prevent diseases, disabilities and premature deaths.

CEFPAS has invested in quality and self-directed learning methodologies strategically constructing its programmes and projects on the principles of effectiveness, efficiency, equity, appropriateness, scientific rigor, research, innovation, courtesy and transparency. Well-recognised local, national and international trainers have been engaged in carrying out learner-centred training activities.

The institutional setup

CEFPAS' campus consists of 14 two-floor buildings covering a total surface area of 26,000 square metres, as well as a hotel with conference rooms, dozens of equipped rooms, computer and language laboratories, a library and a covered sports ground.

In order to pursue its aims, the Centre works towards the development of activities that respond to:

- the necessity for continuous improvement in the quality of services and care offered to the population to satisfy their health needs;
- the development needs of social and health personnel and of their motivation;
- the opportunity for health organisations to offer more effective and efficient services;
- the emerging needs of the labour market for the development of new professional skills for emerging jobs.

From 1996 until now, the Centre has achieved most of the quality-quantitative objectives which had been defined. Specifically, the following activities have been carried out over the course of the last ten years:

Residential activities

- 1,153 courses
- 31,765 trainees
- 37,702 training hours
- 4,073 tutors and teachers

The areas covered are:

- Clinical Sciences, EBM, Nursing and Rehabilitation
- Health Management
- Behavioural sciences
- Public Health
- Continuous Quality Improvement
- Other initiatives

In April 2004, CEFPAS took part in the national experiment on Distance Learning (DL) organised by the Ministry of Health and became a DL Provider making its advanced training widely available.

CEFPAS is the only institution authorised to train Directors General of Health Organisations in Sicily; it also trains Health and Administrative Directors and Chief of Departments. But, today, CEFPAS is much more than this:

- Several international, national and regional projects have been developed and carried out in a number of areas: from hospital food services to gender entrepreneurship and from Evidence Based Medicine (EBM) to Traditional medicine.
- A three year programme on CQI has involved the 72 Sicilian public hospitals.
- Other initiatives.

The development of training activities

Strategies

In order to achieve its institutional objectives, CEFPAS' strategies are essentially based on the provision of high quality training and continuous education for social and health personnel. The methods used are innovative, follow a self-directed learning principles, problem solving and are interactive and experiential.

A notable investment has been devoted to the achievement and maintenance of the high standards of quality of its own system. CEFPAS has, in fact, been successfully ISO 9001 certified since the year 2000.

The Centre's internal quality is considered a fundamental and strategic element of the entire process, in the strong belief that it is not possible to offer high quality products and services if the supplier does not strive for the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) of its own system.

Needs analysis.

For CEFPAS, needs analysis has been of the utmost importance and has constituted the starting point and the operational basis of the training process. The identification of activities to propose to the health personnel of our National Health System has been carried out – initially – on the basis of a needs analysis derived from questionnaires compiled by the top management of health organisations and, subsequently, through suggestions obtained from questionnaires completed by individual trainees.

In the autumn of 2000, CEFPAS carried out an analysis of training needs based on a representative sample of health personnel in Sicily. The investigation was based on quali-quantitative methodologies with the use of semi-structured interviews of key-informers (top management, chiefs of training, etc.), and group interviews (focus groups) of former trainees, with a sample of those interviewed for maximum variance. The second phase of the research involved the various categories of professionals.

The collected data have provided information on current needs, and have been used as the basis for the development of activities in the medium term: Masters programme, pluri-modular courses, activities in cooperation with training departments of health organisations.

The Planning Phase

CEFPAS has always considered planning as one of the most central points in the chain of its activities.

The methodology used by CEFPAS follows the J.J. Guilbert planning spiral as described in the WHO's Pedagogical Guide, of which he is the author. The spiral foresees the

various steps of the planning process in a circular fashion: needs analysis, definition of the objectives and of the evaluation system (project, process, teachers, participants, impact) and the elaboration of the programme and its realisation.

The Centre has included in its Quality System (Vision 2000 Certification) the entire planning process of its yearly programme as a single process not as individual projects. Masters programmes, covering around 300 classroom hours with the completion of an original research thesis and final exams, have been developed on the basis of the qualitative investigation and on the expression of needs by trainees.

In House Training

An important aspect of CEFPAS' work has consisted in the extension of its training activities In-House, that is, directly on the health organisations' premises. Personalised activities are designed with the objective of creating professional profiles, more in line with the rapid organisational changes, and initiating an open, reflective process that can lead towards new models of work organisation.

Trainers and trainees

The greatest percentage of participants to CEFPAS' courses has traditionally been doctors and a growing percentage is represented by nurses. The Centre has, in many ways, promoted the training and CME of nurses as they, in our context, are generally neglected and therefore lag behind in technical and in career development. Other professional figures belonging to the technical, administrative and social sphere are present in smaller numbers.

From 1996 until today, CEFPAS has used 4,573 trainers, 44% of whom came from the National Health Services. In most cases, the proposal for the nomination of trainers comes from the Director of the course, who is the scientific guarantor of the initiative. Each trainer undergoes an individual evaluation through the determination of a satisfaction index by participants. This information is gathered from the final questionnaires, which contain a question referring to each single trainer. A score of above 80% is considered very good, between 70% and 80% is good, under 70% the result is insufficient, and, with the exception of a few particular cases, the collaboration relationship with trainers is not renewed.

Trainers' training

The wide programme of Training of Trainers carried out since 1997 has contributed to the improvement in the quality of training activities by internal and external professionals in Sicily, some of whom, after having taken part in this programme, have gained leading training roles also inside their organisations. The diffusion of a culture for training and for quality has been the first and most important thematic issue on which CEFPAS' interventions have been developed.

The evaluation system

CEFPAS' evaluation system is based on the utilisation of multiple instruments and qualitative analysis.

The categories of "objects" that are evaluated by the Centre are: the project, the process, the trainers, the trainees, and the impact.

The most important steps, regarding evaluation results in terms of process, satisfaction and learning are:

- Satisfaction evaluation;
- Final questionnaire data feedback at the end of the course;
- ISO 9001 evaluation procedures;
- Learning evaluation;
- Combined evaluation: Trainer-Trainee- Course Coordinator;
- Impact evaluation, In-House.

Conclusions

Training is considered today as the most effective growth engine of all business organisations, also of those belonging to the health and social sectors.

The National law that establishes that CME is an obligation for all health personnel recognises that permanent training and CME of health personnel is a right and a duty of the professionals working in the health system. The real challenge at this moment - when demand for training is high in order to meet requirements - is linked to the willingness and the ability of providers to offer high quality training, that is evaluated in a strict and systematic way

In ten years of intense activity, CEFPAS has developed and validated approaches, methods, instruments and capabilities of very high quality, whose value is also recognised at an international level. In order to carry out its strategic activities, the Centre has relied upon an extraordinary group of people. As a matter of fact, its greatest wealth is not the huge structure it is endowed with, but its staff who know they are an active part of a "small big" dream that blends efficacy and efficiency in the public nature of the Centre.

Bibliography

- Quaglino G.P., Carrozzi G.P. (1998). Il processo formazione. Dall'analisi dei bisogni alla valutazione dei risultati. Franco Angeli: Milano.
- Knowles M. (1997). Quando l'adulto impara. Pedagogia e andragogia. Franco Angeli: Milano.
- Rotondi M. (2000). Facilitare l'apprendere. Modi e percorsi per una formazione di qualità. Franco Angeli: Milano.
- AA.VV. (2001). Il CEFPAS cinque anni dopo, rapporto dal 1996 al 2000. CEFPAS: Caltanissetta. http://www.cefpas.it/rapporto_attività.htm
- Amietta P.L., Amietta F. (1996). Valutare la formazione. Edizioni Unicopli: Milano.
- Beccastrini S., Gardini A., Tonelli S. (2001). Piccolo dizionario della qualità. Centro Scientifico Editore: Torino.
- Guilbert J.J (2002) Guide pédagogique pour les personnels de Santé. OMS Publication offset n. 35

