Providers of rehabilitation services have to face increased and more complex challenges due to a changing environment. The increasingly competitive environment of disability-related health and social services forces service providers to profile themselves, to demonstrate the added value of their service, and to pro-actively reach out to funders and clients. Secondly, the decentralisation and mainstreaming of services result in a situation where the client is not any longer automatically referred to the specialised rehabilitation provider. The rehabilitation service provider has to go out (‘extra muros’) to identify and find clients, and to offer its services as part of a comprehensive package of which major parts are offered by other (mainstream) providers.

Successful service providers must be able to cope with the implications of such developments. They are expected to better understand the expectations of the clients, funders and other stakeholders, and to put marketing strategies and customer management systems in place. Moreover, this changed approach calls for a fundamental mind shift of management and professionals, and the ability to adapt services and service-delivery modes in accordance with emerging needs and this new landscape. Finally, the not for profit environment poses additional dilemmas when deploying new solutions: What about quality, quantity and accessibility of the services to deliver, what about the dilemmas of investments (investment in staff, better housing for services users, working conditions, needs of top class management, building up financial reserves), what about the market position (image building towards public opinion, future or potential users and even colleagues/competitors in the market...)

At the completion of the seminar, the participants will:

- understand the wider European policy context and service-delivery trends that require from service providers to enter into a marketing logic and activities
- have identified the key actors and their impact on the ‘market’
- have made an analysis of the environment and competition factors for their own organisation
- overview the different possible marketing strategies, and have identified the most suitable strategy for their own organisation
- have insight into customer relation management (CRM) systems and public relation tools suitable for the social services sector

The seminar presents a balanced mix between transfer of new knowledge, development of concrete solutions for existing problems for the participants, and an exchange of experiences between participants. This balance will be achieved via a combination of presentations, workspaces and group discussions.
In order to cover the different perspectives on this theme, EPR involves a corporate consultant on communication and organisational issues as well as a sectoral expert who has led for many years a national network of service providers in the disability sector. These experts will be accompanied by the EPR General Secretary as facilitator, which should guarantee the trans-national perspective and the translation of knowledge into concrete solutions for the managers and professionals from EPR member organisations.

**Targeted participants**

The seminar mainly targets the EPR member organisations that have identified marketing of their services as a major challenge, and have included this seminar in their Centre Action Plan. These centres have already at an earlier stage nominated participants from specific marketing departments as well as unit managers with marketing and customer relationships in their work package.

Seen the wide interest among EPR members in this theme, the seminar is also open for all other full and associate members of EPR, be it that the number of participants will be limited to a maximum of 12 persons, in order to properly implement the format described above. Also professionals or centres without much experience in marketing are welcome. Since vocational and medical rehabilitation, as well as social care services, face similar marketing-related challenges, the seminar addresses professionals from these three fields together.

**Experts**

*Jos de Leijer* is director of [@1st Consulting](http://www.1stconsulting.com) and partner of Beijer, *Osten and Smits* a Dutch consultancy company highly specialised in organisational development and communication. Jos de Leijer has nearly 30 years of marketing and communication experience in both profit (Unilever) as non profit (Education and Health Care ) which he obtained both by working and living abroad as in the Netherlands. He facilitates organizations to develop a crystal clear strategic vision and to translate this into practical objectives and marketing actions.

*Jos Sterckx* is director of *Kleis vzw*, the Flemish knowledge center on social Europe and liaison officer at the *Flanders-Europe Liaison agency (vleva)*, where he is responsible for the not for profit sector. Before he was director of *Pluralistisch Platform Gehandicaptenzorg* (a Flemish umbrella of service providers for persons with disabilities) and board member of *Verbond Sociale Ondernemingen* (an intersectoral employers organisation in the not for profit sector). He also was Board member of the *European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD)*. Jos Sterckx started his carrier as social worker in the field of disability and homelessness.

**Practical Information**

The seminar will take place in **EPR Secretariat**, Rue de Spa 15, 1000 Brussels. For more information, please contact Claude Delfosse (claude.delfosse@epr.eu, or +32 2 736 54 44).

To register, please send your registration form completed as soon as possible and at the latest by Friday, 1st October 2010 to claude.delfosse@epr.eu.
Programme

Thursday 4 November 2010

09.00 – 10.30 Identification of the rehabilitation ‘market’ and its main actors
- European trends and tendencies that create a competitive environment for rehabilitation services and the need for service providers to engage in marketing
- Who are the key actors (‘stakeholders’) in the service provision and what is their position in the management of services?
- What’s the role and impact of authorities and regulations on the market?
- Which management capacity is required in the emerging ‘rehabilitation market’, and is growth always the best answer?

COFFEE BREAK

11.00 – 12.30 How should service providers (re)act in this new market environment?
- SWOT analysis by the participants of the market position of their own organisation on the basis of the elements discussed in session 1
- Services who are purely market driven (no intervention of public actors)
- Renewing existing services (how to overcome legal and social barriers?)
- Cooperation, mergers and subcontracting to enhance the market position and reduce costs.
- Price setting and marketing

LUNCH

13.30 – 15.00 Marketing in the rehabilitation sector
- Principles and essentials of marketing in health care and social services
- How can service providers differentiate themselves
- Workspace: Analysis of elements that influence the decision-making of clients, and that distinguish the service provider from competitors

COFFEE BREAK

15.30 – 16.00 Marketing strategies
- Diversification of customer type
- Specialisation of the service offer
- Diversification of service offer

16.00 – 17.00 Workspace on marketing strategies
- Participants use the sector and competition analysis to identify the most suitable strategy for their own organisation
- Presentations by participants and group discussions

Friday 5 November 2010

09.00 – 09.45 Public relations
- Introduction into the theme
- Kaleidoscope of public relations instruments and their impact
- Questions and answers

09.45 – 10.30 Customer retention
- Introduction to ‘life cycle events’ that create opportunities for additional service-delivery
- Workspace: small groups will develop a lifecycle calendar based on a case study

COFFEE BREAK

11.00 - 12.30 Customer relation management (CRM)
- Overview of different CRM systems
- Group discussion on which information needs to be transferred to which actors and what is the best way to do that.
- Short presentations of CRM tools used in EPR member organisations