


Digital Peer-to-Peer Support for Older Persons

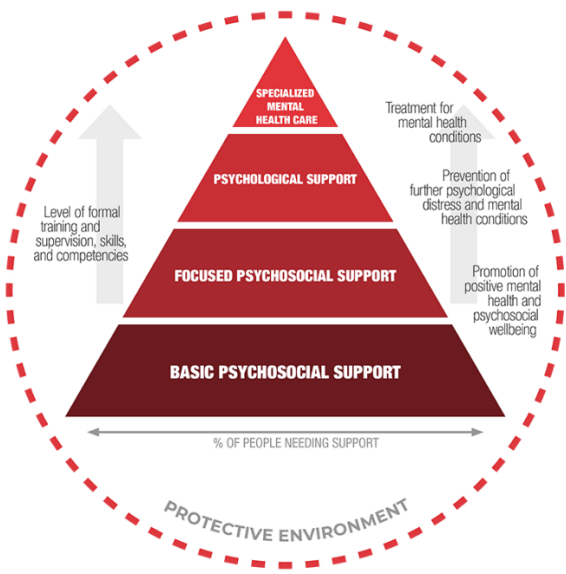
Name / title of service	Piazzetta Virtuale CRI
National society / organization	Italian Red Cross
Your logo/icon	 Croce Rossa Italiana
Person of contact incl. function	fabio.specchiulli@cri.it
Short description of the digital MHPSS service / practice (max. 1000 signs)	<p>"Piazzetta CRI" is part of a broader initiative aimed at promoting mental health and providing psychosocial support to individuals already receiving assistance through the telephone psychology support hotline. Originally launched in 2023, the project initially targeted two age groups: 18-35 and 65+. However, with its continuation from mid 2024, the target audience shifted to focus on individuals aged 50-83.</p> <p>The project aims to support participants in forming meaningful connections, fostering a sense of community, and reducing feelings of loneliness or social isolation. The activities are led by professional psychologists and psychotherapists.</p>
Objectives of the digital MHPSS service / practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and strengthen self-esteem and personal identity • Foster the ability to relate functionally with others • Encourage the expression and sharing of one's emotional experiences constructively • Enhance the quality of interpersonal relationships • Develop a sense of belonging to the group and the community • Expand the social network • Encourage the development of empathy (learning to understand the perspective of others and to relate to them) • Foster discussion and dialogue, promoting knowledge and reflection, both individually and as a group, on specific topics • Promote integration, mutual acceptance, and a sense of belonging to the peer group • Improve self-awareness in order to make informed choices • Enhance self-esteem and personal efficacy • Promote personal, relational and social skills (life and social skills) • Enhance communication and relational abilities.
Benefits for target group/s (max. 5 bullets)	Improve the participants' quality of life through the establishment of meaningful relationships and a supportive social network.



Unique Selling Point What makes your digital MHPSS service special/relevant?	Allowing anyone to participate, despite the different social, cultural, economic, and psychophysical barriers. This also includes those who, for various reasons, are confined to their homes or live far from other participants.
Specific barriers along the way <i>(max. 3 bullets)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty in using digital devices • Initial difficulty in approaching other participants • Initial communication difficulties
Specific facilitators along the way <i>(max. 3 bullets)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of emotional intimacy among participants • Normalization of discomfort • Remote support
Business model, finances, donors (internal/external) who have financially contributed to the development of the MHPSS service	The project activities were initially part of the "All for Health, Health for All-Piazzetta CRI" project funded by the SANOFI group. Currently, they are managed directly by the psychological support hotline desk located within the ItRC's National Response Center.
Experiences, user stories, quotes or feedback from stakeholders <i>(max. 5 bullets)</i>	<p>Participants were encouraged to maintain the connections built during the project activities by staying in contact and meeting in person at the conclusion of the project. The following video showcases experiences and feedback from different activities that were part of the initial intervention of the "Progetto Piazzetta CRI – All for Health, Health for All," aimed at combating involuntary loneliness. The activities featured in the video go beyond the support provided digitally.</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXUE1Zyd3n4</p>
Links	<p>https://cri.it/piazzetta-cri/</p> <p>https://cri.it/supporto-psicologico/</p>



Details

<p>Languages, in which the digital MHPSS service is available</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish <input type="checkbox"/> Arabic <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Others: Italian </p>
<p>Did you work in collaboration regarding your digital MHPSS service? If yes, with whom did you partner?</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Other in-house departments: <input type="checkbox"/> Partner NS <input type="checkbox"/> ICRC <input type="checkbox"/> IFRC <input type="checkbox"/> NGO <input type="checkbox"/> Government (ministry of health, ministry of social affairs etc.) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private sector <input type="checkbox"/> United nations agencies <input type="checkbox"/> Academia <input type="checkbox"/> No collaborations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Others: Public social and health services </p>
<p>Geographical region where the service is accessible</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Africa <input type="checkbox"/> Asia & Pacific <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Europe & Central Asia <input type="checkbox"/> Middle East (MENA/NAMEH) <input type="checkbox"/> The Americas </p>
<p>Level of the MHPSS Framework (link)</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Basic psychosocial support <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focused psychosocial support <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Psychological support <input type="checkbox"/> Specialized mental health care </p> 



<p>Target group of the digital MHPSS service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Children & adolescents <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Older persons <input type="checkbox"/> Families of missing persons <input type="checkbox"/> Family of persons with mental health conditions, including alcohol and substance abuse <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Persons with physical health issues <input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous persons <input type="checkbox"/> Migrants <input type="checkbox"/> Refugees & internally displaced persons <input type="checkbox"/> Prisoners and/or their families & post-release detainees <input type="checkbox"/> People affected by violence <input type="checkbox"/> People affected by war and armed conflict <input type="checkbox"/> People who are homeless <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> People who are lonely <input type="checkbox"/> LGBTQ <input type="checkbox"/> Community helpers <input type="checkbox"/> Staff & volunteers <input type="checkbox"/> Others:
<p>Format What type of service are you providing? (e.g., peer-to-peer, self-help, hybrid/blended with face-to-face interactions, minimally guided, VR therapy, e-learning)</p>	<p>Peer-to-peer, self-help, minimally guided</p>
<p>Evaluation & effectiveness How has the digital MHPSS intervention been, is being or will be evaluated (monitoring, research,...)?</p>	<p>Initiated in 2023, the project has yet to be formally evaluated. However, participants have expressed overall positive feedback.</p>
<p>Platform Through which channels do you provide your service?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Website <input type="checkbox"/> Progressive Web App <input type="checkbox"/> Native app (Android/iOS) <input type="checkbox"/> VR solution <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teams/Skype/Zoom, other online-communication tools: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WhatsApp, Telegram, other chat-tools: <input type="checkbox"/> Other:



How to access your digital MHPSS service	<input type="checkbox"/> App Stores <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Link: https://cri.it/supporto-psicologico/ <input type="checkbox"/> Email to: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phone Number: 1520 (public utility service number)
Timeline How long has your service existed? How long will it remain? <i>(max. 500 signs)</i>	One year starting in 2023, extended until August 2025
Remarks:	<p>Since the launch of the Piazzetta CRI project, there has been a significant increase in the number of CRI local committees engaged in activities to combat loneliness. While the majority of these activities are conducted in person, digital initiatives, such as phone companionship, have seen substantial growth.</p> <p>In 2024, guidelines were developed and distributed nationwide, and 10 workshops were organized, engaging 200 volunteers. The data highlights a notable rise in telecompanionship tickets from 2021 to the present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecompanionship 2021 - 7,230 tickets closed with "Service completed" • Telecompanionship 2022 - 13,429 tickets closed with "Service completed" • Telecompanionship 2023 - 16,488 tickets closed with "Service completed" • Telecompanionship 2024 - 18,000 tickets closed with "Service completed"
Date of completion:	2025/01/08

