

1. Name of the action / entity in charge

Action: Open Protection Centres for the Elderly (KAPI) – Κέντρα Ανοικτής Προστασίας Ηλικιώμενων (ΚΑΠΗ)

Entity: Social Organization of the Municipality of Patras

Website: <https://kodip.gr/men-triti-ilikia/plirofories/>

2.Objective

The Department for the Elderly supports the elderly of the Municipality of Patras with structures and actions of support, care, empowerment and strengthening the sense of security and self-confidence. The Social Organization of the Municipality of Patras makes every effort to help the elderly citizens to remain active, lively and dynamic, enjoying their life, which in old age has its own charms and challenges. Medical care, physiotherapy, social work, help at home, organized entertainment, as well as all kinds of services are the services provided to our elderly fellow citizens through the Open Protection Centers for the Elderly (KAPI). KAPIs target the physical, mental and social health of elderly people.

3. Origin

KAPIs were established in 1984 by a legislative initiative of the Ministry of Health and Welfare and they were gradually developed through local authorities, and expanded throughout the country so that by 2017 there were more than 900 centres in operation. The Social Organization of the Municipality of Patras recognizes that it is necessary to support lonely elderly people, but also people who have mobility problems or serious illnesses. At the moment, there are three Open Centres for the Elderly (KAPI) in Patras. Currently, most of the KAPIs in Greece are renamed as Friendship Clubs for Elderly

4. Methodology

The services provided by KAPI are varied and cover a wide range of needs of the elderly.

First of all, psycho-emotional support, counselling and general social care is provided. In this context, support and discussion groups for older people and individual sessions are available. Secondly, there are nursing services provided. Thirdly, there are Physiotherapy Centre services.

Then, KAPIs provide Creative Activities Groups that their purpose is to raise awareness and mobilize the elderly people with the aim of the functionality of the individual in his/her personal environment, as well as in the wider social environment.

Lastly, there are Services for the Domestic Support of Members of the KAPIs. Home support is operated exclusively by the Department for the Elderly with permanent staff. It conducts home visits to seniors throughout the municipality who meet specific eligibility requirements.

5. Characteristics

Mental health level

In the three KAPIs of the Municipality of Patras there are **social services** provided:

-Psychosocial support groups (bereavement groups) with the aim of dealing more smoothly with losses experienced by the elderly, in order to be more functional in their daily life.

-Experiential and empowerment groups aimed at engaging the members of KAPIs in issues of the everyday life concerning them through the process of experiential exercises.

-Groups of free discussion and expression. The purpose of these groups is the participation of the elderly through a wide range of concepts, in order to give them the opportunity to freely express their views and to listen to how their peers face the same situations. In individual sessions, counselling is provided with specialised support depending on the problem of each elderly person.

-Training of students of the Social Work Division of the University of Patras in the context of the interconnection of the Social Organization of the Municipality of Patras

with the Department of Educational Sciences and Social Work of the University of Patras.

Creative Activities Groups include:

-Dance groups: The purpose of the dance groups is to familiarize the elderly with different types of dances from all over Greece. This kind of cultural involvement combined with movement makes this group extremely important for the mobilization of the elderly.

-Choir Groups: The purpose of choir groups is the musical and cultural development of the elderly person.

-Familiarisation groups on new technologies: The purpose of this group is to provide knowledge on practical topics such as ICT use, online searching and communication through new technologies. The aim of the group is to introduce the members of the KAPI to new ways of information and communication through the Internet.

-Fitness groups: aimed at exercising and maintaining good physical health among older people with the promotion of the well-being and a healthier lifestyle. They also operate during the summer at the Summer KAPI in the Plaza of Patras.

-Hangout spots with free access to internet and PCs, to information (newspapers), to table games and to drinks and refreshments. Approximately 900 elderly people visit the lounge in all 3 KAPIs every week.

-A Summer Members' Hangout Spot at the Plaza of Patras, where a total of 350 members participate in the free transportation and activities programme at the Summer Members' Hangout Spot.

-Organised recreational activities with an annual targeted Excursion Programme, cultural events as well as visits to museums and archaeological sites. 700 members of the KAPI participate in the excursion programme every year, on a first-come first-served basis.

-Theatrical performances with partner institutions, like the Municipal Regional Theatre of Patras (DI.PE.THE. Patras).

Physical health level

Regarding the **nursing services**:

- Obtaining a nursing history on every registered member of each KAPI.
- Information and practice of first aid.
- Educating patients-members on proper medication.
- Vaccination of KAPI members.
- Measurement of blood pressure (BP), blood sugar measurement, wound care, administering first aid.
- Training of members of KAPI in personal hygiene and advice on eating habits.
- Accompanying elderly people to the summer shelter of the KAPI, as well as on excursions.
- Providing first aid on a daily basis on the premises of the KAPI and at activities outside the KAPI, where necessary.

The **physiotherapy centres** offer services:

- Provision of physical therapy to members of the KAPI after a referral from a doctor, covering a wide range of conditions faced by the elderly, such as Cervical syndrome, Back pain, Lumbosacralgia, Osteoarthritis of the lumbar spine, Osteoarthritis of the lumbar spine of the spinal column of the spinal cord, Subacromial friction syndrome.

Both mental and physical health level

The provided Services for the **Domestic Support of Members of the KAPIs** are:

- Provision of psychological and counselling support
- Assistance and counselling, including psychological support and counselling
- Family counselling
- Social networking
- Primary nursing care

-Prescribing medication, taking vital signs, monitoring medication, accompanying to hospitals and other diagnostic centres.

-Cleaning of premises, personal hygiene, bill payment and purchase of essentials.

6. Recommendations

● Recommendations for policy makers

The KAPI is a Unit that could be upgraded in its role as community center with multiple functions regarding the well being of the elderly in an holistic ways. To that point we could recommend policy makers to :

- develop monitoring mechanisms that identify needs in constant basis
- answering to the challenges in social, health and humanitarian field, by introducing experts to influence a positive mentality to the elderly
- enriching the social interaction and the relevant opportunities for meeting, travelling or volunteering to those elderly who feel ‘employable’ in a different way. ERASMUS projects could work on this way, especially the new Mobility Actions for Adult Learners who wish to travel, learn and offer in voluntary basis in a different context

● Recommendations for practitioners

The practitioners should change their approach on what elderly are capable to do by discussing with them and finding a way to communicate the new technology close to their real needs.

Practitioners should take courses on what elderly means and what are the changes associated to this age transition in order to become agents of proactivity than therapy