

Study group



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Mental Health & Migration

International Survey on
psychosocial health for people
with migration background
and on cross-cultural openness
in the psychosocial health care
system

Duration

The research project has started in December 2009 and ends in November 2012.

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Background

Detailed knowledge about the mental health status of the 19 million people with a migration background living in Germany is limited due to a lack of representative data. Additionally, there are no standards for implementing cross-cultural openness in psychosocial institutions nor are there standardized cultural competence trainings for professionals working in the mental health care system.

Goals

The aim of the international and interdisciplinary study group is to improve the health care situation for people with migration background who suffer from mental disorders.

The collected data will contribute to gain insight into the requirements of people with migration background and mental disorders, to set standards for cross-cultural openness in the mental health care system and to evaluate its implementation.

The research project will make an important contribution to the integration of people with migration background into the German health care system.

External advisors

The work of the study group will be accompanied by external advisory boards consisting of representatives from focus groups, representatives from politics and business, migrant and health organisations and international migration researchers.

Realisation of the study

The study group will focus on analysis and improvement of several aspects of mental health care for people with migration background. The study is divided into four interrelated modules.

Module 1

Conduction of an epidemiological study to gather data on the prevalence of mental disorders of people from the largest migrant group in Germany, namely people with Turkish migration background. Regional partners (e.g. migrant organisations, companies, local authorities, associations) will be integrated beforehand to promote the study.

Module 2

Qualitative exploration of barriers and resources in utilisation of mental health care in Germany. Explanatory models for mental disorders will be assessed in a group of people with Turkish migration background and a German comparison group.

Module 3

Compilation of structural quality standards for cross-cultural openness in the German mental health care system. Assessment and analysis of the implementation of standards in two districts of Berlin. Besides interviewing professionals the viewpoint of people with migration background will be included.

Module 4

Development and evaluation of a standardised cultural competence training for professionals in mental health care institutions.

Basic principles of the study group

In order to assess the complex topic on mental health and migration in an all-embracing, objective and unprejudiced manner the study group agreed on five principles to form the basis of the study.

1. Multidisciplinarity

The study group consists of researchers with various backgrounds (psychiatrists, psychologists, psycho-therapists, sociologists and anthropologists).

2. Diversity

The study takes the cultural and socio-economic diversity of people with a migration background in Germany into account as the results of module 3 and 4 will have an impact on all people with a migration background in Germany.

3. Cross-cultural bias sensitivity

Discriminatory attitudes and prejudices whether they may occur in the clinical setting or in the study group itself will be reflected and discussed with the help of the advisory board.

4. Methodological heterogeneity

Emphasis is put on the integration of a variety of quantitative and qualitative approaches in the study process.

5. Sustainability

Instruments and results developed in the course of the study are intended to contribute in a sustainable way in order to improve the inpatient and outpatient health care of people with a migration background and mental disorders.