

# migrant-friendly hospitals

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## **Contribution by Antonio Salceda de Alba**

My name is Antonio Salceda, I am the focal person for MFH in Hospital Punta de Europa and I am the subproject C manager as well. My hospital is very close to the African coast, we are only 10 km from it, so we are highly involved in population movements, though the migration experience in our country -to receive migrants- is something relatively new in Spain. We are newcomers in this area, we have been a country that produces migrants but not a country to receive migrants. The training on cultural diversity / cultural competency was selected in my hospital as an intervention to be implemented following the results from our needs assessment. Cultural differences appeared in second place among the issues to be addressed. On the second place after languages differences. The staff in our hospital made a clear request to us to receive training to increase knowledge and abilities that could allow them to offer a better quality of service to the migrant patients.

The implementation of the measure required a clear commitment from the part of the managers, approval of the measure and setting up material and human resources. Besides it had to be accepted and understood by staff as a measure that will have a positive impact in their daily practise. It was not mandatory to attend the modules / the sessions and we choose the options of keeping an open call for registration to all departments within our hospital. Letters were sent to responsible of departments, the measure and what we expected to achieve was explained directly to staff in different wards and additional info was clearly visible in our MFH notice board, which is located at a privileged position of the hospital, it is right in front of the exit of the lift of the hospital.

The modules were scheduled out of the working time, which is the normal procedure in our continuous professional education service. The course was to start on March 24<sup>th</sup> 2004 and the promotion of the course started on March 11<sup>th</sup>, in coincidence, obviously accidentally with the Madrid train bombing by the terrorist. I was very concerned that the highly emotional, and passionate climate of the following days in Spain would have a negative impact in the development of the pilot course, but to my relieve it made no effect at all, in the responds of the staff, not in that of the rest of the public. We wanted the attendance to be a small group, to be more interactive. We had 16 workers in it which were integrated in very different departments, there were delivery rooms, haematology, emergency room, social worker, even the cook was there. The different modules were set following the recommendation of the MFH European project, the two initial modules were separated by one week and the third module four weeks after the second one, with a total of ten hours. A group of trainers was selected, from a NGO “ALGECIRAS ACOGE” that was already cooperating with us in the MFH project, they had a lot of experience in the field of migration, and one of them is a cultural mediator and a migrant himself. The modules were expected to generate awareness, provide



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knowledge and develop abilities among staff in the field of cultural competency. To us both theoretical knowledge and practical abilities were necessary but the emphasis was on practical issues to have some impact on daily practise. The modules were independent and coherence among them was assured when negotiating previously the topics to be addressed with the trainers. Selecting topics of interest for the potential audience was to us very important. We obtained improvements in awareness and knowledge in topics related with cultural diversity and raised the level of comfort of staff in cross cultural encounters. Around 80% of the attendance report that the modules had a real impact in their daily practise, 95% stated that their interest on cultural competency had increased. After the training there were no dissatisfied persons. Though the personal costs to implement the measure have been quite high, it is clear that it was worth while and by looking at the figures we have to agree that cultural competence training should be included in normal programs of professional continuous education in our hospital. This will assure the sustainability of the measure beyond MFH project and ensure a permanent improvement in the quality of service provided to migrant populations.

Thank you

