

Don Gnocchi Foundation

Vismara Centre , Milan

Italy

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Role in the project Don Gnocchi Foundation will lead Work package N° 5, which is mainly the organization of a 1 week international train-the-trainers course, in order to train trainers-of-professionals and trainers-of-parents in the different modules, with the purpose to increase dissemination. It is also part of the Enablin + Research Committee, through literature research, project planning and dissemination of a questionnaire for professionals and parents.

Who we are? Don Carlo Gnocchi Foundation is a non-profit Institution founded in 1952 by Don Carlo Gnocchi, a priest from Milan who started taking in charge orphans and children with disabilities victims of war.

Today the Don Carlo Gnocchi Foundation continues to take care of disabled children, who have acquired and inherited complex pathologies; besides them, other targets are: patients of all ages who need neuromotor, cardio-respiratory and oncology rehabilitation; persons with multiple sclerosis, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease or other crippling pathologies; the not self-sufficient elderly, terminal cancer patients, patients with serious brain damage either acquired or in a prolonged vegetative state.

Besides the social, medical, educational and health activities, the Foundation is active in scientific research, technological innovation, training at various levels and international cooperation. Credited as an Institution of Hospitalization and Scientific Care (IRCCS), particularly for the Centres of Milan and Florence, today the Don Carlo Gnocchi Foundation counts on more than 5700 professionals, who are constantly provided with training and updating programs. Care services are provided through an accreditation with the National Health Service in about thirty Centres, grouped together in eight territorial Areas in nine Regions.

The participation of Don Gnocchi Foundation to the Enablin + project will involve the UNIT OF CHILD NEUROLOGY, PSYCHIATRY AND REHABILITATION who deals with 7 centres and 5 ambulatory services for child rehabilitation and education, in particular VISMARA INSTITUTE in Milan. The Unit of child neurology, psychiatry and rehabilitation is active in educational and rehabilitation intervention programs for children with complex disabilities.

Activities

Health area: include hospital care, residential and outpatient hospital facilities, and home care, ambulatory services. Most services are for rehabilitation. All the Centre provide extensive rehabilitation for the handicapped and people with complex disabilities. A specific area of intervention is dedicated to children with any kind of developmental disturbance.

Assistance. Since the 1980s the Foundation has expanded the services to care for the elderly, mainly for those who cannot take care of themselves, in order to meet a need that has become a priority in our society.

Recently the Foundation's care services have been expanded to include aid to terminal cancer patients, by setting up residential Centres for palliative hospice care and assistance to patients in coma.

Social and educational area. Elementary schools set up with special nurseries and social and educational centres, day care(,) residential facilities and housing communities.

Training. Courses for the disabled geared to help them enter the work force in the areas of computers and the web, large-scale retail, catering and artisan labour, also in co-operation with various European Union initiatives.

Under the auspices of the University of Milan and the Lombardy Region, degree programs for rehabilitation therapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, nurses, neuro-physical pathology technicians and professional educators.

With the Catholic University of Milan, post-graduate specialist courses are offered on "technology for independence and social integration of disabled persons".

Finally, the Foundation belongs to the national program of the Ministry of Health and Continuing Education in Medicine, and organizes meetings and conferences for which training credits may be requested.

Scientific research

The Foundation is strong in the area of research, especially in the IRCCS Centre in Milan and Florence. In connection with many universities and national and international organizations, these centres have specialization in sectors of bio-medicine, bio-technology and clinical experimentation to discover new methods and new technologies for rehabilitation and reducing disability conditions.

International Solidarity - Ngo

International for vocation, since many years the Foundation extended its field of intervention outside the Italian border, working in line with the statutory mandate. In 2001 the Don Carlo Gnocchi Foundation was recognized by the Italian Ministries of Foreign Affairs as a Non Governmental Organization (Ngo).

Up to date the Foundation's commitments and experiences are implemented in Bosnia-i-Herzegovina, Ecuador, Zimbabwe, Sierra Leone and Rwanda; in these countries is mainly guaranteed the support for the construction of a rehabilitation centre or the participation to the running and physical rehabilitation activities in collaboration with local organizations.