

Maintal, 26.01.2023

We fight for

- equally good medical treatment for people of all classes
- social and fair working conditions in the health professions
- solidarity-based support for participatory health movements internationally
- unrestricted medical care for refugees

We criticise

- the commercialisation of medicine
- the lobbying of the device and pharmaceutical industries
- any form of two-class medicine

We are

- Doctors
- Dentists
- Psychotherapists
- Medical students

Health workers are not a commodity

vdää rejects targeted international recruitment*

The Association of Democratic Doctors (vdää*) rejects the expansion of the targeted international recruitment of health workers (1). In order to overcome the shortage of health professionals, the vdää* demands binding and adequate staff to patient ratios and the complete overcoming of the flat rate per case system by a financing system based on self-cost coverage excluding profit-making.

The problem of staff shortages in hospitals has worsened enormously in recent years. The conditions we find in German hospitals today are neither a coincidence nor a necessary fate of an ageing society. The financing of hospitals through DRGs (Diagnosis related Groups) and the market-mediated competition between hospitals have led to working conditions that are driving in particular nursing staff to leave their jobs en masse. Surveys show that many would be willing to return if conditions improved. (2) This can only be achieved in the long term through adequate and needs-based funding and staffing levels. Karen Spannenkrebs, vdää* officer for health professional recruitment, demands: "The goal must be to shape work in health professions in Germany in such a way that there is no longer a need for cross-border recruitment of health professionals."

If there are calls today to solve the shortage of skilled workers through increased recruitment from abroad, the actual problems remain unaffected. On the contrary, the recruitment of foreign specialists can even support the current situation. The "revolution" in hospital financing announced by Health Minister Lauterbach falls far short of what is necessary for this. The abolition of DRGs, which the vdää* has been demanding for years, was announced in a big way, but has not happened. "Together with colleagues from all professional groups, we stand for a financing system that is based on self-cost recovery and excludes profit-making," Karen Spannenkrebs continues.

Instead of a consistent restructuring of nursing and health care, Germany has been relying for about ten years on private and state recruitment from countries where the working conditions for nurses and doctors are even worse, so that labour migration seems attractive. This further exacerbates the globally unequal distribution of health workers. "The idea of being able to simply import health workers instead of finding a sustainable solution to the problem shows a colonial arrogance and world view in which people from poorer countries are regarded as raw materials that can be disposed of according to the needs of the Federal Republic," criticises Spannenkrebs.

Migration is a right that we stand up for. However, the targeted recruitment of health workers from countries with lower earning potentially exacerbates the shortage of skilled workers there and thus poses a threat to the health care of the population, regardless of whether the recruitment is done by the state or by private agencies. Therefore, vdää* rejects the active recruitment of health workers.

*Felix Ahls, member of the executive board of vdää**

1) *Wie Deutschland zu mehr Pflegekräften kommen soll*, Süddeutsche Zeitung 18.01.2023

2) [Jenny Auffenberg u.a.: „Ich pflege wieder wenn...“ – Potenzialanalyse der Arbeitnehmerkammer Bremen](#), S. 113