

Age-friendly Hospitals and Health Services

Competent response to ageing in all organizational units of the health care system



ÖSTERREICHISCHES NETZWERK
GESUNDHEITSFÖRDERNDER
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Towards a recognition procedure for members of the Austrian Network of Health Promoting Hospitals and Health Services

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Background

Due to the demographic development and the increasing incidence of illnesses of all kinds associated with old age, a large proportion of all patients in health care facilities are people in their eighth, ninth and tenth decade of life. This is associated with a high prevalence of limitations of sensory abilities, mobility and orientation with increased risk of hospital-associated functional decline.

Older patients are not only on geriatrics, but everywhere in our health services – that is why we have to deal with them competently!

Nevertheless, these facts are not yet sufficiently taken into account in basic training and education for health care professionals, in general organizational conditions and in the design of the physical environment of health care services. In order to raise awareness and provide guidance, a task force of the International Network of Health Promoting Hospitals and Healthcare Services (HPH)¹ has developed standards and measurable indicators that can be used for self-assessment and certification as an age-friendly healthcare organization: Taiwan's Framework of Age-Friendly Health Care².

Taiwan's Framework of Age-Friendly Health Care

The Taiwanese framework is based on WHO age-friendly-principles³, standards of health promoting hospitals⁴ and the Elder-Friendly Hospital Initiative in Canada⁵.

It consists of four standards, 11 sub-standards and 60 measurable items.

The aim of the framework is to support health care organizations in developing age-friendly and health promoting structures, decisions and processes, as well as a corresponding organizational culture.

Standard 1: Management policy

- 1.1 Developing an age-friendly policy
- 1.2 Organizational support
- 1.3 Continuous monitoring and improvement

Standard 2: Communication and services

- 2.1 Communication
- 2.2 Services

Taiwan's Framework of Age-Friendly Health Care

Standard 4: Physical environment

- 4.1 General environment and equipment
- 4.2 Transportation and accessibility

Standard 3: Care Processes

- 3.1 Patient assessment
- 3.2 Intervention and management
- 3.3 Community partnership and continuity of care

Focus on health care staff



In the standards of the Taiwanese framework, the health care staff is not explicitly considered and only mentioned in terms of their qualification and responsibility for good communication. However, since the staff of health care organizations is one of the three target groups in the HPH concept (along with patients and the community), an additional standard is being developed for the recognition procedure of the Austrian Network of Health Promoting Hospitals and Health Services (ONGKG) that takes ageing staff into account.

Recognition procedures developed in Austria in this subject area have been reviewed (e.g. NESTOR^{GOLD} seal of quality for effective generational management) and in a next step, specific guidelines for health care organizations have been deduced. The following topics are taken into account: managerial responsibility, age-appropriate work organization, appreciative organizational culture, equal opportunities and intergenerational dialogue.

Developing a recognition procedure for age-friendly health services in Austria

A working group of the ONGKG is adapting the Taiwanese framework to Austrian conditions and adding the focus on health care staff.

First results will be presented at the **24th Austrian Conference on Health Promoting Hospitals and Health Services**, which will take place from **14-15 November 2019 at the Klinikum Bad Gleichenberg**, Styria, on the topic of „Age-friendly Health Services – Contributions of Health Promotion“. For more information go to www.ongkg.at

Objectives of the recognition procedure

- Awareness raising
- Benchmarking
- Quality development towards age-friendliness

Planned support measures for recognition as an age-friendly health care organization

- Joint learning and mutual support for further development within the Austrian Network of Health Promoting Hospitals and Health Services
- Staff training and awareness-raising workshops (age-friendly organizational structures and processes, ...)



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References:

¹Task Force „HPH & Age-Friendly Health Care“, Chair: Shu-Ti Chiou (Director of Healthcare Quality Management & Director of Family and Community, Medicine, Cheng Hsin General Hospital, Taipei, Taiwan)

²CHIOU, Shu-Ti; CHEN, Liang-Kung. Towards age-friendly hospitals and health services. Archives of gerontology and geriatrics, 2009, 49. Jg., S. S3-S6.

³WHO. Towards age-friendly primary health care. 2004.

⁴GROENE, Oliver, et al. Implementing health promotion in hospitals: Manual and self-assessment forms. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2006.

⁵PARKE, Belinda; STEVENSON, Lynn. Creating an elder-friendly hospital. In: Healthcare Management Forum. No longer published by Elsevier, 1999. S. 45-48.