



## Understanding and organising

# Potential consulting supports private clinic in reorganisation

There is hardly any area in society these days that is not dictated by cost-effectiveness. That also applies to the health care system. The private Neurologische Fachklinik Hilchenbach, for instance, has totally repositioned itself with the support of potential consulting. After a short while the Siegerland rehabilitation centre already noted a higher performance quality, better company earnings and a significant plus concerning workplaces. The list of defects was endless: Chronic under-occupancy, large staff fluctuation, considerable leading problems and an insufficient coordination between the departments. A status, that the owner of the Neurologische Fachklinik Hilchenbach, the AHG AG, was no longer able and willing to afford. A new manager, experienced in the structuring of rehabilitation various indication fields, was entrusted with the reorganisation. The manager realised: "Every clinic today is a business enterprise or it must become one very fast in the face of the shortage of finances of public funds. Nobody can afford to maintain a loss-making company these days, and that applies to us, as a private or-

ganisation, in particular. We can, after all, only spend money that we have earned on the market with our performance, our product." It was up to him now to combine economic necessities with medical-nursing quality to the best of his ability.

### Systemic analysis

He had plenty of ideas and he acted fast: "Communication and management, those were our central approaches." He was supported by potential consulting funded by the Arbeitsministerium NRW<sup>2</sup>. "The view from outside", the manager explains, "is very important and works well when the 'system clinic' is fully understood. Another consulting company had investigated the workflow organisation before. That was not a mistake, but it did not help in this situation, as this analysis stayed too near the surface. It did not, for instance, take into consideration the importance of the individual work contents, like that the care therapy has to challenge the patient to train his own abilities again. We had to go much deeper into the

<sup>1</sup> Neurological Clinic Hilchenbach  
<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Labour NRW



performance of the clinic.” The Institut für Komplexe Systeme, die Siegener IKS GmbH<sup>3</sup> took on this task in the framework of the potential consulting. Management consultant Claudia Roller-Habben and her colleague Johann Schweißgut: Our topic is to understand and organise the complexity of living systems – individual people as well as organisations. We have to think in systems, in networking and processes to find suitable solutions for the problems that are becoming ever more complex.”

### **Coordinated customer orientation**

His systemic organisation analysis explored the strengths and weaknesses of the clinic in the areas offer and market, inner structure, work organisation and qualification of the staff. “We were soon agreed on the analysis and its consequences”, the clinic boss underlined. “The resulting concept is described in simple words in the following: the clinic will go away from that side of rehabilitation that has to do with nursing and post-care – due to the structural change in the health care system rehabilitation measures of that phase are only funded to a slight degree by the financial bearers – and on to the post-primary and mobilisation phase. Further steps: speedy realisation of respective conversions as well

as closer coordination between the departments medicine, nursing and therapy. The medicine is in the centre”, the manager explains, “it diagnoses the neurological deficits and determines a treatment plan. This is followed by the work of the psychologists and physiotherapists, the ergo- and speech-, music- and art therapists. All this has to be exactly co-ordinated. The patient is the customer in this system. He has a right to the best treatment, in medical and general human respect – from the first customer contact to the discharge and the post-treatment interview.”

### **Qualified personnel**

Intensive training, following the potential consulting, has given the nurses new competencies for rehabilitation and activating care and have qualified them for the work in the team. The clinic, department and ward managers have acquired the necessary management and communication competencies. Even the administration was not spared the ‘patient oriented reorganisation’: from the reception to the financial accounting department everybody sees itself as ‘service providers for the treatment success’. The introduction of a quality management and a success control watch over the keeping of the high aims.

<sup>3</sup> Institute for Complex Systems, IKS GmbH Siegen



### General recognition

The primary clinics and the health insurances – they finance the rehabilitation – obviously appreciate the improved quality of the services. The manager: they know which clinic is best for which clinical picture and they can judge medical and therapeutical successes as well as the out-patients support after the in-patient therapy. They recommend us to the patients much more often these days and refer them to us.” The success is calculable: The average occupancy rose from 44 to 80 percent. The restructuring showed remarkable effects from a labour market policy view: the number of employees rose from 186 to 238. Now other institutions are going to benefit from the experience made in the Hilchenbach clinic: four organisations are developing new leading models in a group project.

### The Development

The new developments in the health care system are a challenge for the rehabilitation organisations. Cost-effectiveness has gained increasingly more importance for the clinic. All in all less and shorter reha-

bilitation measures are granted; the pressure on prices is increasing; at the same time the quality has to be maintained. The Neurologische Fachklinik Hilchenbach has been well positioned by the process of reorganisation, which was started by the potential consulting. In the course of this process a quality management was established, which is able to define and maintain quality standards. This has also achieved an optimisation of the workflow. The reorganisation process has led to a continuous improvement process (KVP). A new, flexible work time regulation will be developed in the further course, which enables a prompt and optimal adaptation to seasonal fluctuations in the occupancy.

#### CONSULTANCY ADDRESS:

Johann Schweißgut IKS GmbH  
Melanchthonstraße 10  
D- 57074 Siegen  
Tel. +49-271 / 33 71 222  
Fax: +49-271 / 330 78 78  
schweissgut@iks-siegen.de  
www.iks-siegen.de