

Handbook for the Certification of

**ANTHROPOSOPHIC  
NURSING SPECIALISTS (IFAN)**

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by the International Forum for Anthroposophic Nursing in the Medical Section  
of the School of Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland

Version 5.0

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## 1. TRAINING IN ANTHROPOSOPHIC NURSING

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The International Forum for Anthroposophic Nursing (IFAN) supports continuing education in anthroposophic nursing by publishing these guidelines. Providers of continuing education are encouraged to align their curriculum and practice with these guidelines. Accreditation of courses is possible through the IFAN "Quality in Anthroposophic Nursing (QAN)" office. QAN accreditation is strongly recommended by IFAN to ensure uniform international standards within anthroposophic nursing and to promote collaboration, growth, and development of anthroposophic nursing worldwide.

This handbook replaces the previous version 2.0 of the Handbook for the Certification of Specialists in Anthroposophic Nursing and the Handbook for the Certification of Specialists in Rhythmical Einreibung according to Wegman/Hauschka 4.0 (IFAN). The two handbooks are now combined into one and the recommendations for the training courses will be adjusted accordingly. The present version allows specialization in all specialties of anthroposophic nursing based on a generally formulated curriculum. Continuing education, as was previously possible with the specialization in Rhythmical Einreibung, can be continued without fundamental changes after adjustment to the required number of hours and the addition of some general topics. The same applies to general further training as a specialist in anthroposophic nursing. As required in all previous versions of the manual, certification is only possible for nurses with a state-recognized professional degree.

The IFAN guidelines include three levels of continuing education in anthroposophic nursing:

1. Foundation course, graduation as "Anthroposophic Nurse"
2. Specialized course, graduation as "Anthroposophic Nurse Specialist"
3. Teacher training

As an alternative to curricular further education, further education in anthroposophic nursing can be pursued on a portfolio path. This consists of an individually structured further education program and leads to certification as a specialist in anthroposophic nursing (Paragraph 5).

## 2. FOUNDATION COURSES

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Anthroposophic foundation courses comprise at least 365 learning units (1 unit = 45 minutes). The foundation course introduces the main topics of anthroposophic nursing. The aim of the foundation course is to become acquainted with the most important concepts of anthroposophic nursing, as well as to gain competence in carrying out the most important external applications and other typical procedures of anthroposophic nursing and medicine. The topics to be covered are distinguished into the following categories:

1. Anthroposophic understanding of the human being and nature
2. Anthroposophic understanding of health and illness with reference to nursing care.
3. Concepts of anthroposophic nursing care
4. Professionalism, collaboration, patients' rights, research
5. Applied practice of anthroposophic nursing

Course providers prioritize scope, topics, and methodology with respect to the target group. The following competencies are achieved in a basic course:

### 2.1 Anthroposophic understanding of the human being and nature

- ⇒ The participants know the essential terms of the anthroposophic understanding of the human being and nature.

#### Suggested content:

- Manifestations of fourfoldness: four kingdoms of nature, four elements, four temperaments, fourfoldness of human organization
- Manifestations of the threefold: body-soul-spirit, tria principia, functional threefoldness, soul processes
- Manifestations of the sevenfold: life processes, learning processes, biographical rhythms, planets, metals
- Manifestations of the twelvefold: twelve senses
- The common evolution of human beings and nature

Recommended Learning Units: 40

### 2.2 Anthroposophic understanding of health and illness with reference to nursing care

- ⇒ The participants know the anthroposophic understanding of fundamental disease processes and general nursing questions in the main medical and nursing specialties

#### Suggested content:

- Health and disease from an anthroposophic perspective
- Principles of polarity, form and structure, catabolism and anabolism, inflammation and sclerosis
- Birth, illness, suffering, pain and death in the context of the patient's biographical experience

Recommended Learning Units: 10

### **2.3 Concepts of Anthroposophic Nursing**

- ⇒ The participants know the concept of the four members of the human being and the connection with nursing interventions
- ⇒ The participants know the concepts of life processes, their transformation into learning processes and the rhythms of the biography
- ⇒ The participants correctly carry out nursing interventions according to the anthroposophic understanding of the human being, health and illness and the nursing process
- ⇒ Participants use substances for external application from an anthroposophic perspective in a patient-friendly and safe manner

#### Suggested content:

- Botany, Goethean phenomenology of plants and metals used as therapeutic substances
- Anthroposophic remedies and their application
- Hygiogenesis, salutogenesis, autogenesis
- The importance of warmth
- The importance of movement and rhythm
- Healthy and sustainable nutrition
- The concept of nursing gestures
- The nursing process including the principles of anthroposophic nursing for nursing assessment and intervention.
- Attitudes and relationships: How to create, form and maintain relationships

#### Recommended Learning Units: 50

### **2.4 Professionalism, cooperation, patients' rights**

- ⇒ The participants know how to shape their professional development as a personal development path. They become aware that they represent nursing in the team and in public
- ⇒ The participants can reflect on ethical and philosophical ways of thinking in medicine and in everyday life
- ⇒ The participants know their professional and legal framework of action, as well as the rights of the patients when using integrative and complementary nursing methods

#### Suggested content:

- The history of anthroposophic nursing, history of Rhythmical Einreibung according to Wegman/Hauschka. Awareness of the nurse's responsibility for her further development.
- Artistic work as a way to promote competence
- Working in a multidisciplinary team
- Anthroposophic nursing as an inner path of development. Nursing practice as a path of practice. Examples: Rhythmical Einreibung, nursing gestures, exercises for inner development and self-care.
- Pathways for professional development and research in anthroposophic nursing
- Patients' rights
- Ethical case discussion

#### Recommended Learning Units: 20

## **2.5 Applied practice of anthroposophic nursing.**

- ⇒ The participants safely perform all part-body Einreibung according to Wegman/Hauschka
- ⇒ The participants correctly perform the most important external applications (compresses, poultices, baths) for their respective professional context
- ⇒ The participants adapt nursing measures with regard to the given biographical, social, and cultural situation
- ⇒ The participants know nursing measures for crisis intervention

### Suggested content:

- Support self-care skills through guidance, training, supervision in the delivery of care
- Body care, care of senses, prophylaxis, and therapeutic washing
- External applications such as tea- or oil compresses, wraps, poultices and baths
- Rhythmical Einreibung according to Wegman / Hauschka: part-body Einreibung of the back, arms, hands, chest, abdomen, legs, feet. Work according to the RE quality criteria.
- Indications and contraindications for care, external applications and Rhythmical Einreibung as well as plant and metal substances
- Warmth, rhythm and rest and their use in nursing, external applications and Rhythmical Einreibung
- Anthroposophic care for specific life situations such as: postpartum, early childhood, trauma, crisis, old age, death, etc.
- Anthroposophic nursing for a range of specific illnesses such as: mental and psychosomatic illnesses, pain, developmental disorders, dementia, etc.

Recommended Learning Units: 120

### **Mentored practice**

- ⇒ Participants perform and reflect on anthroposophic nursing practice in their work environment

### Suggested methods of reflection:

- Learning diary
- Treatment records
- Supervision
- Peer practice
- Coaching
- Job shadowing
- Internship
- Exam preparation and exams

Recommended Learning Units: 80

## **Project work**

⇒ Participants work together or alone on a defined project

### Examples of such projects are:

- Homework
- Observation exercises
- Group work
- Artistic projects

Recommended Learning Units: 30

## **2.6 Examination and certification foundation course**

### **Prerequisites**

- Proof of a state-recognized nursing profession
- Proof of completed courses as indicated under 2.1 -2.5
- Proof of practical work experience
- Treatment evidence of at least 15 therapeutic washes, baths, or external applications and 30 Rhythmical Einreibung treatments with rationale and evaluation. Evidence presented should consider various ages, health conditions, and health needs of patients, as well as various types of treatment.
- Options in practising these skills in patient education, self-practice e.g. psychiatric settings
- Regular supervision by a mentor
- One-day visitation in an anthroposophic health care facility e.g., in a doctor's office, day clinic, hospital, Camphill facility, Waldorf school with a school nurse, art therapy practice
- If none of the proposed visitations is possible in a country, other creative ways of getting to know anthroposophical ways of working can be found

### **Completion of the foundation course**

The course provider chooses its own procedure to determine whether the objectives of the foundation course have been met. The completion is an opportunity for the responsible persons of the program to assess the outcome of the student's learning in the foundation course. Specifically, the completion process is intended to provide information on whether the student is suitable for participation in a specialist course. The student should feel recognized by the teacher and assess the level of competence achieved for him/herself.

Examples of the format of the completion are:

- Writing and presentation of a final paper
- Commented and reflected demonstrations of practical tasks
- Discussions in which the participants' level of competence is discussed and acknowledged including a reflection of their own learning process

Competency assessments are also possible during the foundation course and do not need to be assessed in a formal exam.

### 3. SPECIALIST COURSES

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Anthroposophic specialist courses comprise at least 365 learning units (1 unit = 45 minutes). Participation in the specialist course is possible after successful completion of a foundation course or the corresponding portfolio path. The aim of the specialist course is the independent assessment of complex nursing issues from an anthroposophic perspective, as well as their correct implementation and evaluation. The range of topics includes the categories already mentioned above:

Course providers weigh the scope, topics and methodology with regard to the target group. Focus courses can be offered, for example, in Rhythmical Einreibung, external applications, nursing gestures, nursing specialties such as geriatric care, pediatric care, or in medical specialties such as oncology, palliative care, neonatology. The following competencies are achieved in an expert course:

#### 3.1 Anthroposophic understanding of the human being and nature

- ⇒ Participants explain the essential terms of the anthroposophic understanding of the human being and nature in a comprehensible way, orientate themselves in the specialist literature, justify nursing care appropriately from anthroposophic terminology and carry out a nursing diagnosis of the four constitutional members

##### Suggested content:

- Preparation of a nursing diagnosis based on the four constitutional members, the threefold structure, the seven life processes, biographical rhythms or the twelve senses
- Observation of nature, observation of art
- Text-studies
- Imagination, inspiration, intuition

Recommended Learning Units: 30

#### 3.2 Anthroposophic understanding of health and illness with reference to nursing

- ⇒ The participants apply anthroposophic nursing in an integrative way in their nursing specialty. They practise anthroposophic nursing in the context of conventional medicine and nursing, and place nursing in the overall context of treatment and help to shape it. They explain typical diseases and general nursing issues in main medical specialties in the light of anthroposophic medicine.

##### Suggested content:

- Recent developments in medicine, nursing and science of the respective specialty
- Specialized anthroposophic anthropology
- Discussion of studies
- Patient observation, case discussions

Recommended Learning Units: 60

#### 3.3 Concepts of Anthroposophic Nursing



- ⇒ The participants diagnose the four members of the human being and derive, justify and reflect the necessary nursing interventions according to the nursing process
- ⇒ Analyze life processes, learning processes and biographical rhythms and derive, adapt and reflect the necessary nursing interventions
- ⇒ Correctly implement, adapt and evaluate nursing interventions according to the nursing process
- ⇒ Justify the use of medicines for external application from an anthroposophic point of view and prepare external applications in a patient-friendly and safe way

Suggested content:

- Anthroposophic remedies and their application
- R. Steiner “The Invisible Man Within Us”
- Birth and death
- Reincarnation and karma
- World Evolution as outlined in Occult Science
- Hygiogenesis, salutogenesis, autogenesis

Recommended Learning Units: 65

### **3.4 Professionalism, collaboration, patients' rights**

- ⇒ The participants take care of their personal development, cultivate teamwork and are aware of their responsibility for the development of anthroposophic nursing
- ⇒ They reflect on ethical and philosophical ways of thinking in medicine and life issues
- ⇒ They integrate anthroposophical research results into nursing work and demonstrate methods for research in anthroposophic nursing
- ⇒ Participants know their professional and legal framework for action, as well as the rights of patients in particular when using integrative and complementary nursing methods

Suggested content:

- Anthroposophic art and eurythmy to promote adult learning
- Working in a multidisciplinary team
- The inner development of the anthroposophic nurse expressed through skills such as Rhythmical Einreibung, through an inner attitude such as in the twelve nursing gestures, exercises for inner development and self-care
- The Anthroposophic Training Path
- Expectations and pathways for professional development and research in anthroposophic nursing

Recommended Learning Units: 20

### 3.5 Applied practice of anthroposophic nursing

- ⇒ Participants deepen one area of expertise to the point of becoming a specialist (e.g. specialist in anthroposophic nursing with a focus on Rhythmical Einreibung according to Wegman/Hauschka or specialist in anthroposophic nursing with a focus on palliative care)
- ⇒ Based on anthroposophic concepts, the participants draw up a care plan which is appropriate to the specific situation of the person in need of care. They carry out, adapt and evaluate the resulting nursing interventions.
- ⇒ They perform rhythmical part and whole-body Einreibung and evaluate the effect
- ⇒ They establish indications for the most important external applications (compresses, poultices, baths), carry them out properly, considering safety precautions and possible contraindications, and evaluate the effect
- ⇒ They adapt nursing interventions to the given biographical, social and cultural situation and explain them to the patient
- ⇒ They master the most important external applications for their respective professional context (Rhythmical Einreibung, wraps and compresses, baths) in terms of indication, implementation and evaluation
- ⇒ They apply nursing measures for crisis intervention

Suggested content: (contents and scope are based on the specialization)

- Support, guidance, education, supervision in the independent practice of nursing measures (self-care)
- Body care, prophylaxis, therapeutic ablutions, washing and bathing
- External applications such as wraps, compresses, poultices and medicinal baths
- Rhythmical Einreibung according to Wegman/Hauschka: whole body RE, organ RE, pentagram RE; working according to the RE quality criteria
- Indications and contraindications for care, external applications, Rhythmical Einreibung, and plant and metal substances
- Warmth, rhythm and rest and their use in nursing, external applications and Rhythmical Einreibung
- Anthroposophic care for specific life situations such as: birth, early childhood, death, trauma, crisis, etc. Anthroposophic care for a range of specific illnesses such as: mental and psychosomatic illnesses, pain, developmental disorders, dementia, etc.

Recommended Learning Units: 80

### **Mentored practice**

⇒ Participants practise and reflect on anthroposophic nursing practice in their work environment

#### Suggested methods of reflection:

- Learning diary
- Treatment Reports / Care Reports
- Supervision
- Peer teaching
- Coaching
- Job Shadowing
- Internship
- Exam preparation and exams

Recommended Learning Units: 75

### **Project work**

⇒ Participants work together or alone on a defined project

Examples of such projects are:

- Homework
- Observation exercises
- Group work
- Artistic projects

Recommended Learning Units: 50

## 4. FURTHER TRAINING TO BECOME AN EXPERT IN ANTHROPOSOPHIC NURSING WITHOUT DIVISION INTO FOUNDATION AND SPECIALIST COURSE

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Further training courses to become a specialist in anthroposophic nursing can also lead to the specialist examination without the distinction between foundation and specialist courses suggested above. The prerequisite is the accreditation of the course by QAN (Quality in Anthroposophic Nursing) according to the respective valid accreditation handbook.

## 5. PORTFOLIO PATH

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As an exception further training to become a specialist in anthroposophic nursing can also be completed outside of a curricular course program. This can be useful if no curricular offer is available or cannot be taken for valid reasons. In this case, the candidate attends learning opportunities from various providers required for specialist status until all essential content listed in the handbook has been worked through in an adequate scope of hours.

If the candidate decides to take the specialist examination, she seeks a mentor who is a specialist in anthroposophic nursing in the specialty in which she wishes to qualify. Together with the mentor, she prepares a learning balance sheet by listing the learning opportunities attended with number of hours. In addition, strengths and weaknesses in theoretical knowledge and practical skills are identified and a recommendation for further learning steps is agreed.

Once the mentor is satisfied that the candidate has the necessary skills and meets the formal and content requirements listed in Section 6 - "Admission to the Examination", she recommends the candidate for the specialist examination.

The examination is conducted by the mentor and another specialist in anthroposophic nursing who is experienced in examinations.

## 6. EXAMINATION AND CERTIFICATION

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### **Prerequisites**

- Proof of state recognized nursing profession
- Proof of completed courses as indicated under 3.1 -3.5
- Proof of practical work experience in nursing of at least 2 years
- Treatment evidence of at least 15 treatments from the area of compresses, baths, washings
- 30 treatments with Rhythmical Einreibung with justification and evaluation. Evidence submitted should consider various ages, health conditions, and health needs of patients, as well as various types of treatment (applies only to the focus on Rhythmical Einreibung)
- Regular supervision by a mentor

- One-day observation in an anthroposophic health care facility, e.g., a doctor's office, day-care clinic, hospital, Camphill facility, Waldorf school as a school nurse, art therapy practice.

### **Final exam specialist course**

The expert course concludes with a practical and a theoretical completion. The completion will be formally counted in the total hours of continuing education.

### Admission to the examination

- Fully completed application form
- Certificate of state admission to a nursing profession
- Proof of successful participation in the accredited advanced training course or in the portfolio procedure (a total of 730 teaching units or corresponding learning achievements)
- 3 case reports with anthroposophic diagnosis (threefoldness, fourfoldness, life processes, nursing gesture)
- Written final paper on a topic in the discipline of 6,000 - 8,000 words
- Oral presentation of the final paper followed by a professional discussion

### Practical examination

- Demonstration and reflection of at least two practical activities according to the various disciplines with a total duration of 90 minutes

### Theoretical examination

- Technical discussion on the submitted case reports
- Technical discussion on three topics freely chosen by the candidate from the field of the specialty

### Examiner

The examination is taken by two specialists from the respective subject area. At least one examiner should not have been a lecturer in the course.

### Passing the examination

The examination is considered passed if the admission requirements have been fulfilled and the examiners have declared the examination passed in all parts. A record is made of the course of the examination.

Examination parts that have not been passed can be repeated within one year.

### Certificate

The certificate is intended exclusively for state recognized nursing professionals. It is issued by the International Forum for Anthroposophic Nursing (IFAN) on behalf of the Medical Section of the School of Spiritual Science. It is signed by the course organizer, one of the two examiners and the IFAN coordinator.

It authorizes the holder to use the title Anthroposophic Nursing Specialist (IFAN). If the further training was in a special field, the designation can be added by an appropriate supplement. (e.g., Anthroposophic Nursing Specialist - focused on Rhythmical Einreibung according to Wegman/Hauschka (IFAN).

### Examination fee

An examination fee will be charged. The candidate must be informed of these costs in advance. The details are shown in the appendix.

## 7. QUALIFYING AS A TEACHER IN ANTHROPOSOPHIC NURSING

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Currently there is no formal further training to become a trainer for anthroposophic nursing. We assume that experts in anthroposophic nursing are willing to share their knowledge and skills with others and will do so upon request or on their own initiative. The anthroposophic nursing movement, which is only slowly growing, needs this initiative.

Those who teach anthroposophic nursing are aware of the challenge and their responsibility. It is not only necessary to teach the complex contents and skills, but also to find an appropriate methodological and didactic approach to the learners. This usually requires training and experience.

If a course is to be recognized by the International Forum for Anthroposophic Nursing, the main lecturers must have sufficient experience in teaching adults. For this we recommend attending the entire "Teach the Teacher - Seminar" (3 modules) offered by the Medical Section of the School of Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum in Dornach / Switzerland or elsewhere.

## 8. APPENDICES

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**Annex 1: Self-commitment to continued education**

**Annex 2: Self-commitment to continuous education**

**Annex 3: Recommendation of the mentor in the portfolio process**

**Annex 4: Examination fees (including cost for portfolio path and mentoring)**