

Cooperation between municipalities and community pharmacies on local prevention and health promotion – what are the opportunities?

”The cooperation has been an eye opener - we can use each other for the benefit of our citizens”

Background

There is a current lack of knowledge on how pharmacies can be involved in cooperation with municipalities to participate in health promotion and disease prevention. It seems that there is an unutilized potential for involving pharmacies in disease prevention and health promotion and linking them more closely to the rest of the health system for the benefit of the individual citizen.

Aim

To develop and evaluate a collaboration model between the municipality and the pharmacy in order to provide health promotion and disease prevention to vulnerable citizens.

Methods

A user involvement approach was chosen for the development of the collaboration model.

Through workshops¹ the parties were guided to:

- define the target group of vulnerable citizens in their local area
- agree on choice of healthcare service to deliver in collaboration
- draft a plan on how to effectively cooperate in order to deliver the chosen services
- decide where and how to recruit citizens
- create information pamphlets for the target groups.

Quantitative and qualitative methods were chosen for the evaluation of the use of the collaboration model.

Demographic data on the participating citizens were collected.

The project is approved by the Data Inspectorate (Jr. No. 2017-41-5260, Doc. No. 446567).



Fig. 1 The six participating community pharmacies and five municipalities.

Study settings

Five municipalities and six pharmacies (figure 1). One pair from each Danish region participated in a 1 ½ day-start-up seminar followed by a three months study period (November 2017 till January 2018).

Each collaborating pair worked together to provide an agreed service to 20 citizens (100 in total).

Telephone meetings were held every fortnight with the project manager at Pharmakon.

Results

Quantitative results

The parties recruited 54 citizens (female=63 %), ranging in age from 24-91 years (m=63.6 years).

The three most frequent services were Type 2 diabetes education, Stop smoking sessions and Self-management programs for chronic conditions (figure 2).

The healthcare was primarily delivered in municipality settings (68 %) versus pharmacy settings (32 %) (figure 3).

Fig. 2 Overview of the services pharmacies and municipalities have collaborated on. The numbers illustrate the amount of citizens who received each service.

Preventive and health-promoting service delivered

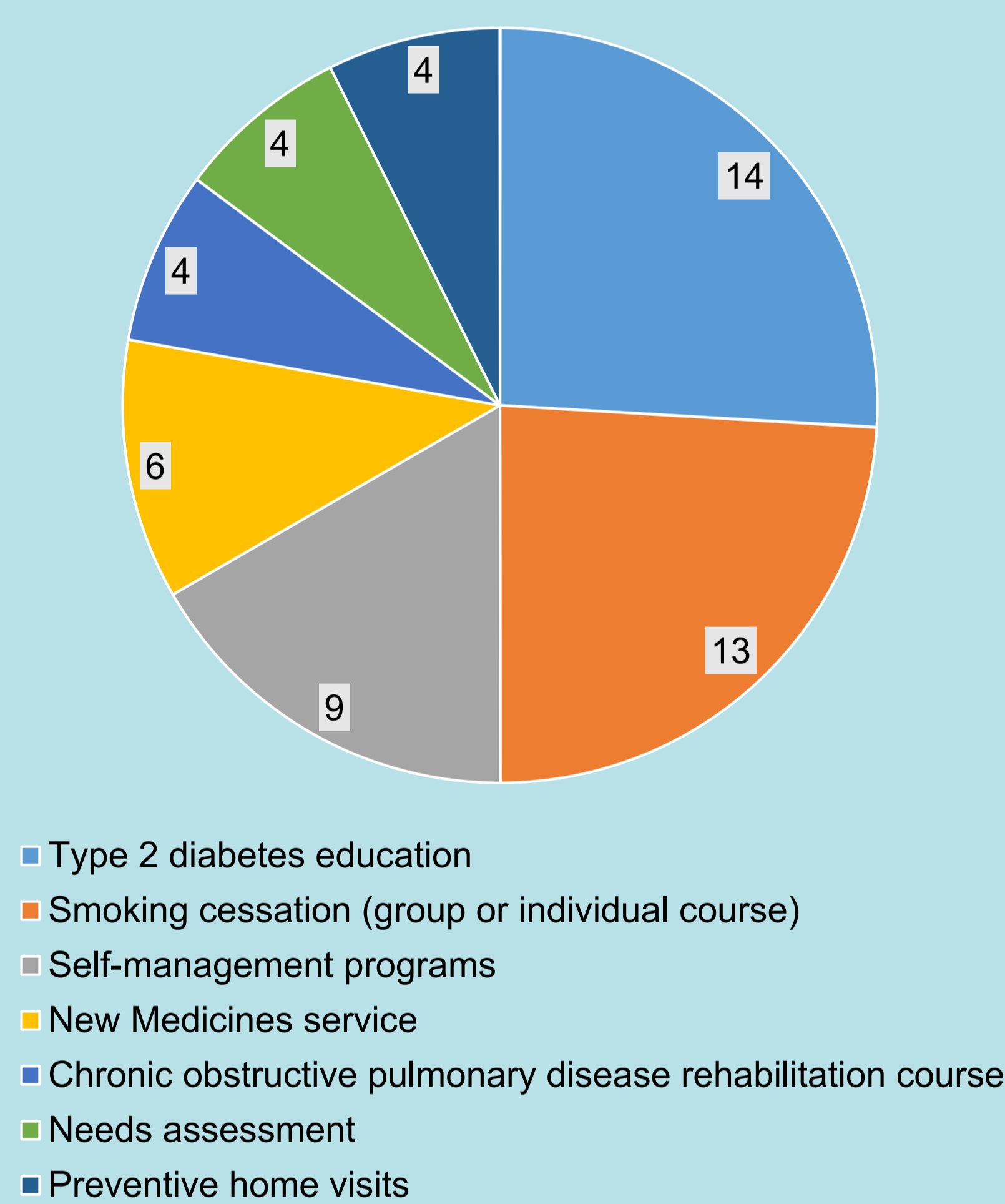
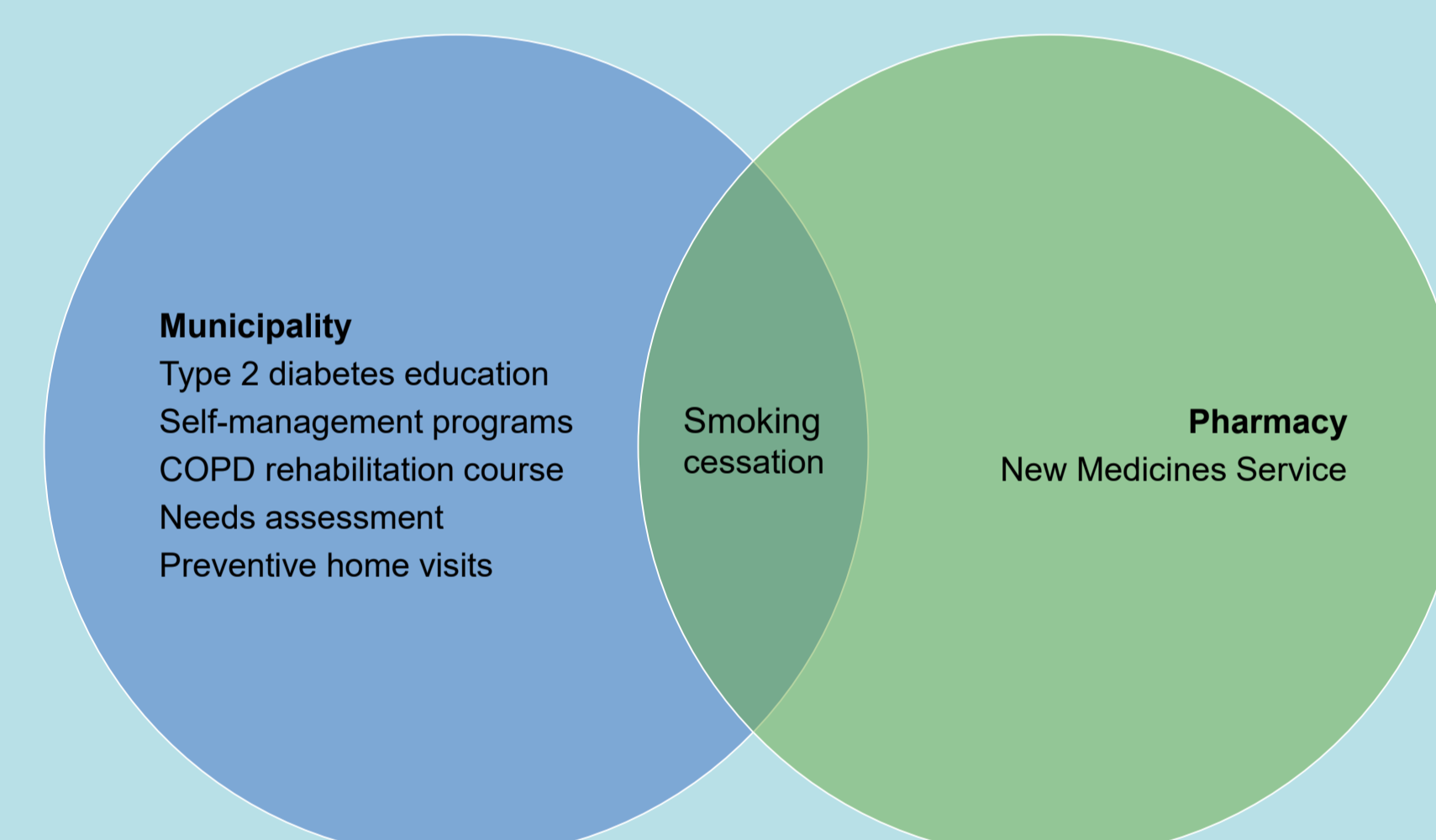


Fig. 3 Overview of where the services were provided.



Qualitative results

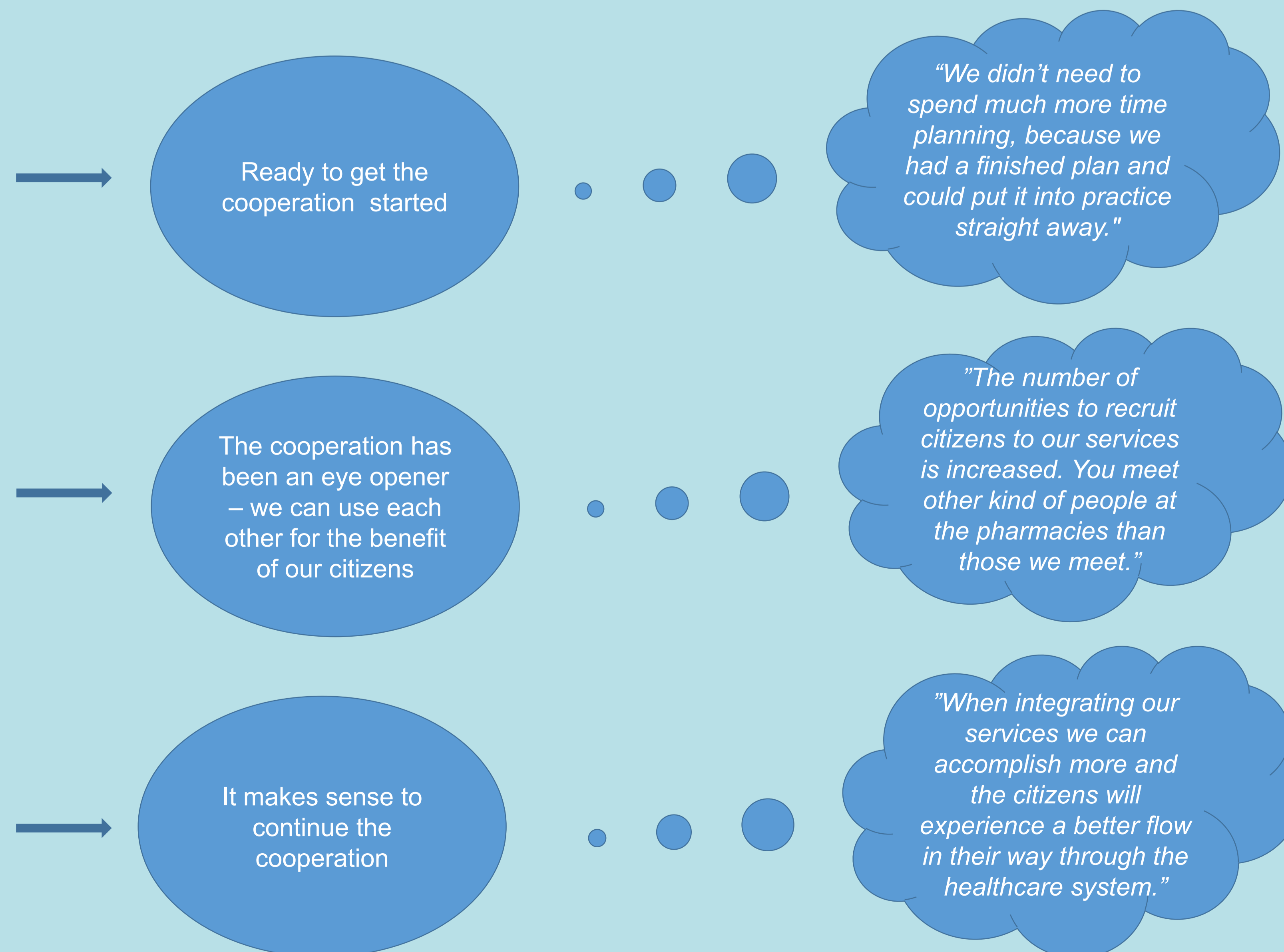
Three main themes were identified (figure 4).

The start-up seminar with the use of semi-structured worksheets resulted in a joint agreement sheet. This was very important for creating individual collaboration models which contributed with ownership as a starting point.

Pharmacies are an entrance gate to help citizens that otherwise are hardly reached in the municipality.

Pharmacies and municipalities become aware of each other's services and how these complement each other for the benefit of the citizens. It is possible for municipalities and pharmacies to cooperate on delivering health care services to vulnerable citizens.

Fig. 4 Three main themes were identified subsequently illustrated by three quotes.



Conclusions

- Pharmacies and municipalities have started a partnership in delivering health promotion services
- Pharmacies and municipalities regard themselves as an extension of the healthcare system
- Pharmacies are a new entrance gate to reach citizens that are otherwise barely reached by municipalities
- The citizens experience more continuity in health services when pharmacies and municipalities cooperate.

Recommendations for establishing a collaboration model

- Ongoing management support and involvement
- Start-up seminar and scheduled time to start making relations between collaborators
- Joint agreement sheet
- Use of validated worksheets¹ to ensure user involvement
- Ongoing external support to ensure implementation of the agreed collaboration model - for instance telephone meetings
- Ongoing focus on the cooperation process
- Sharing knowledge with the participants who run the cooperation in the rest of the organisation.

References

¹ Benrimoj S. I., Fioletto, E., Wilson, L. Australian Government, Dept of Health and Ageing The Pharmacy Guild of Australia. Building Organisational Flexibility to Promote the Implementation