

# INFORMATION

## FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

### MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF DIPLOMAS, RIGHT OF ESTABLISHMENT AND FREEDOM TO PROVIDE SERVICES FOR NURSES RESPONSIBLE FOR GENERAL CARE

158/77

(Directives adopted by the Council)

#### 1. Progress towards freedom of movement for nurses

About 700.000 nurses will be able to move freely in Europe to practice their profession. Continuing its action in the field of public health professions, on 27 June the Council, on a proposal from the Commission (1\*), adopted two Directives concerning:

- the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of the formal qualifications of nurses responsible for general care, including measures to facilitate the effective exercise of this right of establishment and freedom to provide services;
- the coordination of provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in respect of the activities of nurses responsible for general care.

In addition, the Council also decided:

- to set up an Advisory Committee on Training in Nursing.

The Directives will enter into force two years after their notification to the Member States, which will take place forthwith.

#### 2. Freedom of movement: the scope of the Directives

The Directives apply to nurses responsible for general care who are holders of one of the diplomas listed in Article 3 of the Directive on mutual recognition (see Annexes 1 and 2).

As regards the other categories of nursing staff, the Commission will at a later date prepare specific texts enabling them likewise to benefit from effective freedom of movement.

The Directives apply to both employed and self-employed persons. Knowledge of the language of the host countries is not a condition for establishment: it goes without saying, however, that in the interests of the profession and of the patients concerned, Member States may make provision, where appropriate, for linguistic knowledge to be acquired.

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1\* OJ N° C 156 of 8 December 1969

### 3. The Conditions of training as regards nurses

In addition to the principle of the mutual recognition of diplomas, another basic feature of these Directives is that they lay down conditions regarding training on the basis of which diplomas, certificates and other general nursing qualifications are to be awarded in the Member States.

Such is the purpose of the Directive on coordination, which lays down qualitative criteria and determines the common minimum training which must be guaranteed in the individual Member States. This common minimum includes general school education of 10 years' duration and three years' or 4.600 hours' specifically vocational training. As regards this last point, it should be noted that vocational training in the individual Member States at present varies from two to three and a half years.

Although in general, Member States retain their freedom as regards organizing training, it will nevertheless have to satisfy common minimum conditions. The three years or 4.600 hours must be devoted to theoretical and practical training, covering the subjects specified in the Annex to the Directive. In addition, this theoretical and practical training must be balanced and coordinated with clinical training.

To ensure a comparably high level of training - i.e., here again with the purpose of establishing qualitative criteria - an Advisory Committee on Training in Nursing has been set up. The Committee consists of three experts from each Member State, as follows: one from the practising profession, one from the establishments providing training in nursing and one Government expert.

The Commission attaches great importance to this Committee, particularly with a view to ensuring that training for nurses is continuously adapted to progress made in this field.

Any difficulties arising from the application of the Directive will be referred to the Committee of Senior Health Officials, which was created in 1975 under the "doctors" Directives. It will thus keep its present structure but its terms of reference will be extended.

### 4. A nex step towards freedom of movement in the public health professions

A second sector of the public health professions thus finds "freedom" under Community rules. It will be recalled that the Directives on doctors were adopted in June 1975; they entered into force on 19 December 1976 and concern 500.000 doctors in Europe.

Dentists and midwives will be the next groups to benefit in the near future from directives facilitating their professional mobility. Preparation of the Commission's proposals on these two professions is already well advanced; action by the European Communities in the field of public health professions is thus being steadily broadened.

## Annex I

Persons holding the following formal qualifications may pursue the activities of nurse responsible for general care:

in Germany	"Krankenschwester", Krankenpfleger"
in Belgium	"hospitalier (ère)"/"verpleegassistent(e)", "infirmier(ère) hospitalier(ère)"/"ziekenhuisverpleger (-verpleegster)"
in Denmark	"sygeplejerske"
in France	"infirmier(ère)"
in Ireland	"Registered General Nurse"
in Italy	"infermiere professionale"
in Luxembourg	"infirmier"
in the Netherlands	"verpleger", verpleegster", verpleegkundige"
in the United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)	"State registered Nurse"; Scotland: "Registered General Nurse"

## Annex II

The diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications eligible for mutual recognition under the Directive are the following:

### a) in Germany:

- certificates awarded by the competent authorities following the "staatliche Prüfung in der Krankenpflege" (State nursing examination);
- attestations from the competent authorities of the Federal Republic of Germany certifying that the diplomas awarded after 8 May 1945 by the competent authorities of the German Democratic Republic are recognized as equivalent to those listed in the first indent above.

### b) in Belgium:

- the "brevet d'hospitalier(ère)/verpleegassistent(e)" awarded by the State or by schools established or recognized by the State;
- the "brevet d'infirmier(ère) hospitalier(ère)/ziekenhuisverpleger (-verpleegster)" awarded by the State or by schools established or recognized by the State;
- the "diplôme d'infirmier(ère) gradué(e) hospitalier(ère)/gegraduateerd ziekenhuisverpleger(-verpleegster)" awarded by the State or by higher para-medical schools established or recognized by the State;

Annex II (cont.)

c) in Denmark:

- the "sygeplejerske" diploma awarded by nursing schools recognized by the "Sundhedsstyrelsen" (National Health Board).

d) in France

- the State nursing diploma awarded by the Ministry of Health.

e) in Ireland:

- the "Registered General Nurse" certificate awarded by "An Bord Altranais" (Nursing Board).

f) in Italy:

the "diploma di abilitazione professionale per infermiere professionale" awarded by State-recognized schools.

g) in Luxembourg:

- the State diploma of "infirmier";
- the State diploma of "infirmier hospitalier gradué" awarded by the the Ministry of Public Health on the strength of an examining board decision.

h) in the Netherlands:

- the diplomas of "verpleger A", "verpleegster A" or "verpleegkundige A";
- the diploma of "verpleegkundige MBOV (Middelbare Beroepsopleiding Verpleegkundige)" (intermediate nursing training);
- the diploma of "verpleegkundige HBOV (Hogere Beroepsopleiding Verpleegkundige)" (higher nursing training), awarded by one of the examining boards appointed by the public authorities.

i) in the United Kingdom:

- the certificate of admission to the general Register, awarded in England and Wales by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, in Scotland by the General Nursing Council for Scotland and in Northern Ireland by the Northern Ireland Council for Nurses and Midwives.