



Individual support for full professional recognition

“Health care bridge training” brings international care workers into jobs near their residence



IQ | GOOD PRACTICE to the point

Addressees for transfer:

Counselling centres and personnel managers from the field of care services

Health care bridge training:

The “Health care bridge training” programme provides individually tailored continuing education for nurses who acquired their professional training abroad, but whose qualification has not been fully recognised in Germany. The course includes an analysis of the training needs of the participants as well as an individual planning of their educational steps to reach full recognition of the foreign degree.

Project:

Vide terra – recognition training for health care and nursing

Implementing organisation:

Social welfare organisation: Diakonische Werke Baden und Württemberg

Project management:

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Offer:

An information flyer on the “Health care bridge training” project has been published, which can be downloaded from <http://welcome-center-sozialwirtschaft-bw.de/vidе-terra/>. Printed copies of the flyer can be ordered from the responsible contact persons, Dr Christine Böhmig and Gunther Müller, under the above email address. All IQ good practice examples published so far can be found at www.netzwerk-iq.de.

Starting position/challenge

Currently, there is a severe nationwide skill shortage in the fields of health care as well as patient and geriatric care. This also applies to hospitals and geriatric care facilities in Baden-Württemberg, which are in desperate need of qualified staff. At the same time, some 2,000 international nurses apply each year for recognition of their foreign degrees, which are often only partially acknowledged. In order to obtain professional licensing, requirements concerning professional, practice or language skills must be met. However, it is very difficult for many international nursing specialists to meet the requirements because there is a lack of knowledge of the German labour market, contacts and money. The “Health care bridge training” programme focuses on these difficulties. It is an example of the various projects and offers for health and nursing staff within Network IQ.

Implementation of the job training

The “vide terra” project provides coordinated support with the “Health care bridge training” project in the Network IQ Baden-Württemberg, both for international nursing specialists who are looking for qualified work as well as for hospitals that need trained staff. At the beginning of the project, the responsible parties convinced the hospital management to compensate the international nursing staff financially during their clinical internship. Through intensive coordination, the project quickly developed into a success story, not least because the job matching of participants and hospitals was individually supported by “vide terra”. Contact with language course providers was also established to ensure that nursing specialists can reach the B2 level of German language proficiency before commencing their internships. Generally, the appropriate measure begins with an analysis of the



training needs of the participant(s), based on which the modular training is planned. If it is required by the recognition assessment notice, language courses are carried out at the B2 qualification level, professional training courses are provided, and internships are completed in hospitals. Participants are supported close to where they live, as needed. For all participants there is an obligatory support group, which serves to clarify personal questions, teaches specific content and assists in overcoming cultural challenges.

Summary

Since the start of the project at the end of 2015, the “Health care bridge training” programme has so far successfully assisted 34 participants in their professional recognition and subsequently starting a qualified job. The qualification stands out through paid internships in the hospitals, the high level of support for the participants by the project management, the intensive cooperation of the participants, and the flexible, modular concept.

“A great feeling of accomplishment”

Hiring rate of graduates by hospitals is very high

The participants of the “Health care bridge training” programme are supported by the employees of “vide terra” from the very beginning based on actual requirements. On the way to the recognition of their foreign degree, this includes not only the review of the documents and the planning of the individual training, but also numerous other important topics for the international nursing specialists, such as the right of residence or childcare. Another focus for the employees of the “vide terra” project is the extensive support in labour market integration to ensure that the professionally recognised nursing staff finds a qualified workplace. Corre-

spondingly, the hospitals, in which the participants work during training, are also supported. This includes support for the initiation of adaptation periods and job matching support of both sides. If participants risk to



Nursing director Josef Hug hired Akosua Abrafi Domfeh, the first graduate of the training.

about the measure, “vide terra” connects with all parties involved and tries to analyse the causes and continue the participation. This ensures that cancellations are kept to a minimum. The hospitals have a great interest in retaining the interns of their institution as a specialist after the end of the training measure, so the hiring rate is very high. “A great feeling of accomplishment”, says Akosua Abrafi Domfeh. With the certificate of recognition, the 28-year-old can now practice her profession as a nurse, which she acquired in Ghana, in Germany. After the training at the Karlsruhe Hospital she was hired to work there in her occupation as a nurse.

Three questions to Dr Christine Böhmig and Gunther Müller, project managers of “Health care bridge training”

“Accepted and valued as professionals”



What is the innovative aspect of the “Health care bridge training” project?

The added value of this training is the coordinated support of the nursing staff and the hospital, which is essential when faced with challenges such as language and communication problems, intercultural conflicts as well as motivation decline. The project not only aims at supporting a particular hospital within a single measure. It provides tailor-made support for collaborative hospitals and thus strengthens regional structures. It is also essential that specialists with foreign qualifications receive a salary during the qualification; they are therefore accepted and valued as skilled workers.

Can the training also be transferred to other contexts?

Our concept includes a cooperation structure, which can be easily transferred to other contexts. Two conditions must be met for this.

For one, it requires the willingness of the recognition body to cooperate in the implementation of the project and, secondly, hospitals and other institutions need to be ready to offer opportunities for bridge training. The support concept for participants and hospitals can be implemented anywhere.

What can the training affect in the long-term?

Hospitals participating in the project are sustainably strengthened through counselling and support. This is demonstrated by the fact that several institutions have permanently opened up to foreign professionals. This was not always the case at the beginning of the project, when unsolicited applications were often not considered. The employees of “vide terra” have taken over this task for some hospitals by reviewing applications and making recommendations to the hospital. This provides suitable applicants with the opportunity to complete a bridge training in the hospital as project participants. In the meantime, hospitals have acquired the skills themselves and can evaluate applications and, if necessary, take further steps.

Imprint

The project is funded as part of the Network IQ. It is a subproject of the Network IQ Baden-Württemberg.

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Photos: Dietrich Bechtel, Diakonisches Werk Baden, Julia Schlax (RockAByte GmbH)

Layout: Gereon Nolte, ZWH

Version: 2017

www.netzwerk-iq.de

Network IQ

The Network “Integration through Qualification (IQ)” aims at sustainable improvements in the labour market integration of adults with a migration background. The programme is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) and the European Social Fund (ESF). Strategic partners in implementing the programme are the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the Federal Employment Agency (BA).

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