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REQUIREMENT PROFILE - LATVIA

1. Introduction

The centre of the following document is a requirement profile for a case manager in Latvia. The profile describes the qualities that a case manager should possess in order to fulfil the role. The profile consists of key competencies, which are the abilities of an individual, and can be encompass knowledge, skill and professionalism.

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2. Methodical approach to create a country specific requirement profile for case managers

The creation of country specific profiles is guided by the following question: “Which technical and interdisciplinary competencies do specialised personnel need to work as case managers in this country?”

The outcome of this approach is the detection competencies that are essential to working as a case manager. Various tools are used to aid this process:

1. KODE®X method
2. Guidelines for interviews
3. Standardised Questionnaires

Creation of a target profile using KODE®-X

The first step, using the standardised measurement technique KODE®-X as a basis, is to get to know which competencies are important for a potential case manager to successfully manage a case. The KODE®-X method is applied to determine these competencies.

KODE®-X is a measurement technique that measures specific characteristics - in this case competencies.¹ Competencies are self-organisational abilities. They “are based on knowledge, constituted by values, allotted as skills, fused by experiences, realised by will power” (Erpenbeck/Heyse 1999 S.162).²

Competencies are incredibly important in open question and decision making situations and in complex systems, as is the case when implementing case management.

¹ Ann.: To ensure the highest scientific standards the FHM-Kompetenzzentrum has been certified as a CeKom® (Centrum für Kompetenzbilanzierung). In the scope of CeKom® institutions Germany-wide follow the same quality standards to measure competencies. Inter-institutional projects are made possible using this national network.

² Erpenbeck, J. Heyse, V. (1999)

The target group in the employment promotion field are employees in job centres and recruiting agencies. The target group also includes specialised staff that work with people that are difficult to promote on the job market and/or participate in employment promotion programmes, career counselling, addiction counselling services and institutions that help people with mental-health issues, physical disabilities and special needs.

The target group in the health care sector consists of employees that work in discharge management in hospitals, specialised staff in day care, residential care, educational counselling, care counselling and specialised staff that work in information centres for old people and people with special needs, as well as the rehabilitation sector. Moreover, specialised staff that counsel in doctors' surgeries should also be targeted.

The KODE[®]-X questionnaire maps 64 interdisciplinary areas of competence. The role of the questioned experts is to determine how significant each competence is for a case manager. A scale ranging from 1 (not important) to 6 (extremely important) was used to measure the significance of each competence. 10 to 20 KODE[®]-X surveys, corresponding to the relative work fields, will be conducted in the participating countries.

Using an analysis of the survey results the most frequently named competencies will be selected and described. The results of the survey regarding required qualifications will provide an overview of the most desirable qualifications. The results will be compared to secondary analyses and expert opinions. The interdisciplinary competence requirements will be expanded using the professional requirements. This approach will provide indicators for the sector and country specific **requirement profile** of a case manager.

The goal of **the standardized questionnaire** is to understand which competencies specialised staff, who wants to work following the case management concept, need for client relations and cooperation with involved organisations. On the one hand the results of the survey will be used to create a requirement profile for case managers. On the other hand the results will be used to specify a training programme for case managers.

In addition to socio-graphic data the questionnaire includes questions about the personal competencies of the case managers³ and the networking work of case management. The survey consists of open and closed questions and a question measuring satisfaction using a scale. The results will be evaluated using frequency analyses and the answers to the open questions will be categorised.

The target group of the survey is similar to that of the KODE[®]-X method; it consists of employees in the health care and employment promotion sector.

The guideline supported interview consists of the following modules: personal profile and personal professional development of the respondent, personal knowledge, expertise and personal evaluation of counselling. The respondents' answers will be given in writing and evaluated using Mayring's⁴ methodology.

The research questions are as follows:

- What are your most important occupational activities in your organisation?
- Please name the key competencies for your job?
- In which situations are the aforementioned competencies essential?
- How do you define success in terms of working with your clients and/or unemployed people?
- When and where did you develop these strengths? How did you acquire them?
- What are the most important work-related competencies that have led to success in your job?
- What advice would you offer a future social worker/counsellor/ case manager to develop and promote their professional and interdisciplinary competencies?

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3 Mayring, Philipp (2002)

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3. Requirement profile for case managers in Latvia

The requirement profile of a case manager in Latvia is based on the results of the KODE-X[®] method, the questionnaire and the guideline supported interviews.

Based on the KODE[®]-X job profile central results of the survey and interviews were used to create a competence based requirement profile for a case manager.

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3.1. Results of KODE[®]-X-survey

Results of the survey in Latvia showed that the competencies reliability, credibility, helpfulness and initiative are considered to be most important. Future case managers are expected to approach their responsibilities in a disciplined and conscientious manner, while being guided by values and ideals. They should act convincingly and motivationally and stimulate the personal development of their clients. This means that personal commitment and the ability to initiate processes are required. Likewise, the training of personal responsibility, communication skills, a normative-ethical attitude and the willingness to actively address problems should be advanced.

Requirement profile according to KODE[®]-X key competencies

Competence	Average
Normative-ethical attitude	5,7
Sense of duty	5,7
Credibility	5,6
Readiness to learn	5,5
Communicative skills	5,5
Preciseness	5,5
Reliability	5,5
Loyalty	5,4
Ability to assess things	5,4
Ability to solve conflicts	5,4
Awareness of results	5,4
Holistic thinking	5,4

Fig. 1: Requirement profile according to KODE[®]-X key competencies

Relationship between the key competencies and the basic competences

The four core competencies of the KODE[®]-X method are:

- Personal competence
- Activity and decision making competence
- Professional and methodology competence
- Socio-communicative competence

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The detected key competencies are assigned to the corresponding four core competencies. This results in the following distribution:

Competence	Percent
personal competency	46 %
competency of activity and decision-making	0
professional and methodological competency	29 %
social communicative competency	25 %

Fig. 2: Core competencies

Additional findings

In addition to the aforementioned findings 22 experts were asked their opinion using a semi-structured questionnaire. Besides the collection of socio-graphic and occupational data the questionnaire focused on the following topics:

- Number and problems of clients as well as their access to advice and the reasons for needing it
- Criteria for job satisfaction and success in the job or in counselling situations
- Challenging situations
- The most important competencies and personal skills that are used in the practice of the profession and how they were acquired
- Which concepts do you work by
- What makes a good advisor and what advice would you give him/her?

In addition to KODE[®] X- questionnaire five experts were interviewed in an anonymous narrative interview. During the interviews biographical data on education, personal development and development of professional and transferable skills was captured as well as information about the interdisciplinary competencies and

interviewees' companies was acquired. The questions as described in chapter 2 are deciding in compiling a competence profile:

3.2. Results of data collection

In addition to KODE[®]-X questionnaire five experts were interviewed in an anonymous narrative interview. During the interviews biographical data on education, personal development and development of professional and transferable skills was captured as well as information about the interdisciplinary competencies and interviewees' companies was acquired. The questions as described in chapter 2 are guiding in the creation of a competency profile:

Survey results

➤ Sociographic data

The experts who have been questioned, who work in the health care area, are medium 41,5 years old, 14 female and 1 male, most of them have university degree, first of all in the field of medicine, but also nursing, social work and physiotherapy and psychology.

➤ Counselling activities

All of them have additional qualifications, first of all in the issues of their expert knowledge, meaning the sectors of medicine and nursing, e. g. massage, in dealing with depressive or addicted people or children, but also health care, crisis management and social work. Most of them work as doctor or medical practitioner, some in nursery, therapy or social work, nearly all of them in a health centre respectively clinic. Half of them have to care for more than 35 clients per week, the other half average 15 to 20. The clients approach almost a third voluntarily, a third by a legal basis, a third are assigned by a third party like other doctors or social services.

Most of the experts collaborate with partners. To develop and promote their collaborations they would prefer first of all professional exchange, followed by joint case discussions, regular workshops, and joint meetings.

Summary of questionnaire and interview results

➤ Successful/joyful work

A successful/joyful work is featured by feedback from patients in the form of thanks or only smiles, if they experience that their work is useful or meaningful. That are the situations they can give support to solve problems and they see the results, they are able to use their knowledge, they empower patients to develop

themselves. Some of them is worth mentioning to set apart professional life from private life. Most of the experts are satisfied of their activities, level 8.5 on a scale from one to ten.

- The greatest strengths as a consultant and the competences which essentially contribute success in their job

In their opinion the most important skills are professionalism or professional experience and a high level of knowledge. They appreciate communicative skills, listening and understanding. While doing their work they need empathy, openness and tolerance to understand other's perspective. Further they need the ability to motivate and to encourage their patients. A successful worker is willing to help and to solve conflicts. He or she follows a result oriented way and works with devotedness.

- Strengths have been developed and required

They acquired their consulting skills mostly during their training and studies, but also in further training and by themselves. Their personal strengths they gathered while working with people, especially in extreme situations. Most of them work according to a specific concept, like a systematic approach or systematic plan or an action plan or other standards. Some of them need their skills in all situations, some especially in extraordinary or high risk situations or in increased stress situations. To optimize their consulting activities most of them would like exchange with other consulting people or colleagues, followed by further training, and some of them would like training measures. The topics they are interested in are first dealings with patients and communication training, followed by conflict management and knowledge about methods of consulting, then organisational knowledge, self-reflection and knowledge about conditions.

- Advice to future social workers

The answers are not able to be standardized. Here a summary: "Volunteer before you chose your profession and then learn devotedness, patience, acquire a broad knowledge and a strong certainty. Develop self-awareness and a strong personality, and then try to specialize a specific field."

4. Summary

The collected results represent a small sample that show trends and are not representative.

Based on the created requirement profile for case managers in the health care sector it can be said that the development of personal competencies is considered very important. This means that the competencies normative ethical attitude, credibility, preciseness and reliability are considered vital. The presence of the professional and methodology competency is highly valued. In contrast an averagely developed social competency is expected and the activity and decision making competency hardly carries any weight.

The written and oral respondents judge the success of their advisory activities based on whether or not they can offer their patients support and encourage their development. The respondents eagerly use their technical knowledge. They value professionalism and expertise. Communicative and empathetic abilities such as listening skills, being able to understand other people's views, openness and tolerance are considered extremely important. Based on their own opinions case managers need to be able to motivate and encourage their patients. Dedication and goal-oriented behaviour were also pointed out. The professional capabilities and the socio-communicative, as well as, the activity and decision making competency were highlighted during both the interviews and in the results of the survey.

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The interviewees expressed a strong desire for an exchange among peers and training aimed to expand and strengthen their competencies.

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