



Recommendations for an European Curriculum for Care Assistants of People with Disabilities

Strategy Paper proposed by the Leonardo Partnership 2008-10
"Training of Care Staff for People with Disability"

Members of the partnership are (A.P. = associate partner)

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- Netværket - The Network
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1. Designation of Occupation

1.1 Care Assistant (f/m) for People with Disabilities

1.2 A training for this purpose will differ very much in reference to special target groups (p.e. students, family members, special employment situations as German "Zivildienst" or "Soziales Jahr", unemployed persons looking for a new job perspective or persons seeking a first qualification step for a professional career). Each training provider will consider the needs and chances of its given trainees, while these recommendations do not refer to a special group.

1.3 The trainee's work must not substitute more qualified work staff, when the rights and wishes of assisted persons require those services.

2. Duration of Traineeship

2.1 200 hours / 4 months

Venues for training are facilities of a training provider and place(s) of internship

2.2 An appropriate number of lessons/hours might be added for items of general, cultural and political education, training in a second language ..., depending on special target groups. As competence in ICT is most important for any trainee, it is to be recommended to put special emphasis on this subject.

2.3. We recommend two periods of internship / practical stays, one with a disabled person living at his/her own home and one in a rehabilitation or living institution with not less than 80 hours each in about three weeks all together. These hours are not included in the 200 mentioned above.

3. Occupational Profile

3.1. Field of Activity

3.1.1. The assistant will be guided by the rights and wishes of the assisted persons, look of their and his/her own safety and develop as far as possible a professional understanding of her/his performances, which enhances inclusion in society and cooperation with other partners, mainly in the following fields of activity:

A) Delivering personal services

B) Assisting persons with handicap in their tasks in household, place of education / training, work or leisure places

C) Promoting assisted person's inclusion in society

D) Organise own work as needs of assisted person might require flexible work in special surroundings and time frames

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3.1.2 Special questions and tasks of elderly peoples' care and nursing as well as those to assist persons with severe psychic disabilities are not part of the training concept proposed here.

3.2. Occupational Skills

I) Practical skills to give assistance in the fields of activity mentioned above

II) Knowledge of basic facts for understanding situation, abilities and rights of assisted persons and the surrounding structures

III) Competences of communication and cooperation with assisted persons and their family, colleagues at work ..., assistants from other professions

IV) Attitude of self-development in adapting oneself to the faculties and assistance needs of other persons without losing sight of own situation

4. Framework Curriculum

4.1 Syllabus of Training Items

The syllabus in the following table links a list of items suggested and found relevant during the partnership work to the fields of activities and competences described above. We recommend that a training provider considers this syllabus in relation with the rights, wishes and needs of future assistance users and the special target group of trainees and develops its learning objective and planned learning outcome accordingly. Some examples are given in the sample lessons in annex to these recommendations.

Training Items	Relevant Field(s) of Activity	Kind of Competence(s)
General introduction		
1) Disability: Definitions (UN Charta/ WHO)	C	II
2) UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Convention & Optional Protocol)	C	II
3) Main types of disability (physical, sensory, cognitive)	A C	I II
4) Care and nursing: needs & aims	A B D	I II III IV
5) Competences and skills	A	IV
6) Professionalism & raised consciousness	A	III IV

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7) Assistance in working place	B	I II III IV
7a) Assistance in the use of ICT and e-learning activities of the assistance user	Depending on training target group	
8) Ethics and deontology / Carers characteristics / taboos and borderline situations	A B C D	III IV
9) Disability & Family / Family members as carers	A B C D	III IV
10) Gender issues	A B C	II III IV
11) Social welfare systems & institutions	A D	II
12) Privacy & Intimacy	A	I II III IV
13) Visits to practise Aggression & violence	A B C D	I II III IV
Care & nursing		
14) Daily personal hygiene needs of people with disabilities	A B	I
15) Usage of assistive equipment	A B C D	I II
a) Light & manoeuvrable wheelchairs		
b) Power wheelchairs		
c) Shower chairs		
d) Lifts/ hoists		
e) Electric beds		
f) Accessible cars		
16) Health provision for carers	A D	I II
a) Lifting/ carrying techniques & transfers		
b) Security at work		
17) First Aids & emergencies: basic rules	D	I II
Basic knowledge (medical, psychological, sociological)		
18) General knowledge on different types of	A B C D	II

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disabilities & diseases that cause disability		
a) Anatomy and physiology		
b) Pathology and Pharmacology		
c) Basic hygiene rules		
19) Mental health & psychiatric patients	A B C D	II
20) Prophylactic measures & AIDS & other contagious diseases (e.g. pandemic)	A D	II IV
21) How to get special information (> net: blind)	A B C D	II III &
Communication		
22) Methods for a successful conversation & Verbal and non-verbal communication, sign language	B C	III
23) Working as a team	A	
24) Privacy rules in communication	A B C	III IV
25) Communication Codes	A	I
26) Management of crisis/ coping with conflicts	A B C	III
a) Between the disabled person & the carer		
b) The carer & the person's family		
c) Conflicts in a team		
Household and Outdoor assistance		
27) Household tasks (washing, cooking)	B	I II
28) Basic household competences	B	I II
29) Being guest or host	A B C D	III &
30) Personal assistance & motherhood: raising a child with a carer	B C	I II III
31) Outdoor assistance:	A B C D	I II III IV
a) school/ kindergarten		
b) leisure time facilities		

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c) living in an institution		
d) workplace		
Juridical issues		
32) How to look for employment as assistant	A B C D	III IV
33) Agreements between the user & the carer and third parties	A B C D	II III IV
34) National legislation	A B C D	II
a) Employment law		
b) Security in workplace		
c) Health insurance & allowances		
d) Guardianship rules		
Disability & Ageing		
35) Defining Ageing & Dependency	B	II
36) Mental health & ageing / Dementia	A B C D	I II III

4.2 General Training Plan

4.2.1 General explanations

4.2.1.1 As we propose a duration of 4 months and 200 hours this means 50 hours per month. As times for approximately 2 ½ internship weeks are not included in the 200 hours, the weekly training time in the remaining 13 or 14 training weeks would be about 15 hours.

4.2.1.2 Following these recommendations, the procedures seem to be a half-day training on 3 or 4 days a week. When items of "general education" are added, it would be 5 or even 6 half days. A training provider might choose to offer a course on one or two full days, combined with half-day(s) or might offer a minimum training on evening hours in combination with some week-end sessions. Providers with wide areas of "influence" giving accommodation to their trainees might decide to condense this course to a less numbers of weeks by organizing full-day-training and practise. On the other hand, it seems not necessary that a local training provider offers whole day stay facilities (or overnight accommodation) to its trainees, who probably continue living at their resp. homes.

4.2.1.3 Training providers have to realise that trainees will probably combine course attendance with a (small) part-time job, an independent small business, a perhaps reduced study program, job-seeking activities when unemployed or family and community responsibilities (child-minding, care for elderly parents ...). Particularities depend on the choice of target groups. We suggest that even the tighter schedule of the proposed internship weeks is not a decisive obstacle for continuing these tasks, as

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the internships have to be planned weeks in advance and the training provider might offer help in organising substitution. A training provider should therefore be able to understand such situations, especially for women, offer qualified advice and be able to cooperate with service providers which offer child minding, care service for elderly or disabled persons or even substitution on independent small business or agricultural facilities. Staff should be able to advise a trainee about dealing with an employer about part-time working hours etc. Certainly, all this is not necessary if some other institution, agency ... provide it, but the training provider and his staff should consider such situations of their trainees!

4.2.3.1 Reflecting the importance of e-learning and the use of ICT in learning, we strongly recommend that a training providers make any possible effort to include methods of ICT and web based learning in the "classroom" or other suitable activities in order to use the potential of these learning strategies for case-studies, motivation and evaluation of personal learning outcomes. It might be possible for trainees to make acquaintance with persons with disabilities and see their potential via web-based learning strategies who they could not get in touch with in any other place. Still, reflecting on the situation of this short curriculum (4.2.1.3), we do not recommend to use "decentralized" e-learning strategies which would make it necessary for trainees to study at a PC at home. The case is different if the training provider organizes this training piece by piece over a longer period of time.

4.2.2. Internships

4.2.2.1 Internship weeks should be placed around mid-course (7th to 9th training week). At least one week-end should be included as typical performances with leisure time activities should be introduced, too. These internships would include job-shadowing and applying training activities.

4.2.2.2. It seems to be very difficult to find suitable places for internship "at home" as the assisted persons, his/her regular assistant and the trainee must not "stand on each others feet": After all, it is clear that a training provider cannot be successful without very good "connections" to associations of disabled persons or service providers and the trust of community, formal and informal networks of disabled people in his area.

4.2.3. Time order of items

4.2.3.1 Overview of training weeks:

1st month	Visits to practise		
2nd month	Visits to practise		
3rd month			
4th month			

Green shadow: internship period in mid-course

Therefore the training might be divided in these five stages:
a) introduction weeks,

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- b) preparation for internship period
- c) internships
- d) evaluation of internships and consolidation of competences,
- e) preparation for examination or securing of results -

4.2.3.2 Example for planning a training period - first stage

As an example for further planning a training curriculum, we recommend the following topics as subjects of the first training weeks - all necessary items like general introduction into the training, get-to-know of institutions, trainers and other participants, obligation and rights of trainees, practical and technical questions, clearance of expectations for the training set aside -, before the period of practical internship:

- Importance of human rights / human dignity in everyday life and assistance tasks and communication. Understanding of "help for self-help" principles, not to "over-support", "over-protect" an assisted persons, but communicate about needs and feelings with respect for their self-esteem, recognizing and avoiding stereotypes and prejudices
- Typical needs related to types of disabilities - ability to recognize these needs and communicate about them with an assisted persons and other assistants
- Respecting privacy and intimacy - assistant being a guest in the home/sphere of living / working / learning of another person - empathic behaviour, giving self-confidence
- How to communicate in a professional way, be able to listen and to understand (and see to own) unspoken messages, being able to talk and reflect about own way of behaviour and style of communication
- Basic hygiene rules in a private home / in an institution
- basics rules for touching and bodily supporting another person when performing services like transfer, nutrition, assistance with dressing ...
- Working techniques to avoid p.e. own backache, muscular problems and other typical health risks
- Juridical and practical questions of liability and data protection

We recommend that training providers with target groups not acquainted with assistance and caring situations organise at least two "visit to practise days" during the first two weeks and gives opportunity to reflect these experiences during the "classroom" sessions of the training.

The training provider should offer similar "visits to practise" to interested persons before they decide about entering the training, but this should not substitute the visit days mentioned above.

4.2.3.3 Questions about internship in a private home / with a person living independently

It might result difficult to organise and arrange such practical stays and find persons with disability ready to welcome such an additional "guest" in his/her own. Nevertheless we recommend strongly that trainees get to know the practise of independent living and not only institutional care situations. With special target groups, it might not be necessary to add a second practical stay of a different kind, but in general we upheld the principle stated above.

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Therefore training provider has to be part of a network including disabled persons and their associations and representations.

Other proposals for a training provider to solve this difficulty are

- It might be easier to find places for practical stays with persons living in private organized community (flat-sharing) than with persons living as single.
- After a short period of job shadowing the trainee might do the job on his own (without the "real" assistant) and apply his/her training , provided there is a well organised way for him/her and the assisted persons to "get help" and ask back.
- Certainly the assisted persons has to have the assured right and the opportunity to get to know the trainee before he/she enters the private home and "reject" him/her without any formality.
- The training provider should organize "workshops" with the assisted persons to prepare such practical stays, discuss all items about them and - if necessary - introduce and prepare them for possible difficulties.
- There might be some sort of fee or at least reimbursement of additional expenditure to the assisted persons (the additional guest might use facilities, have a drink or refreshment in the home ... it must not be taken for granted that the assisted persons provides these means).

To the trainees it has to be made clear that they have to follow the way and rhythm of living of the assisted person even if this practical stay is considered (perhaps paid for) as part of "their" vocational training.

4.3 Examination Requirements

This has to be considered by any training provider with reference to its special "target group". Some might require a formal examination, others only a "certificate of attendance".

Following European standards, it is to be recommended to use system of "credit points" for evaluation the trainees performance as well as for giving the trainer a clear view for training priorities (p.e. from a sum of 60 credit points to be reached during the complete training, 20 points might be achieved from performance in practical stays, 20 points in training communicative competences (field of competence III) and 10 points in classroom training on the other fields of competence).

5. Annex

5.1 Resources

The outline of this proposal follows recommendations of

- Federal Institute for vocational Education and Training (BiBB Bonn), Vocational Training Regulations and the Process Behind Them (2006)

For definitions of above mentioned terms see

- European Communities, The European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF), Annex 1 (2008) and
- European Communities, Key Competences for Lifelong Learning - European Reference Framework, section "Key Competences" (2007)

On questions of ICT and e-learning:

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- Commission of the European Communities, Commission Staff Working Document SEC(2008) 2629 final, The use of ICT to support innovation and lifelong learning of all - A report on progress

On actual questions of Vocational Training

- European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the council, the European Economic and social Committee and the Committee of the Regions COM(2010) 296 final, A new impetus for European cooperation in Vocational Education and Training to support the Europe 2020 strategy

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5.2 Proposal for lesson planning

Module / Session	Themes/Topic (General Introduction)	Objectives	Contents	Material	Hours
Module 1 Session 1	<p>1) Disability: Definitions (UN Charta/ WHO)</p> <p>2) UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Convention & Optional Protocol</p> <p>3) Main types of disability (physical, sensory, cognitive)</p> <p>4) Care and nursing: needs & aims</p>	<p>know the Disabilities and types of disabilities.</p> <p>know the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).</p> <p>know the care and nursing available according to the types of disabilities (needs and aims).</p>	<p>Disabilities (concepts and types of disabilities).</p> <p>Rights of Person with disabilities</p> <p>Care and nursing for people with disabilities</p>		1,5 h
	<p>5) Competences and skills</p> <p>6) Professionalism & raised consciousness</p> <p>7) Assistance in working place</p> <p>8) Ethics and deontology/Carers characteristics/taboos and borderline situations</p>	<p>know the Competences and Skills that as a Care Assistant must have to deal with people with disabilities (Duties and role of assistant).</p> <p>know of the health care system and local resources. (This includes an understanding and awareness of the complex system of community resources that support people with disabilities).</p>	<p>Competences, Skills, Duties and role of Care Assistant</p> <p>Disabled person's life cycle EU laws and rights for people with disabilities</p> <p>Ethics and deontology/Carers characteristics/taboos and</p>		1,5 h

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		<p>know the key players in the health care system for people with disabilities.</p> <p>understand disability through the disabled persons' life cycle - foundational knowledge on working with youths, adults and elderly with disability</p> <p>know EU laws and rights on issue.</p> <p>know assistant ethics and deontology, behavior and conduct (Careers characteristics, how to face a borderline situation, and how to cope with social taboos)</p>	borderline situations.		
Session 2	<p>9) Disability & Family/Family members as carers</p> <p>10) Gender issues</p> <p>11) Social welfare systems & institutions</p> <p>12) Privacy & Intimacy</p> <p>13) Aggression & violence</p>	<p>know the difficulties faced by family and family support.</p> <p>Increase sensitivity about gender issues.</p> <p>Learn how social integration of disabled people is a good indicator of welfare state.</p> <p>Increase knowledge about the kind of interaction that must exist between care staff and disabled person starting with his/her needs and specific issues.</p>	<p>Disabilities and family support</p> <p>Impact of Disabilities: (personal life, family life and social life) Interaction between Care staff and disabled person</p> <p>Aggression and violence (skills for the management of risk situations)</p>		2 h

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		develop awareness of possible aggressive behaviour and to acquire adequate skills for the management of risk situations.			
Module 2 Session 1	14) Usage of assistive equipment a) assistive equipment for movement * light & manoeuvrable wheelchairs * power wheelchairs * shower chairs * lifts / hoists * electric beds * accessible cars b) Assistive equipment for nutrition (eating and drinking)	know about different assistive equipment and their using - know about safety in using the equipment * brakes * abdominal belt * bed lattice Know about problems with assistive equipment * no air in the wheels * electric wheelchairs/beds/lifts need socket or accumulator - know about assistive equipment for nutrition * special cutlery (forks, knives and spoons) * special dishes * tube feeding	-presentation of different equipment and practical lesson -information about safety using -practical lesson - information about problems with assistive equipment - presentation about assistive equipment for nutrition - practical lesson	- different kinds of wheelchairs and other aids for movement - information papers / pictures of lifts / hoists / electric beds / accessible cars - different kinds of special cutlery and dishes / different kinds of feeding tubes - information papers /pictures of assistive equipment for nutrition	1,5 h
Session 2	15) Health provision for carers	know about different techniques of transfers (Kinaesthetic, Bobath concept,...) - know about hygiene * using gloves * use disinfection	information about different techniques of transfers - practical lesson		1,5

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		know about security at work			
Session 3	16) Personal hygiene needs	know how to talk with people about intimate problems	Practical lesson with role-playing for example		
	17) First Aid & emergencies: basic rules	know what to do in case of emergency: *breathlessness *heart attack *epileptic seizure *laceration * absence; * insensibility	-information about Behaviour in case of emergency practical lesson		

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