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Proposal:
Workshop during the 7th International Short Break Conference
Galway, Ireland, June 2010

Abstract

**Support for families with handicapped family-members in Germany:
Tailor-made services for different life situations und periods of life**

For the first time ever, Germanys social organisation Lebenshilfe presents its profile of assistance and support at an ISBA-Conference, focused on families and their different members.

The presentation will show the conceptual development and good practice of the “Familienentlastenden/Familienunterstützenden Dienste” in Germany. These settings contain: Respite care services, short-term services, family-support services.

This is meant as a step towards conceptual networking and partnership within the framework of the ISBA.

Since the ninety-eighties a growing number of respite care services (roundabout 300) have been developed in Germany. They were and they still are the professional and institutional response to the priority given to outpatient settings over inpatient structures, as it is layed down in Germans social legislation.

Over the years the services turned more and more from respite care to support for the families. Thus, the services cover a much wider range. Today the local service providers see themselves as a part of the many outpatient services offered for families and people with handicap.

Individual and tailor-made arrangements try to create a framework, in which every family and every person with handicap can realize their own vision of life. This aim is backed up by the UN-Convention On The Fundamental Rights Of Persons With Disabilities, that had been endorsed by the German government in 2009.

The implementation however is not as unproblematic as it seems, because the budgets in the social sector are extremely tight.

This workshop is going to provide information on the development and future goals of the family support in Germany. Aid for people with handicap and their relatives, that aimed at a full participation, has to lead to a “caring community”. Ultimately such a “new community” would benefit all people, who need any kind of support.

Marburg, 2th november 2009

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