



Exemplary Project

PROXIMITY MOBILE HEALTHCARE UNITS-PORTUGAL
June 2018



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PROXIMITY MOBILE HEALTHCARE UNIT – PORTUGAL

General information	
OP information	<p>Title OP: CRESC ALGARVE 2020</p> <p>Priority axis: Guarantee social and institutional cohesion</p> <p>Investment priority: Investing in health and social infrastructure which contributes to national, regional and local development, reducing inequalities in terms of health status, promoting social inclusion through improved access to social, cultural and recreational services and the transition from institutional to community-based services.</p> <p>Specific objective: Promote social inclusion and fight poverty and discrimination in the Algarve region</p>
Timeline	<p>Start date: 03/10/2016</p> <p>End date: 28/09/2018</p>
Budget	<p>Total budget: EUR 700.000</p> <p>Co-financing rate: EUR 560.000</p> <p>EU Fund: ERDF</p>
Beneficiary/ies	<p>Main beneficiary: Administração Regional de Saúde do Algarve, I. P. (project leader and nonbeneficiary); AMAL – Comunidade Intermunicipal do Algarve (nonbeneficiary) and the Alcoutim, Aljezur, Loulé, Monchique, São Brás de Alportel, Silves and Tavira municipalities (beneficiaries).</p>
Category of intervention:	<p>III – Social, health and education infrastructure and related investment</p> <p>053 – Health infrastructure</p>
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Project website	http://www.arsalgarve.min-saude.pt/projetos-cresc-algarve-2020-programa-operacional-regional-do-algarve/
Thematic block covered	Theme 1: access to healthcare

Project summary

The rural areas with low population density of the Alcoutim, Aljezur, Loulé, Monchique, São Brás do Alportel, Silves and Tavira municipalities, included in this project, show various constraints regarding how frequently their populations have access to healthcare. The isolation of these areas is generated by: an ageing population, long geographic distances to the most important urban centers in the Algarve, financial difficulties and problems arranging transport for people with disabilities, which complicates the access to the traditional health care centers. This consequently justifies an expansion of the existing healthcare equipment net and the creation of proximity mobile healthcare units net to provide the population of these areas with adequate clinical monitoring and enhance the proximity healthcare coverage.

The project aims to create these mobile healthcare units net equipped for diagnosis in order to provide primary care services to a specific population (elderly, rural population, etc). The project aims to provide preventive care, diagnose and monitor disease, through medical and infirmary consultations and other healthcare acts within the Portuguese National Health Service (Serviço Nacional de Saúde) to reduce inequalities and promote social inclusion in rural areas with low population density.

The expansion of the existing healthcare equipment net permits to address the general needs and to guarantee healthcare to the population that normally lives far from the normal health centers. It also permits to live up to the specific necessity to identify in due time for the various medical conditions that characterize the populations and to intervene early, minimizing the jeopardizing effects on the people's health due to less frequent consultation. The expected investment will make the scheduled healthcare provision more accessible in geographical disadvantaged areas and enhance the life quality and the equality of opportunities amongst the populations that now have difficult access to the healthcare centers.

Development and Implementation

Initiator/trigger	The ageing of the isolated population in rural Algarve; the financial difficulties; the problems arranging transport that complicates the access to the traditional healthcare centers, justify this investment.
Project objective	Reduce the asymmetry of the users' access to the Portuguese National Health Service (groups of healthcare centers) and guarantee an adequate healthcare coverage in the rural areas with low population density. Reduce the risk of a nonscheduled monitoring process of the elderly and isolated population's health status in the rural areas of Algarve, with low population density, performed by the Portuguese National Health Service.
Target group(s)	Elderly, rural population
Project health-related indicators	Covered population with improved healthcare services

Results

Expected/attained results, outcomes and potential impacts	15.000 users benefiting from services of the mobile healthcare unit
Success factors & Challenges	Promote cooperation agreements between the ARS Algarve and the municipalities, in order to guarantee the sustainability of the operation and the proximity healthcare services and provide the necessary measures for the primary healthcare of the Portuguese National Health Service to secure a quality response.
Potential for replication	The project is possible to replicate in other countries due to the problems it seeks to address and also due to its easily applicable solution method.
Wider context	
Relevance of the project to the objective of the relevant thematic block	The mobile healthcare units perform proximity healthcare services by providing physical, technological and human resources, near the populations in the rural areas of Algarve with low population density.
Relevance of the project objective to the specific objective of the OP	The project contributes to the goals set on the OP level in terms of reducing health inequality and permitting the populations to access to the health equipment.
Relevance of the project towards reducing health inequalities	The project reduces health inequalities through scheduled proximity healthcare services for a special audience like elders and populations in the rural areas of Algarve with low population density.
Relevance of the project towards the reform of health systems	The project contributes to reform the health system as it broadens the access to quality units near home.
Relevance of the project objective to the national context and policy goals	<p>The project is integrated in the national health policies. The strategies to strengthen equity and adequate access to healthcare are based on the implementation of specific projects that aim for additional health gains through the reduction of inequalities an on the territorial healthcare organization that contemplates the Primary Healthcare network.</p> <p>It is important to prioritize the Primary healthcare resources in order to improve access, adequacy and performance and to reinforce the healthcare services on a local level. This can be achieved by reducing the impact of social determinants using access as the key factor for reduced inequalities.</p>
Relevance of the project objective to health policy goals at EU level	The project is integrated in a range of expected infrastructural investments in the health area that are elaborated within the scope of priority investment 9.7 (Health and social infrastructure investments that contribute to the national, regional and local development, reduces health inequality, promotes social inclusion through increased access to social services and recreation as well as transit institutional services to the community basic services), as contracted with the European Union.