

Title

“Nimm-mich-mit”-Dötlingen Bank (“Take-me-with-you”-Dötlingen bench)

Short description

Two benches in Dötlingen, Germany were set up in 2014 and designated as “Take-me-with-you” benches. By sitting on these benches, people indicate that they want to be picked up and taken around the municipality, through green spaces to specific destinations. The idea came from a group of citizens who identified the necessity for people, mainly seniors, to be able to stay in their familiar environment, yet still have transit to go about their daily lives in a municipality without readily available public transport. This system of benches, which has an upcoming expansion in Spring 2017, helps citizens be mobile using shared transport, and build a sense of community.

Topic

Moving – Other

Characteristics (type, level)

Neighbourhood intervention

Country/Countries of implementation

Germany

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the project is that all residents are able to remain in their familiar environment as long as possible. Providing travel sharing for persons waiting on the “bench” to the direction specified enables in particular elderly being mobile, participating in social and cultural life, as well as managing the independent care. Therefore, all residents of the neighbourhood, regardless of their age, benefit from the successful implementation of this practice, saving in meanwhile using a taxi at least for one ride.

Target Group

People in particular elderly living in Dötlingen where no public transportation is available to bigger districts/town with shopping possibilities

Status

Ongoing

Start and Completion dates

2014-today

Lifestyle and Behavior Change

Using travel sharing instead of calling a taxi, at least for one ride

Effects on:

<p>Health and Wellbeing</p>	<p>Being mobile and having the possibility to be taken along to the bigger district or city for buying daily belongings provides the possibility to live in the familiar environment. In the long run, it supports physical activities of people to walk to the next bench, if no public transportation is available instead of calling a taxi.</p>
<p>Vulnerable populations</p>	<p>It supports mobility of elderly and also vulnerable people and groups not being able to cover taxi expenses</p>
<p>Environment</p>	<p>As a private car is anyhow driving to somewhere and takes another person along, it saves using a second car in form of a car sharing or taxi to the same destination</p>

Initiated and/or implemented by

A working group based on 50 persons (target group) on voluntary basis dealing with a “housing project”

Stakeholders and sectors involved

Mainly the working group; supported by the city council and the municipality administration for authorisation and folding signs

Financial support

As already existing benches in relevant points were selected as “take-me-with-you” benches, the expenses were rather limited to folder signs (on which there are different locations to go to like Train Station, City x or y, etc.) and information and awareness for both people driving a car and those who are in need of the bench to be taken along

The city council and the municipal administration cover the manageable costs

Evidence-base

Lack of public transport to bigger towns with shopping possibilities was identified during while dealing with a housing project. The working group partly consisting of the target group has initiated the idea.

Main activities

- Identification of the need by the working group
- Consultation with the mayor, city council and municipal administration to initiate the practice.
- Selection of locations and benches
- Installation of folding signs with locations where the people want to be taken to
- Information and awareness for inhabitants

Evaluation

No evaluation has been undertaken.

Main results

Increasing of number of benches from two in 2014 to seven in 2017. Though there are no verified information on whether and how the service is received, the responsible municipality considers the offer as useful and supports it.

Key success factors and barriers

Involving the target group in initiating the practice made the project successful. Loss of interest and willingness of the municipality to further support the project would hamper its continuation.

INHERIT Perspective

The practice has been selected because implementing this program is as easy as creating the “Take-me-with-you” benches, and so can be done with little effort. However, this initiative neither provides any tangible benefit to health nor promotes (active) moving. It primarily is a neighbourhood project designed to support elderly residents so they can remain in their familiar environment as long as possible. This may have some health benefits, but none that have been identified in any research. Nonetheless, in the long run it is still environment-friendly to a certain extent as it encourages shared travel.

More information

<http://www.gesundheitliche-chancengleichheit.de/good-practice/kinder-gestalten-ihren-naschgarten/>

Contact

Stephanie Schluck
Fenskeweg 2
30165 Hannover (Niedersachsen)
stephanie.schluck@gesundheit-nds.de