



Medical
Anthropology
Europe

Staff development for teaching medical anthropology/diversity issues in health faculties

Learnings from 10+ experience in organizing teaching and a train-the-trainer project

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Content

- Context of experience
- Current situation in Austria and Arab countries
- Challenges
- Ideas for solutions
- Future



Context of experience

- 10+ of experience teaching medical anthropology at health faculties (medicine, nursing, occupational therapy, psychology, public health - mixed groups)
- 2017 – 2022: module coordinator for „diversity in medicine“ mandatory module with 115 units (half of them in-person) in 6th semester of bachelor program Medical Sciences (human medicine and dentistry together) – February to April each year, from 170 to 240 students.
- Since 2015 co-coordinator of the EASA/MAN based special interest group “Teaching medical anthropology to (future) health professionals)
- Since 2018 co-coordinator of the initiative „teaching medical anthropology in the Arab world“
- 2020/21 first pilot train-the-trainer in the Arab world – online and onsite (1 week)

Current situation in Austria and Arab countries

	Austria	Arab countries	Egypt
Medanthro in Medicine	1 public, 1 private university, other 5 have no content	UAE – partly anthropologists in U.S. based universities, no further info if they name it medanthro; <i>Curricula British influenced</i>	No content at medical faculties, wish to introduce it at Cairo, Mansoura and Alexandria University;
Medanthro in Nursing	Subject: transcultural nursing – mainly taught by nurses without medanthro education	No knowledge, probably some content in U.S. driven universities.	Not at all.
Medanthro in Occ. Therapy	Margret’s teaching in one course bachelor and master program – 6 other units of edu without.	16 bachelor programs in: Algeria, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Saudia Arabia, Syria and Tunesia	No educational programs
Trainers	Very few medical anthropologists with experience in health faculties, young scholars search for job opportunities	(medical anthropologists) from the U.S. in U.S. based universities. Few local medical anthropologist	Two most famous Egyptian medical anthropologists live and teach in the U.S. ; Local medical anthropologists are not engaged at health faculties; Mustafa Abdalla, Berlin based Egyptian medical anthropologist
Train-the-trainer	No training program	No training program known	1 pilot in 2020/2021

Challenges (from an HR perspective)

- **Qualified trainers:** criteria of qualification, how to qualify them, who should qualify them, content of qualification (field visits, internships, guests)
- **Number of students:** Medicine - often large cohorts of students, in therapy professions max. of 30 – need of big quantity of trainers.;
- **Training language : teaching language** (requirement of German in Austria; English in many Arab countries)
- **Fair payment of trainers** – lectures, and preparation and marking/commenting on students products are often not paid;
- **Teaching resources** – creating them needs knowledge, time and staff;

Content of qualification

- Choose which anthropological concepts and theories are useful for health professionals (= easy to understand, no 1000 pages reading needed, also applicable in low resource settings, easy to be trained in)
- Deep knowledge of health system is needed: structures, political goals, stakeholders, finances, different health professions and their engagement, routines of workplaces etc.)
- Idea of the landscape of local medical pluralism besides „official – public – healthcare“ – knowing where people go for which problems.
- Internships in healthcare institutions – a hospital, a nursing care home, a primary healthcare centre – whatever is locally important for people to seek help.

Ideas for solutions

- Start lobby work at health faculties and specially in medical schools (WFME rec.)
- Present health education sector as job opportunity in graduate school
- Train-the-trainer programs within graduate schools
- Create locally grounded trainings with a global perspective
- Invite experienced trainers to create your curriculum together
- Create/support internships in the health sector for graduate students and colleagues who are interested.

Future

- More job opportunities will appear within health faculties
- We need well trained staff members who are able to create quickly new course content in case of incidents such as a local epidemic (a pandemic), a natural disaster, any happening in society that will affect the health sector (high influx of refugees)
- Online training is a solution to bridge distances – high quality but easy access
- Financial resources are needed to fund trainings and offer continued education/exchange for these teachers – a global network or platform?
- Information: within SMA, a special interest group is in creation.

Sources

Arab Council for Social Sciences [Arab Council for the Social Sciences | arab.org](https://arab.org)

DecolMad: Interview with Margret Jaeger and Mustafa Abdalla

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxpxJfYkHd0>

Malkawi, S., Jarrar, M., Fehringer, E., & Amro, A. (2021). Senior Occupational Therapy Students in Selected Arab Countries: Characteristics, Perspectives, and Academic Major Satisfaction.

Workshop on Medical Anthropology, DAAD Cairo, July 2018 [Workshop on Medical Anthropology | DAAD Egypt](#)

Poster: Train trainers for integrating medical anthropology in medical education - a North-South pilot partnership for the Arab world at Transform MedEd Conference 2022, London:

<https://www.transformmeded.org/>

THANK YOU!

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