

Handbook for the Certification of

**Anthroposophic Nursing Assistants (IFAN)**

through the International Forum for Anthroposophic Nursing  
(IFAN) in the Medical Section of the School of Spiritual  
Science at the Goetheanum, Dornach, Switzerland

Version 1

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## 1 PREFACE

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Nursing care such as the washing, dressing, feeding, moving and positioning of patients, but also therapeutic washing, poultices and compresses or Rhythmical *Einreibungen* are often prescribed by qualified nurses and executed by nursing assistants<sup>1</sup> who are not Registered Nurses. Carrying out this kind of care to a high qualitative standard requires that the carers, nursing assistants included, have received thorough basic and further training. This handbook describes ways of further training for nursing assistants who have already acquired qualifications on diverse routes and wish to extend their faculties through anthroposophic nursing.

## 2 FURTHER TRAINING IN ANTHROPOSOPHIC NURSING

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Special courses are available for further training in Anthroposophic Nursing. These courses must be accredited by the International Forum for Anthroposophic Nursing (IFAN).

The further training for nursing assistants consists of several modules that can be offered as part of a foundation course in Anthroposophic Nursing or separately. As an alternative to the courses, individual further training routes are also open to nursing assistants.

## 3 FURTHER TRAINING FOR NURSING ASSISTANTS IN ANTHROPOSOPHIC NURSING

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The further training for nursing assistants must have a minimum of 200 units (with 45 minutes per unit). These units convey a selected range of anthroposophic nursing skills. The further training teaches particular practical skills in the field of therapeutic washing, supporting uprightness, mobilisation and nourishing, Rhythmical *Einreibungen*, poultices and compresses as well as the basic attitudes of carers in communication with those in need of care. The students learn about the foundations of anthroposophy so they can understand the meaning of the practical skills they acquire and develop a healing attitude. The course providers cover the following topics depending on

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix 1 shows a list of possible training qualifications on which the further training described here is based.

the needs of their students and according to national legal regulations as well as to requirements of national professional nursing associations:

- The four nature realms, the four elements, the four members of the human organization
- Body-soul-spirit, functional threefoldness, thinking-feeling-will
- Examples of disease process or illness picture (or health and illness)
- Dealing with the various moods of patients
- Creating a therapeutic atmosphere
- Rhythmical *Einreibungen* according to Wegman / Hauschka
- Compresses
- Therapeutic washing, body care, mobilisation, nurturing, preventative measures
- Working with qualified nurses, physicians, art therapists, eurythmy therapists
- Inner development, self-care

### 3.1 QUALIFYING AS AN ANTHROPOSOPHIC NURSING ASSISTANT IN TRAINING

Anthroposophically oriented trainings can offer their students qualifications as nursing assistants in addition to their usual course programme. For this, the training centres must be accredited by the International Forum for Anthroposophic Nursing. The following criteria apply if a training centre seeks accreditation:

- The students are informed about this option when they start their training and a date is fixed by which they have to make their decision.
- The students must prove during their training by means of a suitable method that they have acquired the relevant knowledge of anthroposophic nursing.
- A minimum work experience of one year after the training during which the students are able to apply their acquired skills as anthroposophic nursing assistants in practice.

### 3.2 NURSING ASSISTANT COURSES AS PART OF FOUNDATION COURSES

Nursing assistant courses can be integrated in foundation courses for Anthroposophic Nursing. Practical training lessons are particularly suited for such combination. Thereby different levels of qualification must be taken into consideration.

### 3.3 INDIVIDUAL FURTHER TRAINING ROUTES <sup>2</sup>

Individual further training routes for nursing assistants are possible if the further training described above is not accessible to a student for personal or professional reasons. The following general guidelines apply:

- The assistant needs a mentor. This can be an Anthroposophic Nursing Specialist (IFAN) who has received information about this task from the office for Quality in Anthroposophic Nursing.
- The mentor examines the assistant's portfolio and identifies a further training goal with the assistant.
- Assistant and mentor set up an individual further training plan including self-directed studies as well as attendance of further training and professional development courses.
- The mentor supervises the assistant's progress on a regular basis.
- When the training goal has been achieved following a sufficient period of anthroposophic nursing practice, the mentor recommends the assistant for admission to the Anthroposophic Nursing Assistant examination.

The relationship between assistant and mentor is voluntary on both sides and based on trust. Any fees to be paid have to be mutually agreed.

## 4 ANTHROPOSOPHIC NURSING ASSISTANT EXAMINATION

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The International Forum for Anthroposophic Nursing awards a certificate that enables the graduate to use the title "Anthroposophic Nursing Assistant (IFAN)".

It is the aim of the certification to describe the competences needed by anthroposophic nursing assistants and to assure that the bearer of this title has acquired particular knowledge and competences.

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<sup>2</sup> See appendix 2; Mentor's recommendation

#### 4.1 COMPETENCES REQUIRED OF ANTHROPOSOPHIC NURSING ASSISTANTS

##### Anthroposophic nursing assistants

- recognize the IFAN Guidelines for Good Anthroposophic Nursing Practice.
- are able to justify and reflect on the prescribed care procedures (anthroposophical reference: the fourfoldness and functional threefoldness of human beings).
- are able to perceive empathically the physical and social environment of their patients (anthroposophical reference: four elements, nursing gestures, biography)
- are able to apply and report about the application of part *Einreibungen* (anthroposophical reference: Rhythmical *Einreibungen* according to Wegman / Hauschka)
- are able to use the most important compresses appropriately and give a competent description of the application (anthroposophical reference: external applications in Anthroposophic Nursing)
- are able to empathize with their patients in biographical threshold and crisis situations; they know and respect their own limitations (anthroposophical reference: birth, death, threshold experiences).
- They can correctly execute, document and communicate the nursing measures delegated to them. (Anthroposophical reference: practical application in nursing of anthroposophical insights into the human being).
- know the therapeutic significance of nursing, how art therapies work and they have chosen an art form (for instance rejuvenation in nature, doing handicrafts, cooking, baking, music, literature, painting, sculpting, eurythmy) to enhance their own personal growth (anthroposophical reference: art)
- care for their own personal development, foster their cooperation with others and are aware of their responsibility for the team they are working in (anthroposophical reference: inner development, self-care, cooperation, responsibility)

#### 4.2 FORMAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO THE EXAMINATION <sup>3</sup>

Nursing assistants who have undergone basic training will be admitted to the Anthroposophic Nursing Assistant (IFAN) examination if they

- have completed a qualification in an area of nursing, which is legally recognized in their country

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<sup>3</sup> See appendix 3; Exam registration and proceedings

- have successfully completed further training as Anthroposophic Nursing Assistants,
- have worked for a year in an anthroposophic care facility or under the mentorship of an Anthroposophic Nursing Specialist.
- are members of a professional anthroposophic nursing association. (If nursing assistants are unable to become full members of such an organization, passive or associate membership will be considered sufficient.)

#### 4.3 PROOF OF QUALIFICATION

The following proof of qualification is needed for admission to the nursing assistant examination:

- Certificate of a qualification in an area of nursing, which is legally recognized in their country
- Evidence of at least one year of practical work in the field of nursing
- Documentation of 5 part body Einreibungen, 5 therapeutic washings, 5 compresses<sup>4</sup>
- Proof of successful participation in a further training course for Anthroposophic Nursing Assistants or equivalent qualification.

#### 4.4 EXAMINATION

The title of Anthroposophic Nursing Assistant (IFAN) will be awarded following a personal examination. The documents mentioned above need to be submitted in full before the examination can take place. The examination consists of a theoretical and a practical part:

##### The practical part:

- Demonstration of a part *Einreibung*, a compress and a therapeutic washing
- The practical examination lasts for a maximum of 60 minutes.

##### The theoretical part:

- Presentation and explanation of two reports of nursing procedures, followed by a structured professional conversation.<sup>5</sup>
- The professional conversation lasts for a maximum of 30 minutes

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<sup>4</sup> See appendix 4; Advice for documentation nursing report

<sup>5</sup> see appendix 5; Advice for documentation of report of nursing procedures

### Passing the examination

- The examination is successful if both examiners are satisfied with all the results in accordance with the competences listed under 4.2.
- assistants who fail to pass can repeat the examination after six months at the earliest. Renewed admission is granted by the examiners when they have ascertained on the basis of a written report from the candidate that sufficient further development has taken place in the meantime.

### **4.5 CERTIFICATE**

- The certificate is supplied by the International Forum for Anthroposophic Nursing. It authorizes the candidate to use the title “Anthroposophic Nursing Assistant (IFAN)”.
- The certificate holder undertakes to recognize the professional code of conduct for Anthroposophic Nursing and commits to ongoing development in the field of nursing assistance.

## **5 APPENDICES:**

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1. List of legally recognized qualifications in nursing assistance
2. Mentor’s recommendation
3. Exam registration and proceedings
4. Advice for documentation of nursing report
5. Advice for documentation of report of nursing procedures
6. The examination fee explained