



The strategic development of Social Services Centres



impulsem!

Process of reflection and action
on Social Services Centres



Ajuntament
de Barcelona

**The strategic
development of Social
Services Centres**

Document for
the 2nd Technical Session

Barcelona City Council,
6 April 2017

Presentation

The Municipal Institute of Social Services (IMSS) is responsible for carrying out the **“Impulsem!” project, a process of reflection and action on Social Services Centres (SSC).**

The “Impulsem!” project started at the beginning of 2016, and embodies Barcelona City Council’s aim of rethinking the role of Social Services Centres and how they work.

The project **aims to construct a vision of the future of Social Services Centres**, built on identifying strategies and positions which will help to achieve that future.

The result of the project is the fruit of **the most ambitious consultation and participation project in the history of the city’s municipal social services.** It was an intense, open and plural process based on reflection and dialogue with the professional teams in the centres. Other people were able to contribute interesting perspectives on this collective and constructive process, attributed to their various roles and positions.

This participatory process was structured on **three categories: internal, external and the general public.** The people involved, the content considered and the key participation data for each category are detailed below:

- The **internal participation** was by the professional teams in the centres. During the process, they worked on various aspects: the future challenges and proposals for Social Services Centres, the gateways, primary care, monitoring and treatment and IT systems.

- They participated in a total of **13 work sessions**. Over **500 professionals** from all areas, roles and professional profiles took part. Their involvement in the process made it possible to compile **975 contributions**.
- Regarding **external participation**, "Impulsem!" coordinated dialogue and listening processes with various key players involved in the actions of Social Services Centres. Specifically, these key players were from the City Council and other public systems, social movements and relevant organisations in different fields (housing, education, health, employment).

Other people involved included experts, representatives from professional associations and from universities. The participation of the Municipal Council for Social Welfare and the Citizen Agreement for an Inclusive Barcelona deserves special mention.

16 sessions were held with external players, with the participation of **168 people; 317 contributions** were obtained.

- Lastly, **citizen participation** concerns the sessions carried out with people receiving assistance at Social Services Centres. During the process, their opinions on various subjects were compiled in order to carry out an evaluation of how the service works.

A total of **5 focus groups** were held, with the participation of **70 service users; 81 contributions** were obtained.

The **following table summarises the overall participation data**, detailing the players involved, the sessions carried out, the people taking part and the number of contributions and proposals for each of the participation categories.

Table: Participation data for the “Impulsem!” participatory process

	Sessions	Participants	Contributions	Proposals
Internal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st Technical Session • Work with TT departments • Work with SSC departments • Work with SSC professionals 	13	561	975	643
Other players <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal Council for Social Welfare • Open Centres Network (Citizens Agreement) • Caring Families Network (Citizens Agreement) • Homeless People’s Network (Citizens Agreement) • Platform of People Affected by Mortgage Crisis • Alliance against Energy Poverty • Area of Community Action Services • Areas of Services to People and Territories • Ombudsman • Trade unions • Women and Gender Violence Services • Care and Sheltering of Immigrants Services • Housing Office • IMEB Education Consortium • Barcelona Health Consortium • Opposition municipal groups 	16	168	317	127
General public <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus groups with service users 	5	70	81	10
Total:	34	–	1.373	780

Clarification: The total number of participants is blank, due to the difficulty in counting the number of people participating in various sessions of the internal dimension at any one time.

This document is based on all the contributions, and it contains the strategy that must guide the development of Barcelona's Social Services Centres in the coming years, **"The strategic development of Social Services Centres 2016-2021"**, which identifies and specifies the short, medium and long-term projects that should be promoted.

Contents

I.	The uniqueness of the approach: jazz v classical	9
II.	The vision and the mission of the “Impulsem!” project in the SSC	13
III.	External facet: lines, objectives and proposals	17
VI.	Internal facet: lines, objectives and proposals	19
V.	Next steps	37

I. The uniqueness of the approach: jazz v classical

The strategy assumes three key factors:

- 1.** The turbulent situation surrounding the SSC (a social crisis signalling a change of era).
- 2.** The complexity arising from the interdependence of factors in the various social situations of people and families.
- 3.** Uncertainty concerning the process of change of protection and social welfare systems.

These permanent transformations involve methodological guidelines:

- **The most significant factors are:** the **vision** (the future model of the SSC) and the **mission** (the objective of offering more and better time for high added-value social intervention).
- **The objectives and the system of indicators that measure their development are more important than the projects and initiatives.** Continual assessment and flexible management are necessary conditions for the process.
- **The process of drafting the strategy is circular and interdependent at all stages.** The analysis, formulating objectives and projects and their management are all aspects that must be taken into account during all phases of the process.
- **The knowledge of professionals and the good practices of the SSC are the foundations** on which future projects must be built.

For all of these reasons, the features that make the “Impulsem!” project different and unique are as follows:

- **It does not define an organisational model** of standardised, detailed work and administrative processes. **It defines a strategy for the SSC** (what needs to be done and why this is more important than how and where).
- “Impulsem!” is also conceived as a **social organisational process** which should improve knowledge, confidence, mutual commitment and cooperation among professionals throughout the organisation.
- **It is not top to bottom, nor from outside to inside.** It is the result of work that promotes, catalyses and coordinates, of know-how and confidence in the professionalism of the SSC teams.
- “Impulsem!” **means a different way of doing things.** The implementation of “Impulsem!” is also open to the participation of SSC professionals and teams.

II. The Impulsem! project's vision and mission in the SSC

The vision or desirable situation for the SSC is the framework in which the “**Impulsem!**” project’s mission is developed:

- **They are support centres for empowering people and social sectors** based on the implementation of social-family, group and community work.
- **They act as promoters and reference points for networking in the territory**, for reinforcing collaborative work with social organisations and movements defending rights in all of the territory’s social actions.
- **They are well coordinated and complementary to other service systems**, which provide equal opportunities and equity, and especially health and educational assistance.
- **Their available resources are in proportion to the territory’s social problems** in order to ensure high-quality, equitable action for the general public as a whole.
- **They are permeable** to the opinions of the service users, the association network, the main participative municipal bodies concerned with social matters and the movements defending rights within the territory.
- **They act with public responsibility**, and consequently, with transparency and accountability to the general public.

In order to progress from the current situation to the desired situation, the key matter that must be tackled, and which we propose as the project's mission, is:



Providing more and better time¹ and more room for social-family, group and community work, reducing the time spent on fragmented, bureaucratic paperwork and tasks that have no impact on an inclusive social intervention that guarantees social rights.



In order to implement the mission, two large itineraries or facets are defined: external and internal.



¹ Better time concerns the qualitative factors of time use, i.e. time dedicated to the development of a high-quality intervention.

External facet:

The external facet includes all the actions that Barcelona City Council, one of the main institutional players in Catalonia, can implement in collaboration with other players. This facet has only one strategic line:

Line 1. Contributing to the progress of the social services system towards a complete, universal system of social rights.

Internal facet:

While these objectives are being achieved, Barcelona City Council not only can, but should implement internal initiatives in order to gain more time and room for the development of group, social-family and community work. The strategic lines for the internal facet are as follows:

Line 1. Recuperating time for social intervention: eliminating “bureaucracy”.

Line 2. Making group assistance and community work an essential part of the SSC response.

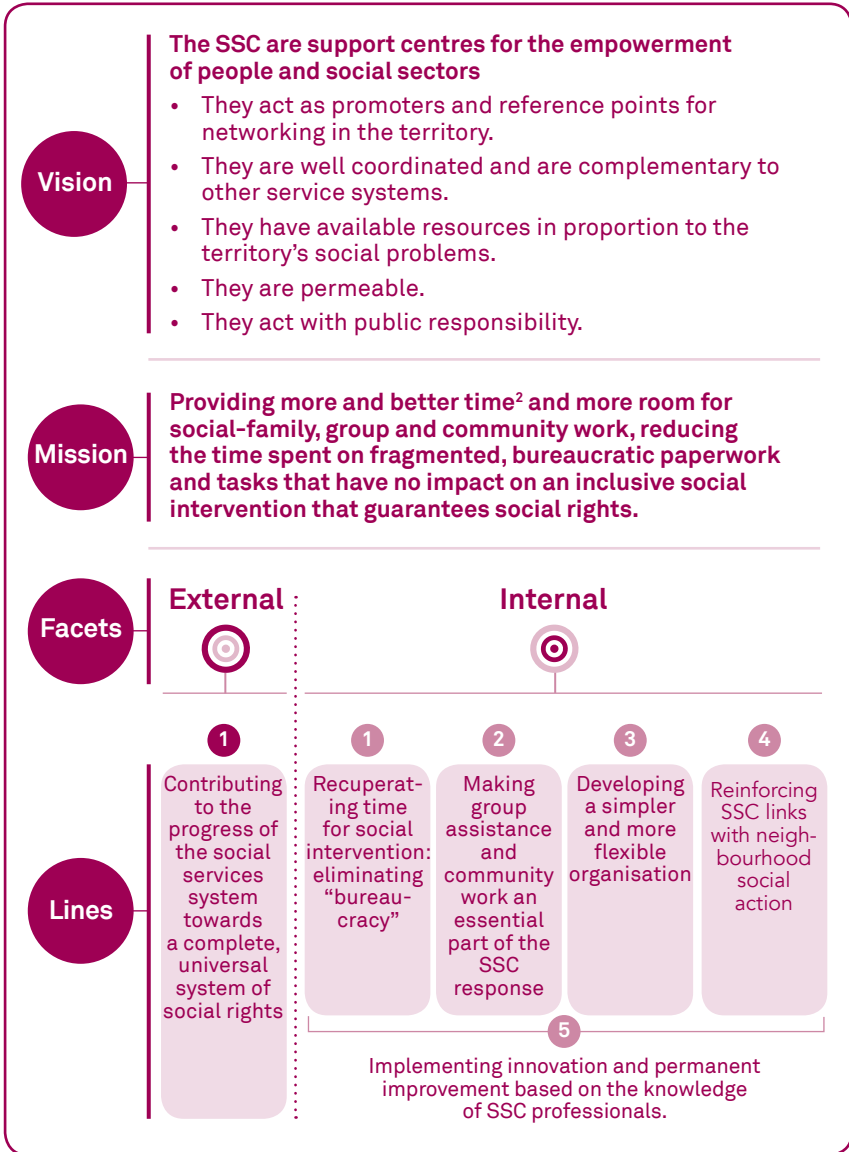
Line 3. Developing a simpler and more flexible organisation.

Line 4. Reinforcing the links between the SSC and neighbourhood social action.

Line 5. Implementing innovation and permanent improvement based on the knowledge of SSC professionals.

Summary: proactive document

Vision, mission, facets and strategic lines



² Better time concerns the qualitative factors of time use, i.e. time dedicated to the development of a high-quality intervention.

III. External facet: lines, objectives and proposals³



Line 1:

Contributing to the progress of the social services system towards a complete, universal system of social rights

A guaranteed minimum wage for all city residents.

Generalitat funding for the SS, in accordance with the population and social needs.

Ensuring that the other systems assume their own aid and benefits aimed at the population at risk.

Line 1.

Contributing to the progress of the social services system towards a complete, universal system of social rights:

The objectives are:

- 1.1 A guaranteed minimum wage for all city residents.
- 1.2. Getting Generalitat of Catalonia funding for social services, in accordance with the population and the social needs of city residents.
- 1.3. Managing only the benefits and services which the SSC have to assume, and ensuring that the other systems assume their own aid and benefits for the population at risk.

³ The identification of proposals for developing objectives requires an internal work process with the IMSS management team.

IV. Internal facet: lines, objectives and proposals³



Line 1:

Recuperating time for social intervention:
eliminating “bureaucracy”

Improving
the cycle of
processes
that have the
biggest impact.

Freeing the
SSC from
processing
external
resources.

Establishing
IT systems
as a working
base .

Managing
reports in an
agile way.

Line 1.

Recuperating time for social intervention: eliminating
“bureaucracy”.

The objectives are:

1.1 Appropriate and agile management of reports issued by social services professionals at the request of other services and authorities.

Proposals:

- Initiating a specific work process to simplify, rationalise and, if possible, automate the production of reports and requests:
 - Identifying the different reports and requests that are produced.

- Analysing their purpose, evaluating their expediency and relevance.
- Simplifying and rationalising the content.
- Producing a uniform reference format.
- Automating processing actions (automatic transfer of existing data and records).

1.2 Establishing IT systems as a support for social work instead of the other way round.

- Introduction of a new IT system that:
 - Covers all types of assistance (individual, group and community).
 - Integrates the management of different types of benefits (SAD, SAUV) into a single, simple and intuitive working environment.
 - Expedites work processes (improving family files, simplifying data records, etc.).
 - Simplifies interoperability, avoids multiple enquiries and manual calculations, and automatically shows an integral vision of the personal and economic situation of the person or the dwelling unit.
- Makes progress in the digitalisation of assistance processes (e.g. Personal Data Protection Act signature, Individual Attention Programme, electronic signature of service users and professionals).
- Providing the centres with continual, local professional support in the use of the various tools that also allow the collection of information on incidents and the identification of improvements in design: functional tutors.

- Reviewing the training system for the use of tools and applications: taking training to the centres (training in more practical, smaller groups).
- Creating a stable commission with SSC professionals for the improvement of and innovation in the IT systems.
- Adapting the work requirements of SSC professionals (e.g. meetings, home visits) to the Human Resources procedure portal.

1.3 Freeing the SSC from the processing of external resources.

- Initiating a work process with the corresponding organisations and authorities to return the processing of resources that are external to social services. For example, disinsectisation, intensive cleaning, funeral management, custody of pets, furniture storage, aid for the utility-bill programme, etc.

1.4 Improving the organisational and assistance cycle for processes that have the biggest impact on the SSC.

- Evaluating and, if necessary, reprogramming the organisational model for the dependant-care service.
- Designing and creating a financial-aid management office, so there is no need to go to the SSC first.
- Improving the organisational cycle for responding to requests for the investigation of children and teenagers at risk.

Line 2:

Making group assistance and community work an essential part of the SSC response

Increasing group work and action.

Promoting informative groups.

Fostering a community perspective.

Line 2.

Making group assistance and community work an essential part of the SSC response.

The objectives are:

2.1 Increasing and reinforcing group work and action.

- Exploring all the potential of group work, not only as a complementary resource, but also as a substitute for individual assistance.
- Facilitating the processes for implementing new projects based on support and exchange between professionals and transferring of projects that are already functioning successfully.
- Providing support for designing new projects that tackle emerging needs.
- Making the territorial scope of projects more flexible (facilitating collaboration between centres, transferring people between centres, etc.).
- Facilitating the dissemination of groups to prescribing services and the general public.

2.2 Promoting informative groups as a means of assistance that provides more benefits for the service users and a more efficient use of time for professionals.

- Generalising group assistance in specific areas or subjects (e.g. services for senior citizens, basic information on services, etc.).
- Systemising a reference model for the organisation and dynamism of informative groups.
- Identifying measures for generalising the function of informative groups throughout the city (identification of training needs, specific support units, etc.).
- Promoting the organisation of informative sessions with other services (housing, job-placement services, etc.).

2.3 Promoting a community perspective in the SSC.

- Identifying the key measures and projects for developing a community perspective in the SSC.
- Promoting SSC involvement in joint projects and participation in working frameworks with social organisations and movements within the territory.
- Favouring SSC involvement in existing community plans or those promoted by other institutions.

Line 3:

Developing a simpler and more flexible organisation

Reinforcing gateways.

Collaborating in the construction of “other” gateways.

Rethinking the SSC assistance units.

Line 3.

Developing a simpler and more flexible organisation.

The objectives are:

3.1 Reinforcing gateways (face to face and telephonic), increasing information, screening and guidance capacities in order to facilitate more immediate assistance.

- Reviewing and defining the profile of people who work with the public (skills, abilities, training). Evaluating, rationalising and incorporating new profiles to the gateway (social insertion and information officers).
- Providing professionals who attend the public, face to face or by telephone, with the devices and support (content, formats) they need.
- Coordinating initial training for people who join the UGA of the SSC (face to face training, guide or introductory capsule).
- Increasing the DATC response and filter capacity. Exploring the inclusion of new profiles into the service (social insertion and information officers).

- Improving areas for attending the general public, in order to facilitate privacy and contribute to a calmer and more relaxed atmosphere.
- Reviewing and improving the working and functions of the kiosk (access to the desk, Personal Data Protection Act signature, etc.).

3.2 Jointly constructing the “other gateways”, the welcoming and assistance processes for people transferred from specialised services, or guided or detected by other services, associations or organisations within the territory.

- Initiating work and collaboration processes with the main services that transfer or guide people attended at social services (Citizen Help and Information Offices, Housing Offices) in order to avoid inappropriate transfers.
- Facilitating better knowledge of the services that detect, guide or transfer people attended by the SSC and their professionals, in order to make progress towards common criteria and guidelines (recognition of diagnoses or evaluations, support in some transfers, periodical assessments, joint work plans, etc.).
- Reinforcing support in the transition process between specialised services and the SSC (homeless, assistance for women, children at risk, etc.) in order to avoid break-downs or delays in personal itineraries.

3.3 Rethinking the SSC assistance units: content, composition and size.

- Initiating an analysis and review of the content and size of SSC assistance units. Exploring new classification and organisational criteria. Contrasting the possibility of a low-

intensity unit (primary assistance, low-intensity monitoring, resources monitoring, indirect monitoring, temporary financial needs, etc.): a high-intensity unit (treatment).

- Initiating a work process to review the organisation of primary care, in order to facilitate greater response capacity for the general public and exerting less pressure on the professionals concerned.
- Analysing and establishing the best possible organisation of indirect monitoring, connected to services or resources (Home Care, Làbora, dining rooms, “Meals in company” etc.).
- Improving the system for covering people who are ill or on leave, the processes for incorporating new professionals and reinforcing the replacement team in order to reduce the impact of changing the professionals attending people and interacting with other services.
- Coordinating support measures for those centres that have special needs, due to their size (very big or very small) or the special complexity of the population they serve.

Line 4:

Reinforcing the links between the SSC and neighbourhoods

Maximising participation rights and opportunities.

Reinforcing the tools for analysing, programming and coordinating social interventions within the territory.

Increasing the accessibility of the service, SSC opening hours and the different types of remote assistance.

Facilitating the participation of professionals in group and community assistance and outside the centre.

Enhancing the role of the SSC as promoters of networking.

Line 4.

Reinforcing the links between the SSC and neighbourhoods.

The objectives are:

4.1 Reinforcing the role of the SSC as promoters of work organisation and management in a network with other organisations, systems and services.

- Establishing or strengthening the necessary frameworks and cycles for networking with the services of other systems, especially with health and education services.
- Designating specific professionals in certain areas (careers, energy poverty, mental health) who can represent and speak on behalf of the SSC in the city's working frameworks (planning processes, networks, etc.).
- Promoting working frameworks and measures (inter-professional networks, shared-information systems) that favour the maximum interrelatedness of assistance among health and social services.

4.2 Facilitating the participation of professionals in group and community assistance projects and for working outside the centre.

- Facilitating flexible timetables and agendas in order to give greater autonomy and responsibility to professionals in organising their time.
- Providing the SSC with the necessary technological equipment for working outside the centre (mobile phones with internet, laptops with access to all applications, tablets, Wi-Fi in the SSC, etc.).

4.3 Increasing the accessibility of the service, SSC opening times and the different kinds of remote assistance.

- Exploring the Internet's potential as a gateway and means of information and communication with service users.
- Improving communication mechanisms between the SSC and service users: SSC telephone systems (system for recording pending calls and traceability, identification of calls, etc.).
- Defining the criteria for using email as a means of communicating with the service.
- Reviewing the closure of centres on Thursday mornings and analysing new measures for extending service periods (introducing shifts).

4.4 Reinforcing the tools for analysing, programming and coordinating social interventions in the territory.

- Establishing a simple, valid and reliable system of indicators to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of group, community and social-family work.
- Facilitating tools for territorial analysis (use of collected data in the IT system) which must form the basis of the centre's social-action plan.
- Facilitating periodical stoppages and technical support for teams, for reflection on social interventions in the territory and reviewing cases.
- Establishing stable relationship frameworks and cycles between the SSC and the District, in order to improve the complementarity and coordination of actions, especially those that affect public areas.

4.5 Maximising the participation opportunities and rights for the general public and service users.

- Improving the general public's knowledge about social services, adjusting expectations on the service's response.
- Producing and disseminating informative content in different formats (easy-to-read materials, videos, etc.) on the most common subjects and questions (services, resources, benefits).
- Reinforcing transparency in the service's actions: facilitating the dissemination of criteria for access to benefits or the administration of the waiting list.
- Making progress in achieving assistance and quality commitments to the general public.

- Establishing guidelines for facilitating the active participation of service users, families caring for dependants and other players involved in assistance and in decision-making on the assistance process.
- Establishing a proactive system for collecting and managing suggestions and complaints received by the SSC and, especially, from services who visit people in their homes (SAD).
- Establishing the necessary information cycles with the city's districts in order to improve the transparency and accountability of the SSC to municipal participation bodies (Neighbourhood and District Councils).

Line 5:

Implementing innovation and permanent improvement based on the knowledge of SSC professionals

Defining measures to improve the care of teams and facilitate itineraries.

Defining and sharing work methodologies and assistance and organisational criteria in the city.

Facilitating access to specialised knowledge on resources and intervention strategies.

Involving professionals in the implementation of **Impulsem!**

Linking the provision of new resources to improvement objectives.

Line 5.

Implementing innovation and permanent improvement based on the knowledge of SSC professionals.

The objectives are:

5.1 Defining measures to improve the care of teams and facilitate professional itineraries.

- Identifying measures aimed at taking care of professionals (guidance and support, rotation or temporary stays in management situations or without face-to-face pressure) and agreeing on a system of clear indicators for measuring this aspect.
- Formalising the recognition of expertise in certain subjects so that some professionals can undertake advisory roles with their colleagues in the centre or district (e.g. hoarding disorder, gender violence).

5.2 Defining and sharing work methodologies, assistance criteria and intervention organisation in the city.

- Establishing a development and technical support unit that facilitates the systemisation of existing best practices and the definition of criteria and work methodologies that can be shared by the whole organisation. For example:
 - Interviews as a key intervention tool and function for individual and family work at the SSC: type, objectives, time allocation and management, dynamics, content according to typical situations or problems, gender perspective, etc.
 - Criteria for urgent and preferential care at the SSC.
 - Criteria for the organisation of care (e.g. intensity of assistance).
- Facilitating the systemisation of knowledge and the dissemination of professional experience (subjects of interest, methodologies, good practices).

5.3 Facilitating access for professionals to specialised knowledge about resources, processes or intervention strategies required for more complex subjects or cases.

- Identifying and facilitating access to specialised technical advice for tackling more complex cases (violence, disabilities, mistreatment, minority cultures).
- Facilitating access to information on territorial resources (organisations, professionals) in different spheres of activity.
- Making progress in the use of virtual working frameworks in order to facilitate exchange, sharing methodologies, experiences and good practices.

5.4 Ensuring the involvement of professionals in the implementation, evaluation and reprogramming of the **Impulsem! project.**

- Providing continuity in the organisation of action workshops, with the participation of professionals in designing the projects and actions they consider to be vital for improving the quality of work in the SSC.
- Establishing monographic sessions with SSC professionals, both for identifying challenges to be tackled and for identifying solutions and for the evaluation and reprogramming of those solutions.

5.5 Linking the new provision of human and material resources to various improvement objectives and projects.

Summary:
Facets, strategic lines and objectives

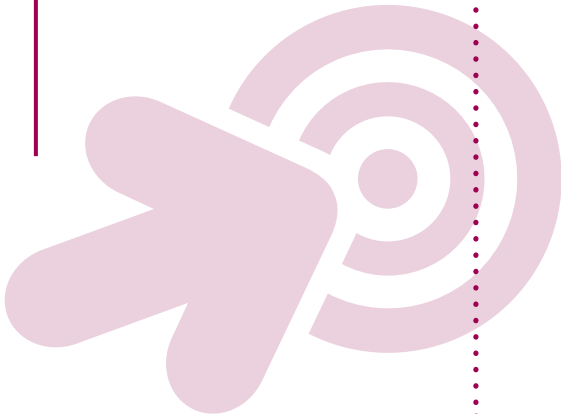
 **External facet**

Line 1:
Contributing to the progress of the SS system towards a complete, universal system of social rights

A guaranteed minimum wage for all city residents.

Generalitat funding for the SS, in accordance with the population and social needs.

Ensuring that the other systems assume their own aid and benefits addressed to the population at risk.



Line 1:
Recuperating time for social intervention: eliminating “bureaucracy”

Managing reports in an agile way.

Establishing IT systems as a working base.

Freeing the SSC from processing external resources.

Improving the cycle of processes that have the biggest impact.

Line 5:
Implementing innovation and continual improvement based on the knowledge of SSC professionals

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Line 2:

Making group assistance and community work an essential part of the SSC response

Increasing group work and action.

Promoting informative groups.

Promoting a community perspective.

Line 3:

Developing a simpler and more flexible organisation

Reinforcing gateways.

Collaborating in the construction of “other” gateways.

Rethinking the SSC assistance units.

Line 4:

Reinforcing the relationship of the SSC with neighbourhoods

Enhancing the role of the SSC as promoters of networking.

Facilitating the participation of professionals in group and community assistance and in work outside the centre.

Increasing the accessibility of the service, SSC opening hours and the different types of remote assistance.

Reinforcing the tools for analysing, programming and coordinating social interventions in the territory.

Maximising participation rights and opportunities.

Linking the provision of new resources to improvement objectives.

Involving the professionals in the implementation of **Impulsem!**.

Facilitating access to specialised knowledge on resources and intervention strategies.

Defining and sharing work methodologies and assistance and organisational criteria in the city.

Defining measures to improve the care of teams and facilitate itineraries.

V. Next steps

Presenting, contrasting and identifying priorities
(for producing the 2017-19 action programme)
(February-April)

- **2nd Technical Session: 6-21 April.**

Definition and specification of the action programme
(Government team)
(April-June)

- **Action programme (prioritised proposals and projects 2017-19)**
 - Description.
 - Objectives.
 - Justification.
 - Calendar and expected territorial implementation.
 - Estimated budget.
 - Expected sources of funding.
 - Monitoring and evaluation indicators.
- **Indicator systems for the monitoring and evaluation of “**Impulsem!**” management**
 - Indicators for the implementation of actions, proposals and prioritised projects.
 - Indicators for achieving the objectives of strategic lines.
 - Indicators for the evolution of the social situation in SSC environments.

- Participative process in the SSC for adapting objectives and strategic projects to the needs and singularities of the various territories.
- Programming the participatory sessions, debating committees and action workshops to provide continuity to and extend the participation of professionals in the management, evaluation and continual reprogramming of “**Impulsem!**”.

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