



KADIKÖY'S PLEDGE TO THE EU PILLAR OF SOCIAL RIGHTS

Reproductive health and sexual rights and services are considered fundamental human rights in international agreements and are defined as a social right at the national level within the framework of the right to health. Sexuality is a multi-layered and relational concept, influenced by biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, legal, historical, religious and spiritual factors. In order to ensure peace, welfare and security for the residents of Kadikoy district and to maintain their well-being, services are developed with a right-based, inclusive, equal and accessible service delivery policy in order to provide holistic services in the field of health. The city of Kadıköy takes its responsibility to live by the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

Commitment to Principle 16. Health Care

Kadıköy district is a city center with a historical and cultural heritage, social and cultural life, covering an area of 25.20 square kilometers, consisting of 21 neighborhoods, and with a population nearly 500,000 people. It attracts over 2 million visitors daily. In the field of health and social services, there are various services provided by Public Institutions, private Organizations and NGOs in Kadıköy district. It has been identified that there is a need for a rights-based service center where local residents can receive information and counseling about the services.

Kadıköy Municipality declared in its 2020-2024 Strategic Plan that it will develop accessible, affordable, effective and efficient health and social services to promote a healthy lifestyle. In line with the participatory approach of the Local Equality Action Plan prepared in 2022, the municipality has committed to establish a center providing services in the field of sexual and reproductive health.

Within this scope, **the Sexual Health/Reproductive Health Center**, which started providing services in 2023, aims to develop preventive and protective services, primarily for women and young people, in the field of sexual and reproductive health, as part of health and social services in Kadıköy district. The center implements comprehensive practices with individuals, groups and communities to raise awareness, provide information, counseling and guidance as well as conducting workshops and educational activities, all free of charge.

For the first time in Turkey, a consultancy center has been established within a local government that brings together polyclinic services in the field of sexual health, along with preventive- protective health services and social service work. The center focuses on enhancing the well-being and health of individuals and communities in Kadıköy district, with a special emphasis on women and young people.

Our future plans and goals:

The vision of the center is to contribute to the equal and comprehensive knowledge of all individuals living in Kadıköy, regardless of race, ethnicity, language, belief, health status, gender identity and sexual orientation, regarding sexual health/reproductive health services and rights. It aims to promote equal access to these services and rights for everyone in the community.

Its objectives are to empower the residents of the district, in a manner that includes but is not limited to; secure and human rights-based service provision within the context of reproductive rights and sexual rights guaranteed by international agreements and laws. These objectives encompass the right to life, freedom, equality, freedom of thought, access to information and education, freedom of marriage and family formation, the ability to make choices in relation to childbearing, access to healthcare and health protection services, benefit from scientific developments, access information, methods, techniques and services, choose contraceptive methods, feel safe and trustful, maintain privacy, confidentiality and dignity, ensure continuity in service, express opinions and other related issues.

Focus of the Center:

Sexual health and Reproductive Health Information and Counseling Services

- **Individual Counseling:** Individual counseling services are provided on topics such as pregnancy prevention methods and family planning, sexually transmitted infections, sexual health issues, sexual dysfunction and sexual development.
- **Group Counseling:** Group counseling is conducted on subjects such as adolescent development, working with children and family counseling.
- **Community Work:** The Center contributes to advocacy activities and research and development studies.
- **Psycho-Social Intervention Services:** Individual psychological counseling and couple therapy counseling services are provided.
- **Referral and Collaboration Services:** Collaboration activities with the Municipality's Health Units, Family Health Centers and NGOs are carried out.
- **Workshop/Educational Activities:** Workshops and seminars are organized on topics such as pregnancy prevention methods, comprehensive sexuality education, pregnancy school, women's health seminars and seminars on children's bodily autonomy.
- **Social Support Services:** Efforts are being made to increase access to preventive services and methods for sexual health through the provision of material support.

Starting from 2024, in addition to continuing with the center's activities, plans are underway to provide free and anonymous test counselling services. It is expected that this initiative, particularly in conjunction with early diagnosis and counseling services, will contribute to the reduction of the spread of sexually transmitted infections.

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Şerdil Dara ODABAŞI

Mayor