

The Social Indicator Programmes (SIP)

– monitoring and developing the social sector services using indicators

Background

The issues social work address are characterised by being dynamic and very diverse. The social sector is characterised by a lack of systematic approaches towards documentation and quality development and no evidence-based documentation of or common criteria for deciding best practice within the Danish social sector – partly due to the special conditions which apply to this sector. Because of this, the development and use of indicators in this particular area must be carried out in a way that optimizes the possibilities for learning and systematic reflection among professionals.

Aims

The ambition of the Social Indicator Programmes are to gain detailed knowledge about relations between the individual background of service users, the work provided by the social sector services and the outcome with respect to the individual user's conditions of life. Thus providing the platform for an evidence-based best practice within the social sector services.

Methods

To collect data on the selected indicators, social workers and service users answer a number of questionnaires. The answers clarify the conditions relevant to each individual user when entering and exiting the social service setting. When dealing with long-term or permanent stays status descriptions may also be carried out on an annually or bi-annually basis.

Based upon the quantitative data a number of statistical analyses are done to prepare for professional interpretation and discussion at audit-meetings. The answers from the questionnaires are interpreted into a social work frame that provides opportunities for learning and quality development and at the same time, assuring the quality of the data collection process and the analyses.

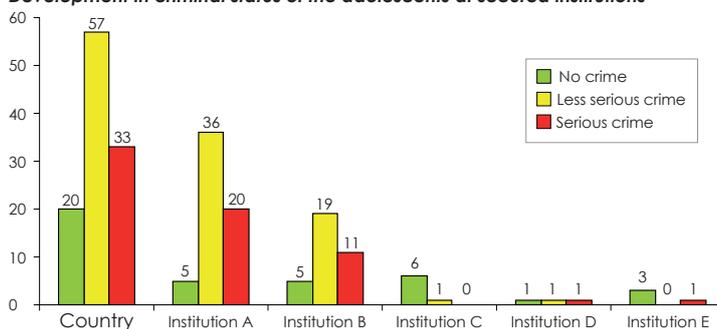
The model of SIP: An annual cycle



Results

By analysing the data collected it is possible to get knowledge about the development as well as the sources of this development.

Development in criminal status of the adolescents at secured institutions



Conclusions

Initial results indicate that the Social Indicator Programmes are useful instruments in deciding best practice on longer term. Social workers find that the programmes are useful communication tools in daily practice, because each programme clearly illustrates an overview of the individual user's problems, resources and development. This can be used in planning future work and thereby contribute to modifying the service towards the individual user.

Further information

Centre for Quality Improvement Central Denmark Region
Olof Palmes Allé 15 – DK-8200 Århus N
• www.cfk.rm.dk
• Tel: +45 8728 4911
• E-mail: center.kvalitetsudvikling@stab.rm.dk

