

“To promote coherence in the measurement and analysis of disability by validating the ICF model of the World Health Organisation”

The problem

Disability is an issue of major significance to European individuals and the European economy. To support policy developments, there is a need for improved and harmonised systems to gather statistics on disability. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has developed a model that should assist in this task, known as the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF). There remains a need, however, to demonstrate the validity and utility of the ICF model by analysing actual practice and statistics, given that policy development can be supported only by data analysis, to determine whether it is working or not.

Overview:

MHADIE will investigate the validity of the ICF model for the documentation and analysis of disability so as to better serve the needs of disability policy development, monitoring and evaluation.

The project will:

- use the ICF model of disability to analyze and evaluate existing sources of European disability data;
- demonstrate that the ICF model is adequate for describing and measuring patterns of disability in clinical samples;
- show that ICF is useful for data collection and analysis in rehabilitation and educational sectors;
- make policy recommendations and guidelines concerning the use of the ICF for effective and coherent health and social policy;
- develop predictors of disability and environmental barriers to access in the health care and full participation in society;
- produce policy recommendations and guidelines concerning the use of ICF for effective and coherent health and social policy.

Contribution to policy development:

- By facilitating the harmonisation of existing statistical information systems related to disability, this project will permit more effective and coherent comparison and development of policies;
- Provision of data to support the development and implementation of the ICF in the context of European and wider international policy;
- Development of predictors of disability and related factors to allow policy-makers to define more effective interventions;

Project deliverables

- Reports on conceptualisation of impairments and childhood disabilities in educational sector – December 2005
- Report on statistical modelling techniques for defining thresholds of disability – December 2005
- Protocol for evaluation of care in clinical and rehabilitation settings using functioning as outcome – by January 2006
- Report on the state of the art of measurement of impairments and relationship with health outcomes and quality of life – June 2006
- Reports on correlates of disability and on the state of the art of conceptualising childhood disabilities – June 2006
- Protocol to collect data based on the ICF model and report on the potential utility of the model – June 2007
- Policy paper with recommendations – December 2007

Dissemination

- Publication of results in scientific journals and specialised publications – as needed
- Presentation of results at international conferences – as needed
- Project brochure in lay language
- Consensus conference involving all stakeholders
- Press conferences and other media events to inform the lay public of the importance of disability statistics and usefulness of the ICF.
- Summary of findings and other results from prominent European and international disability website and databases