

DOKPY – Social and Health Organisation  
of the Municipality of Nea Ionia Magnesias,  
Region of Thessaly,  
Greece

## **Full Case Description**

4<sup>th</sup> Quality Conference - (4<sup>th</sup> QC)  
*'Building Sustainable Quality'*  
Tampere - Finland  
(27-29/09/2006)

**Improving local social service  
through  
the application of EFQM:  
The case of the Municipality of Nea Ionia Magnesias in Greece**

**A. Introduction**

The 4<sup>th</sup> Quality Conference for Public Administrations in the EU – *Building Sustainable Quality* is a settled meeting that brings together biannually various organizations from all over the EU and provides the chance for new methods to be presented for sharing knowledge on quality improvements.

Our organisation's participation in it is crucial since we are under the process of developing and implementing of *Quality Management and Improvement* – as an ongoing process – through our forthcoming engagement in the 2<sup>nd</sup> scale of the Levels of Excellence of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) and in the Common Assessment Framework (CAF).

**A.1. Organisation's presentation**

The Social and Health Organisation (Greek abbreviation: DOKPY) of the Municipality of Nea Ionia, in Greece was established in 1995 by the Municipality of Nea Ionia Magnesias in Thessaly Region (central Greece) as a municipal enterprise (Legal Person of Private Law). DOKPY consists of 7 different centres- situated in various areas of the city. Its personnel numbers 50 employees. Maintaining a non-profit (making) character, DOKPY promotes the establishment of support structures - mainly of a welfare character within the area of the city - and the promotion of first degree health care. DOKPYs aim is mainly to encourage and to promote the set up of a first-degree network of Social Solidarity for the city. Secondly, DOKPY studies and proposes issues for exercising social policy's matters to the Municipality of Nea Ionia and organises a documentation system of data of social character of the city. DOKPY participated in the Levels of Excellence of the EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management). At the beginning of May 2004, DOKPY started its official cooperation with the EFQM by entering in the 1<sup>st</sup> level (Committed to Excellence) in the end of October 2004

**A.2. Presentation of the external environment of the organisation**

DOKPY is one of the five municipal enterprises that the Municipality of Nea Ionia established a decade ago. The Municipality is the major shareholder of these enterprises (51%). The target groups that the organisation addresses are of course all the inhabitants of the Municipality who ask for a counselling support, but in particular those who belong to 'special groups' that due to their 'origin, language, cultural particularity or economic status'

have been socially excluded. Those groups are the lone-parent families, the Romas (Gypsies), people with disabilities, the elderly, the penurious, the Greek repatriates and the immigrants, etc.

### A.3. Presentation of the Vision and of the Mission of the organisation

The vision of the organisation is the following:

✓ To form a system of social care that would mitigate the inequality, the unfairness and the poverty that modern society reproduces. To promote the prosperity for all the persons, to redistribute the resources, to have a decentralised character and to support the dignity and the integrity of individuals as essential conditions for the operation of the democracy and of the social justice

The mission of the organisation is the following:

✓ To form an excellently organised system of social activities, focused mainly on the local level of the Municipality of Nea Ionia, that would provide with consistence, ethos and respect, in quality excellent and extensive support, help and reestablishment services of all individuals

✓ To sensitise and inform the citizens of the Municipality about the importance and the services of social care that our organisation offers and to encourage them to strengthen these services and ask for them – provided that they need them

✓ To encourage the participation of all citizens in the planning and the realisation of those services, which are addressed to them, and also to all persons in general, in order to improve their quality of life

✓ To enhance the individual and family incomes of the Municipality's citizens

✓ To secure the essential conditions that promote the rights and the prosperity of the children

✓ To spot continuously new areas of social action so that potential new needs and demands of the citizens of the Municipality can be foreseen

### B. Main part

The core of our presentation will be the Internal Evaluation System, named 'Documentation & Quality - TEP' that the organisation uses as an evaluation mechanism that helps customer satisfaction measurement on a continuous basis and through the use of specific indicators helps also the benchmarking procedure between all the structures of the organisation and between the organisation and other organisations of the field of provision of social services. This evaluation system is continuously developed by the organisation itself.

More analytically the following are outlined for the better understanding of the development, use and implementation, difficulties and conclusions of the 'Documentation & Quality - TEP':

## B.1. Description of the reasons that led to the implementation of the 'Documentation & Quality - TEP'

DOKPY started searching for the implementation of Quality Systems 3 years ago. Its main objective was the inclusion of its everyday work into a Quality System that will respond to its social character and to the character of the provided services towards special groups of population.

DOKPYs involvement into procedures of systems of Total Quality Management came as an 'internal demand' after the exponential growth of it during the last years and after its maturation and its more and more great anxiety to respond to the needs of the customers and to face the pressure and the various conditions that are imposed by its external environment.

In 2003, the organisation started to seek for a model of quality after becoming familiar to the basic principles of ISO-9000. This education led to the following achievements:

- ✓ the basic knowledge of the principles of a Quality Management System
- ✓ the initial licking into shape of the internal operations of the organisation
- ✓ the gradual changes in the everyday practice
- ✓ the introduction of a philosophy of 'a common effort and common objectives'
- ✓ the initiation of the establishment of a culture orientated towards quality

In 2004 DOKPY decided to initiate its official cooperation with EFQM by achieving to enter in the 1<sup>st</sup> level of Excellence (Committed to Excellence) as a more multiple model of measurement of the performance of each different sector of the organisation with a self-evaluation procedure and a scheduled system of rating. EFQM included the principles of the Total Quality Management, it did not focus on procedures and it involved powers of accomplishment of objectives and results.

One of the 3 areas for improvement that the organisation addressed and worked with (within its entrance and its continuation with the 1<sup>st</sup> Level of Excellence) has been the 'Strategy Formulation System linked with its Mission, Vision and Values and the Identification of Key Processes and relevant Key Performance Indicators'.

Within this area of improvement the organisation's Internal Evaluation System, named 'Documentation & Quality - TEP' (Greek abbreviation: TEP) has been included for further development and use. This evaluation system is being presented in this Conference.

Within the framework of organisation of its provided services towards quality and inclusion of a bidirectional communication with its customers, DOKPY has scheduled, developed and continues to develop the '*Documentation & Quality - TEP*' system. The '*Documentation & Quality - TEP*' system is based on the description of the life of the customer

through structured interviews. It is being used in the organisation since 2004 as the official recording tool of its social and employment counsellors. These professional interviewers use as common tools a series of forms for the documentation and description guidelines of the procedure in order to record in a common way and to properly accompany the customer from her/his entrance until her/his exit from the service system of the organisation.

The '*Documentation & Quality - TEP*' system is inspired by the system 'DOK' that is being widely used in the field of withdrawal from drug use in Sweden, and from other tools of documentation in Europe and in the USA, as a product of researchers and therapists, following the projective system of the American McLehlan. In the '*Documentation & Quality - TEP*' system's version, the material has been substantially changed and adapted to the needs of a municipal enterprise during the counselling work for the empowerment and encouragement of people from vulnerable groups of populations and of multi-problematic families.

With the use of common forms of interview and data-base, there is the ability to collect and elaborate customer's information. In that way the '*Documentation & Quality - TEP*' system provides the encouragement of a dynamic model that can give space for comparisons with other structures and also of direct development of statistical data that can be used for comparisons at national or international level (benchmarking).

The main objectives of the '*Documentation & Quality - TEP*' system are the following:

1. the creation of a material of continuous self-evaluation in the form of descriptions by the clients and of the activities that are addressed towards them and the encouragement of a continuing evaluation
2. the expansion of the self-evaluation base in the form of a comparison between the activities of the various structures and enterprises
3. the dissemination of the knowledge about how the self-evaluation can be used for the development of Quality
4. the selection of basic data with a demographic-epidemiological character for its usage at national or international level
5. the assessment of the used methodology

The '*Documentation & Quality - TEP*' system uses specific forms that are being filled in by the counsellors of the organisation and its customers during interviews that are being held with them.

Qualitative criteria are used in these forms and the results of these evaluations are being communicated to the administration of the organisation in order to be taken into account.

## B.2. Description of the procedure of implementation of the 'Documentation & Quality - TEP'

The '*Documentation & Quality - TEP*' system operates through the use of specific forms that are as following:

1. intake of the user
2. monitoring of her/his provided service
3. closure of the case
4. follow-up

The '*Documentation & Quality - TEP*' system's form is being filled in during every new entrance of a customer in the organisation. It is the main tool of taking the social record of a customer.

Within the '*Documentation & Quality - TEP*' system there have been incorporated evaluation fields with qualitative criteria for the provided services that the customers have received from the organisation and from other organisations of the area. Through these fields the customers themselves evaluate their received services.

Also through the biannual implementation of the Customers Satisfaction Survey<sup>1</sup>, the customers of the services directly evaluate their received – by the organisation – services. The main organisation's sources that operate as sources of customers' evaluation of their provided services are the following:

- ✓ 'Help at Home & Social Care' Centre (customers of the services of this Centre fill in questionnaires during the visits of DOKPYs personnel at their home)
- ✓ 2 Centres of Creative Activities for Children (the parents and the children themselves of this Centre fill in questionnaires at the Centres space)
- ✓ Centre of Creative Activities for Children with Disabilities (the parents of the children of this Centre fill in questionnaires at the Centres space)
- ✓ ROM Social-Medical Centre (customers of the services of this Centre and the children who participate in the Creative Activities fill in questionnaires at the Centres space)
- ✓ Family and Child Centre (customers of the services of this Centre fill in questionnaires at the Centres space)
- ✓ Cooperating Associations and Citizens' Groups (the representatives-members of them fill in questionnaires at the central premises of the organisation)

Finally, the 3<sup>rd</sup> and last source of evaluation by the customers themselves concerns the evaluation of the counselling work that they receive by DOKPYs counsellors. For that customers fill in 2 specific evaluation forms, i.e. the 'Result's Assessment Climax – KEA' and the 'Session's Assessment Climax –

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<sup>1</sup> The Customers Satisfaction Survey is a constant biannual tool of the organisation and is the result of its 3<sup>rd</sup> Improvement Activity during the validation procedure of the 1<sup>st</sup> Level of Excellence of the EFQM

KES' after their counselling session. This evaluation is being made at the organisation's centres that provide with a counselling work, such as:

- ✓ Centre for Counselling and Supporting Services/ Employment Centre
- ✓ Family and Children Centre
- ✓ ROM Social-Medical Centre

The results of these evaluations are being communicated to the administration of the organisation and - with the cooperation of the programmes' coordinators - the Annual Action Plan for each Centre is being compiled, which incorporates also the clients' demands.

From last summer the '*Documentation & Quality - TEP*' system has been uploaded on the Internet in an electronic form in order for the following to be achieved:

1. for mobile DOKPYs centres can participate
2. for an automatic and dynamic depiction of the statistical data
3. for the existence of the probability of benchmarking firstly between the organisation's various centres and secondly between the organisation and other organisations

For the comparison of the various entries between the various centres of the organisation and – in the future – between DOKPY and other organisations that will provide the system with their entries, common indicators are being used based on those indicators that the European Commission proposed through its Social Protection Committee<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> According to the nature of the organisation's services and customers, the indicators are in line with the ones that the Social Protection Committee of the European Commission<sup>2</sup> proposed in October 2001. These indicators are concerning the poverty and the social exclusion. These indicators – according to the Committee – focus on the social results rather than on the means to achieve them. *Primary indicators* are: (1) low income rate after transfers with low-income threshold set at 60% of median income (with breakdowns by gender, age, most frequent activity status, household type and tenure status; as illustrative examples, the values for typical households), (2) distribution of income (income quintile ratio), (3) persistence of low income, (4) median low income gap, (5) regional cohesion, (6) long-term unemployment rate, (7) people living in jobless households, (8) early school leavers not in further education or training, (9) life expectancy at birth, (10) self perceived health status. *Secondary indicators* are: (11) dispersion around the 60% median low income threshold, (12) low income rate anchored at a point in time, (13) low income rate before transfers, (14) distribution of income-Gini coefficient, (15) persistence of low income (based on 50% of median income), (16) long term unemployment share, (17) very long term unemployment rate, (18) persons with low educational attainment

B.3. Description of the basic difficulties, obstacles and problems that came up during the implementation of the 'Documentation & Quality - TEP' and how these have been confronted

The obstacles that have been faced are the following:

- ✓ lack of existence of a financing context at national or local level for the development of TEP system
- ✓ immaturity of the similar social enterprises to integrate into such electronic systems
- ✓ non-registration of the whole package that results in that anyone can use it according to his will

What has been proposed for overcoming these obstacles?

- ✓ contacts have been made with central services in order to be included under their auspices
- ✓ the system has been communicated to various 'strong' partners

Other points of difficulty that have been recorded through the use of the system:

- ✓ the difficulty of the users of the system to incorporate it into their everyday routine of work
- ✓ wrong fills-in into fields from individual counsellors of the organisation or deficient fills-in that lead to invaluable comparative data
- ✓ technical difficulties in the construction of the electronic form of the system, such as slow servers, deficient knowledge by the programmers of the social issues, etc.
- ✓ lack of economic sources for the further development of the system

How these points of difficulty can be overcome?

Through teamwork, education and continuous monitoring

There should be noted that anyone can have access to the general conclusions that are being produced by the electronic version of the system. Of course due to the personal data protection that the organisation strongly safeguards the picture that someone can have will be a general picture of the results.

## C. Conclusions

Description of the main results of the 'Documentation & Quality - TEP' and of the way of these results' measurement and evaluation, of their side effects, and of the way that they influenced the total operation of the organisation. Transferability of the 'Documentation & Quality - TEP'

The benefits from the use of the '*Documentation & Quality - TEP*' system are the following:

- ✓ direct depiction of the customers' situation
- ✓ direct record of the customers' satisfaction
- ✓ general demographical data for the area
- ✓ probability of the direct development of an operation report that can be forwarded to possible financing sources or to the local authority
- ✓ the comparison-benchmarking between organisations with similar activities during their provision of social services can lead - through the provision of a picture at any moment of the social data in each area - to the scheduling and provision of social policies and activities based on the reality or to the provision of direct data to potential researchers

The '*Documentation & Quality - TEP*' system is also transferable to other social enterprises in Greece and it should be mentioned that at this moment nothing similar exists at national or local level. Its financing has been made totally by the organisation itself.

The '*Documentation & Quality - TEP*' system as part of the general effort of the organisation's efforts to included quality tools in its everyday work helps its organisational and operational function and together with each workers commitment to implement it and also other quality tools has led to following practical results that are apparent in the usual work of the organisation's function:

- ✓ through the elucidation of each worker in the organization role and position, likely conflicts have been decreased
- ✓ the cohesion of the groups of the personnel that undertake projects and particular initiatives has been increased (many times new projects stem from individuals themselves)
- ✓ there has been a decrease in the losses during the management of various programmes (absorbedness: almost 100%, balanced income-expenses)
- ✓ improvement of the public picture of the organisation towards its customers and its cooperators
- ✓ viability of the organisation and decrease of the reliance on the Municipality

√ increase of the effectiveness of the actions/ interventions towards its clients

Closing this presentation we have to wish for the major success of this Conference and we really wait to learn as much as possible from all you extremely experienced participators.

Being finally a kind of poetical, we can conclude in the following major for us statement:

*... whichever effort, for the improvement of the offered services, presumes the prevalence of a general perception that wants quality to stamp each human activity and to assign in the long-term a new enhanced quality of life ...*

*... quality is not a process but a way of living ...*

*... quality is not a deed but an everyday practice ...*