Nursing Education in Germany – Challenges and Obstacles in Professionalization

ANIM 2013 NCS Joint Meeting | 24.01.2013 | Prof. Dr. Anne-Kathrin Cassier-Woidasky | Neurocritical Care Nursing, German perspective
AGENDA

• Introduction
• Background
• Current state
• Developments
• Goal
Fundamental changes in demographics

- growing number of old people (>80 years)
- growing prevalence of geriatric and gerontopsychiatric diseases (dementia, multimorbidities)
- changes from acute illness to chronic diseases
- changing structures of family and social networks
- early discharge from hospital
- growing requirements in patients’ education of self care-management abilities
- decreasing number of health professionals
Nursing Education Today
Basic Education

• State recognized schools, affiliated to a hospital
• Admission requirement: Completion of Intermediate (secondary) school, 10 years general education
• Three year vocational training, 2100 hours theory, 2500 hours supervised practical work
• State examination: oral, written and practical exam
• “Gesundheits- und Krankenpflegerin” (Nurse)
• Subordination to medical authority
Nursing Education Today

Advanced Education

• Training courses
• e.g. Mentor for Trainees, ICU–Nurse, Anaesthesia–Nurse, Surgery/Theatre-Nurse
• two year additional training in theory and practical work in the chosen area
• State examination under federal law: oral, written and practical exam
Challenges

• no academic background
• stuck in intermediate education system
• hard to achieve appreciation from other professions
• extent of research based nursing depends on teachers’ commitment
• influence on nurses’ professional self-concept:
  • lack of access to literature and research, little knowledge in English language, lack of knowledge in how to find research findings
  • nurses believe they are not allowed to change anything in practice
  (Schubert & Wrobel, Printernet 06/09, 343ff.)
Research and Academia in Nursing Science in Germany

1980s
- Private research projects without institutional affiliation

1988
- Monika Krohwinkel, Nursing Process in Stroke Patients
- First government-funded nursing research project

1990
- Academic education in universities

2000
- 50 academic programs in universities
  (teacher, manager)

2004
- Bachelor of Nursing (Practice)
PhD - Program in Nursing Science

Bremen University
Bielefeld University
Witten-Herdecke University
PTHV Vallendar

Charité Berlin/ Maastricht (NL)
Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg

2011

Nursing Education in Germany
Basic Academic Education

Vocational Training AND Bachelor of Nursing

• provides ward nurses with scientifically based academic education
• vocational training in accordance with German law entitles graduates to work as a nurse
• academic education opens the way to academic career and research

Map: Stöcker, Reinhart (2012), www.dbfk.de
Getting Support from Outside

European Commission plans to require German Government to raise general education time to 12 years (Draft EU Directive 2005/36/EC - Admission Requirement for Nurse Education)

German Council of Science and Humanities (Wissenschaftsrat) recommends providing 10 to 20% of ward nurses with academic background and higher education. (www.wissenschaftsrat.de)
Nursing Education in Germany

Relations (statistics) we are talking about

Current state

Goal

Nurses with vocational training

Nurses with academic education

25,000 Employers (Hospitals/ Nursing Homes….) (Statistisches Bundesamt 2010)
Goal of Nursing Education is…

• to look for the very special and unique contribution of nursing to human beings
• at a high quality level
• from a professional point of view