

Development and evaluation of an interprofessional and intersectoral training concept to promote communication and culturally sensitive competences in health care (InterKultKom)

Pilot project, funded by Robert Bosch Stiftung

In many areas, the German health care system is not prepared for the challenges and peculiarities of dealing with people from other countries, cultures or ethnic groups. In addition to the language barrier, the cultural, religious and biographical differences are often barriers to access the health system and receive high quality care.

Health professionals - whether doctors, dentists, nurses, doctor's assistants, dentist assistants or other health professionals - are often overburdened when dealing with people from other cultures. They need information and support to help them make an intercultural opening.

Intercultural competence can be learned, it is important and helpful for all professionals involved in medical care.

Measures creating or improving a culturally sensitive interaction amongst each other, as well as with patients and their relatives, should aim for enabling a communication based on understanding and mutual appreciation.

In order to guarantee a culturally sensitive patient care across professions, the employees of all professional groups have to be sensitized and trained. measures for cultural opening should be established. Interprofessional training seems to be particularly successful and it also reduces the inhibition threshold for collegial and interprofessional exchange. It helps to reduce possible sources of error, increases the job satisfaction of the involved groups involved as well as the quality of patient care, and promotes the evolution of interprofessional teams.

Project Participants

Several health institutions have convened to design and implement a project promoting intercultural healthcare.

Participating institutions

- Ärztekammer Nordrhein (Medical Association North Rhine) (Applicant)
- Kassenärztliche Vereinigung Nordrhein (Association of Statutory Health Insurance Physicians North-Rhine)
- Institut für Qualität im Gesundheitswesen Nordrhein (Institute for Health Care Quality North

Rhine)

- Institut für Allgemeinmedizin und Familienmedizin Universität Witten Herdecke (Institute of General Medicine and Family Medicine University of Witten Herdecke) (Evaluation)
- Verband medizinischer Fachberufe e.V. (Association of Medical Professionals)
- Pflegerat NRW (Nursing Council North Rhine - Westphalia)
- Krankenhausgesellschaft Nordrhein-Westfalen (Hospital Corporation North Rhine-Westphalia)
- Zahnärztekammer Nordrhein (Dental Association North Rhine)

Project Outline

An interprofessional working group comprised of subject matter experts from the in-patient and out-patient sectors (doctors, dentists, nurses, medical assistants, dental assistants), complemented by people from other cultures shall develop a modular training concept on topics of cultural openness and intercultural healthcare.

The training will be piloted in the Aachen area. Taking advantage of the respective competences, the regional and interprofessional approach should serve to improve the communication amongst each other as well as the intercultural opening and sensitization of the involved employees, thereby improving the quality of care.

Training Participants

In order to promote interprofessional cooperation regionally, the training participants should come from one town or region. They will receive their training in an interprofessional group which may break out to small subgroups.

A training group consists of:

- Doctors from a hospital
- Doctors and Dentists from out-patient care and their doctor's/dentist assistants
- Nurses from the inpatient care sector of the participating hospital
- Carer from in outpatient care

Training and planned topics

The interprofessional training concept shall consist of several modules on different topics of cultural opening and culturally sensitive treatment of patients with different cultural backgrounds. Each module is comprised of several lessons which together should be covered in an afternoon training session.

The training modules for intercultural sensitization should focus on the following topics:

Attitude

Module 1: Attitude

- Attitudes to patients and their relatives from different cultures and their needs in the German health system
- Different values and orientation systems in different cultures

Communication

Module 2: Communication

- Communication and relationship design with foreign-language patients and patients from other cultures
- Dealing with specialist interpreters / cultural mediators, sensitization to the problem of interpreting by affiliates

Dealing with the sick from the point of view of different cultures and different religious aspects

Module 3: Dealing with the sick from the point of view of different cultures and different religious aspects

- Different ways of dealing with acute and chronic diseases, importance and view of disease
- Dealing with mental illness in different cultures
- Dealing with patients with physical and mental disabilities

Family and Gender

Module 4: Family and Gender

- Different family structures and importance of the family in different societies
- Dealing with children and adolescents
- Dealing with physical and cognitive disability
- Dealing with prevention and health promotion,
- Care in old age (intercultural care for the elderly)

Dealing with violence, trauma, pain, death and grief in different cultures

Module 5: Dealing with violence, trauma, pain, death and grief in different cultures

- Trauma and treatment of trauma patients, post-traumatic stress disorders
- Dealing with violence and violence
- Dealing with terminal care, grief and mourning rituals

In order to convey the contents of the training as practically and clearly as possible, they should be accompanied by a real-life case story.

Evaluation

The participants of the pilot training shall be interviewed at the beginning of the project, after the training measures and half a year after the end of the training regarding their views and experiences in interprofessional cooperation and intercultural opening.

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