

## Cooperation improves health services

Many victims of domestic violence interact with healthcare professionals when seeking routine or emergency care. Yet, despite guidance on recognising and treating victims of domestic violence in Slovenia, healthcare workers rarely report on incidents.

The 'POND' project run by the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, is changing this. The first step was a survey to assess experience. Findings revealed that although 74% of healthcare professionals have encountered a case of domestic violence at work, only 23% had undertaken training on the issue.

To fill the gap, training courses have been held for over 1 700 staff and a number of resources produced. A website, handbook, protocol sheets and smartphone applications offer clear guidance for healthcare workers on responding to domestic violence. Around 1.5 million leaflets explaining how to seek help for victims have been distributed in all inpatient and outpatient services.

"The website and other resources provide the most comprehensive educational platform in Slovenia for health workers working with victims of domestic violence as well as for the victims themselves," said Lilijana Šprah, Academy Psychologist.

Coordination between health services and the police, NGOs and social workers had also previously been limited. As a partner, the Brøset Forensic department at St Olav's Hospital in Trondheim, offered valuable insight from Norwegian domestic violence protocols for improving cooperation and response between the different public and voluntary organisations.

The POND project is one of 20 health and six gender equality projects financed by Norway under an €11.7 million programme to improve public health and promote gender equality.

### Programme operator

Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy

### Donor programme partner

Norwegian Institute of Public Health

### Grant amount

€11.7 million

### Programme link

[bit.ly/1VhQxLL](http://bit.ly/1VhQxLL)

### Results from selected programme

**36 300**

People benefiting from improved health services

**121**

People (29 men and 92 women) participated in exchange visits between Slovenia and Norway

**3 713**

Professionals and students trained in the health sector

**115**

Professional trained in lifestyle-related chronic disease prevention