



Needs assessment

Belgium



Local needs analysis report

HELMo Liège – October 2022

OVERVIEW OF THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND PARTNERS INVOLVED

The nurse curriculum is established according to the European directive (2013/55/EU) imposing a minimum of 2300 hours of clinical practice (at the patient's bedside) distributed during the four years of studies.

The structure, organization and pedagogical supports for nurses students currently applied was thought out and established in the past. As it no longer meets the current realities of curriculum and hospitals, this structure must now be adapted.

At the same time, the Belgian health care context has evolved: an aging population, shorter hospital stays, development of ambulatory and outpatient structures and care. Moreover, Belgium knows a lack of nurses since 30 years. This shortage has been accentuated by the covidia pandemic. As a result, fewer and fewer nurses find the time to accompany students in the field.

In addition, the role of the teacher, supervising the students' clinical placements, has evolved with the Belgian higher [education decree](#) published in 2013 .

The budget for teachers to support students on placement is limited.

These different elements lead to many difficulties that hinders a good organization of diversified and placement of high quality in hospitals.

In addition to the HEAL project, the paramedical department (midwife, medical laboratory technician, psychomotrician) is currently working on this issue as part of the [HELMo strategic plan](#).

METHODS USED TO GATHER INFORMATION

We mainly followed the guide provided by the Spain team.

In the first time, we determined the composition of each focus group.

- * Tutor/ coordinator: we have chosen 12 teachers according to their length of service in order to cover the whole range from the youngest in the job to the most experienced.
- * Hospital staff: We invited students' reference nurses from each hospital that collaborates with our school for the placements.
- * Student: we selected four students with different levels of ability and/or specific needs from the second, four from the third and four from the last year of study.

The organization and running of the focus group followed the guide's instructions. Methodological adaptations that had to be done are described in point 3.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

- * Tutor/coordinator: Eight tutors and two coordinators were present. Two teachers were absent due to changes of assignment. Gender balance was not possible, but both genders were involved in proportion

to their representation in our curriculum: two men and eight women. Professional experience at HELMo ranges from 6 to 29 years in teaching and supervision of students during their placements.

- * Hospital staff: Five students' reference nurses from two hospitals of different implementations were presents. The other students' reference nurses were absent or did not respond to our request to participate. Two of the participants have completed further training as a "practitioner trainer" in order to develop the skills to accompany students on placement, two others have followed a special training in their one institution, and one has a certificate of teaching ability.

They have professional experience ranging from 6 to 20 years. Two participants are student's reference nurses in their care unit and three are accompanying students at the patient's bedside.

- * Student nurses: Only one of the selected students showed up, so we had to ask other students to participate on a voluntary basis. We therefore were not able to meet the original selection criteria. The participants are between 18 and 24. Three students from the second year, three from the third year and four of the least year.

STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The sample of students that finally participated in this needs analysis is probably not representative of the overall population of our curriculum regarding the difficulties met during the recruitment of this target group.

The analysis is being conducted in a difficult health care context (post-covid). All health care units are understaffed, which puts pressure on the teams.

KEY FINDINGS

The three target audiences integrated in the focus groups have a relatively homogeneous assessment of the current model. However, their expectations for the future are different.

Tutor/coordinator do not see themselves as supervisors during the student's placement in the next 10 years anymore. They imagine a new function of accompanying person in the hospital. This support person would be hired by the hospital. For this audience, the preparation of the student to the placement is essential.

Students would like to work in a closer partnership with the nursing team of the care unit. They are looking forward to working in pairs with a dedicated referent nurse. Students would like someone to welcome them on the first day of their placement. For this audience, too, their preparation for the placement is essential.

The audience from the Hospitals felt that teachers should come on placement more often and continuously. They would like the teachers to be present on the first day of the placement to welcome the student and, during the placements, to take care of several patients.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The audiences agree with the use of new technologies, but they must be complementary to the existing activities.

The audiences expect the innovative training tool to be feasible and down-to-earth.

ANNEXES



Attached to the document