



Measures for safeguarding long term care lose their shine after 1 year – staff cuts feared in residential homes

The hymns sung to the measures for safeguarding long term care (introduced on July 1, 2008) which were a driving force in the electoral fall of 2008 in South Tyrol are still ringing in our ears. The requests for nursing allowances have far outstripped forecasts, however, causing a crisis in the care fund. According to the unanimous tenor in nursing homes, the result has been the disappearance of care level 4. Level 4 was introduced along with the measures for safeguarding long term care, first and foremost to meet adequately the considerable needs of dementia patients. Also as regards outpatient care, it seems that the classification teams working in each district are following discreet instructions to lower classifications. Many care homes are already complaining of a lack in revenues that could range from 70,000 to 100,000 euros for mid-sized institutions (80 – 100 beds) by the end of the year. Chances are strong that this will lead to staffing cutbacks.

Our politicians are now striving to harmonise daily rates for inpatient facilities over the next 4 years. The additional contribution for accommodation in retirement and care homes granted today could be cut as a result. To the extent that the difference is not made up for by customers or the community, our homes will face far more drastic changes than we care to imagine.

Irene Morandell, chairman of the BFA and director of the Wohn- und Pflegeheim St. Pauls (Eppan, Italy)

Financial crisis good for residential care homes?

While many European residential care homes have grave concerns about the consequences of the financial crisis (see: Irene Morandell), reports from the Netherlands have it that people are happy about the crisis: "Whereas previously it was extremely difficult to find good workers," we hear, "now there's a large supply of labour". The financial crisis will be an important topic during our TIME OUT in Luxembourg. Luc Broussy, local councillor and social committee delegate in the French department of Val d'Oise, will take a thorough look into the consequences of the financial crisis for residential care homes. *w.s.*

The Executive Board has met in Belgium

The Executive Board of the E.D.E. met in Dilbeek (near Brussels) at the invitation of the Belgian association VDOR on July 12, 2009. The meeting took place in the Breugheldal care home directed by VDOR vice president Jan Vandekerckhove. Among the topics on the agenda were preparations for the Congress in Luxembourg and the most recent results of the working group "E.D.E. Mission". Discussions with VDOR president Jan De Moor dealt with cooperation between national associations in implementing the aims of the E.D.E. and possibilities for joint projects. A visit by colleagues from the Flemish association to long-term care facilities in Saxony (Germany) was planned. Directors from the UK will also home care take part in this study trip.

Cross-border exchange for intensifying cooperation

At the suggestion of Jan De Moor, chairman of the Belgian association VDOR, the E.D.E. is planning an international expert's field trip for interested colleagues next year. The first destination for this type of exchange will be the German state of Saxony. The care facilities in the region are highly interesting for their conception, construction and organisation, and provide a first-class look into the future of long-term care.

On the agenda are visit to the Wohn- und Pflegezentrum Annaberg-Buchholz (Annaberg-Buchholz residential care centre), which excels for its broad range of services, various living facilities and innovative organisational models. With its "Schloss Osterstein", the care home Senioren- und Seniorenpflegeheim gGmbH in Zwickau offers a unique backdrop for a thrilling exchange of ideas. Its "rooms of the future" – an innovative project between industry, the University of Applied Sciences in Zwickau and the sector – as well as its location in an extensively renovated renaissance palace, have given this establishment a high profile in the German media.

Additional professional highlights are in the planning, together with a cultural programme in Saxony's capital Dresden. The field trip is planned for May 9 – 12, 2010. As the first applications have already come in, we encourage those interested to contact *Mrs Hartmann* (e-mail: info@ede-eu.org) at your first convenience.

E.D.E. Vision 16

This is the 16th edition of the electronic Newsletter of the E.D.E.: E.D.E. VISION.

This newsletter will inform you about the current developments within the European care centres and in particular about the position of directors/managers. The E.D.E. also intends to adopt a position on real issues in European politics in the context of care for the elderly. E.D.E. VISION's primary purpose is however to inform you about projects of the E.D.E. and its member countries.



Prof. Dr. Wilfried Schlüter

The fact that the newsletter is published electronically makes it readily accessible and enables national associations to pass the contents on to their members.



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on Social Services: How Social Services help mobilising the Workforce and strengthening Social Cohesion

Maybe a result of the conference will be to strengthen the importance and place of social services. The conference mainly looked at social services as a tool for prevention of social exclusion, as an area of growing opportunities for increasing the workforce and of their strong role in national economy. However there was an underlying leitmotiv of how are social services going to stand up to the crisis or will they strengthen through the increasing number of vulnerable persons.

In fact the question was asked "could the crisis be an opportunity for SSG?" It was stated by J. Vignon* in his summing up "Social Services will bring a valuable answer to the crisis; on the one hand they will bring stimulation to employment and on the other hand they hold a central place in the solidarity that is so much needed for active inclusion."

The services sector is booming, said one speaker, but all is not well. There is an increase in needs, but decrease in the workforce. There will be a higher number of people ageing and a shortage of staff to be foreseen. We are confronted with "new disabilities", more complex, many in the mental health sector. There is a need for modernisation, to move away from a "charity" approach to a "human rights" approach.

The opening panel had the mission to start the debate with the questions of "sustainability, Quality and Accessibility of Social Services", however the speakers rather avoided the sticky question of sustainability. Somehow the speakers did not (want, dare?) touch on sustainability and surprisingly nor the question of accessibility.

For the Commissioner Špidla* "services have an important role to play in re-launching the economy". 80 % of new jobs created are filled by women. France encourages the accessibility of SSGI to persons in situation of exclusion, helping access to a bank account for example. For Slovenia the main feature of quality standards is accessibility and most importantly financial accessibility. Sustainability is an "unknown parameter" at the moment. Most services' budgets are allocated annually, few services know what the following year will bring, and this prevents them from holding staff under long term contracts.

Affordability was brought up by the Czech National Disability Council highlighting the fragility of financing social services to the user. Institutional care has a more reliable financial system from state funds than domiciliary care allowing care providers to be able to guarantee their costs to the user. This is not the case in domiciliary services.

Out of the three themes set for the opening panel it was by far the theme of Quality that pulled the most weight: Who defines quality? Is it an informed choice for clients? A pact between user and provider? But what about the carer..., what about the family who is often the purchaser?

It was "quality" that came out as the key to social services; as the key to the costs; as the key to the access; and as the key to the recognition of the carers' job, of the tasks of all those who give care. J. Vignon did not call for standards but "for something that draws the quality of services upwards."

Angela Cluzel, E.D.E., EU Affairs

* the EU Commissars J. Vignon and V. Špidla will be the lecturers during the 11th E.D.E. Congress in Luxembourg

A letter from the court of the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess of Luxembourg, patrons of the 11th E.D.E. Congress

Sehr geehrter Herr Bohler,

Durch Ihr geschätztes Schreiben vom vergangenen 17. Februar, für welches ich mich bedanke, haben Sie liebenswürdigerweise Seine Königliche Hoheit den Großherzog gebeten die Schirmherrschaft über den 11. Europäischen Kongress des Europäischen Heimleiterverbandes (E.D.E.) mit dem Leitthema "TIME OUT", welcher vom 24. bis 26. September 2009 in Luxemburg stattfindet, zu übernehmen.

Der Großherzog hat mich beauftragt Ihnen recht herzlich für Ihre Anfrage zu danken und Ihnen mitzuteilen dass Ihre Königlichen Hoheiten der Großherzog und die Großherzogin bereit sind die alleinige und ausschließliche Schirmherrschaft über die von Ihnen geplante Veranstaltung zu übernehmen. Der genaue Wortlaut wäre "Unter der Schirmherrschaft Ihrer Königlichen Hoheiten dem Großherzog und der Großherzogin."

Auch hat Er mich gebeten Ihnen viel Erfolg in Ihrem Vorhaben zu wünschen.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,


Pierre Mores