

Educational Senior Network

Best Practices and Educational Innovation for Seniors

Author/s	Permanent University of the University of Alicante
Title	Peer to peer support fostering active ageing
Key words	Active ageing, peer to peer learning
Context – location and impact	Following UPUA's participation as a partner in the European project <u>PPS (PEER TO PEER SUPPORT FOSTERING ACTIVE AGEING)</u> , which developed a peer-to-peer-education-based methodology to promote active ageing, both in small face-to-face groups and through the Internet, an interest arises in developing a pilot activity aimed at improving citizen's active ageing.
Start date	September 2015
Institution	Permanent University of the University of Alicante
Addressees	<p>There are two groups of addressees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Peer trainers, older adults and in most cases retired persons, with a previous professional activity and a specialised training in the contents (psychologists, pharmacists, biologists, nurses, teachers, engineers, social workers...) who receive initial training in communication and social skills, as well as with regard to the PPS project. They own the knowledge needed to develop specific contents. The selection of trainers was carried out taking into account their human quality, empathy, generosity and availability to dedicate their time to the initiative on a voluntary service basis and to help other seniors. Alberto Plaza Salán, coach, and Concepción Bru Ronda, Director of UPUA, took charge of coordinating the group of trainers. They both monitored all session contents too. -The citizens who attended the peer to peer training sessions imparted at the Consumption Resources Centre of the Alicante Town Council were older adults residing in the Alicante province.
Thematic area	Health, social action and ICTs
Justification	The European Union's population is changing and getting older. Since Europeans can enjoy a longer and healthier life, the European Union is promoting policies meant to achieve a greater integration of seniors into society, and thus to keep them active by means of "Active Ageing" programmes. The WHO defines active ageing as "the process of optimisation of opportunities for health, participation and security with the aim of improving quality of life as individuals age." The determining factors for active ageing include the psychological factor, and especially self-perceived effectiveness and the ability to imitate.
Objectives	This project has as its aim to develop a peer-to-peer-education-based methodology to promote active ageing, either in small face-to-face groups or on a distance basis (online). This training will seek to increase the older-than-55-year-old participants' self-perceived effectiveness along with their capacity for imitation, additionally fostering active and healthy ageing.



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Experience

The pilot course with peer trainers was held between March 16th and June 4th 2015 and comprised the following formative programme contents:

- Introduction to the training programme for facilitators
- Training for facilitators
- Developing an educational programme about active ageing
 - o Demographic ageing
 - o Functional ageing
 - o Training and online resources. Moodle
 - o Physical activity and healthy ageing
 - o Healthy habits and healthy ageing
 - o Prevention for a healthy ageing
 - o Social Skills
 - o Voluntary service/
- Individual learning project

The second stage of this initiative corresponding to the programme “Peer to peer training for active ageing” took place from January 13th to March 16th 2016. That programme, addressed to over-55s, was divided into several modules and had a duration of 30 teaching hours. The aim sought with the training sessions consisted in consolidating participants’ skills –their knowledge of the topic as well as their capabilities and best practices. Very special attention was also paid to discuss and analyse individual problems and perspectives related to ageing. The training was conceived in such a way that students could benefit from the enrichment that derives from taking part in debates and sharing their thoughts about the issues studied.

The following sessions were carried out:

- Introduction to active ageing. Demographic and active ageing in XXI century.
- Towards a healthy ageing.
 - o Good life habits and overall health. How to live ageing as a full and active process.
 - o Health promotion in chronic diseases.
 - o How to take medicines correctly. The path of drugs through our body.
 - o The enhancement of seniors’ physical health. Guidelines to promote physical activity amongst senior adults. Physical activity programme for seniors.
 - o The importance of a suitable nutritional model and a healthy diet to prevent illnesses. Workshops: healthy food.
 - o Social and emotional skills for personal well-being.
- Use of technology for information purposes in health and social communication. Resources and ICT tools that can help promote active and healthy ageing: social networks

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	<p>and tools for learning and digital communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social skills and voluntary service as a healthy strategy for active ageing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Resources and strategies aimed at supporting socio-cultural inclusion and voluntary practices. o Voluntary service: music workshop and songs to stimulate memory and body.
Results	<p>The final assessment of the initiative has proved successful as a high-impact learning method for seniors.</p> <p>It is worth noting that the development process was very complex; hence why lots of dedication and many hours were required together with means and resources which had not been evaluated-envisaged in the initial conception of the initiative.</p> <p>The training process thus needed a process of design, preparation, publicity, provision of resources (classrooms, audiovisuals, brochures, materials), exploitation, personalised attention to peers and participants, assessment and the subsequent improvement and implementation which has required the efforts of many people that were not initially foreseen in the drawing-up of the instructions manual and the design of this initiative.</p> <p>From our educational and psycho-educational perspective, and in our capacity as an institution specialised in senior training, we have implemented all the aforementioned elements to ensure success at the initiative actions and to achieve the desired outcome and impact.</p> <p>We appreciate the high degree of involvement shown by peers, whose contribution to this project was very generous, with full dedication, as well as a strong self-commitment.</p> <p>We would also like to express our gratitude to the Consumption Resources Centre and the Education and Social Affairs Department of the Alicante Town Council for their valuable help and collaboration in the dissemination of tasks and the provision of classrooms and a variety of other facilities to house our training sessions.</p>
Future perspectives	<p>This best practice has generated an active citizenship and a group of PEERS able to replicate it autonomously and sustainably in any public or private context.</p>
Remarkable facts	<p>Thanks to this best practice, we have optimised the opportunities for seniors' active ageing, health, involvement, quality of life and security.</p> <p>A strong impact on the social and community environment of the older adult citizens' who have been given peer training.</p> <p>On the part of PEERS, satisfaction with the effectiveness perceived as well as the proven outcome reflected in other seniors' ability to imitate those peers are determining facts which help consolidate such an active ageing dynamics.</p>



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Bibliographic references	http://www.activeageingproject.eu/content/outputs
Contact Details	
Web page	https://web.ua.es/en/upua/projects/tabs/pps-peer-to-peer-support-fostering-active-ageing.html
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