

A multi-institutional approach to maintaining an internet based health promotion programme for young people in Switzerland (2004 – 2006)

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Issue

Feelok, an internet based intervention programme, was developed between 1999 and 2003 to address health behaviour issues among young people. It included a range of health topics such as smoking, stress and sexuality. Further health topics such as cannabis, physical activity and alcohol were added during later development phases. Until the end of 2004 this programme was administered by only one institution (ISPM), which ensured a common structure, appearance and underlying philosophy for the programmes on each topic. However, in order to guarantee that the information on each theme would remain up to date and of high quality in the long term, an approach involving several institutions, which are specialised in each respective area, has been chosen. Furthermore, these institutions will be able to better disseminate the programme, particularly in the school setting.

Description

During the year 2005 institutions which are renowned for their competence in each topic were approached about their willingness and ability to take charge of the feelok intervention programme on their area of interest. This would primarily include the tasks of keeping the information up to date, disseminating the programme among schools, and evaluating the programme.

Lessons

Nine institutions bearing a national reputation in their field signed agreements in the year 2006 to participate in the multi-institutional approach to administering feelok, the overall co-ordination of which remains with the ISPM. Therefore, schools now have an internet based health intervention programme at hand which includes a range of topics while the accuracy and quality of the information on each area is guaranteed by experts from the corresponding field. As all institutions are involved in disseminating the programme, user numbers increased from 600 per day in 2004 to 1100 per day in 2006.

Conclusion

The new multi-institutional approach combines the expertise of each institution in one single intervention product. This co-operation allows for a more efficient use of resources. Such co-operation is to be recommended as target groups are increasingly confused by the wide range of products offered to them. Our experience shows that a multi-institutional approach is possible and welcomed by institutions active in the field of health promotion.