

SAVE AGE: First Pan-European Workshop Shows Impressive Energy Saving Potentials

Prague, 28th September 2011 - SAVE AGE project partners from 10 European countries gathered in Prague to present the first findings of their work so far. Only 15 months after the project's start, the audience was informed about the results of measurements and analyses. The message behind it is: Every care home should check their energy saving potentials.

At the opening of the workshop, Prof. Dr. Wilfried Schlüter, President of the E.D.E. (European Association for Directors and Providers of Long-Term Care Services for the Elderly) emphasized the importance and potentials which result from the work of the SAVE AGE project team. Technological advancements and changes of behaviour open the way to energy and cost saving measures.

Darko Ferčej, SAVE AGE leading project partner, underlined the importance of energy efficiency in care homes because of their increasingly significant role in view of increasing energy needs and the rising number of elderly people requiring nursing care. Mr Ferčej pointed out that the funds for investments are low and, therefore, change of behaviour is even more important. The strategic goal of the SAVE AGE project is to achieve 5 % of energy savings and reductions of CO₂ emissions in the participating care homes during the period May 2010 – May 2013. 540 employees will be trained during the project.

Pedro Esteves, project partner in Portugal, presented the results of energy performance measurements. An adapted computer based benchmark tool was created to measure different energy consumptions, with the result that heating is the biggest energy consumer. The importance of energy efficiency and legal conditions also differ in individual countries.

Boris Koprivnikar, project partner in Slovenia, reported on an energy management information system in senior homes in Slovenia, supported by an external expert. An industrial tool for measuring heat, water, and energy consumption was adapted to analyse and compare care homes' energy consumption and to reduce costs. The results show great differences between care homes' costs, for example differences in costs for electricity amount to 30 % and for heating even up to 100 %.

Miren Iturburu, project partner in Spain, reported on behavioural analysis regarding energy efficiency in 100 participating care homes. As a result, the commitment to energy efficiency shows extension potential. There is a lack of information and training on energy efficiency in care homes; apart from that, there is also a great need to make wasting of energy use more visible.

Kent Anderson from Sweden summed up a study on 3,000 employees. He stated that a concept to motivate and increase awareness of the employees, with clear roles and responsibilities, can achieve measurable results and even secure jobs.

Sandra Langer, department for energy management in Stuttgart, presented the approach of internal contracting, regarding for example new controls for heating, ventilation or lighting, insulation of walls or top floors. This model results in a revolving fund. The payback time for the thermal insulation of top floors was only 4.4 years.

Kostas Zapounidis, project partner in Greece, gave practical recommendations by reporting on a strategy and action plan for energy efficiency in care homes. He pointed out the opportunities and the potential of changes in behaviour and investments, based on measurements and analyses of all participating care homes. Even minor changes of behaviour result in 5 % savings, low investments in 10 %, and high investments in 25 % savings. These savings can start immediately; experiences from the audited buildings show that there is great potential for saving.

170 participants of the workshop gained experience in multiple aspects of energy efficiency and their positive feedback was the acknowledgment that the project work is a valuable contribution to the reduction of energy consumption.

Further information:

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