



IQ agreement with recognition authority

Co-operative approach to identifying need for counselling — improving the recognition process



IQ | GOOD PRACTICE in a nutshell

Addressees for transfer:
Recognition authorities, ministries and institutions involved in the recognition process

Strategic approach
Cooperation agreement with recognition authority:

The objective of the cooperation agreements between the recognition authority and the IQ Network Rhineland-Palatinate is to develop the recognition process in the specialist health occupations by means of a mutual sharing of information about the demand for counselling and on the processes involved, and to make it more transparent and efficient for applicants. This binding co-operative arrangement involves providing assistance to those seeking advice during counselling, when making the application and when planning and supporting the training required. It also ensures a win-win situation for all those involved.

Project:

Coordination of the IQ Network Rhineland-Palatinate and "Doctors for the future".

Organisation

Institute for Social Education Research, Mainz e.V.,
MIP - Medici in Posterum GmbH

Point of contact:

Dr. Ralf Sanger / Augustinerstr. 64-66
55116 Mainz / Tel.: 06131/9061810
ralf.saenger@ism-mainz.de

Provision:

All previously published IQ Good Practice examples can be found at www.netzwerk-iq.de.

Starting point/challenge

The timely recognition of foreign qualifications in specialist (non-)academic health occupations is a key concern for the skilled workers themselves as well as for the local labour market. However, in practice it has been shown on the one hand that applying is often very time consuming, while on the other those seeking counselling often face difficulties in correctly interpreting the assessment notice from the recognition authority and in working out the steps which need to be taken based on the assessment notice, such as adaption training. These obstacles are being addressed jointly in the federal state of Rhineland-Palatinate by the recognition authority — the State Office for Social Affairs, Young People and Care (LSJV) — and the Network IQ. In a written cooperation agreement, both partners have expressed support for close and binding collaboration with the aim of optimising the recognition procedure, both at an individual level for those seeking advice, as well as at a structural level.

Implementation of the strategic approach

Quick and efficient recognition procedures in the health sector require close collaboration with internal coordination. These were the findings from a series of workshops initiated by Medici in Posterum GmbH (MIP) — implementing organisation of the project "Doctors for the future". The workshops were run jointly by the IQ Network with the LSJV and in each case, over the course of these workshops, the working methods and perspectives of the other institutions became clear. The positive results developed in the meetings resulted in a cooperation agreement for the target group of academic medical professions. The aim is to consolidate and institutionalize the collaboration and to generate synergy effects in order to develop the recognition process further and to make it transparent and efficient for the applicants. The strategic steering partner(s) share their experience both in relation to individual cases as well as the process. As a result of the positive experiences, a second agree-



ment for non-academic specialist health occupations was concluded in 2017. Under the terms of the written agreement, the strategic steering partner(s) each guarantee to provide assistance to each other during the counselling of those seeking advice, in the application process, and when planning and supporting the training required. Data relating to those seeking advice is forwarded taking into account data protection regulations. In regular exchange and information events, MIP, the IQ regional coordination and the LSJV gain a good overall understanding of the target group's requirements and challenges, both in the individual case as well as with regard to the structural recognition process.

Conclusion

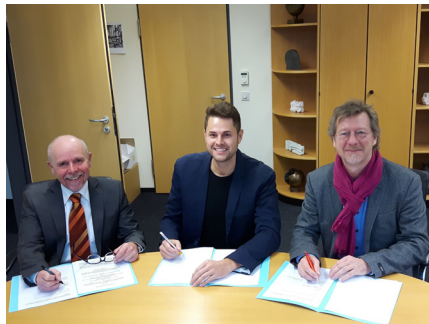
Key to optimisation of the recognition procedure are trust, transparency, willingness to enter into dialogue, and a binding collaboration in order that structural barriers can be overcome for the target group. The numbers speak for themselves: There has been a seven-fold increase both in recognition counselling for academic medical occupations as well as for non-academic specialist health occupations.

“Successfully combining competencies”

Cooperation increases efficiency and accelerates the process

Recognition procedures are complex processes involving a large number of stakeholders. In Rhineland-Palatinate, the key stakeholders are the State Office for Social Affairs, Young People and Care (LSJV) and the Network IQ. Since 2016, a written agreement has been in place between them to exchange information in a structured manner on individual cases and on procedural processes. This has resulted in a trust-based corporation and, two years after its introduction, it is difficult to imagine the day-to-day without it. Dr. Ralf Sanger, Coordinator of the IQ Network Rhineland-Palatinate, points to the main benefit as “being able to make contact without any bureaucracy and getting straight to the person you need”, adding that this “leads to a faster recognition procedure”. As soon as requirements which fall within the service portfolio of the strategic

steering partner(s) emerge from the counselling of those individuals seeking advice — counselling which is conducted by the IQ or the LSJV — the agreement guarantees that they can also be adequately referred. Basic and trusted collaborative engagement by the partner also ensures that IQ is now “included in regional and strategic health policy issues,”



explains Sanger. Detlef Placzek, President of the State Office for Social Affairs, Young People and Care, in turn praises the increase in efficiency which has taken place in the recognition procedure as a result of the agreement. “Competencies are successfully combined as a result of this agreement,” says Placzek. Individuals who have completed training in an academic medical profession in their country of origin “are now able to become integrated more effectively and more quickly within the society and the labour market of Rhineland-Palatinate.” He emphasized that the cooperation agreement is not only helping those seeking recognition but that all people in the federal state benefit from it as “it is helping to resolve the skills shortages in the health and care occupations in Rhineland-Palatinate”.

Three questions for Dr. Ralf Sanger, coordinator of the IQ Network Rhineland-Palatinate

“Success depends on a willingness to enter into dialogue”



What is innovative about the cooperation agreement?

This form of cooperation is unique in Germany. The agreement means that the entire target group can be reached, and they can be assisted and supported as a result of the counselling and training provision. The intensive collaboration also means that the needs of the target group can be understood in

a systematic and structured manner. It is important to emphasize that the agreement is a written, properly formulated and signed document and that this increases acceptance of the cooperation among all strategic and operational stakeholders. All these factors result in an improvement of the procedure for the benefit of those seeking recognition and this eases the workload for both strategic steering partner(s).

Can this approach also be applied nationwide?

It is possible to transfer it to each federal state because there are recognition authorities in all states. Cooperation agreements have the potential to retrospectively improve the recognition procedure everywhere because they enable a targeted training strategy to be developed and jointly coordinated. An important requirement for the transfer is that each of the relevant stakeholders in the federal state is willing to enter into dialogue.

What can the cooperation agreement achieve over the long term?

One key benefit of cooperation agreements is their dependable nature and the long-term focus of the collaboration with the recognition authorities. Agreements are not concluded between individuals but between institutions. The gathering of information on individual cases also helps to make the potential of the skilled workers in the federal state visible. The result is that stakeholders at this local level are made aware of the issue and may well become involved with an even greater level of commitment than previously.

Imprint

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Authors: Dr. Johnny Van Hove, Dr. Ralf Sanger, Elmar Kretschmer
Editors: Dr. Johnny Van Hove, Christian Zingel, Canan Ulug (ebb GmbH)
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Network IQ

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In cooperation with:

