



Country Report 2010 of the German Society of Specialised Nursing and Allied Professions (DGF)

Dear IFNA Colleagues and Friends,

Greetings from Germany! I do hope you are all doing well and am looking forward to meet most of you at the IFNA Council of Representatives Meeting, June 3, 2010 in The Hague.

1. Educational Issues

The specialist nurse education in intensive care and anaesthesia in the Federal State North-Rhine Westphalia (NRW) was put through by majority agreement of the health ministry despite the far too few hours in anaesthesia theory and practice hours. Unfortunately, the official expert hearing, the full support of the NRW Nursing Council, the DGF position statement and also the reference to the IFNA Standards of Education – neither of them had prevented this.

However, the good news is: the first ever “Bachelor Course in Anaesthesiology/Anaesthesia Nursing” started on April 1, 2010! The SRH University of Applied Science for Health (City of Gera, Federal State of Thuringia) offers a dual education programme that grants both a BSc Degree AND the Certificate for a nurse specialist in anaesthesia. The clinical campus is situated at the Medical Centre in Lünen.

2. Endorsement of the IFNA Standards

The IFNA Standards have been endorsed by the DGF shortly after they were issued and have also been used for the promotion of nurse anaesthesia education and practice in Germany.

3. Salaries

The salaries have changed only little as compared to 2008 and this has mainly to do with the crash of the international financial market and its impact on the economy.

4. Workforce

There is indeed a decline of nursing workforce because of three reasons. 1.) Lower number of school leavers; 2.) Reduction of places at general nursing schools and 3.) Competing career opportunities. The DGF is working on a scheme to attract more young people for the field of nurse anaesthesia.

5. Nursing Policy, Promotion and Inclusion

The German Society of Specialised Nurses (DGF) is member of the German Council of Nursing (DPR) and the DGF executive officer, Andreas Westerfellhaus, was recently elected as president of the DPR. The DPR is the ultimate voice of nursing and currently being busy in establishing volunteer registration of all nurses, which shall later on be transferred into compulsory registration. The DGF is also member of the society committee of the Cooperation for Transparency and Quality in Hospitals (KTQ). Further, State Health Ministries, Federal State Offices and the German Hospital Association (DKG) formally appointed the DGF as professional advisor/consultant.

6. Current Issues

An expert panel for health issues established by the Federal Health Ministry proposed in their report that nurses would better be tasked with so-called physician duties in future. However, from the nursing point of view this depends much on the work force because the staffing levels are in fact very, very low. As mentioned earlier, the DGF suggested to delegate the provision of anaesthesia to patients classified in ASA 1 and 2 but the physician associations are strongly against that. Surprisingly enough, they now want to introduce Anaesthesia Technical Assistants with a short-time education. Of course, the DGF objected that emphasising that anaesthesia nurses are much better qualified and competent.

7. National Activities

The DGF board meets two times a year and additional two times with state representatives and the advisory group. Numerous national conferences and quite a few regional symposia were conducted. In addition members are getting the refereed "Journal for Intensive Care and Anaesthesia Nursing", (6 x a year) with a supplement of the DGF news. The DGF is working very closely with the German Council of Nursing (DPR) and has long established contacts with the German Society of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Care Medicine (DGAI), the German Alliance of Anaesthesiologists (BDA) and the German Hospital Association (DKG). The DGF membership has increased a bit but the nursing moral is generally low because of the poor working conditions (staffing, payment and overtime hours as well as lacking study leave). Finally, President Klaus Notz negotiated a dual membership for DGF members with the German Interdisciplinary Federation of Intensive Care and Emergency Medicine (DIVI).

8. Union Activities, Strikes, Legislative Activities

Last year the German Council of Nurses and the Federal Health Ministry met for a 2nd nursing summit. The aims were to improve the working conditions for nurses and to enhance the quality of nursing work. The health Minister consulted the Union Ver.di, the German Council of Nurses, the compulsory health insurances, the German Hospital Association and the German Medical Association, too.

9. Reports and Communications with the National Organisation

The information of IFNA activities is being reported by email as well as orally during the DGF board meetings and in writing for the journal and the website <http://www.dgf-online.de>. Besides, there is a yearly report at the Annual DGF Member Meeting, which then goes into the journal as well.

10. Other Issues

Here is the DGF board members list:

Klaus Notz, President

Dieter Bassauer, Vice President

Andreas Westerfellhaus, Executive Officer

Sabine Pfeffer, Secretary

Wolfgang Klein, Vice Secretary

Tilmann Müller-Wolff, Treasurer

Martina Bauer, State Representatives' Koordinator

DGF State Representatives can be viewed here:

<http://www.dgf-online.de/wDeutsch/adressen/Landesbeauftragte.php?navanchor=2110018>

The DGF Advisory Group (Special Task Force):

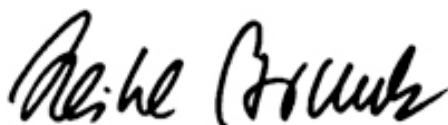
Heike Strunk, Delegate of International Affairs

Tilmann Müller-Wolff, Chief Editor Journal

Holger Beuse, DGF Website

Finally, the DGF proudly announces that Germany has suggested four speakers for the 9. IFNA World Congress in La Hague/The Netherlands in 2010. The DGF board members and state representatives wish the IFNA all the best for the 9th IFNA World Congress in The Hague/Netherlands.

With kind regards from Germany
and wishing you a pleasant time



Heike Strunk, RN CCRN CRNA MN
DGF Delegate of International Affairs
Muenster-Roxel, May 27, 2010