

CAP Health: A new model of healthcare for deprived areas



In January 2024, the Bracco Foundation and Fondazione La Rotonda launched the "CAP Salute" project to address the issue of health poverty in deprived areas. This pioneering project, based on the idea of "personal capital activation," seeks to contribute to the building of community health resources, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable.

Health poverty in Italy and the district of Baranzate

In recent years, health poverty has become one of the most severe social emergencies in Italy. According to official ISTAT figures for 2023, 9.7% of Italians live in absolute poverty, a significant number of whom are concentrated in the north of the country. Lombardy, where nearly one million people face economic difficulty, is among the most affected regions. The situation has forced many families to choose between basic needs and healthcare, and the impact is most strongly felt by large families and those of foreign origin. The emergency is particularly acute in Baranzate, a peripheral district of Milan with the highest percentage of foreign residents (35.2% from 81 different ethnicities). Here, difficulty of access to healthcare services is often not only an economic issue but also a cultural and social one.

The CAP Health Project: A model of joined-up action

The project aims to do more than provide healthcare services by taking a multidimensional approach that includes:

- The creation of a community health fund to cover medical expenses that households cannot meet, to be set up in partnership with CDI - Centro Diagnostico Italiano, the diagnostics division of the Bracco Group.
- The formation of a multidisciplinary team with volunteers and workers from APS La Rotonda, the Municipality of Baranzate, and the local chapter of Caritas (a charity), along with an important new member, the case manager. The case manager is responsible for identifying needs, coordinating action, and accompanying individuals on their healthcare journey.
- The provision of customised care whereby recipients receive a personalized plan that includes access to essential health services and facilitates visits to and communication with general practitioners.

Results of the first phase

In 2024, CAP Salute project achieved significant results, particularly in the area of female preventative care. Forty-two women received care, and more than 60 received medical counselling and analyses of test results. Thanks to the agreement with CDI, 81 treatments were provided, including gynaecological visits, Pap tests, mammograms, and breast ultrasounds. Counselling included psychiatric and psychological support for particularly vulnerable cases, including an over-65 man and an at-risk adolescent. Notably, in 20% of cases, diagnoses revealed severe ongoing pathologies, which testifies to the urgent need for structured preventative work.

The services focused primarily on gender-specific care and treatment and gave many women access to services they could not otherwise afford.

Success and Continuity

The success of the project is attributable to its personalized approach and the constant presence of the case manager, who builds up a relationship of trust with beneficiaries. The partnership with CDI has also proved indispensable.

The project, which continues in 2025, is expanding its data collection activities, continuing to provide preventive healthcare for women, and introducing new services. The goal is to involve not only women but also adolescents and the elderly, and thus create an ever more inclusive support network.