

# AUTISM PCP

A hollistic Approach of person-centred planning  
for people with Autism

## Our Newsletter

“There needs to be a lot more emphasis on what a child CAN DO instead of what he can not do.”

— Dr. Temple Grandin



## News from SHIPCON

Mrs Angela Winstanley

Organisation: Shipcon  
Limassol Ltd

April was the month set aside to begin Person Centered Planning in Cyprus. At the Paralemni Day service for young Adults (School Leavers). Staff had been trained, Keyworkers Allocated, and there was great enthusiasm to ‘go live’ with the process.

Then of course as everywhere — we suffered the impacts of Coronavirus. All the risk assessments re safe distancing ( not easy with Autistic Guys) — and hygiene measures were completed and before there was time to put everything in place, the Government issued a severe Lockdown, which took decisions out of everybody’ s hands — The Centre was closed for ‘ the duration’ .

Hard for parents in these circumstances — and for the Service Users who had to cope with change in routine, and a different sort of stimulation / activities. However — Cyprus is now, as I write (early May) in our 7th week and preparations are in place to very carefully re — open the centre.

I have to say that I have been impressed to see the pictures parents have been sending in, showing how they are keeping things going at home, with quite a variety of fitness, independent living and work type activities, as well as favourite relaxation opportunities.

So back to it again — back to the risk assessments, plans — protocols and whatever is needed to make the centre as safe as possible for Staff and Service Users — including social stories about sanitiser, gloves and masks — given a new ‘clean sheet’ start after the break, it’s hopeful that the ‘new rules’ will be easily accepted.

Meanwhile at the Shipcon offices, people have been ‘remotely’ busy also — lots of facetime meetings and making the most of time without travelling and courses to revisit what we have, keep up with Projects — develop online opportunities and prepare for the coming year, when we hope that Educationalists across EU are confident and positive enough to get travelling again soon — and get involved with Shipcon Training events.



## MSSA activities in first half of 2020

Prof. Dr. Vladimir Trajkovski

Organisation: Macedonian Scientific Society for Autism

From January to March MSSA president and vice president worked on creating online modules about sensory issues and cognitive issues at Erasmus plus project entitled “Autism friendly spaces”. These contents will appear on official web site in July this year.

At the end of March Ivana Vasilevska Petrovska, M.A. have submitted the paper entitled: “Parental perspectives on support needs and availability of autism services in South and South-Eastern Europe”. Representatives from all organizations involved in Autism PCP project are authors of this article.

During the April month Prof. Dr. Vladimir Trajkovski have created tool for “Leisure time and recreation” for Autism PCP project. He resubmitted a scientific paper entitled: “Barriers and facilitators to social participation for individuals with autism spectrum conditions” into Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders. On May 22nd Macedonian Scientific Society for Autism will celebrate its 20th Anniversary.

In the period May-June regarding the project “Autism Social Skills and Positive Parenting Programme” financially supported from UNICEF MKD office, MSSA members started with realization of 9 webinars and will work and support 20 children with ASD and their families via online communication.

### Autism Webinars

Every Thursday in May-June 2020 at 12:00  
5 professionals 5 moderators

MSSA - 20 years of autism protection, education, rehabilitation and science in Macedonia



## A BEST PRACTICE:

# OFFSHORE - SAILING ACTIVITY WITH GROUPS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH ASD

Doc Marco Damiani &  
Doc Roberto Miletto

The working and research group of  
"Tutti Noi Onlus"

Organisation: Maendeleo for Children  
(MfC)

It's been quite some time since the sailing activity in Europe has become also a valid element of reinforcement for therapeutic processes for groups of individuals with various psychophysical and social issues.

"Go to sea" as a sailor in fact carries along in its meaning a remarkable psychoeducational value in terms of experimenting emotions never lived before, connected to the conquer of such an open space as the sea, in connection with natural elements like the water, the wind, the sun, the weathercast changes, but also on the other hand being compelled to a psychic and bodily restructure in a new delimited space represented by the boat: "unavoidably in an ambience with restricted space you may live in along with a group that functions as a social amplifier".

We can assume in case we would, that the outdoor effect is returned amplified, in particular from those that are used to interact in institutional spaces where they are recognized as ill, as patience bearers of a pathology, or even alumni bearers of unsucccess and so school failures.

Sailing gives the opportunity to escape from its own rooms, places more and more characterized from virtual exchanges and activities and to live a real adventure, that challenges the capability of each one besides soliciting the curiosity and senses.

Sailing modifies all the above for sure and all participants are there as learners — internship sailors, in water it doesn't matter if you are ill, dumb or not...

The project. The association "TUTTI NOI ONLUS" (All of us) - in collaboration with the "Lega Navale Italiana" (Italian Vessel League) - University of Tor Vergata section in Rome, has elaborated a project of offshore sailing "Autismi Sottovento" - as an integrated tool of "Recovery" aimed for people with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

Recovery is a concept of particular importance for ASD persons, in this case recovery is intended in terms of regaining your existence under a medical aspect, gaining health thanks to integrated tools and social aspect, with reference to a reorganization of life and the capability to relate with others in your context and in the territory you belong to.

This social dimension of relations built thanks to the offshore sailing experience, can be further carried forth beyond the project and is pivotal in the re-educational experience.

This is the scheme: small group (six maximum seven individuals) and the reduction of environmental sensory input as the managing of a limited and structured space eases the programmed activities. The participants are involved gradually in exercises with increasing difficulty, gradually soliciting individual functions and enhancing the motivational component; working routines are implemented gradually and always with the support of experts.

The repetitiveness of the tasks makes them pretty much predictable favoring a limited emotional solicitation. The increasing complexity of the experiences on board slowly makes the participant get used to changes and except them deprogramming the common rigidity of thoughts of ASD individuals.

The duration of the project for each group is minimum of four months; the interventions of the training are carried forth on land and on the boat.

An objective clinical analysis of the experience is done by a testing based on the observation of three segments of the programme: INITIAL - INTERMEDIATE -FINAL. The results are achieved by observing cognitive empowerment and improvement of the lacking cognitive functionalities and modification of the emotion fragility which are the cause of school and life failures.

The main feeling when you manage a sailing boat is freedom and a personal sensation of self-efficiency: while applying to manage a sailing boat's helm and the sheets that regulate the sail without any other help as an engine or propeller, you discover the ability to tame the elements of nature to your will. In this view just think what it could mean for a person with ASD experiment that the boat and its passengers move in the given direction under his/her control and will, producing an evident fulfillment of the need to control his/her self and the other member of the group aboard an the surrounding.

Conclusions. This specific re-habilitation project is moreover centered on the main necessity of transferring into actual "Recovery happening" the sailing experience and a suitable and sufficient removal from the illness and the social and life failure. To make the above happen this project cannot be an isolated rehabilitation cycle. In the outdoor rehabilitation you need to make an extra effort not to limit the experiences so as for them to end to themselves. In the effort of inclusion of each recovery action it is necessary moreover to forecast in the project the involvement of the family and all other support actors — figures that rotate around the protagonist involved in the project.



## Project Partners



<https://www.facebook.com/AutismPCPproject>

<http://www.autismholistic.eu/>