

The International Society for Quality in Health Care



# 26th International Conference **Dublin, Ireland**

11th – 14th October 2009  
The Burlington Hotel, Dublin, Ireland



## Designing for Quality



## Abstract Book

The International Society for Quality in Health Care

# **Abstract Book**

International Society for  
Quality in Health Care Ltd  
26th International Conference

*'Designing for Quality'*

11th - 14th October 2009,  
The Burlington Hotel, Dublin, Ireland

**590**

## Promoting empowerment strategies and programs within the regional health care systems in Italy

*Caracci, G., Carzaniga, S., Durante, G., Labella, B., Mantuano, C., Bottai, R., Carlozzo, B.M., Casucci, P., Ceccagnoli, M.A., De Pasquale, I., De Polli, P., Forgione, F., Francescato, M., Gagliardi, S., Menchini, M., Nicoli, M.A., Passerini, A., Pontalti, L., Romano, A., Simon, G., Terri, F., Tobia, L., Torri, E., Vullo, M., Moirano, F.*

---

**Objective:**

To improve health and reduce health disparities by promoting the implementation of empowerment strategies and programs at the individual, organizational and community levels within the regional health care systems.

---

**Methods:**

To respond to the specific mandate of fostering empowerment research and actions in Italy, the National Agency for Regional Healthcare Services (Age.Na.S.) developed an ad hoc research project in 2008. The methodological approach used was based on Continuous Quality Improvement and Knowledge Network principles and tools.

The following activities were carried out:

- institution of an inter-regional working group
- adoption of a common theoretical model
- elaboration of a standard form to collect empowerment initiatives
- validation (face validity) and testing of the form
- collection of significant experiences at the regional level
- planning and organization of educational and informational events

In all the above phases of the project consensus among project participants was sought.

---

**Results:**

- A permanent national working group on empowerment was set up, and at present experts from 13 of the 21 regions participate.
- Sharing of construct (Wallerstein, 2006), analysis model (Zimmerman, 2000) and procedures has been achieved.
- A tool, congruent with the theoretical model, has been elaborated and agreed upon. The standardized form is made of two sections: the first section concerns general identification data of empowerment initiatives (title, region, organisation (health trust/ hospital), name address and telephone number of the referent) and the second section comprises nine areas about the methodological elements of the initiative (context/ background/ framework, problem, objectives, target, plan of actions, results, dissemination and transference, cost-benefit analysis, strengths and weaknesses).
- 64 relevant experiences have been collected in 10 regions: 36 attaining individual empowerment, 19 organizational empowerment and 9 community empowerment.
- A national seminar will take place in April 2009, to share the methodological framework and the good practices with professionals of all regions.
- Planning of several educational events in 9 regions will be held in May and June 2009, aimed to foster the culture of empowerment and the implementation of local initiatives among health professionals and administrators.

---

**Conclusions:**

A common theoretical methodological framework on empowerment research and action has been defined in Italy. An inter-regional network of professionals has been successfully activated and its initial results have been obtained. All the initiatives that were collected and evaluated, using shared criteria, have been disseminated and their potential for the transference of knowledge is being exploited. The foundation of a national strategy for the empowerment of individual, health organizations and communities has been established, based on the grounds of a mutual comparison of regional policies and integration of efforts.

- 
- Wallerstein N. (2006), What is the evidence on effectiveness of empowerment to improve health?, Copenhagen, WHO Regional Office for Europe (Health Evidence Network report; <http://www.euro.who.int/Document/E88086.pdf>, December 2007)
  - Zimmerman M.A. (2000), "Empowerment theory: psychological, organizational and community levels of analysis". In: Rappaport J., Seidman E., eds. Handbook of community psychology. New York, Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.