



The EU 'Healthier Together' Non-Communicable Diseases Initiative

Reducing the burden of non-communicable diseases

INTERNATIONAL SPORT AND CULTURE ASSOCIATION

BACKGROUND

Provide the rationale and background for your proposed action including challenges and enablers.

In one sentence: The action will improve mental health, physical activity and well-being for disadvantaged target groups in Europe through further development and scale-out of the successful, research-based "ABCs of Mental Health" model.

Grassroots sport is the biggest civil society sector across the European Union, working with people from all walks of life on a weekly basis. The potential benefits of consciously integrating mental health into grassroots sport's physical activity programmes could therefore have exponential benefits towards their well-being and prevention of NCDs. With a starting point from a local sport and local community perspective, we believe that grassroots and local associations who have the capacity are the best equipped stakeholders to adopt the Danish model of the ABCs of Mental Health to other European countries and contexts. Grassroots sport organisations can be fast-tracked to deliver physical and mental health prevention benefits to many more citizens and hard-to-reach populations including refugees and minority groups across Europe. Involving a wider group of stakeholders from the grassroots sport, health and education sectors can facilitate substantial implementation as well as effective advocacy efforts and policy changes in the national settings, as the experience and evidence from Denmark and other piloting countries becomes more readily available and shared.

CONCRETE ACTION

- Idea:
 - *What are the objectives and the scope of the action?*

To improve mental health, physical activity and well-being for disadvantaged target groups in Europe through further development and scale-out of the research-based ABCs of Mental Health model from Denmark to other European countries, thus preventing NCDs. ABCs of Mental Health has in 2024 been adopted by DG SANTE as a Best Practice.

*How will this
action support
the prevention
of non-
communicable
diseases in the
EU?*

- EU added value and impact:

- *What is the EU added value and impact of the action?*

The EU added value will emerge from adapting, transferring and scaling up the ABC model for the first time in a wider geographical area. Furthermore, the synergies will emerge from bringing a wider group of sport and mental health actors together to discuss the adaptation and transfer, their experiences from the field, the characteristics of their national settings and simultaneously developing European-wide advocacy, dissemination and political engagement.

This initiative would build on proven experiences, tap into the biggest civil society sector in Europe, and deliver low-cost, high impact activities at scale.

CHALLENGES AND ENABLERS

- *Which issues will your action address on health promotion and prevention of non-communicable diseases in particular related to health determinants, or socio-economic, environmental, commercial determinants of health?*

The project will address NCD prevention through physical activity and mental health promotion and implementation. In the group of children and youth alone, approximately 20-25% are suffering from mental health problems in the aftermath of COVID-19 and the long-lasting trend of insufficient physical activity for 80% of adolescents puts the health and well-being of the children and youth at serious risk. ABCs of Mental Health is designed to reach socio-economically disadvantaged participants in local community settings in a highly efficient manner.

How will it target specific challenges, and are there any enablers that can take your action forward?

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- *Provide your views on how your organisation can be involved and help in taking this idea forward.*

International Sport and Culture Association ISCA is an international umbrella for grassroots sport, physical activity and health. We can facilitate the European roll-out of ABCs of Mental Health through our networks, capacity-

What can your organisation

building expertise, and extensive experience in transferring and scaling proven initiatives for health promotion involving civil society. We have a committed series of national partners in Denmark that are willing to support the further scaling of ABCs of Mental Health.

For more about ISCA and our work, please refer to <https://www.isca.org/> and <https://www.isca.org/Health>.

*do to put
this idea in
place?*