STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE PROJECT

"RESILIENCE AND INCLUSION FOR THE MILITARY"

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"Resilience and Inclusion for the Military"

Erasmus+ Program – Strategic Partnership

"Resilience and inclusion for military" project

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Partners:

DIGITAL KOMPASS - Bucharest , Romania

IV International – Foggia, Italy

Organization for Promotion of European Issues – Paphos, Cyprus

BUMIR - Bucharest , Romania

Strategy and implementation plan for the project "Resilience and Inclusion for the Military"

The strategy and implementation plan for the project "Resilience and Inclusion for the Military" can be organized in the following stages:

Stage 1

Planning and preparation

We established the objectives and purpose of the activities, which have as their finality the realization of the digital application for the identification and management of post-traumatic stress in the military, according to the conclusions and recommendations that resulted from the debate with the experts and active military , veterans and military with disabilities in the three participating countries, namely Romania, Italy and Cyprus. We have identified the need to identify and establish strategic partnerships with the relevant institutions and organizations (the Ministry of Defense, military units, non-governmental organizations, mental health professionals, etc.), which will be actively involved in the analysis of knowledge about post-traumatic stress in their own institutions. It is also opportune to create bridges with these organizations and institutions, and in this sense we have proposed that each designate a contact person with whom we can maintain a permanent link also in terms of access to project results and project sustainability.
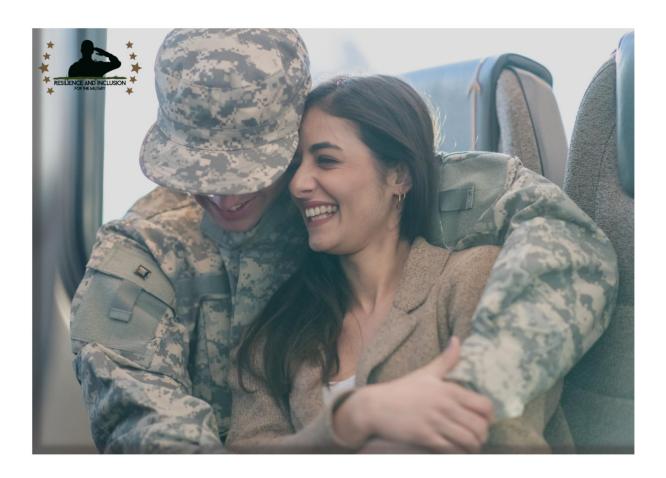
Collaboration with the Ministries of Defence, military units and relevant organizations to create partnerships and obtain support in the implementation of the project is particularly important.

Stage 2

Development of resources and tools

We have identified the need to add relevant information about support resources in the management of post-traumatic stress to the post-traumatic stress manual, which are external to the military institutions where the servicemen are active or external to the associations of military veterans. Thus, we will identify a number of psychologists from the organizations participating in the project or outside them, who will have the availability to offer counseling to the military who express the need to speak physically with a psychologist. This action will be manifested both during the implementation of the project and after.

Regarding the development of the mobile application that would provide information and resources similar to the guidebook, we identified the need for steps that would also allow exemplification of situations in which the military faced post-traumatic stress from all the partner countries participating in the project.

Stage 3

Implementation of programs and activities

We have identified the need to organize information and training sessions for both military personnel and their families and management personnel in military institutions about post-traumatic stress, its prevention and management. Implementation of these prevention and intervention programs should be implemented early in military units. Also, one important element for a future strategy should be related to improving access to mental health services for the military by increasing the availability of psychologists and other mental health professionals.

It is necessary to promote the mobile application and the guidebook both among the military and their families, but also among the management staff and other professionals involved in supporting the military.

Stage 4

Monitoring and evaluation

In addition to collecting feedback from the military, it is important to collect feedback from the families of the military, but also from the management staff to evaluate the impact of the project some time after the project has been completed, so that we can identify the benefits of the project and in the context of interaction between soldiers and families, between soldiers and leadership, or between soldiers and soldiers.

Stage 5

Sustainability

Important aspects that deepen sustainability are related to reducing stigma and promoting dialogue by encouraging an open culture and dialogue among the military about mental health and post-traumatic stress. This could include organizing awareness events, open discussions and communication campaigns. We can also talk about the training of commanders and management personnel.
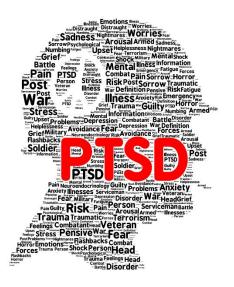
Common elements identified in the three countries participating in the project, as a result of the debate with the experts and the debate with the military

- There is a significant need for information and education about PTSD among the military.
- Access to mental health services is limited or needs improvement.
- The existence of a guidebook and a mobile application that provides useful information about post-traumatic stress is considered very useful.
- Awareness and knowledge of post-traumatic stress among the military is important, but there are still significant needs for additional education and outreach to increase understanding of this disorder.
- Access to mental health services, including psychologists, can be limited, and improving access to such services is a common recommendation in all three studies.

- There is a significant need for prevention and early intervention programs to reduce the risk of developing post-traumatic stress among military personnel and to provide support to those already experiencing this problem.
- It is important to create an open and safe environment where service members can discuss their mental health and receive support without stigma.
- Developing appropriate programs and resources for military families is important so they can understand and manage the impact of PTSD on their lives.
- Analysis of individual responses can help identify specific concerns and needs and develop appropriate resources and programs to meet these requirements.

The elements that differ in the reports from the three countries participating in the project, namely Romania, Cyprus, Italy

In the Romania report, it is mentioned that the majority of active military, veterans and disabled military interviewed have access to a psychologist to talk to when they need it, which could be a positive point in military mental health care. The Cyprus report recommends encouraging an open culture and dialogue among the military about mental health and post-traumatic stress to reduce stigma and promote

access to support. The Italian report notes that access to mental health services such as a psychologist is limited, with a significant proportion of participants not having such access.

General recommendations

In terms of recommendations, the Cyprus report shows that the idea of developing a "Military Resilience and Inclusion" project, taking into account the positive feedback and the diverse needs of the military, including those with disabilities, is particularly beneficial . The report from Italy mentions the need to improve access to mental health services for active military , veterans, and military with disabilities , including increasing the availability of psychologists and other mental health professionals to act in this regard. Also, the report from Romania mentions that most of their active military , their veterans and their disabled military have heard or seen colleagues who have or had post-traumatic stress disorder, while the Cyprus report states that many servicemen appreciated the idea of the "Military Resilience and Inclusion" project and believe that an app and accessible resources are important to also help those with disabilities or who cannot physically go to a psychologist.

Even though the titles of the chapters of the manual were established at the time of the project's funding request, following the debates with the experts and the military, it was necessary to complete it in a very clear structure and design. Thus, the design and structure of the post-traumatic stress manual should be clear and accessible to military personnel and should contain the following elements:

Cover and title page – These should contain the title of the textbook, the authors' names, the date of publication, and perhaps a subtitle or brief description of the contents of the textbook.

Table of Contents – Should include a list of all the chapters in the textbook so readers can navigate through the material quickly and easily.

Introduction – This should introduce the manual and give an overview of what will be covered in the following chapters.

Description of PTSD – This section should include basic information about PTSD, including definitions, symptoms, and causes.

Post-Traumatic Stress Management – This section should cover different methods of managing PTSD, such as cognitive behavioral therapy, meditation, exercise, and others.

Support Resources – This section should include a list of resources and organizations that provide support for military personnel with PTSD, including emergency phone numbers and web addresses.

Prevention Strategies – This section should provide information on how military members can prevent PTSD by appropriately handling difficult situations and reducing exposure to traumatic events.

Frequently Asked Questions – This section should include a list of frequently asked questions and answers to them that can help service members better understand PTSD and find solutions to their problems.

Conclusion – This should provide a recap of the information presented in the manual and provide recommendations for coping with post-traumatic stress.

Bibliography – This should include a list of useful information sources and resources that were used to create the manual.

Regarding the design of the guidebook it should be clear and easy to read, with clear fonts and appropriate sizes to make the information easy to digest. Appropriate colors should be used, avoiding too bright or contrasting colors that could distract the reader. The manual should be structured and presented in an intuitive way so that it is easy to navigate and find specific information.

The design of a post-traumatic stress management app should be intuitive and easy to use. Some design elements that should be considered include:

Simple and easy-to-navigate interface : The main menu should be clear and easy to understand, and the user should be able to quickly access the information and resources they need.

Attractive graphics : It is important that the app looks good and is pleasing to the eye, as users should be encouraged to use it and explore various features.

Well Structured Sections : Sections should be clear and well organized to make accessing information easy and efficient. For example, the app could have separate sections for symptoms, management strategies, support resources, and more.

Multimedia integration : The app should include images to help explain key concepts as well as improve user engagement.

Personalization : The app should give users the ability to customize their user experience, such as the ability to add personal notes or bookmark favorite sections.

Additional features : The app could include other useful features, such as a mood journal or a checklist for tracking progress in post-traumatic stress management.

Accessibility : It should be easy to access, for example through a phone number or email address, so that users can access the help and support they need in times of crisis.

Regular Updates : The app should be updated regularly with the latest information and resources so that users can stay abreast of the latest trends and developments in the field of post-traumatic stress.

Interactive features : Interactive features could be added, such as discussion boards or chats, where users can interact with other military and mental health professionals.
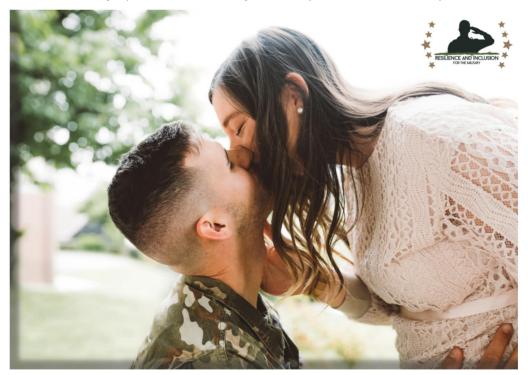
Data security : It is important that the application is secure and protects users' personal information so that they feel safe and protected.

Gamification Features : To make the app more engaging and fun for users, gamification features could be added, such as rewards for completing certain activities or goals.

Also, to be specific to active duty military, veterans, and military with disabilities , the app should include resources and information that take into account the specifics of military life and experiences, such as:

- Strategies and tips for managing stress and during military missions or training.
- Information about mental health care programs and resources available within the military and how to access these services.
- Resources and advice for military families dealing with military family members' PTSD or other mental health issues.
- Information on reintegration programs for servicemen returning home from a conflict zone.
- Access to online support groups for military personnel dealing with post-traumatic stress or other mental health issues.
- Ability to connect military personnel with mental health experts and psychologists specializing in post-traumatic stress.

- Tips and resources to help military members balance their military and personal lives, including tips for maintaining a healthy and balanced daily routine.

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