

Working Group 1 Meeting – COST Action 866
First meeting 28/29 August 2006

Dr Joe Sempik (University of Loughborough, UK) was elected as leader of WG1, and Dr Patrik Grahn (University of Alnarp, Sweden) was elected as Deputy of the Group.

For next meeting 4/5 December 2006:

The group will present a plenary lecture to provide an overview of research carried out on the health benefits of green care in Europe. Members of the group will collect information on specific research projects that have recently been carried out in their country or are currently in progress and will report on these to the group.

The first milestone of the group is to *develop a conceptual framework and theoretical model for the health-promoting mechanisms of green care* (MoU, p 10). At the next meeting of the WG members of the group will present their outlines for a framework or model based on their own research or experience of the research. Thus, a number of different approaches or viewpoints will be presented, depending on the area of research of the group members. These outlines will be used by the group to develop a model (or a number of interrelated models) of the benefits to health and well-being of green care. The eventual outcome of this will be the publication of a series of papers or report which will describe the various processes associated with the benefits of green care and which will place them within the context of present knowledge and research in medical and social care.

The method of publication is still to be decided but may be a special edition of a journal such as Hortscience or a report published and printed by the institution of a member of the working group. The format is likely to be a number of individual contributions from members (or from groups within the WG engaged in a similar approach), accompanied by an overview which brings them together.

A long term aim of the working group (milestones 2 and 3) is to address the issue of methodology in the research of green care. The next meeting (December 2006) will therefore discuss the different methods used by researchers within the WG and the methods and approaches known to WG members. A future meeting will focus specifically on research methods in green care and any additional researchers with expertise in research methods will be invited to the meeting.

A separate proposal has been submitted to the ESF for funding for a seminar on research methods in green care. If this is successful the seminar will take place in the UK in spring 2006. A meeting of the WG may take place immediately after this seminar. It is likely that most of the members of the WG would attend such a seminar.

Milestones 4 and 5 (joint research between participating countries and the development of a research agenda) will be addressed once work on the other objectives has started and is progressing.