

Addressing and preventing care needs through innovative community care centers (I-CCC)

4th Partner Meeting, I-CCC Project¹



Date & Time: 27-28 February 2023

Location: Hartberg, Styria

Participants:

- Austrian Red Cross, International Cooperation: Ms. Anya Blum
- Red Cross of Serbia: Ms. Nataša Todorović, Dr. Milutin Vračević
- Red Cross of Montenegro: Ms. Ivana Smolović
- Austrian Red Cross, Health and Social Services: Dr. Gabriele Detschmann, Ms. Kerstin Bohner
- Austrian Red Cross, Vienna branch: Ms. Andrea Stöckel
- Austrian Red Cross, Styria branch: Mr. Bernhard Strobel, Mr. Anton Zierl
- Non-Profit Organisation (NPO): Ms. Maria Doppler
- Republic Institute for Social Protection (RISP): Ms. Slavica Milojević, Ms. Sanja Miloradović
- External Evaluator, Montenegro: Ms. Lidija Brnović
- Austrian National Public Health Institute (GÖG): Ms. Alice Edtmayer, Ms. Barbara Stulik

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Welcome, overview of the agenda and guided tour

The meeting was opened by Mr. Bernhard Strobel, Deputy Head of Social Services, Migration & Tracing Service, Austrian Red Cross, Styria Branch and Ms. Anya Blum, Project Manager of the I-CCC project, who briefly presented the agenda:

Day 1:

- Guided tour and presentation of the Red Cross local branch Styria and the services provided (Visit of I-CCC Hartberg, Retirement Home Menda, LKH Hartberg lecture on: "Hospital Discharge" and visit of the Rescue Service)
- I-CCC project overview & next steps
- Brainstorming session on the sustainability of the I-CCC
- Presentation of the promotional videos by Montenegro

Day 2:

- Session on challenging target values within the I-CCC
- Review of the preliminary results of the third process evaluation survey by NPO
- Overview of the evaluation time- table
- Review of the preventive home visits by GÖG
- Presentation of the toolbox developed by Serbia and Austria
- Outlook: I-CCC next steps & follow-up

During the **guided tour to LKH Hartberg** participants learned about the importance of "**Hospital Discharge Management**". Mr. Karl Preißler, in charge of the Discharge Management at LKH Hartberg gave a presentation on the importance of Hospital Discharge. He underlined that the discharge of a person in need of care from the hospital often leads to a (sudden) psychological and financial burden for the family. In most cases, the caring task is taken over by one person in the family. Many family members are overwhelmed with the situation. Therefore, the LKH Hartberg developed the **concept of nursing and discharge counselling** in combination with nursing mediation. Mr. Preißler underlined that due to a well-organized discharge management, informal carers are supported; the likelihood of a patient returning soon to the hospital is reduced; the patients only need to stay as long as needed in the hospital (e.g., average duration of stay at LKH Hartberg: 5,3 days; average duration of stay in AT: 6,3 days) and it ensures that an over- or undersupply of remedies is prevented. The team of LKH Hartberg supports patients and their relatives to design individual home care plans. Further they have a well-developed network to other service providers such as the Red Cross or "Pflegedrehscheibe", which offer services to support people in this situation, such as: "Call Help Program" by the Red Cross (germ: Rufhilfe) or services provided within the I-CCC such as support for informal carers, home visits, trainings for informal carers, healthy aging activities, counselling, etc.



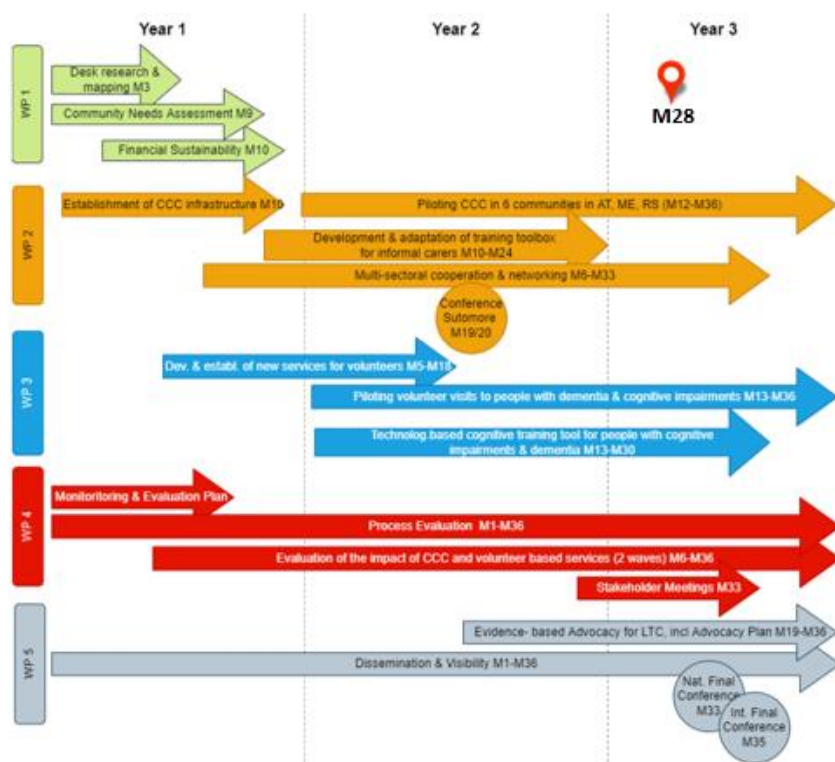
Mr. Karl Preißler explains how Hospital Discharge works at LKH Hartberg



Mr. Johann Fuchs provides an overview of the Retirement Home Menda and explains how older persons are supported in Styria

After visiting LKH Hartberg, participants had the opportunity to **visit the Retirement Home "Menda"**. Mr. Johann Fuchs, Head of the Retirement Home gave a presentation on the capacities and services provided at the Retirement Home. He explained the different amounts of care allowance (in Austria the amount of care allowance is divided into 7 different levels, depending on the extent of the need for care) and explained how nursing home fees are covered in Austria by the State. In addition, Mr. Fuchs gave a brief overview of additional support and care service in Styria, such as: mobile social services, home help services, food delivery, visiting services, etc. services which are also offered within the I-CCC project. All services are aiming to support clients to stay at homes as long as possible.

In the **afternoon** Mr. Anya Blum, Austrian Red Cross gave a **brief overview of the I-CCC project**, and the current status was presented. The project is currently in **Y3** of implementation (28 months of project implementation, **8 months left**). Since the last Partner Meeting in Sutomore in June 2022 many tasks have been completed; most of the activities are ongoing, some activities are delayed due to a delayed start.





Reviewing the services offered at the Community Care Centres

Following a brief **I-CCC project overview**, Ms. Anya Blum underlined the importance to ensure the sustainability of the community care centres after 2023, as especially for Montenegro most people living in the municipality of Bar or Bijelo Polje are depending on the services provided by the I-CCC. Ms. Ivana Smolović, Project Manager of Red Cross of Montenegro stressed that especially for people living with the minimal pension, which is around 215 Euros/month it is often not possible to cover basic needs. The I-CCC services are essential for the most vulnerable older people living in the region. Mr. Ivana Smolović described the services offered at both community care centres, including preventive home visits, counselling sessions (on phone, in homes), services for people with dementia, home helpers, healthy ageing activities (movement, art & crafts, group exercises) and underlined again the big interest in these activities (which are organised once a month); most clients say that the biggest benefit of healthy ageing activities is the group support (coming together, not being alone, combating loneliness), and they also appreciate the weekly social visits including tablet training. All I-CCC offers are well received by clients, only the self-help groups still need further promotion & awareness raising. Currently around 10 people meet on a regular basis; the **biggest obstacle for people** to come together is the **lack of time**.

Ms. Nataša Todorović, Red Cross of Serbia shortly explained that in Serbia there are two groups (older people taking care of older parents AND employed people as caregivers – second group needs more counselling than self-help; idea of empowerment as driving force behind self-help group; important aspect of informal carers: what are their rights and how to claim them; **knowing their "rights"** is also the most important issue for clients in Montenegro (older people don't use digital technology and hence, they do not (easily) have access to information). The national project coordinators agreed that it is still **challenging to design suitable offers for informal carers** as they often lack time resources. Most counselling sessions at the I-CCC focus on financial support. Mr. Anton Zierl, social worker at the I-CCC in Styria stressed that most of the clients who contact him are overwhelmed with bureaucracy. Often, they do not know where to seek financial support and whom to contact. An important insight gained from the project is that most of the information regarding LTC is not easy to find. Therefore, the **"toolbox" for informal cares**, developed by the **Austrian Red Cross** is designed as an **online platform** not only providing information on how to best support a person in need of care but also including information on where to get help and advice on financial assistance.

Ms. Anya Blum provides a brief overview of the I-CCC project and upcoming project deliverables



Mr. Anya Blum provides a brief overview of the I-CCC project and upcoming project deliverables

Findings:

- Challenging to find interested persons for the self-helping groups & address informal carers due to time constraints
- Empowerment of informal carers is essential rather than only offering self-helping groups activities
- Consultations showed that in all countries informal carers often seek advice on financial information and their rights
- All activities are running, some activities are delayed due to a delayed start (details were discussed in Monitoring-Tool session)

How to ensure sustainability of services?



Brainstorming session on the sustainability of services offered at the I-CCC

After an update on all project activities by the national project coordinators the following session was dedicated to brainstorm on: **“How to ensure sustainability of services”**. All project partners discussed the financial sustainability of the I-CCC project. The framework conditions are different in each country. However, all national project coordinators agreed that for advocacy activities the data collected by DigitAAL life could be very helpful. In Serbia and Montenegro there is no funding or budget to extend the licences for DigitAAL Life. This needs to be further discussed. Regarding the

rent: in some regions the buildings are owned by Red Cross branches, e.g. in Serbia and Austria, whereas in Montenegro the I-CCC offices are rented. Ms. Nataša Todorović explained that, in the beginning of the project branches in Serbia were chosen who already had a good cooperation with the local government with a view to sustainable financing, e.g. in Sombor the governments intends to provide funds for trainings and education for informal carers. Further, as a member of the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities of Serbia, the Red Cross of Serbia in regular exchange with key players. They are planning a budget for health services and have approached Red Cross Serbia to present examples for public health services; RCS suggested to include education of informal carers in their guidelines and budget.

In Austria there is an option to use the **Brainmee Licence after the I-CCC project** but, there are also other tools available which are cheaper. Some of them have already been tested by the Red Cross local branch Styria. Each tool has its advantages and disadvantages'. In Austria the Red Cross charity, “Aus Liebe zum Menschen Stiftung”, has provided the funds for the Brainmee licences. All project partners agreed that it is still a challenge to advocate for the scale-up of project activities and to reach more people apart from two communities. In Serbia there is a cooperation and exchange with Kragujevac, regarding the support of informal carers and the toolbox. Red Cross Serbia underlined the importance of media presence to raise awareness of the topic. Case studies could be used. There are still some savings from the video production which could be used for an additional short film or other collaboration with journalist. Ms. Anya Blum, Red Cross of Austria stressed that for the upcoming networking meetings with key LTC players it is important to sensibelize for funding option for the I-CCCs. The discussion also highlighted that in Austria there are already several LTC providers. Introducing additional services is therefore challenging. In Montenegro the situation is also challenging due to the unstable

political situation. During the I-CCC project there have already been around 10 different contact persons in the Ministry of Health. Ms. Ivana Smolovic also emphasised that the Red Cross of Montenegro is a member of the Working Group for the development of the **Strategy of Social Care**. The next promotional film will be about dementia, funded by the Ministry of Health.

Anya Blum suggested to choose different topics for thematic session during the monthly partner meetings to make them more interactive and interesting; partners agreed.

Findings:

- In Austria finance possibilities for tablet-based training licences after 2023; might be challenging for Serbia and Montenegro
- For advocacy activities data collected by DigitAAL life could be useful
- Advocating for the scale-up of the I-CCCs is challenging
- The media presence is important to sensitize for the topic of LTC in Montenegro and Serbia
- Upcoming networking meetings with key LTC players are essential to advocate for follow-up activities & to promote the I-CCCs

Next steps:

- Networking activities with key LTC players
- Focus on dissemination & advocacy in Y3
- Red Cross of Montenegro needs to submit Advocacy Plan- pending
- National & final conferences- important events to raise awareness and to ensure sustainability of services

Upcoming events & deliverables

See PPP- Overview I-CCC project



Presentation_ICCC_
Overview_4PM_Styri:

Day 2

Sessions on challenging target values within the I-CCC project

See PPP- Monitoring Tool



Monitoring Tool
Presentation 4PM.ppt

On the second day of the Partner Meeting participants discussed the challenging target values within the I-CCC project. The session was moderated by Anya Blum, Austrian Red Cross, supported by Maria Doppler, NPO Institute.

It was concluded that due to the **different circumstances** in the project region, **each country performs differently**. Especially for Austria reaching the target values is challenging as activities started later. Unlike Montenegro and Serbia, in Austria there are many other providers offering comparable services that could potentially substitute the I-CCC services. In Montenegro the number of home help receivers is extremely high as there are no other comparable services in the region. This also applies for Serbia as dealing with LTC issues is still a niche. The I-CCC services are not really offered by other service providers.

Another reason why countries perform differently is due to their approach on counting. During the Partner Meeting it appeared that Serbia counts all consultations carried out at the CCC in Sombor and Pirot, whereas Austria only counts those explicitly conducted by I-CCC staff. This must be considered in the evaluation process. For example, in Serbia consultations during a preventive home visit are also counted, in Austria this is not the case. Another finding during the evaluation session was also regarding the time volunteers stay with a client when they conduct the tablet-based trainings. In Serbia, for example volunteers stay approximately half an hour vs. in Austria volunteers stay around two hours. The time how long volunteers stay with clients is not reflected in the Monitoring Tool but also explains why numbers are lower in Austria.

Regarding the intensity of trainings within the countries there are also differences. For example, in Serbia there are one-day trainings for informal carers, in Montenegro there are three-day trainings and in Austria even shorter trainings; therefore, comparing the performance between the countries is not possible. It was also evident that this different settings lead to confusion as it was not clear to all partners how to exactly count the trainings.

Montenegro mentioned that they would like to **change the design of the informal carer trainings**, as it is not possible to find interested persons for a three-day training. Further, Ms. Ivana Smolovic recommended to organize a training in Podgorica where it can be accessed easily by many persons.

All project partners agreed that a test run with the Monitoring Tool in the beginning of the project would have been beneficial, as well as trainings with all staff involved using the Monitoring Tool. It was also agreed that another challenge when using the Monitoring Tool was the staff change since a lot of information was lost.

Austria stressed that it would be desirable to **run the Monitoring Tool for the last evaluation report until August** (not May) to include as much data as possible. NPO Institute agreed to include data by project partners until 15th August as they would need to have time to prepare the **final evaluation**

report. NPO Institute agreed to update Austria on how the collected data will be presented in the final evaluation report.

However, in all countries the **Monitoring Tool will be used until end of the project** and **submitted to the international project coordinator** with the final reporting.

Important info:

- Two deadlines for the Monitoring Tool: 15th August for NPO institute; end October for IZ

Findings:

- Country comparison not possible as different counting methods and circumstances
- Lesson learned: Test run for evaluation tool with all partners, to avoid errors
- Montenegro & Serbia do not face challenges to reach target values as there is a **high demand for the I-CCC services**
- In Austria many other service providers offering comparable services therefore the client acquisition turned out to be challenging
- The **trainings for informal cares are delayed in Montenegro & Serbia in Austria-ongoing**
- Finding informal carers for time-intensive trainings has proven to be difficult due to their limited time-resources
- Online courses for informal carers & consultations: In Austria online courses and trainings are offered and well received; however, offering online courses turned out to be an obstacle in Serbia and Montenegro as most I-CCC clients live in rural areas and do not have the digital literacy and infrastructure to access such online courses.

Presentation of the 3rd process evaluation & timeline

See PPP- 3rd Process Evaluation



I-CCC 3rd Process
Eval Results by NPO.

Maria Doppler, NPO Institute presented the **third process evaluation** and partners discussed the output. In general, the satisfaction of the project partners declined slightly. Project partners voiced critique with the general process of the project. Among other things, they are not satisfied with the time-intensive evaluation process, the communication regarding the target values and they believe there is an unclear distribution of project goals. Regarding the **work packages** an outcome was that it is challenging to address informal carers and therefore to reach the target values. Especially in Austria it turned out to be a challenge, due to the pandemic and other service providers in the region. Partners suggested to reduce the complexity and to differentiate better between the work packages, as some tasks are overlapping. Further, it was recommended to reduce the excessive evaluation criteria and the prerequisites for volunteers should be re-evaluated. Regarding the acquisition of informal carers, the process evaluation showed that limitation factors are the Covid-19 pandemic, time constraints and comparable offers in the region (in AT). Regarding the acquisition of volunteer's limitation factors are that multiple trainings are needed (in AT) which turned out to be an entry barrier as well as the multiple crises (such pandemic, Ukraine crisis, inflation) which led to a lack of volunteers within the I-CCC project.

Findings:

- Satisfaction of project partners declined slightly
- Time-intensive evaluation process
- Communication regarding deadlines & target values should be improved
- The complexity should be reduced & some work packages are overlapping which led to confusion
- Informal carers: challenging to reach them due to the pandemic & time constraints in all countries
- In Austria most I-CCC services can be substituted by other service providers
- In Serbia and Montenegro most of the I-CCC services cannot be easily substituted by other service providers
- The recruitment of volunteers turned out to be challenging in Austria, due to intensive training courses and multiple crises which led to a lack of volunteers within the I-CCC project

Overview Timeline for evaluation

TABLE 1: ADAPTED I-CCC TIMELINE INCLUDING DATA COLLECTION METHODS, EVALUATION AND REPORTS

I-CCC Timeline	2020		2021										2022										Feb/Mar 2023	2023																												
	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11															
Monitoring tool	Wave 0 (Pre phase)										Wave 1										Wave 2																															
QPPQ wave 1																																																				
QPPQ wave 2																																																				
QPPQ evaluation																																																				
MMSE & GDS survey																																																				
Process evaluation																																																				
Stakeholder interviews																																																				
National reports																																																				
Midterm report																																																				
End report																																																				

(!) New evaluation deadlines

Austria: All of the below data collection instruments should be submitted to NPO **by 15th June 2023**

QPPQ wave 2 survey (clients, informal carers, volunteers)

GDS & MMSE status survey #2 (people with (suspected) dementia and cognitive impairments)

Serbia & Montenegro: Timeline is different-refer to Lidija or RISP (!)

Monitoring Tool: Should be submitted to NPO Institute **by 15th August 2023**

Review of preventive home visits in Hartberg

See PPP- Review of preventive home visits in Hartberg



Preventive home visits in Austria.pdf

Ms. Alice Edtmayer, Gesundheit Österreich GmbH (GÖG) provided a brief presentation on the evaluation of the preventive home visits in Styria and the next steps. Ms. Edtmayer stressed that 10-15 interviews with clients were planned in the beginning, but it might be challenging to achieve the numbers as GÖG has not received any answers from the persons in charge regarding possible interview partners. Therefore, it would be advisable to include the nurses to the national Partner Meetings that they are better informed on the project process. Anya Blum, Austrian Red Cross underlined the importance of conducting qualitative interviews as it is an essential part of the project and only referring to quantitative data and written documentation would reduce the quality of the assessment. Ms. Bernhard Strobel underlined that he will reinforce the importance of the interviews once again. The feedback what he received in the past from the person in charge was that clients were unwilling to participate.

Follow Up:

- IZ and GÖG will have a follow-up meeting

Presentation of the toolbox for informal carers (Austria and Serbia)

In the next session Dr. Gabriele Detschmann, Austrian Red Cross, Health and Social Services (GSD) **presented the toolbox for informal carers** developed in Austria. In the workplan it was foreseen only to adapt existing materials. However, the experience showed that caregivers are overwhelmed with the vast amount of information and bureaucracy, and it is burdensome for them to get an overview over services and training materials. Dr. Detschmann explained that in general caregivers are confronted with time constraints. Hence, an **online platform** should help them access all the necessary information easily and in short time. The online platform ("toolbox") is almost finished and will also contain interactive self-paced online courses (which are currently developed/adapted). The I-CCC & EU logos/disclaimer will be added once finalized. Flyers will be printed to advertise for the online platform.

Next steps:

- Launch of the online platform for informal cares ("toolbox")
- Print flyers to advertise for the online platform

In **Serbia** the **toolbox for informal carers** will be a **booklet** and **available online** and **in print** version (approx. 100 pages). It will contain a definition of informal carers, a self-assessment (are you an informal carer?), some information about formal care (so people can differentiate and be informed about financial aspects), different phases of informal care, challenges and benefits from informal care > step-by-step approach how to plan, information about relevant institutions (Ministries, Insurances etc.) providing financial support, information about hygiene, medicine, changing behaviour and also a chapter dedicated to retirement homes (how to prepare for the transition) etc. The toolbox needs to

be proofread and then printed. Once it is proofread, the pdf will be shared with Montenegro. The videos have also been finished and will be shared with Montenegro in due time.

Next steps:

- Proofreading the booklet for informal cares ("toolbox")
- Share online version, as soon as possible, with Montenegro
- Print the booklet ("toolbox")
- Share videos with IZ and Montenegro when finalized to check visibility criteria

Next online meeting

21st March 11:00-12:00

Zoom Link:

<https://roteskreuz-at.zoom.us/j/84956979223?pwd=cStQQkNLeUpUNDILa2hweVIWMHJEQT09>

Meeting-ID: 849 5697 9223

Kenncode: 946509