

# The Safety House

## **Name of the project/service**

Zorghuis and Veiligheidshuis Tilburg, The Netherlands

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Poverty and social exclusion is rarely the sole problem in the lives of people. Far more often, poverty is just one part of the complex problems affecting vulnerable people. Complex problems, including poverty and social exclusion, still, too often are addressed in a unilateral manner. Solutions and services are supply oriented and arising from specific laws, organizations and goals. A very comprehensive approach is needed to address these complex issues effectively. Tilburg's Care House (Zorghuis) and Safety House (Veiligheidshuis) are based on such a comprehensive approach. The Care and Safety House cannot resolve all problems that people face, but they are an important step in actually tackling complex problems.

## **Description of the service**

*What is the Care and Safety House?*

The Care House and Safety House Tilburg is a collaboration of 20 partner organizations working on a joint approach to ensure wellbeing and security, for a liveable society. The Safety House Tilburg was founded in 2002 by the City of Tilburg, Police 'Mid and West Brabant' and the Public Prosecution office of the Breda court district. Since then, many other cities in the Netherlands have developed a Safety House in their city.

In 2008, the Care House was established. The Care House focuses on adults and families with multiple and complex problems. Directed by the municipality, service suppliers form an integral and binding plan of action for these people.

There is a large overlap between the partners and target groups for the Care House and Safety House. With the Care and Safety House under one roof health and welfare are brought in balance within the safety theme.

#### *What do the Care House and Safety House do?*

The main objective of both the Care House and Safety House is to ensure that adults, adolescents and families with multiple problems do not fall through the gaps and therefore miss out on the care, support and the services they need.

Safety House and the recently associated Care House aim and are designed to direct and shape the chain of service suppliers in individual cases.

The Care and Safety House Tilburg seek a common approach to punishment and care, with the motto: 'one family - one plan'. The Care and Safety House focuses on the following target groups: youth, persistent offenders, victims and perpetrators of domestic violence, disturbing care evaders and persons / families with multiple and complex problems.

The objectives are:

- Preventing and reducing recidivism, nuisance and crime through a personalised approach for these target groups
- Gaining an insight into the multiple complex problems of clients and by that enhancing the multi-disciplinary care to those clients.
- Coordination of care by timely information exchange between organisations about the personal circumstances of the client and making binding agreements on a coherent and comprehensive approach.
- Ongoing monitoring of agreements and the justification of the activities and achievements via the annual plan, to the city board, affiliated organisations and the citizens.
- Providing assistance for victims
- Providing appropriate (after) care for ex-prisoners

All this in order to achieve a safe and viable community in the city of Tilburg and regional municipalities.

#### **Background of the project**

The Safety House Tilburg was founded in 2002 by the City of Tilburg, Police 'Mid and West Brabant' and Public Prosecution office of the Breda court district. It started as a collaboration of judicial chain partners with the aim of reducing recidivism among youth and shoplifters. Later, more and more organisations providing care services were connected, because repression alone was not sufficient. Only with complete (after) care planning and a network that provides early warning signals from within the target groups, can the goals of the Safety House be met. In the following years, more care and welfare organisations were connected.

Mid 2006, the city of Tilburg decided that care and welfare provision had to be balanced with the security theme. Consequently, the council decided on the development of a Care House in Tilburg to better organize and direct the help and care provided by service providers to specific target groups. The concept of the Safety House served as an example for the development.

### **Role as a director**

When it comes to care provision, the City Council chose to put coordination and direction in the hands of the municipality, both at policy level and at executive level. This choice was endorsed by all relevant institutions and organisations in the city.

Regarding directing, there are three distinct forms:

- Policy Management: management of the organization and cooperation within the chain. Establishment and enforcement of cooperative agreements, so that a balanced chain approach is reached;
- Process Management: coordination of care and services at case level, when the service providing processes are jammed.
- Content management: the management of the case (coordination of care itself). Service providers (partners) first agree on a coherent plan. In complex cases, different partners will provide services but only one will take on the coordination.

The city's choice means that the first two forms of care management (direction) are drawn towards the municipality. The municipality is responsible for coordination at the process level. The third form of direction is nuanced. One chain partner is designated by the collaborating partners to direct the service provision in a particular case. In most cases, this is one of the participating institutions. In some cases however, the content management is undertaken by the municipality or the Security Staff, namely when there is an administrative process. In an administrative process such as an eviction proceeded by the Victoria Law, the powers of the municipality are so dominant that it has far-reaching consequences for the care.

The chain partners focus on the composition of the provided services, a comprehensive and individualised approach around a particular client or family. It is crucial, that the leading chain partner effectively directs an integrated approach.

In conclusion policy and process management are the responsibilities of the municipality. It has the task of creating dialogue and monitoring the progress of the agreements. The partners / professionals are responsible for the creation and content of a comprehensive approach. A good cooperation between the supply chain partners themselves and between the partners and the municipality, are essential.

#### *Introduction of the Social Support Act (WMO)*

The advent of the Social Development Act (WMO) obliged the city to aid the participation of vulnerable citizens in society and strengthen self-reliance. In Tilburg the implementation started in early 2007. During 2008, advances were made, for example, with the memorandum on addiction care and introduction of the Urban Compass (Stedelijk Compas, 2008). These developments fit perfectly with the effort to establish a Care House specifically designed for vulnerable citizens in Tilburg with multiple problems.

#### *Care House and Home Safety: an odd couple?*

The Care House and the Safety House have their own specific characteristics. The ways the houses come in contact with individuals differ, as well as the focus within the supplied services.

On the other hand, the two houses often serve the same people, because they both deal with (young) vulnerable people. That fact has led to intensive cooperation under one roof. Therefore, there is a large overlap between the partners and target groups for the Care House and Safety House. With the two houses under one roof, the health and welfare theme is in balance with the safety theme.

#### *Partners in the Care House and Safety House*

Besides the directing organizations, the municipality Tilburg (chain of care providers) and the Public Prosecution office of the Breda court district (criminal chain), the partners are:

- Halt Midden- en West-Brabant - deals with juvenile offenders in the region
- Bureau Jeugdzorg - helps and protects children and their families, gives indications for appropriate care
- Novadic-Kentron - addiction care

- Politie Midden en West Brabant - the police organisation
- Raad voor de Kinderbescherming Midden en West Brabant - council for child protection
- Slachtofferhulp Nederland - victim support
- Stichting Reclassering Nederland - probation organisation
- Dienst Justitiële (Jeugd ) Inrichtingen - (juvenile) detention facilities
- Instituut Maatschappelijk werk - social work organisation
- Steunpunt Huiselijk Geweld - domestic violence support centre
- Stichting MEE - support for people with (medical) limitations
- Juvans - social work organisation
- De Bocht / Kompaan - support organisation for women, children and families
- Traverse -social work organisation
- GGZ Breburg - psychiatric aid organisation
- GGD Hart voor Brabant - general health organisation
- RIBW MB - psychiatric aid organisation
- Amarant - support for people with mental limitations

### **Description of the good practice**

At the present time there are 20 cooperative chain partners. The basis for cooperation is the translation of a personalised approach to an integrated approach, also involving the environment of the person involved.

The cooperation is based on the Integral Intervention Type. This is a network that, in addition to individual and group-oriented approach, pursues an area-based approach to punishment, care, supervision and administrative enforcement.

The available information is used to make a comprehensive plan. Forces of the various partners are combined for an effective collaboration, shared commitment and responsibility. Punitive and care approaches are aligned. Direction is conducted in an effective collaboration between organisations, which prevents families from being bombarded by a multitude of providers, each fulfilling only their own task.

Part of the strength of the Care and Safety House is in the daily collaboration from one location. About 150 employees of the various participating organizations, work one or more days per week in the Care and Safety House. This leads to short communication lines.

The chain partner's front offices and the care providers in the field, form the 'entrance' for customers. This is done deliberately. The networks and connections the partners have within the society reach further than a single front office can ever do. If, in a case, problems are complex and (might) involve multiple organisations, the partners will put the case forward in the Care or Safety House.

In addition, the city established accessible services in different neighbourhoods, namely the Centre for Youth and Family (Centrum voor jeugd en gezin) and Loket Z. Both services are easily accessible for all citizens with questions regarding healthcare, poverty, parental and other requests for help.

### *The approach*

The cases discussed in the Zorghuis and Veiligheidshuis (Safety and Care House) are put forward by the chain partners or front offices within the city. They are enriched with information available from the partners. After case deliberation by the partners in the Zorghuis and Veiligheidshuis a plan of action is formed. The partners implement the actions according to the plan. This implementation is monitored until the objectives are reached.

### *Steps:*

- ✓ Input
- ✓ Information enrichment
- ✓ Case deliberation
- ✓ Plan of action
- ✓ Implementation
- ✓ Monitoring
- ✓ Closure

### *The objectives of the care house are:*

- The alignment of care through timely information exchange tuned to the personal circumstances of the client and to make binding commitments on a consistent, comprehensive and chain approach of the supplied care.
- To each an integrated binding scenario in terms of housing, finance and social functioning for clients, to reduce poverty, unemployment, homelessness, abandonment or neglect of persons who are entrusted to care and to stop deviant behaviour, disruption and insecurity to improve the general welfare and quality of life in Tilburg.

- The detection and contact with alarming care evaders, to lead them to appropriate care.
- Insight into the multiple and complex problems of clients and to gain insight into the role parties have in shaping the care of these clients.

*The objectives of the safety house are:*

- To reduce recidivism by regular offenders, juvenile offenders and perpetrators of domestic violence and to prevent first offences by young people
- To provide adequate care for victims
- To be a reliable information hub for participating chain partners
- To provide appropriate (after)care

*Prevention, repression, and (after) care*

The personalized approach to the target groups within the Care and Safety House is an important factor for the successful reduction of problems. In the Care and Safety House personal circumstances are considered. Depending on the person, an approach may include guidance at home, at work or schooling, debt restructuring, assistance in the rehabilitation of an addiction, help in acquiring social skills, or anti-aggression. In a number of approaches the justice department can provide a credible regulatory 'encouragement'. In short, prevention, repression, and (after) care are part of the work in the Care and Safety House Tilburg.

## **Identification of needs and evidence**

*What is the value of Care and Safety House for the participating partners and the target audience?*

- The themes of Safety, Youth, Health, Poverty and Welfare are interconnected.
- The quality of assistance to persons with multiple and complex problems improves.
- The Care House is a place where "cross-fertilisation of knowledge" between staff from different institutions takes place.
- Intensive Care House cooperation makes more than a "business center"!
- The employee of the Care House can rely on the expertise of many organisations in the back office. (It is important that the worker in the Care House retains sufficient links with the back office.)
- By mandating and broad representation, high quality decisions are achieved in the addressed cases. This breaks the deadlocks that may occur in some cases.

## *Results*

- Recidivism among youth of 18 years old (treated in the safety house) decreased by 51%
- From 2006 onwards the number of youth accused declined in Tilburg (984 to 778), as well as the number of youngsters who committed their first offence (590 to 432).
- On average (in 2008), a repeat offender was detected and apprehended each day (367 times).
- The total number of persistent offenders fell from 390 in 2006 to 314 in 2009.
- The Safety House in 2008 coordinated the care of all Tilburg ex-offenders (546). All the adults who came out of detention where made an offer for after care such as: housing, filling a day (work - education - otherwise), finances and health.
- The processing time was greatly reduced by the cooperation with Safety House.
- About 1,100 reports of domestic violence were made to the police in 2008
- Agreements were made around approaching perpetrators , assisting victims and protection of children.

## *Funding*

The expenses for the Care House and Safety House are around €400,000 a year for the municipality. This includes the rent of the building, personnel and operation costs.

Participating partners fund almost 20%. The partners pay €5000 for each workplace. The Justice department funds about 25%. The rest of the amount is funded from various budgets made available by the national government to the municipality. These budgets are intended for the city's safety, care, educational and youth policy. Funding is mainly based on long term budgets, which improves sustainability.

The incorporated organisations in the Veiligheidhuis and Zorghuis have their own funding for the services they provide.

## **What are your top ten tips for similar projects**

1. Create support with desired chain organisations
2. Realize joint housing and workplaces
3. Develop a solid direction concept
4. Create a balanced budget with the participation of the organisations
5. Appoint enthusiastic “pacemakers” who can inspire staff and organisation



6. Start small with existing forms of cooperation under one roof
7. Identify achievable goals
8. Encourage creativity in the workplace, and make sure the underlying organisations give this space to their employees



Employees of the safety house