

“Our Cafe” Project

The aim of the project is creation of job opportunities for neglected target group – parents or family members of seriously ill and long-term hospitalized children or adult patients.

These people have decided to look after their hospitalized children (or adult family members) intensively, even if the price to be paid was loss of their employment. Our organization has been working with them for several years and this project is based on the experience we have gathered over the years.

A decision was made to set up and operate a cafe at the Thomayer Hospital which would provide employment for such parents. These jobs are based on flexible time basis to accommodate the requirements of both employment and child care.

Other objectives of the project include:

- Increase overall awareness of the existence of this specific target group and its needs.
- Creation of a pleasant meeting place in the Thomayer Hospital for patients, visitors and hospital staff. The cafe offers place to enjoy good coffee and also serves as place for various cultural and social activities.
- Reminder of the historical context of the period in which Thomayer Hospital originated and legacy of Tomas Garrigue Masaryk.

The Thomayer Hospital was built in 1928, originally as the Central Social Institution (shelter) for elderly and sick people. The opening ceremony was attended by the president Tomas Garrigue Masaryk. The Hospital was named after him as Masaryk's Homes. Permanent exhibition of photographs from this period is a part of the cafe.

Also, this is one of the reasons why the cafe has been taken under patronage of Foreign Minister Karel Schwarzenberg.

Schedule of the project:

- 1. August 2009 - August 2010:** Project preparation, support and funding
(Concept creation, establishing of work group including the involvement of the target group; finding suitable premises, identification of funding sources - fundraising events, grant applications, preparation of the construction project)
- 2. September 2010 - January 2011: Reconstruction of the premises**
(Construction bid/tender, further fundrasing, reconstruction of the premises and cafe equipment/furnishing, PR project)
- 3. February 2011:** Cafe inauguration with media participation
- 4. February 2011 – present:** Project continuance, providing supported employment for target group

The management of the Thomayer's hospital has supported this project by making suitable premises available. The premises available are as follows: ca. 80 m2 for the cafe and 100 m2 for technical facilities.

The premises was necessary to reconstruct and prepared for their intended purpose.

Cafe interior is based on 1930's design principles and it refers to the tradition of social housing concept of Masaryk's Homes. The interior contains few historical photographs of Masaryk's Homes in large format on canvas.

Project budget:

- Reconstruction and equipment/furnishing up to opening day – 2.100.000 CZK
- Most of the funds and equipment was acquired through donations and grants with strong project contribution from volunteers (organized through corporate channels or individually).
- Wages and salaries at the beginning of the project were supported by a grant from the Persona Grata 240.000 CZK.
- Over the next two years of operations additional funds have been invested in equipment and improvements - approximately 200.000 CZK (Private donations).

Target group:

During first two years of its existence, the project employed three mothers of long-term ill children.

Employees form the target group work on flexible part-time basis which accommodates the requirements of both employment and child care. They are involved in cafe operations and they recover their working skills. Also, they have the oportunity to restore their social contacts.

Also, the target group has been extended so that it includes other groups of vulnerable people - mothers with disabled/handicapped children in home care, caregivers for long-term ill outside of hospital care, mentally ill, epileptics etc. all of whom are affiliated with Thomayer Hospital. Our project offered job opportunities to all these people directly on the hospital premises.

For 2013, we have prepared a joint project with the association Epistop focusing on employment of epileptics.

Still, our priority remain parents of long-term hospitalized children and our project has always focused on this target group.

The financial aspects of the project:

Over the period of two years of operation, our cafe managed to maintain balanced budget covering the run costs (mainly salaries). The cafe is therefore currently self-sufficient with a slight profit (black zero).

Any profits from the cafe are used in financing of supporting activities in the hospital.

We would like to gradually increase our revenue to create financial reserves for the future (covering planned equipment renewal and repairs). Also, we want to expand the target group of employees.

Outputs / results / achievement of the objectives:

"Naše kavárna" ("Our café") is a project focusing on neglected target group - family members of children who are hospitalized long-term in hospital.

We are successfully increasing awareness of issues facing chronically hospitalized patients and their families. We also help integrating target group of parents into the workforce.

Our cafe has become a pleasant meeting place for both patients, visitors and hospital staff. The emergence of a relaxed environment in the hospital complex is highly praised and the cafe has in this regard great reputation.

Cafe is often used for charity and social events (openings, exhibitions, book signings and discussions with authors of new books, benefit performances, etc.). We are particularly happy that it hosts events of patient and non-profit organizations.

We were able to recall the history of the Thomayer Hospital.

Introduction of the Organization:

The Civil Association Lékořice was founded in 2005. Its members strive to implement various supporting activities and projects within the environment of the Czech health care system.

The mission of Lékořice o.s. is to spread the idea of the need and effectiveness of including non-medical care into the therapy and rehabilitation process of patients.

The objective of the organization is to improve the atmosphere and environment of medical establishments in the Czech Republic by creating Support Care Centers and by developing their activities.

Lékořice, o. s. has been closely cooperating with the Thomayer Hospital in particular and the Královské Vinohrady Teaching Hospital in Prague.

Lékořice o.s.

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