

## FRANCE

# Improve the quality of life in rural areas

### Location

Labastide-Murat

### Programming period

2007 - 2013

### Axis / Priority

Axis 3 – quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy

### Measure

M321 - Basic services for the economy and rural population

### Funding (EUR)

RDP contr. 1 045 000

EAFRD 200 000

National/region. 845 000

### Project duration

2012 – 2015

### Project promoter

Communauté de Communes de Labastide-Murat

### Contact

Elodie RABOUILLE –

Manager

[er-cclm@wanadoo.fr](mailto:er-cclm@wanadoo.fr)

tel. +33 565 20 08 50

### Website

[www.cc-labastide-murat.fr](http://www.cc-labastide-murat.fr)

Local authorities in France's Midi-Pyrénées region used EAFRD funding to develop a medical centre to improve the quality of health services particularly for the elderly.

## Summary

The medical centre of Labastide-Murat was constructed in response to growing demand for rural health services, particularly for a growing elderly population. A range of services were developed including a therapeutic garden and water activities.



The French local authorities used the EAFRD support to develop a medical centre to improve the quality of health services, especially for the elderly, create economies of scales for health professionals by sharing office space and develop innovative practices through medical research.

## Results

18 jobs created or maintained.

6 freelance health professionals deliver services.

Time slots for water basin activities (aqua bike & aqua gym) increased from 2/week to 8/week.

Number of water basin registrations: 150 (instead of 40 initially planned).

After one year of activity, the medical house already reached the targets set for its first four years.

The French government awarded the medical centre the label 'Pôle d'Excellence Rurale' because of its collaboration with the Toulouse university hospital in the field of gerontology, which meant that all people over 60 years old living in the area can have access to advanced medical support for hearing, endocrinology and other specialties.

## Lessons & Recommendations

- Medical centres are vital investments for many rural areas with an ageing population.
- Partnerships with university hospitals specialized in gerontology are a win-win strategy both for the local community and health professionals.
- The combination of various health services, not only targeted at the elderly (e.g. baby swimming lessons) helps the interaction of different generations.

### Context

Back in 2009, the French government introduced a reform of health services. This came in the form of a new law on the regional organisation of health services which established the legal basis for ‘medical houses’ (in French: maisons de santé or maisons médicales). One of the reasons for this reform was to fight the lack of medical services, especially in rural areas where the medical demography showed alarming figures.

In the region of Midi-Pyrénées the delivery of quality health services has always been a key priority. It is considered as an essential service to local communities, particularly in remote rural areas where the ageing of the population has an impact on the supply and demand for a variety of health professionals needed to serve senior people.

The area of the Regional Nature Park of Causses du Quercy shows positive migration patterns due to an active policy to facilitate newcomers. The rural town-centre of Labastide-Murat is at the heart of this regional park and in recent years it has evolved into a dynamic rural functional hub. The medical house was the result of a consultation process with various stakeholders concerned. The consultation informed the project design and the strategy was accepted by the Regional Health Agency (in French: Agence Régionale de Santé – ARS) in 2011.

### Objectives

The aim of the medical centre is to:

1. improve the quality of health services, especially for senior people;
2. create economies of scale for health professionals by the sharing office space;
3. develop innovative practices through medical research.

### Activities

The project was carried out by the local authority of Labastide-Murat which brought together 20 surrounding villages in partnership with the regional Health Agency, and the Regional Council of Midi-Pyrénées.

A public procedure was launched in 2012 to select the architect. Building work started in 2013 and the medical centre was officially inaugurated in April 2015.

The centre offers a full and diverse range of general and specialised medical services and infrastructure. Key features include:

- A gerontology department that works as a branch of the Toulouse University Hospital. The centre includes an area for gerontological day-care services, which gives access to a therapeutic garden specially designed for Alzheimer patients.
- A multi-purpose water basin (physical rehabilitation, aqua gym, aqua bike, swimming courses for babies, etc.)
- General practitioners, nurses and a dental surgeon
- Specialists, including a gastroenterologist, vascular physician, physiotherapist, midwife, clinical psychologist, nutritionist and chiroprapist
- Accident and emergency services
- A home-care secretariat
- A large meeting/training room.



*“We had planned 40 registrations for the water basin, after one year of activity we have 150 registrations. This gives a real dimension to the building”*

*Mayor of the municipality.*

#### Additional sources of information

<http://medialot.fr/labastide-murat-la-maison-de-sante-a-ouvert-ses-portes/>