

MALAWI-ZAMBIA HEALTH CARE PROJECT MAZAFI

Coordinator: Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, Finland

Partners: North Karelia University of Applied Sciences, Finland; University of Malawi; Kamuzu College of Nursing, Malawi; Malawi College of Health Sciences; Lusaka School of Nursing, Zambia

Study areas: Medical Sciences



What are the main aims of your network?

The main aim of the network is to promote high quality in health care and in health care education through active collaboration between all partner countries. The network also puts emphasis on theoretical understanding of professional nursing and clinical nursing skills. Clinical tutoring of international nursing students in Finland, Malawi and Zambia is the specific focus in the network activities. This focus serves to promote the skills in multicultural communication in teaching and tutoring. The aim is to promote the evidence-based knowledge of clinical tutoring to students in a multicultural environment and to share best practices in the partner countries.

What kind of activities are there in your network?

1. Student exchanges, approximately two students from each institution on an exchange yearly
2. Teacher exchanges, including teaching and participating in the network. The topics include research, clinical tutoring and different areas of nursing according to each teacher's



own area of specialisation.

3. Network meetings once a year in the South: first in Zambia in 2008, second in Malawi in 2009. The third will be held in Malawi in September 2010.

4. The first intensive course will be in Malawi, Kamuzu College of Nursing in September 2010.

The Malawi Project was started in 1998 by the Family Federation of Finland together with the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare. Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, Faculty of Health Care and Nursing has been involved in the project since 1999. Metropolias's counterparts in Malawi are the University of Malawi, Kamuzu College of Nursing and Malawi College of Health Sciences. Other partners from Zambia and Finland joined the network later.

What sort of successes and challenges have you encountered during your project?

Teachers have had an opportunity to learn new teaching methods by following lectures given by colleagues in the partner institutions. The topics have been planned before the visit, so that the lectures will benefit the host institution as much as possible.

There is an increased interest among the Finnish nursing students to go to Africa for an exchange. The students have also reported an increased interest towards questions concerning Finnish development co-operation and an respect for human rights and democracy after being exposed to a different environment. They have also reported an increased awareness of cultural differences and global security through understanding of the different political and economical situations in the world. The socio-cultural aspects are of great importance!

Despite the fact that both incoming and outgoing students have had some challenges with communicating with local patients because of language differences, they have succeeded in establishing good relations with them and local staff members. The cooperation in the network has become stronger and the partners know each other well – it is easy to communicate with each other with the modern technology. The implementation and the evaluation of the project is done in cooperation during the network meetings.

Your advice for the new North-South-South networks?

Plan together with your partner, and make the plan as concrete as possible. Make a clear budget before the activities start – money issues are important!

