

Handout: Healthcare Workforce Shortages in Germany and Sweden

Key Information:

Demographic Change

Both countries face an aging population and a shrinking workforce, leading to rising demand for healthcare and care services.

Main Challenges

- **Germany:** Severe shortage of nurses and doctors, high dropout rates, slow reforms, strong focus on recruiting qualified professionals from abroad.
- **Sweden:** Rapid increase in people aged 85+, staff shortages especially in rural areas, many foreign-born assistants, high rate of part-time work.

Key Strategies

- **Germany:** Incentives for full-time work, expanding training, faster recognition of foreign qualifications, targeted international recruitment, digitalization, engaging older generations.
- **Sweden:** Promoting full-time positions, improving working conditions, strong investment in eHealth, extending working life, more training, integration of foreign-born assistants.

Main Differences

Germany recruits more qualified staff (nurses/doctors) from abroad; Sweden relies more on assistants and is a leader in eHealth.

Conclusion

Both countries need broad, flexible strategies. Innovation, training, and integration of foreign-born workers are crucial for the future.

Discussion Questions

1. Which strategy do you think is most effective for addressing healthcare workforce shortages? Why?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of relying on foreign-born healthcare workers?
3. How important is digitalization (eHealth) for the future of healthcare in aging societies?
4. Should countries focus more on improving working conditions or on recruiting from abroad?

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