



*Building capacity for excellence in service
provision for people with disabilities*

EPR Annual Conference 2017

21st century skills and beyond

Understanding the future today to meet tomorrow's challenges

08 – 09 JUNE 2017

Centre de Réadaptation de Mulhouse, France

After ten years, the EPR Annual Conference was back in Mulhouse. The *Centre de Réadaptation de Mulhouse* (CRM) hosted this edition of the EPR's flagship event, welcoming over 90 participants from 8 to 9 June. Prior to the Annual Conference, EPR members attended statutory meetings and a workshop for the Working Group on Medical Rehabilitation, focusing on care pathways for stroke patients. CRM organised guided tours to the various services guiding the participants through the rehabilitation department, the independent living lab and the vocational training programmes. The security guard programme, among others, provided a concrete example of CRM's ability to pilot services that meet labour market demands as well as tackling contemporary problems, such as security concerns in France. Trainees attending this programme, the first and only one of this kind in France, receive a certificate at the end of the course. During the programme, they develop soft skills in conflict management. Considering the high rate of employment upon completion (close to 90%), this programme has proven effective in creating job opportunities.

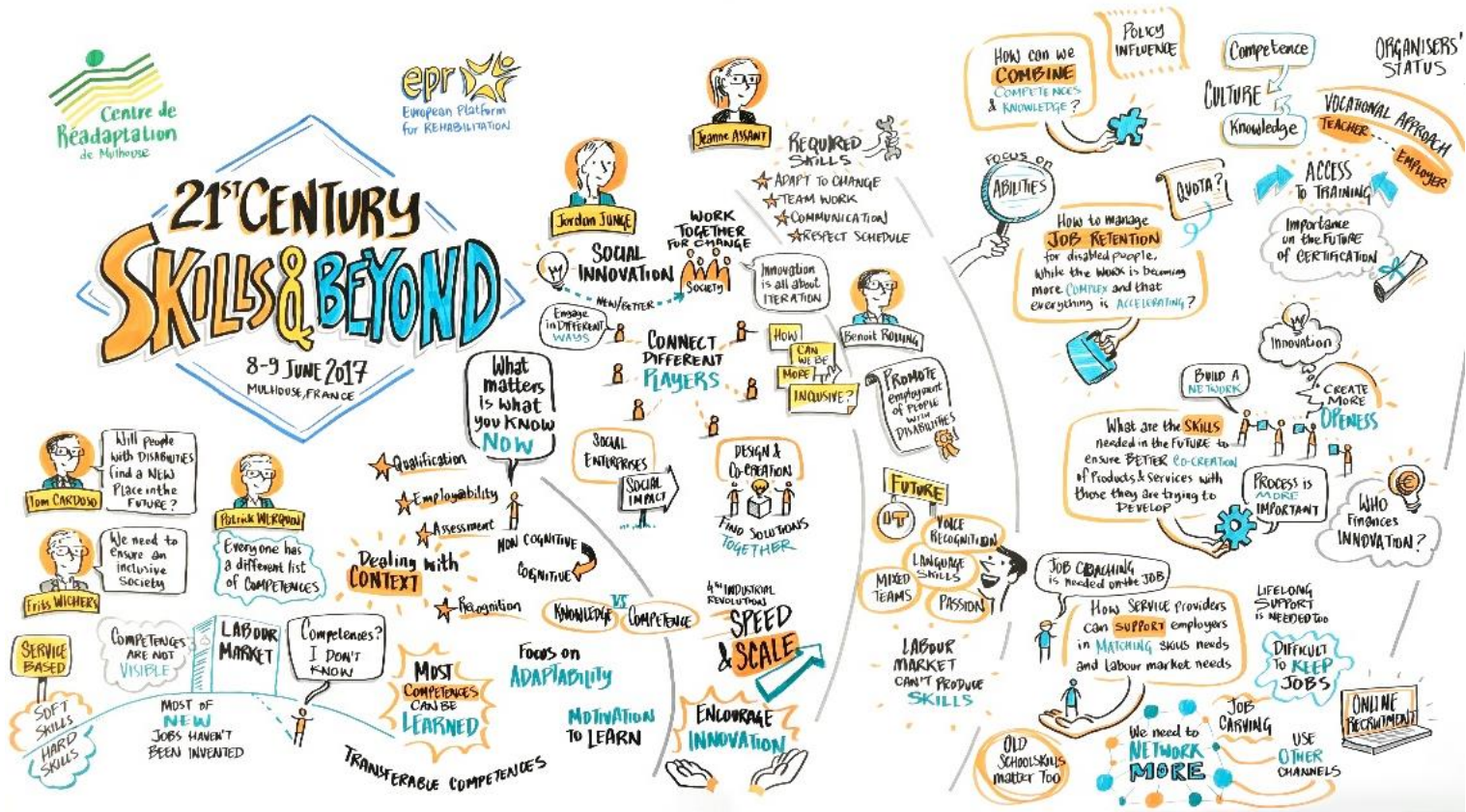
The security guard programme developed at CRM reflects the main topic of this year's edition of the EPR Annual Conference: "*21st century skills and beyond: Understanding the future today to meet tomorrow's challenges*". The conference was an opportunity to reflect on what skills could be needed the most tomorrow and what this means for staff and management in rehabilitation services, for service users, as well as for service provision itself.

What emerged during the plenary sessions, the reflection groups and the workshop sessions, is that anticipating what comes next and the ability to shape services accordingly is crucial in a period characterized by rapid changes in society as well as in the labour market. A key factor to successfully seize the opportunities offered is to innovate services building on clients' and staff's abilities and interests. Hence, EPR's role to create opportunities for leading service providers to stay ahead of the changes is even more important to further support services providers in the future.



This event has received financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014-2020). For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>

Before the official opening session, Laura Jones, EPR Secretary General who chaired the Annual Conference 2017, presented Christopher, the graphic recorder of this event. Graphic recording involves capturing the flow of information by using images and color. The final result is a “graphic wall” where ideas, concepts and reflections from the audience are presented as drawings, linked together, framed with different shapes and highlighted with colors. The goal of graphic recording is to create a visual output that includes the topics touched upon during the event and that can be easily shared afterwards.



After this short presentation of one of the new additions to EPR conferences, Laura Jones gave the floor to Tom Cardoso, CEO of the CRM and Frtis Wichers, EPR President, who welcomed all participants to the event and to the city of Mulhouse.

Before calling the invited speakers of the morning session on the floor, attendees answered the interactive online questionnaire via Sli.Do, an innovative tool to engage the audience during events. Results of this ice-breaker exercise pointed out that participants were *Motivated, Curious* and *Ready* before the start of the Annual Conference 2017.

In the **first session** entitled “What the Future holds?”, participants were invited to critically rethink skills, what we mean by social innovation and also take into account the employers’ perspective on what is needed now and in the future to succeed in the labor market.

Patrick Werquin opened the discussion with a provocative keynote speech on skills drawing upon his experience at the OECD, UNESCO and in developing countries. According to Patrick, the discussion should be focused on competences in general (not general competences) and how to ensure that the individuals’ competences are visible. Patrick noted that labour market trends show how national economies are increasingly focusing on services but we cannot anticipate today what will be needed tomorrow. In his opinion, most competences can be learnt; the key issue is the competence to gain competences, and how to ensure that competences are properly assessed, validated, so as to become qualifications. By doing so, it will be easier to overcome the gap between

“Education should prepare for life – the labour market is only one component”
“Immediate employability is dangerous because it creates less adaptability”

competences (invisible) and qualifications (visible). Having new and reliable qualification systems that include non-formal learning outcomes in the future will create new routes for qualification and perhaps, equality in society. Transferable and transversal competences, including the so called soft-skills, will

be essential to enhance adaptability of the individual through the different stages of their working life.

According to **Jordan Junge** from SIX (UK), social innovation is not a new phenomenon but it has characterised human history because people have always tried to find innovative solutions to problems. The main drivers of social innovation are: constant room for improvement, evolving contexts and the possibility of different solutions to address the same problem. In this sense, social innovation can be described as a spiral process, where challenges create opportunities for generating ideas, to be tested and implemented afterwards. Successful ideas that are scaled up can ultimately change the system and lead to joint efforts to change the society for the better, but it does not make sense to scale up every innovation. Jordan mentioned that values are important when working with society and inclusiveness is the main issue in social innovation, ensuring everyone is empowered. Mentioning the European Institute for Design and Disability, the speaker stressed that by social design and co-creation approaches, we would be able to meet service users’ needs best. Using these approaches will be crucial to ensure a timely adaptation of services during the Fourth industrial revolution, where we witness drastic and fast changes of entire systems of production, management, and governance. Lastly, Jordan reflected on the use of new technologies and how to maximize the benefits they offer to the whole society. Despite there being no clear and single answer to that question, working in networks and thanks to these new technologies, more people can be encouraged to be innovative and therefore contributing to the systemic change.

Skills of the future: *Leadership, Entrepreneurship, Creativity/Problem Solving, Communication Empathy, Teamwork, Engagement with new technologies (4IR)*

Representatives from PSA Group and BIHR, two companies CRM has been working with in the last years, presented their companies’ policies, success stories as well as challenges employers might face when employing people with disabilities. For the **PSA Group** representative, managing job retention in a fast changing labour market poses complex challenges and called on rehabilitation centres to better assess and anticipate trainees’ needs for successful job retention. Multidisciplinary support teams play an important role. **BIHR**, which is now undergoing some internal changes to become a leading European Distributor in parts (auto, moto) presented different initiatives that promote the employment of people with disabilities, which include a stronger collaboration with the CRM. BIHR will focus on developing specific training programmes to develop the skills they need the most in trainees and meet the demand of specific job profiles. Adaptability is key, and different skills mixes become more important, such as profiles with language, management and technical skills. The skills mix in a team is also emphasised, where team members bring different complementary skills.

Following the employer’s presentations, participants were invited to visit the **Project market** and the **Product market** during the coffee break. The former was an opportunity for EPR members to present projects and share the outcomes with other organisations, while offering a moment to discuss possible future collaboration. The Product Market was another news in the EPR annual conferences programme. Selected companies have been invited to showcase their innovative products to EPR members. This year, one company developing innovative wheelchairs based in Hong Kong (**B-Free**) and **Schuhfried GmbH**, an Austrian company providing products and services in the fields of psychological assessment, cognitive training and biofeedback accepted EPR’s invitation.

The **second session** “*Processing the morning’s inputs and drawing conclusions*” started after the coffee break and the visit to the markets. The audience broke into different discussion groups to reflect on some of the many ideas presented by the speakers.

Each participant joined one of four groups created around the following topics:

1. *How can we combine Competences and Knowledge?*
2. *How to manage job retention for disabled people, while the work is becoming more complex and that everything is accelerating?*
3. *What skills are needed in the future to ensure better co-creation of products and services with those they are trying to develop?*
4. *How service providers can support employers in matching skills needs and labor market needs?*

Each group appointed a rapporteur to share in plenary the main ideas emerged in the discussion within the group.

GROUP 1: They propose a change of the culture/attitude towards Competences and Knowledge. A much deeper understanding of staff/users' needs could favour a combination of competences and knowledge. The group also noted that lifelong learning in ageing societies and alternative cost-effective education systems should lead to new (and flexible) ways competences are assessed, perhaps using a credit systems for individuals.

GROUP 2: Starting from the assumption that the fast changes and increasing complexity are common to challenges for all, the group proposed to focus on the individuals' abilities, the opportunities to develop skills through supported employment and lifelong learning. Lastly, job-carving was mentioned as a practical approach to enhance employment and job retention.

GROUP 3: Openness to changes and adaptability to new contexts emerged as the main skills stakeholders should develop to actively contribute to the co-creation of services.

GROUP 4: By closer collaboration and partnerships with the employers, service providers have to develop programmes able to anticipate the most important skills employers will look for in the upcoming years.

The 2017 **Innovation Prize** was awarded to URI (Slovenia). Evalda Bizjak, occupation therapist in Maribor, proudly presented the socio-cultural activities in the vocational rehabilitation program aiming at increasing the quality of PWD's life. Based on the results of their programmes, art, theatre, music, poetry and other instrumental performances have been effective in improving the quality of life of patients, including:

- meeting the needs of people with disabilities,
- strengthening the inner power of people, empowerment of people,
- bolstering motivation
- increasing the vital energy,
- improving self-esteem and self-confidence.

In the afternoon, the Session 3 of the Annual conference was dedicated to the five **parallel training Workshop sessions**.

Workshop 1: Equal Opportunities can be learnt: skills to train employers for inclusive employment

Andrea Toarniczky Corvinus University of Budapest, Institute of Management, Hungary
Paal Haavorsen, NHO Service – the Confederation of Norwegian Service Industries, Norway

Paal presented the project "Ripples in the Water" showing how in Norway they have opened the labour market to persons with disabilities by building relationships and partnerships with employers, and by training employers. Andrea provided information on the main barriers to the integrated employment of people with altered working capacity covered in the proAbility project.

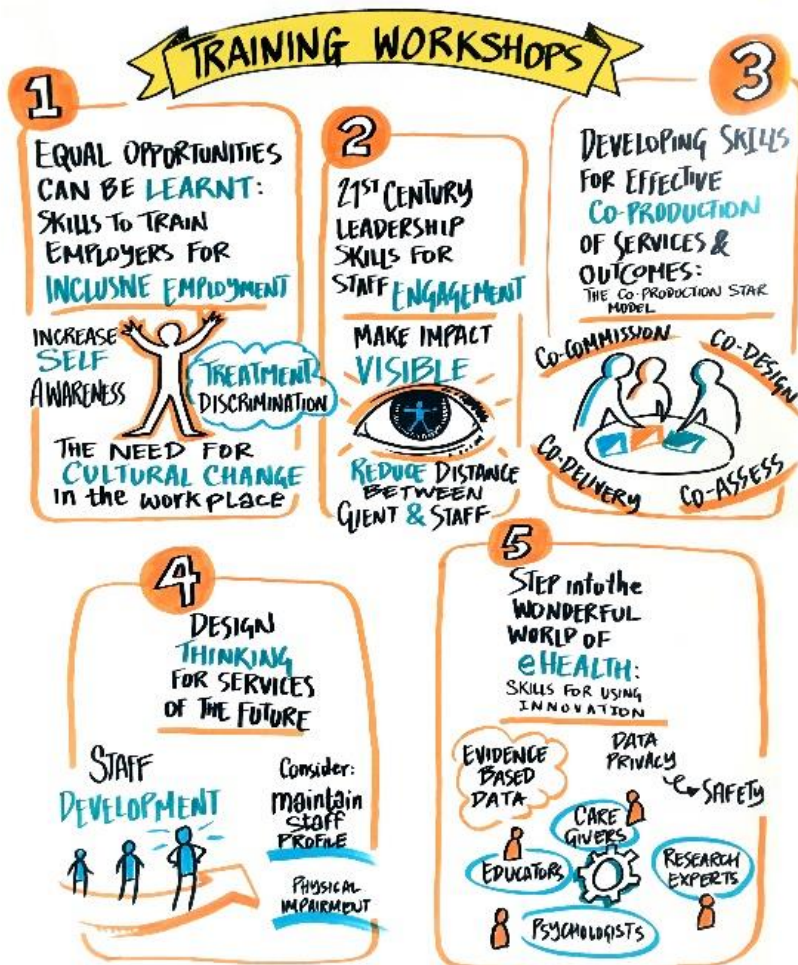
Besides a theoretical overview, the facilitators prepared two practical exercises where participants had to leave their comfort zone and experience mental barriers. It was clear that participants gathered useful information to take home to their own organizations.

Workshop 2: 21st Century leadership skills for staff engagement

Herma Veltman, Director REA College Pluryn, the Netherlands

This workshop showed the contribution of leadership skills to the culture, performance and success of the organization in the future. IT was a follow up of the 2016 Workshops for Directors, where staff engagement and motivation was identified as a key issue for EPR to work further on. The first session set the scene in an interactive session with participants – addressing global, organisational and leadership trends and skills needs for leaders, such as empathy, persuasion and community-building.

The importance of giving employees autonomy and trust was emphasised; whilst also setting high expectations and ensuring clear accountability. Herma talked about creative result orientation, self-steering teams and taking into account people’s full range of skills and interests in their work – wholeness – for a successful, motivated workforce. During the second session, participants assessed their own leadership characteristics and had discussions in a world café format.



Workshop 3: Developing 21st century skills through co-production of services: The STAR model

Olivier Terrien, Governance International Associate, France

The session started with a series of questions for the participants aimed at understanding their perception of the most important values of co-production approaches. This first round of exchange of personal

thoughts and reflection allowed the participants to better understand to their openness to co-production principles and to what extent these principles are already embedded in the organisation’s culture. While guiding participants through the STAR model, some questions emerged in particular in terms of barriers preventing the widespread use of co-production approaches. According to the trainer, one of the possible answers is that not all stakeholders are involved in co-designing the service at the very beginning. However, when all stakeholders are involved in the co-design phase, co-produced services appear to be rather successful and service users satisfied. According to the participants the benefits of using co-produced services would be the improved quality of services and efficiency, while the change of organizational culture as the main possible barrier.

Workshop 4: Design thinking for services of the future

Mireille Pacquet, LearningLab, France

Participants test the user-centric methodology, the E.D.I.T process ((Empathy, Design, Ideate and Test), “cross-pollinated” ideas, reflected on future challenges and opportunities, for service providers and considered the development of innovative solutions and new ideas in different sectors. The main outcome of this workshop is that sustainable solutions will come from more collaboration involving all stakeholders in the field of rehabilitation and patient-centred service design. The solutions considered by the different participants reveal a desire to strongly encourage collaboration through a sharing of practices and co-operation to imagine future solutions that would involve all the stakeholders. They also envisioned a more patient-centred approach, considered staff training as a key asset to improve service provision. Being able to change the organisation and digitalizing services were also considered but to a lesser degree as immediately actionable solutions.

Workshop 5: Step in to the wonderful world of eHealth: skills for using innovation

Margot van der Doelen, Innovation advisor Pluryn, the Netherlands

Pluryn run a highly interactive workshop focusing on how participants could relate and embed the use of e-health and technological developments in their daily routine and working place. What could be done to improve our health in our work place and how could technology intervene? Divided in groups of two, participants were able to go through the schedule of any of their week days and share with a partner how could it be improved with e-health. Afterwards, participants pitched their ideas to the group. Pluryn explained what their Living Lab is, the dedicated space to innovation within the organisation where both employees and clients are the main target. Focusing on the co-creation principle allowing participation of all related subjects, Pluryn is able to innovate listening to their needs. E-health will have an increasing importance on daily and assisted care in the present future and will help centers better coordinate their resources by providing individual care through online systems. Inspiring and innovative as the topic, participants were active to get to know more about what e-health will mean for the rehabilitation sector in the future.

The Second day of the Annual Conference started with the Graphic Recorder presenting the main finding of the previous day using the “Day I Wall”.

During **Session 4** some EPR members presented their innovative practices in a “Speed presentation” format:

1. Therapeutic Patient Education (Carole Deyber/ Fabienne Richard, CRM – France)

A patient-centred holistic approach that helps patients with chronic diseases to manage their lives with a chronic disease well, including through peer support. The presentation was followed by a personal testimony of the patient undergoing TPE and why it has been helpful for her to live with her disease.

2. Improved mobility competence leading to better job opportunities

(Mario Polzer, Josefs-Gesellschaft – Germany)

Mario Polzer presented the findings of the “Kompetent mobil” (2012-2014) project that included seminars on independent living skills with a focus on physical mobility, including mobility training for people using wheelchairs. The main conclusion is that improved mobility competences lead to a better quality of life, not only better job opportunities.

3. How to introduce (digital) health innovations in daily rehabilitation practice?

(Lisa Morsink, Adelante – The Netherlands)

In her presentation, Lisa Morsink shared some of the innovative healthcare solutions her and her team have developed. Adelante has created, piloted, evaluated and scaled up cost-effective solutions

such as the e-consult, online therapy. She showed that innovation can be very affordable, and that the testing phase is key, remembering that innovations might not always meet the need so not to be afraid to decide not to use a product in the end.

4. Ecological agriculture as part of recovery process (Pablo Sanchez, Fundación INTRAS – Spain)

Pablo Sanchez presented a series of EU funded projects that can improve the living conditions and services to people with mental health conditions through technology (Ehcobutler, Rural Path) and sustainable growth (Ecoempleo, Permind) of the rural areas. He explained that they are working on a project using a hologram to help people with dementia remember tasks, but that rural internet connections are proving problematic.

5. Functional capacity evaluation, bridge between medical revalidation and job-coaching (Patrick Ruppel, GTB – Belgium)

By using the FCE (an evaluation of capacity of activities to make recommendations for participation in work, while considering the person's body functions and structures, environmental factors, personal factors and health status) GTB and the partner of a project carried out in Flanders have been able to design integrated services for people with pain or physical problems. This enables people to find suitable work placements.

For the “**What's next for EPR**” session, participants were divided into small reflection groups. Each group was tasked to identify the *three most important* things that EPR should do next, three priorities, either to support services (i.e. skills for clients) or organisations (skills for staff and management). Starting with individual reflections, participants exchanged the main priorities within the groups and appointed a rapporteur to share their suggestions in plenary. Using the online audience interaction tool, participants could vote online for their preferences for priorities:

Adaptability (training of staff)	36%
Information platform online	32%
Influencing/lobbying/policy	28%
Focus group/ benchlearning	23%
Training the employers	18%
EU funding	14%
Increase visibility of EPR (equip members)	14%
Project follow up	14%

Yara Al-Adib, Service & Experience designer, gave the closing speech. Yara told the conference how she recently decided to turn her life around and follow some of her personal passions and interests connected to her Syrian origins. Step by step, she managed to create a catering service employing Syrian housewives living in Belgium. To do so, she met and spoke with them and understood the business and social potential behind one of the master tasks housewives do in their daily routine, cooking. She saw that this could be the way forward to create concrete opportunities for Syrian women in Belgium hence promoting inclusion in society. Yara explained how Syrian housewives tend to be marginalised within the Belgian society because they do not speak the local language but also because they are from a culture where women do not normally work outside the home. These meant that the ladies experienced a form of disability. Despite the initial doubts some housewives had with regards to participating in this catering service, the business is now thriving and they have more interactions with Belgians. The ladies have now bonded and created a solid team. Yara's experience showed how an example of how to build on people's skills and passion and seize opportunities in a fast changing world.



Sabina Lobato Lobato,
EPR Vice-President and
Christian Bernardin, CRM
board member, closed the
conference, talking of the
need to be proactive and
working towards a common
mission.

Presentations from plenary sessions and workshops are available on the EPR website.