association solidarnost
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# REPORT ACTIVITIES SOLIDARNOST ASSOCIATION

# SOFIA 2015

**National Drugs and Alcohol Helpline – January - December 2015**

## I. Statistics

### 1. Total number of contacts

The total number of contacts made by the National Drugs and Alcohol Helpline from January to December 2015 is 404. Of them 248 (61%) were phone calls, 87 (22%) chat sessions, 34 (8%) e-mails, and 35 forum posts (www.stopdrug.info and www.drugsinfo-bg.org) – 9%.

*The statistics that follows does not include data about the contacts realized through the forums.*

### 2. Cause for contact

The leading cause for contact in this period was "Drug use by someone else"- 60%, and 52% of these cases were about the caller's child. The second most frequent cause was "Personal use of drugs" (19%).

The contacts regarding drug use by someone else concerned a child of the caller in 52% of the cases. The average age of the children is 22.55 years with a minimum of 14 years and a maximum of 38. The second most frequent case was a using relative (18%). The third most frequent cause was drug use by an acquaintance (17%).

### 3. Substances

From January to December 2015, the biggest amount of contacts concerned alcohol (81). In second place are the contacts regarding cannabis – 68. In 51 of the cases, the substance was unknown because they were about suspected drug use. The next most frequent substances were amphetamines and methamphetamines with 36 and 21 contacts respectively.

In the cases of confirmed use of a particular substance, the most frequent accompanying drug were amphetamines (20%). The other most frequent were cannabis and ecstasy (18% and 10% respectively).

## I. Other Activities

- **In January we organized the visit of four college students from Karel de Grote University College** in Antwerp, Belgium. They spent a day in the rehabilitation program and the National Drugs and Alcohol Helpline.

- **Updating the website** www.drugsinfo-bg.org**:**

- In January, we published an article about anabolic steroids in the site rubric "Drugs ABC"
- In March, we collected the contacts of a large number of professionals (psychologists and psychiatrists) in the whole country and we asked them whether they would agree that we refer people to them. The contact information of those who gave their consent was published on our website.

- In May, a new menu with information for patients on methadone treatment and their relatives was added to the website.
- In December, we published a new article on cannabis.
- We contacted a large number of treatment programs and centers to update their contacts on our website.
- We updated many of the texts on the Bulgarian version of the website and some of them on the English.
- We archived the information from the two forums of the Helpline because of their forthcoming closure in January 2016.

- **New website for the Helpline**

In 2015, an opportunity to make a new website for the Helpline emerged. The reason for our intention to make a new website is that the current one is technically outdated and the content is old as well. In March, the preparations for the creation of the new website started including:
- Several team meetings to discuss the functions and design of the new website;
- Constant contact with a web designer who gave us feedback for our ideas and wishes;
- Updating of multiple texts on the website.

In august, we met with Nikolai Unguzov who took the task to create the new website. We discussed with him all of our wishes and the forthcoming tasks. After a certain delay, in December, the work on the website started. Some technical issues with the blog were also resolved.

- **Publications in print/online media:**

- Articles for Puls.bg – during the year six articles authored by the consultants of the Helpline were published.

- **Module trainings**

The team of the Helpline finished the module trainings in 119 “Academic Mihail Arnaudov” school on 9 March 2015. The training started in October 2014 and included 15 classes – 5 of the fifth grade, 5 of the sixth, and 5 of the seventh. The topics were “Effects and risks of drug use” and “The influence of peer pressure on drug use”.

In September, we contacted the school councilor of 119 School again to arrange the module trainings on prevention of drug use for students during the new school year. In the beginning of November, the trainings started with five classes of the fifth grade. The trainings will continue up to March 2016.

In November and December, started the preparations for the module trainings on drug use prevention with the students of the ninth grade in another school in Sofia.

- **Development of social networks:**

- In January, we prepared for the creation of a blog of the Helpline and in the beginning of February it was started: www.drugsinfoblog.org. In 2015, we published 70 articles in it. At the same time, the team members were educating themselves on how to maintain it properly and how to perform Search Engine Optimization on every article.
- In May, we created a protocol for the work with the social media of Solidarnost association. Posts are published several times a week on our Facebook and Google+ pages.

- **Projects**

In 2015, the team of the Helpline continued its work on two European projects with international participation.

- "Drug prevention and education among young people through social networking"
  The project officially ended in December 2014 but the work on the website www.partyfriends.eu and the dissemination of the products ended in September 2015. In the future, we will continue with the dissemination of advertising materials. The preparation of the final report ended in February 2015.
- "Drug Helplines, online and interactive"
  The final meeting was held in Brussels In May 2015. During the meeting, a webinar was held to present the results of the project. In April, the invitation for participation in the webinar was disseminated and in May, the video record of it was published. In June, we translated into Bulgarian the final products of the project: Social media guidelines, Social Media Strategy (template), and Social media planning tool. In May, we started the work on the final report. In July 2015, we disseminated the products of the project. In July and August, we prepared the Final report and it was sent to the National agency in September.

- **In May, we had a meeting with an attorney** who gave us information on the frequently asked legal questions from people contacting the Helpline.

- **Event on the occasion of 26 June** – International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking:

We had planned an event, which was to be held in Zaimov Park. The preparation took two months but unfortunately, we had to cancel our plans due to the fee required by Sofia municipality. Instead, we made an online campaign using the Social media of Solidarnost and the Helpline in the week from 22 to 26 June.

- **In July, we had a meeting with representatives of the National Patients' organization**, the largest patients' union in Bulgaria. We contacted them in order to find out more about their ability to protect the rights of the people suffering from addiction concerning certain cases of clients of the rehabilitation program and the Helpline. We received information from them that did not give us very hopeful signs concerning the rights of the people suffering from addiction but they offered us membership in the organization which could be beneficial in other ways. In November, we applied for membership.

- **In September, we took part in two events hosted by the Union of Brewers in Bulgaria** on the occasion of the International day for social responsibility of brewers: work meeting among experts held at the Prevention and information center in Sofia, and a sports event in one of the city's gardens.

- **In September we participated in a round table on the topic "Effective work with volunteers"organized by the volunteering platform Time Heroes**. We have participated in it as organizers of missions since 2011. The purpose of the round table was the participators to share their personal stories, strategies for attraction and motivation of volunteers, frequent mistakes and good practices with a broader public on order to create a "Guidelines for the work with volunteers" handbook for the NGOs in Bulgaria.

- **In October, we started working on a drug prevention program**, which we intend to present for approval to the National Centre on Drug Addiction.

- **In October, we applied for grants for free-of-charge advertisements for Solidarnost Association from Google's NGO program** and in November, our application was approved. Since then the advertisements of Solidarnost have been present in the search engine constantly.

- **In November, we updated the contact registration system of the National Drugs and Alcohol Helpline** and thus resolved the technical problems we encountered over the last year.

## THERAPEUTIC PROGRAMME

## STATISTCS

Concerning the service and the activities of the rehabilitation program of Association Solidarnost that had been described in the previous report, the team of the rehabilitation program for the pointed period worked with **154 people overall**, of which:

- 107 people were consulted through telephone interviews – 97 persons and through email consultations – 10 persons; from them 69 people came for primary consultations;
- 6 persons were already in the group since 2014 year;
- 7 persons were on individual consultations since 2014 year;
- 9 persons - parents and relatives of the participants in one of these two forms of therapeutic work;
- 2 persons in re-entry phase since 2014 year;

Total number of the parents and relatives is 65 persons, from which – 41 parents, relatives and partners – 12 persons; 12 – brothers, sisters and others. From these 65 persons – 9 relatives and parents were in the program since 2014 year.

**Tendencies for the period January – December 2015:**

69 persons (addicts and/or their relatives) came for primary consultations.

- New clients entered in the Rehabilitation program for the period – 13 persons; From the participants in the Daily Rehabilitation program one person finished successfully and two persons prepared for the next phase – re-entry (in January 2016).
- New clients for individual consultation for the period – 10 persons; From all people that took part in the individual consultations four of them finished successfully their rehabilitation.
- We had three persons in phase re-entry during year – at November one person finished successfully this phase.
- Almost all clients who did not enter in our program, according to their needs, were directed at hospitals for detoxification or other organizations, better suited to their clinical profile.
- The average group size for the period was 9 persons, as in the annual objectives it is set to reach 8 people.
- The largest group size is reached in May and June – 11 people.

- For the period, the group had not fallen below 6 people.
- Trough the phase re-entry passed 3 persons.

For the same 2015 year the team of the Rehabilitation Program had given 84 consultations by phone. The aims of these consultations are: support, motivation for treatment and direction according to the clients' needs. As a consequence of this, 64% of the phones conversations lead to primary consultations face to face, taken place in the Information Center.

- In the Information Center 54 primary consultations had been conducted for the year. The aims are: evaluation, motivation for treatment and rehabilitation, also direction for detoxification and direction for suitable forms of treatment and other programs for rehabilitation and similar activities. Also many consultations of relatives and parents had been realized for giving support and some directions how to motivate their addicted relatives for treatment.
- All people that came in the Information Center received a plan with possible alternatives, information and contact details where and how to continue after the evaluation of their problem.
- 18 people accepted at the Program of "Solidarnost" in one of the two forms for participation. In the group form in the Daily Program - 10 persons and in individual form of consultations - 8 persons.

**Difficulties and Strenghts of work in rehabilitation program in 2015**

**WORK WITH FAMILIES**

1. **Group Focus Out – activity of the clients, process, most frequent topics, difficulties, strengths.**

**Activity of the clients:** The clients actively put topics for discussion related to their relationship with significant others and relatives. The seek support and a change in the model of communication without the use of psychoactive substances.

**Process:**

Format**:** The group is held once a week, every week – Tuesday from10:30 to 12:00.

Aim: to achieve a healthy behavioral change in the relationships with relatives and significant others; to support the overall rehabilitation process in order to achieve autonomy and resocialization

Structure: therapeutic and pedagogical

**Most frequent topics:**

- achievement of autonomy in the family context;
- expression of negative feelings in a healthy way;
- coping with conflicts;
- coping with death and loss;
- negotiation in the framework of partner relationships

**Strengths:**

- the life experience of the participants;
- the age of the participants

**Difficulties**:

- group size;
- identification with the others (gender, age, life experience, type of addiction);
- discriminative attitudes of a part of the group towards the group members with severe addiction (heroin)

**Groups for mutual aid – activity of the participants, process, topics, strengths and weaknesses, difficulties.**

**Group for mutual help for parents**

**Activity of the parents:** The attendance and activity of the parents in the group is in direct connection to the number of clients in the program, the number of drop-outs and directly reflects the group dynamic. The smaller number of parents in the groups makes them more passive. **Process:**

Format**:** The group is held once a week – every Wednesday from 18:00 to 19:30. Since December 2015 the group has been held twice a month – every first and third Wednesday of the month from 19:00 to 20:30. The change was made die to the work schedule of the participants.

Aim: achievement of a healthy behavioral change in the relationships between parents and their grown-up sons and daughters; to support the overall rehabilitation process in order to achieve autonomy and resocialization

Structure: group for mutual aid

**Most frequent topics:**

- information about the nature of Solidarnost's program;
- information about the types of psychoactive substances, effects, etc.;
- expectations, fantasies and fears of the parents in the course of detachment and gaining autonomy of their grown-up sons and daughters;
- change in the communication models

**Strengths**:

- attraction of the fathers to the group and their activity in it

**Diffuculties**

- group size;
- boundaries in the subsystems

**Important events**:

- Ruud Bruggeman's participation in the group for mutual aid

**Proposals for coping:**

- work with the boundaries and the compliance with the rules with the clients of the program and their parents

**Group for mutual help for partners**

**Activity of the partners:** The attendance and activity of the partners are in direct connection to the number of clients in the program and the number of drop-outs.

**Process:**

Format: the group was held in October, November, and December 2015 – Thursday from 19.00 to 20.30 with a prior arrangement with the partners about the duration and the needs expressed..

Aim: to make clear the role of the partners in the therapeutic process; to support the overall rehabilitation for the achievement of autonomy and resocialization.

Structure: Group for mutual aid

**Most frequent topics:**

- Clearing up the role of the family members in the therapeutic process; codependency
- Creation of a basis for forming a focus on one's own needs and wishes;

**Strengths**:

- the activity of the partners;

**Difficulties**:

- the group size

**Family and individual counseling – frequency, difficulties, strengths and weaknesses.**
**Frequency of family and individual counseling:**

Family meetings are held at least once a month in accordance with the participation contract and with the clients' consent to include family members in the therapeutic process. At present there is a schedule for the frequency of the meeting with almost all clients and their families – at least two times per month. The exception is Vladya's family – her relatives refuse to participate in the therapeutic process despite the contract, the meetings with them and the information they have received concerning the significance of the work with the family context for the aims of the resocialization.

**Strengths**:

- the participation of the two parents in the family meetings;
- the engagement of the partners;
- the engagement of a broader circle of relatives with the rehabilitation process

**Weaknesses:**

- the need for a more intensive contact with the family of the client for the resolving of various normative and non-normative crises.

**Proposals for coping:**

- to maintain intensive contact with the family especially during the first three levels of the program and the firsts months of the resocialization by creating a schedule for family meetings at least twice a month;

- regular supervision of the clients' cases by e family therapist and supervisor

**Statistics of the meetings for 2015**:

Number of parents, relatives and significant others with whom we have worked in 2015: 69 (41 – parents, 6 – relatives, 7 – siblings, 12 – marital/intimate partners, 1 – friend; 2 – institution representatives);

**of whom:**
43 people – parents/relatives of the clients of the rehabilitation program
26 people – parents/relatives of people who are not in the rehabilitation program
Groups for parents -17;
Groups for partners – 5;
Family counseling meetings – 137;
Individual consultations – 121;
Telephone consultations – 56, Skype - 5.

**Comparison for 2014**

The total number of parents and relatives with who were worked during the past year is 45 ( 24-parents, 7-relatives, 1-siblings, 7-marriage/intimate partners, 4 -marriage and intimate partners of parent, who sometimes is in parent role, 2 – friends);
**Of whom:**

26 persons – parents/relatives of clients in the rehabilitation program
19 persons – outside clients
Conducted groups "Parents"- 29
Conducted groups "Partners" - 1
Family consultations – 49
Individual consultation – 68
Phone consultations – 43
Skype – 0

2. **Tendencies in the Family work**

Positive tendencies:

- increasing the number of attracted parents and relatives at the process of rehabilitation;
- increasing the number of organized family meetings;
- regular supervision of the family consultant's activity;

Negative tendencies:

- the work with clients with double diagnoses ( comorbidity) and their families requires a different type of commitment of the family consultant and whole team.
- a lack of time

**Annual aims for the family work for 2015 :**

**Annual aims for 2015:**

- Increasing the motivation for participating of parents in self-help groups – it depends directly by the number of clients in the program, by the number of dropped out clients and directly reflects a dynamic in the group of direct clients.
- Periodically conducting of groups for self help of partners on significant topics – done;
- Making of genogramas and tracing the models of addictions of each client – done;
- Organizing of seminars for parents out of rehabilitation program – because of lack of time it is not done.

**Annual aims for 2016:**

- Periodically conducting of groups for self-help of partners on significant topics.
- Organizing of seminars for parents out of the rehabilitation program.
- Organizing of daily groups for mothers that use methadone.
- Making schedule for a regularity of family meetings.

**ATELIER CREATIVITY**

The activity of Atelier Creativity is an impartible connected with participants in the program and their persons and interaction. On this point of view the topics and activities were preferred positive, optimistic and exalted.
The most remarkable part of the past year was the experience with thematic ateliers, which were leading by different specialists , offering a variety of arts and hobby occupations an appropriate for groups of people with common interests and not for special target groups. This was a challenge for the clients of program and for leaders also who didn't have a concrete experience with addicted people in rehabilitation . The activities were rather successful and the both sides expressed a desire to continue the occupations. On my opinion the experiment in which the group is participated in activities, different of those in the center, is a successful and their episodic sharing about these thematic ateliers showed that what happened was at least memorable.

- Ritual "Good calling" with Rozmary de Meo – group meetings for discussions some concepts like truth, desire, soul and others, followed by a group ritual for recitation, calling and acceptance pf personal desires. These activates aimed at finding the real desires of the clients, their calling, acceptance and responsibility for the ways of their fulfillment. Discussions about the concepts of „soul“, „religion“, „truth“. The focus is on the individual participation in the process of searching happiness and authentic desires – these are difficult topics for addicted people. Practice is based on an old Bulgarian tradition- a ritual kneading of bread.
- Art-therapy session with Julia Bankova in the Center Workshop "N.Shmirgela" – group session, starting with identifying a doll, chosen from many possible dolls, followed by drawing associated with your own image and then making a sculpture from clay free theme – associations. Then a group discussion of person’s experiences during the various activities. This group session is happening in a specialized are-therapeutic area of public interest. The access and participation of clients is something with additional therapeutic value in a place, that is visited many different social groups, with different age and all this happening in the museum-house of a famous sculptor.

- One workshop for hand-made lamps with Nikolay Tabakov – making lamps with iron base and different shape and color pieces of natural paper. After this the lamps which were made remained for the clients. This workshop is with decorative and application focus and it took place regularly in Sofia-city, and is visited by many different participants and is popular and the interest is high from various organization and non-formal groups.

- A workshop with felted wool with "Divi Samodivi" – production of household things from wool – decorations, purses and jewelry. This technique allows making different things from wool and also gives possibilities for home decorations or personal accessories as well as a way to spend free time, which can be combined with other household activities.

- A workshop for making “martenitsa” with Victoria Stoimenova – some different techniques for making “martenitsa” for the spring holiday. The Martenitsa is traditional Bulgarian ornament (nick-nack) made by white and red wool. On 1st of March Bulgarians celebrate “Baba (Grandma) Marta“and we exchange between us martenitsi with wishes for health and joy. The martenitsi are wearing on the hand like a bracelet or they are pinned up to the clothes. The martenitsa is wearing till we don't see a blooming tree or singing birds according to the tradition.

This allows the clients to connect with themselves and with their relatives and to feel again the pleasure of making something with theiwn hands, to make a present to their relatives and to be included in the community festivals and celebrations.

**Other interesting work-shops**

**Story-telling**

Also there was one open workshop with Priscilla Howe – American professional story-teller. She was a guest in the daily program and presents to the clients and team members some Bulgarian and American stories.

**Photography Workshop (PhotoPhozi)**

Association “Solidarnost’’ initiated a new Photography Workshop (PhotoPhozi) with Facebook group - https://www.facebook.com/groups/1645535262369123/?fref=ts. In this workshop will participates persons from the fourth level of the Rehabilitation program (which is the highest level in the Daily program) and Re-entry phase, also members of the tem and volunteers. In this Workshop we had the following aims:

1. To provide creative products – original photographs and to promote the organization’s activities and people involved in them;

2. Training and developing skills in photography for the clients in the Rehabilitation Program;

3. Developing skills for public appearance in social media in people in a phase of Re-entry;

4. Developing skills for organization some public activities and team working;

5. Inclusion of the Rehabilitation Program participants into social life;

**Project Canine activates**

Three persons from the Rehabilitation program in highest levels – third and four took part as voluntaries in the project Canine activates in groups for children with special educational needs for the period May-July and October-December 2015 year of non-profit organization Association “Usardie” (Zeal). They were engaged in making photos from the group meetings and also helping some of the children during the meetings. The aim of this project was: to improve communication skills and way of connect with others we shell use canine-activities in the group work as an interactive method that uses the positive relationship of the child/adult to the dog and his/her interest in communication with the animal. These Animal Assisted Activities will help in the following areas: Motivation in learning social skills; Different way of break; Treatment to improve the quality of life trough communication with other people and relation between people and dog.

**NEW ACTIVITIES – DROP-IN CENTER POSSOKA**

In 2015 we established a new low threshold center for work with drugs and alcohol users on the street. The purpose of the new center, called “House Posoka (Direction)” is establishing of space for acceptance of people, who have not yet made the choice to be treated. The services of the center are basic – clothes' washing, ironing, offering of a cup of tea or coffee, small breakfast, reading of newspaper. The center is also offering and an individual psychiatric, legal and psychological consulting. Our work was focused on the finding of place for activities, establishing of the center and establishing of a team. On the stage of furnishing of the new place people who are participating in the rehabilitation program were involved. They helped in the creation of furniture of pallets, their painting, in the sewing upholstery and cleaning of the rooms. Together with them we welcomed the guests at opening of the House in September 2015. In this way one continuity was created – addicted people in recovery did something useful for those, who are still in active use of substances. This allowed them to saw the path/way that they passed in their recovery, and also to experiment with things that they had learned in therapeutic program of “Solidarnost” till that moment – organization of a working process, doing of good without compensation, transmission of abilities from older members of the group to the newer.

The team had been trained for basic work with substances' users by Ruud Bruggeman- our Belgium expert. After the training the team started to work on establishment of rules and working frame of the program, as well as accomplishment of meetings with potential partners, who also work with addicted people on the streets. The contacts with 'Caritas" and association "Initiation for health" were most beneficial. The both organizations have relations with alcohol and drug users on the street and they helped us to made contacts with them. The results didn't late – in January 2016 the first clients of "House Posoka" came. We attracted volunteers for work, created brochures with information about services and location of the center, which we spread among our target group and partners.
A part of furnishing of the center was provided by a grant of 2500 euro from Association Les Femmes d'Europe.

**FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**

In September 2015 we were visited by Brother René Stockman, a Superior General of Charity Brothers. He was accompanied by Roel Geboers. Ruud Bruggeman and Christian Schennen who have been helping with the management and funding of the activities for years accompanied the guests.

The organization of the meeting took two years. Its objective was to provide knowledge about the activities and structure of Solidarnost and to hold negotiations about the future cooperation between the Congregation and Solidarnost.

The guests visited Her Excellency Anick Van Calster, the ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium to Bulgaria, Bishop Christo Proykov, a Sunday liturgy at Uspenie Bogorodichno (The Assumption) church and the premises of house Posoka, which was in construction at that moment.

Brother Stockman met the President of the Board of ARZ Solidarnost, Mr. Valeri Ivanov, the Executive director, Mrs. Elena Nikolova, and the team leader Mr. Svetoslav Kirilov. We discussed our plans, difficulties and activities together.

We reached an agreement about the future actions related to Solidarnost's affiliation to Fracarita International next year.

**Our donors in 2015 – with gratitude to them**

The Management Board and Team of "Solidarnost" thank for commitment of all listed bellow organizations, thanks to their financing we were able to accomplish our goals and mission to help to addicted people and their families:

La Fondation privée Futur 21 http://futur21.eu/fr/
Renovabis https://www.renovabis.de/
L'abbaye Notre dame de Leffe http://www.abbaye-de-leffe.be/
L'association international „Les femmes d'Europe" http://www.assocfemmesdeurope.org/
Les compagnons de Trempoline a.s.b.l
Solvay Sodi www.solvay.bg
National center of addiction – Sofia www.ncn-bg.org