



INHEAL caregivers training report

I. INHEAL Project

The INHEAL: Innovation in Health Literacy is a project co-financed by the Governments of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia through Visegrad Grants from the International Visegrad Fund – a donor organization established in 2000 to advance ideas for sustainable regional cooperation in Central Europe.

While innovative methods and tools that could strengthen and improve health literacy actually exist, the region is found to be in need of policies aimed at this objective. INHEAL's objective is to bridge this gap by selecting and gathering promising and successful instruments and practices existing in the V4 countries and spreading their use. Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia share a common historical and administrative heritage, with many similarities in their current economic conditions and organization, incl. the healthcare system, as well as a comparable, steadily increasing aging population resulting from the events of the past 25 years, which have irreversibly 'catapulted' many post-communist countries into a very high level in terms of the share of seniors to the total population.

Taking into consideration the insufficient levels of health literacy among Europeans and especially EU's older citizens, as well as the phenomenon's disadvantageous impact on their health and the countries' healthcare systems, INHEAL aims to inform and educate the elderly population from the Visegrad Group countries and beyond about the existence of innovative services that make it more accessible and effective for them to take charge of their health. INHEAL is intending to provide direct training to the targeted group on how to benefit from this knowledge and services through the intermediary of caregivers. The latter shall be equipped with tools and know-how destined to enhance health-preserving skills. More precisely, the project has the ambition to educate older adults in the areas of interpreting medical prescriptions, doctors' recommendations, sensible consumption of healthcare services, and determinant health-related knowledge.

II. Caregivers training

Between November and December 2022, a diverse array of organizations catering to older adults, including senior homes and universities of the third age, were extended invitations in Prague, Warsaw, Budapest, and Kosice to actively participate in the project. The primary objective of this engagement was to provide comprehensive training to these organizations, enabling them to effectively disseminate the wealth of information, knowledge, and solutions compiled within the shared methodology to their respective constituents.

The training initiative aimed to significantly enhance the awareness levels of caregivers, equipping them with the necessary tools and insights to implement recommendations and activities derived from the methodology. This empowered them to efficiently organize and coordinate seminars and workshops, fostering an environment conducive to improving the health literacy of older adults across the V4 region.

Participating organizations:

- Prague 4 Social Services
- Prague 9 Social Services
- Letokruh
- Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education (IPVZ)

- National Association of Pensioners

- Nasz Drobin Association
- Social Care Center Drobin Niemczewo Village Development Association
- District University of the Third Age Senior Council in Drobin
- Senior Council in Płock Senior
- Centre for Elderly in Drobin
- Płock Food Bank
- Polish Association of Seniors, Pensioners and Disabled People sections: Płock, Drobin, Łąck

- Centre of Active Ageing in Kosice
- Region Regional Public Health Authority in Kosice
- Social care facility – Cesta nádeje Social care facility – Sv. Heleny, n.o.
- University of the Third Age at PJ Safarik University in Košice
- University of the Third Age at the Technical University of Košice
- University of the Third Age at the University of Presov

III. Initial Engagement and Awareness Session

– Why are we inviting them? How is it in their interest?

The organizations invited are closely working with the elderly population. We have developed a comprehensive Methodology specifically tailored to enhance the level of Health Literacy among seniors. This Methodology is the culmination of the collaborative efforts within the INHEAL (Innovation in Health Literacy) project, an international cooperation initiative.

During the meeting, partners aimed to elucidate how and why this Methodology can prove beneficial for their work. Printed copies of the Methodology have been made available for their perusal during and after the meeting, allowing them to consider its potential application within their facilities, should they choose to do so.

Agenda for the meeting:

- Introduction to Health Literacy: give a comprehensive introduction to the fundamental aspects of Health Literacy was provided – most of the attendees are not be familiar with the concept.
- Contextualizing the INHEAL Project: shed light on the broader context of our approach, detailing the significance and objectives of the INHEAL project.
- Delving into the Methodology: delve into the specifics of the Methodology developed, outlining its key components and discussing its potential impact on their work and the well-being of the seniors they serve.
- Interactive Session: actively encourage the sharing of thoughts, questions, and feedback from the participants, fostering a collaborative discussion on potential pathways for implementation and cooperation.

Background:

It is crucial to grasp the primary issue that the project aims to address and the existing situation it seeks to transform. Given the potential unfamiliarity with this concept, it is essential to provide a clear explanation of what health literacy entails and why it is a critical area of focus.

Analysis and Methodology overview:

During the presentation, we delved into the key components of the analysis and methodology developed as part of the project.

- Analysis: A comprehensive national research initiative was undertaken to facilitate the development of impactful and innovative solutions. The organizational framework and the findings derived from this critical analysis have been discussed, providing insights into the intricate process behind its execution.
- Methodology: The methodology serves as a compilation of the most effective and promising findings. Our presentation highlighted the specific elements encompassed within the methodology, emphasizing its core components and discussing its potential applications and benefits.

– The Role of Intermediaries and our objectives:

The critical role of intermediaries lies in facilitating effective access and impactful engagement with our target group. Our overarching goal is to inform seniors in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Poland about innovative services that can simplify and enhance their healthcare practices, alongside providing them with the necessary training to effectively leverage these services.

However, our primary challenge revolves around securing effective access and making a substantial impact on our target audience.

The primary purpose of this methodology is to empower organizations catering to the elderly population across all V4 countries to utilize the knowledge and materials derived from our extensive research and analyses.

Our approach is guided by several factors:

1. The difficulty in gathering the elderly population.
2. Anticipated reluctance from some quarters.

3. The crucial need to ensure their comprehension of the methodology's content, requiring a dedicated follow-up approach.

In pursuit of our objective, ensuring that our target population, the elderly, not only has access to the information and methodology but comprehends its significance, we have devised a strategy to incorporate guidelines and engage organizations associated with elderly individuals across all V4 countries, beyond our selected partners and target groups. The aim is to inspire these organizations to effectively utilize the knowledge and materials at hand.

In essence, our ambition is for caregivers to act as intermediaries, effectively transmitting the tools and knowledge designed to enhance seniors' health-preserving skills within their organizations.

Utilizing the Methodology in Daily Operations:

The aim of this introductory session was to acquaint the participating organizations with our project and its outputs, providing them with insights into the innovative tools and methods outlined in the methodology document.

Moreover, our aim is to encourage and inspire your organization to integrate the project's methodology into their operational framework, thereby facilitating the dissemination of the accumulated knowledge among the seniors you serve. How can this be achieved?

Through the facilitation of seminars and workshops tailored to its staff members, each organization can proactively choose to organize and coordinate informative sessions. These sessions can focus on raising awareness among seniors about the key aspects encapsulated within the methodology. These include addressing health literacy issues specific to each country, presenting potential innovative tools and methods for enhancing health literacy, highlighting best practices from other regions, and providing fundamental theoretical knowledge.

It is crucial to emphasize that each organization holds the pivotal responsibility of determining the best approach for implementing the methodology. This involves guiding and supporting staff members in effectively conveying the most appropriate and innovative practices to the seniors, ensuring their comprehensive understanding and engagement.

In essence, the purpose of this meeting is to equip individuals with the necessary tools and foundational knowledge derived from our extensive research and analysis. This, in turn, enabled to directly impart this knowledge to seniors, thereby fostering a tangible improvement in health literacy.

IV. Follow-up and continuation

Following this initial engagement, each partner actively supported the organizations that expressed interest in implementing the methodology, providing dedicated assistance in the development of tailored activities. An intriguing observation emerged during this process as each activity necessitated a meticulous integration within the framework of the organization's timetable, daily routines, and regulatory requirements.

An essential consideration that surfaced was the diverse profiles of the seniors involved. Partners encountered organizations catering to "active" seniors, emphasizing engagement in various physical and mental activities. Conversely, some partners grappled with organizations tending to seniors requiring specialized care or those facing challenges related to Alzheimer's or dementia, demanding a highly specific approach in their interactions and engagement.

In response to these distinct profiles, each partner collaborated closely with the organizations, taking into account their unique circumstances and requirements. This involved the development of customized programs that not only complemented the existing structure and daily activities of the organizations but also catered to the specific needs and capabilities of the seniors involved. Adherence to relevant regulations and standards was meticulously integrated, ensuring a seamless and compliant implementation of the designed activities within the organizational framework.

V. Examples of activities

1. Health Topic: Botanicals for Good Health, Identify botanicals known for their health benefits (1 hour intervention)

Memory Exercise Activity:

1. Choose a few botanicals known for their health benefits, such as ginger, garlic, turmeric, or ginseng.
2. Show the seniors pictures of these botanicals and explain their health benefits.
3. Ask the seniors to repeat the names of the botanicals and their health benefits.
4. Provide a quiz sheet with pictures and names of the botanicals, and ask the seniors to match the pictures with the correct name and health benefit.

A great addition to the memory exercise for seniors on botanicals for good health:

After showing pictures and explaining the health benefits of different botanicals, you can ask the seniors how they use these botanicals in their daily life. This will not only help with memory recall, but it will also encourage seniors to share their own experiences and knowledge about using natural remedies for promoting health and wellbeing.

For example, you can ask questions like:

- Have you ever used ginger in your cooking or tea?
- How do you use garlic in your meals?
- Have you ever tried turmeric in your recipes or as a supplement?
- What do you know about the health benefits of ginseng?
- Have you ever used any other botanicals for health purposes?

By asking these questions, you can encourage seniors to share their own experiences and knowledge about using botanicals for good health, which can help to reinforce memory recall and build a sense of community among the group.

Here's an example of a quiz sheet for the memory exercise activity on botanicals for good health:

Instructions: Match each picture of a botanical with its corresponding name and health benefit.

1. Picture of ginger
2. Picture of garlic
3. Picture of turmeric
4. Picture of ginseng
5. Picture of Chamomile
6. Picture of Aloe vera
7. Picture of Peppermint
8. Picture of Lavender
9. Picture of Burdock officinalis
10. Picture of Melissa officinalis
11. Picture of Lime blossom
12. Picture of Elderberry

- A. Ginger
- B. Garlic
- C. Turmeric
- D. Ginseng
- E. Chamomile
- F. Aloe vera
- G. Peppermint
- H. Lavender
- I. Burdock officinalis
- J. Melissa officinalis
- K. Lime blossom
- L. Elderberry

1. Boosts the immune system and helps with digestion.
2. Lowers cholesterol and blood pressure, and helps with cold and flu symptoms.
3. Has anti-inflammatory properties and helps with pain and arthritis.
4. Boosts energy and cognitive function, and helps with stress and anxiety.
5. Has a calming effect and is often used to improve sleep and reduce stress and anxiety.
6. Has anti-inflammatory properties and is used to treat burns, cuts, and skin irritations.
7. Helps with digestion and soothes stomach upset and nausea.
8. Has a calming effect and is often used to improve sleep and reduce stress and anxiety.
9. Supports liver function, improves digestion, purifies the blood, and has anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties.
10. Reduces stress and anxiety, improves sleep, promotes digestive health, and has antiviral properties
11. Promotes relaxation, relieves anxiety, has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, and protects against cellular damage.
12. Boosts the immune system, helps prevent cold and flu symptoms, reduces inflammation, and may have anti-cancer properties.

Answers:

1. A - Ginger: Boosts the immune system and helps with digestion.
2. B - Garlic: Lowers cholesterol and blood pressure, and helps with cold and flu symptoms.
3. C - Turmeric: Has anti-inflammatory properties and helps with pain and arthritis.
4. D - Ginseng: Boosts energy and cognitive function, and helps with stress and anxiety.
5. E - Chamomile: Has a calming effect and is often used to improve sleep and reduce stress and anxiety.
6. F - Aloe vera: Has anti-inflammatory properties and is used to treat burns, cuts, and skin irritations.
7. G - Peppermint: Helps with digestion and soothes stomach upset and nausea.
8. H - Lavender: Has a calming effect and is often used to improve sleep and reduce stress and anxiety.
9. I - Burdock officinalis: Supports liver function, improves digestion, purifies the blood, and has anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties.
10. J - Melissa officinalis: Reduces stress and anxiety, improves sleep, promotes digestive health, and has antiviral properties.
11. K - Lime blossom: Promotes relaxation, relieves anxiety, has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, and protects against cellular damage.
12. L - Elderberry: Boosts the immune system, helps prevent cold and flu symptoms, reduces inflammation, and may have anti-cancer properties.

Remember to use clear and simple language, along with pictures or images, to help seniors better understand and remember the botanicals and their health benefits. You can also adjust the difficulty level of the quiz sheet based on the group's cognitive abilities and memory recall.

2. Motor and Muscular Activities for Elders with Dementia (1 hour intervention)

Objective: The objective of this activity plan is to promote independence, self-esteem, and dignity among individuals in the moderate to late stages of dementia through motor and muscular exercises.

Prop Examples: Bowling pins, cups, balls, balls, and badminton equipment.

Activity Ideas:

1. Bowling Game: Set up a small bowling alley using bowling pins and a soft ball. Encourage the elders to engage in active joint movements, practice hand-eye coordination, and stretch their hand muscles while aiming to knock down the pins.



2. Target Practice: Create a target board using cups or other suitable objects. Provide soft balls for the elders to throw and aim at the targets. This activity promotes gross motor skills, hand-eye

coordination, and finger strengthening.



3. Racket and Balloon: Provide a lightweight racket and a balloon for the elders to hit back and forth. This activity involves shoulder to hand movement, stretching, and muscle strengthening.



4. Catching the Ball: Throw a soft ball to the elders, encouraging them to catch it. This activity focuses on hand-eye coordination, joint muscle exercise, and grasping capability.

Remember to provide assistance whenever required and create a comfortable environment by playing their favorite playlist. Music has therapeutic benefits and can serve as a motivating medium for encouraging movement.

Note: Adapt the activities based on the individual's abilities and preferences. Regular breaks and hydration should be provided throughout the session.

Activities inspired by: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42g_8fL-cFw

3. Searching for health-related information and recognize unbiased/official sources: (1 hour intervention)

1. Objectives of the workshop: During the workshop, seniors will learn:
 - how to search for health-related information online;
 - how to recognize biased sources;
 - how to identify official sources of health information.
2. Scope of the workshop: The workshop won't focus on a specific health topic, it will be a more general workshop covering a range of health-related topics.
3. Workshop structure: Given the amount of time for the workshop and the expected heterogeneous level of experience of the attendees, the workshop be structured into three sections.
 - At the beginning of the workshop, seniors will be encouraged to share their experiences searching for health information and ask questions. This can help to create a collaborative learning environment and ensure that everyone benefits from the workshop.
 - Then, the group discussion will be followed by a short presentation on how to search for health information online.
 - Lastly, the workshop will end with a practical session where attendees can try out together the techniques they have learned (with questions already prepared by the senior organization and with questions seniors might have).

I. Questions to engage the group and facilitate the discussion at the beginning of the workshop:

Here are some possible questions to ask to engage with the seniors at the beginning of the workshop:

1. Have you ever searched for health-related information online? What was your experience like?
2. What sources of health information do you trust the most? Why?
3. Have you ever shared health information with others that you found online? How did you determine whether the information was accurate or not?
Are there any particular health concerns or conditions that you are currently dealing with or that you are interested in learning more about?
4. Have you ever had difficulty finding the information you were looking for when searching for health-related topics online?
5. Are there any websites or online resources that you frequently use to find health information? Which ones and why?

II. About the presentation

- **Start by explaining what is the purpose of the workshop:**

“Have you ever searched for health-related information online and found yourself overwhelmed by the amount of information available?” It can be challenging to determine which sources of information are trustworthy and which are not. This can lead to confusion and misinformation.

That's why it's important to know how to identify official sources of information online. Official sources provide reliable and accurate information that you can use to make informed decisions about your health. By participating in this workshop, seniors will learn how to recognize official sources of health information.

During the workshop, we will focus specifically on health-related information and cover topics such as how to search for health-related information online, how to identify biased sources, and how to recognize official sources of health information. By learning these skills, participants will be better equipped to find trustworthy information that can help them make informed decisions about their health and well-being.

We understand that the internet can be overwhelming, but with the right tools and knowledge, seniors can confidently navigate the web and find accurate information. We hope that by taking part in this workshop, seniors will feel empowered to take control of their health and make informed decisions based on reliable sources of information.

- **Some examples of health-related websites will be screened. Participants will be asked to evaluate whether they think the websites are trustworthy or not, and explain why.**

- **Tips to help recognize official sources of information online will be given:**
 1. **Look for trusted domains:** Government websites often end in .gov, educational institutions use .edu, and non-profit organizations use .org. These are generally considered to be more trustworthy than commercial sites with .com domains.
 2. **Check for authorship** (who wrote the article): Look for articles or reports that are written by experts in the field or institutions that are recognized in the industry. You can also check the author's credentials, including their educational background, professional affiliations, and experience in the field.
 3. **Check the date:** Make sure to check the date of publication to ensure that the information is current and up-to-date. You may also want to check if there have been any updates or revisions made to the information since it was originally published.
 4. **Consider the tone and style:** Official sources of information tend to be written in a formal, objective style and avoid the use of hyperbole or sensational language.
 5. **Look for citations and references:** Official sources of information often include references or citations to other reputable sources. This demonstrates that the information is based on sound research and analysis.
 6. **Check for funding sources:** Be aware of the funding sources of the website or organization providing the information. If the information is funded by a biased party, it may not be objective.

- **A list of national-recommended websites for reliable health information will be provided.**

III. Practical activity to try out together the techniques seniors have learned:

- **Examples of questions seniors might want to ask (with for each question, an example of a reliable site of information and a not trustworthy one) :**
- **Questions seniors will ask**