

The “Migrant Friendly Hospitals” Project at Kaiser Franz Josef Spital, Vienna, Austria

Karoline Kandel, local focal person

KFJ hospital is a secondary care centre with more than 700 beds. Anually, more than 50 000 outpatients are treated. The hospital is located in a district with a migrant population of about 25,000. Many of them are originally from Turkey or countries that have been part of former Yugoslavia. Medical and nursing staff has been multicultural for more than 3 decades. Efforts to decrease problems caused by language and/or intercultural differences have already been made before taking part in the MFH project – e.g. by employing a Turkish community interpreter. Several departments are closely cooperating with FEM, a Women's Health Centre that focusses on the needs of women migrants.

Reasons for taking part in the MFH project included the intention to improve services for migrant patients and to increase staff satisfaction with a very complex working situation. Based on the results of the needs assessment the project steering group identified the following target areas for interventions: staff education, communication and patient information, internal and external project promotion, financing by external sponsors and miscellaneous. Besides activities within the overall project we decided to take part in Subproject B “Migrant-friendly information and training in mother and child care” and Subproject C “Staff training towards cultural competence: Enable hospital staff to better handle cross-cultural encounters”. Within the given time frame of 2 years we succeeded in realizing part of our concepts and ideas. As results and feedback were in general promising, KFJ will certainly continue its MFH efforts in the future and is hoping to be able to share its experiences with hospitals on national and international level.

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