

Objective of Project GIA

Between 2006 and 2009 the University of Cologne analysed the situation for elderly deaf people through the project entitled SIGMA. The results proved that in many areas, these people have fewer opportunities to participate in social life. In order to improve the situation for elderly deaf people, particularly for those with dementia, the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) is currently funding the three-year project entitled GIA.

The goal of the project is to provide elderly deaf people with a better, more sustainable care system. This system would give elderly deaf people the opportunity to choose from a variety of counsels, which would meet the specific communicative and cultural needs of each individual. The project will test and evaluate the system by using two exemplary competence centres for elderly deaf people.

The project will result in recommendations for the implementation of competence centres and along with that, a standard of quality for the care of deaf people of old age.

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Competence Centres
for Elderly Deaf
People, particularly for
those with Dementia

Conceptualization, Evaluation,
and Implementation of a Pilot
Project in Dresden and Essen
3/2011 – 2/2014



Elderly Deaf People

- In Germany, there are around 80.000 deaf people, and from those people, around 16.000 are over the age of 65.
- Those people are either born deaf or became deaf early in childhood.
- In comparison to hearing-impaired people, deaf people are not able to improve their understanding of spoken language even with the help of hearing aids.
- Deaf people are not able to learn a spoken language in a natural way. Rather, their competence of the spoken and written German language is exhibited in individual ways.
- Deaf people communicate in a distinct, legitimate language: the German Sign Language (DGS).
- Most deaf people participate in a deaf community, where they have the opportunity to preserve their own cultural and linguistic identity.

Duties of the University of Cologne

Organization of the project

- Implementation of the competence centres
- Coordination of the project's process
- Support from the leaders of the competence centres

Concept development

- Creation of a structuring concept
- Development of a framework
- Definition of quality criteria

Process backing and evaluation

- Conduction of regional field studies
- Survey of professionals
- Evaluation of the competence centres

What the Competence Centres have to offer



Benefits

- Counselling and Mediation
- Information and Explanation
- Networking and Development

Target groups

- Elderly Deaf people
- Their relatives and caregivers
- Institutions, professionals, and organisations in the field of healthcare for senior citizens
- Institutions, professionals, and organisations for the care of deaf people.