

GUIDELINES FOR NATIONAL CO-ORDINATORS

1. Hosts should give the professionals a general overview of the health structure of the host country. To this end national delegations of the host country should at least organise a one-day information meeting at the beginning of the programme and hosts should send, well in advance of the programme, some brochures, leaflets and documentation to the professional.
2. Hosts and professionals must agree on an individual exchange programme (at least for the first 2 weeks of the scheme), well in advance of the scheme, so that no time is wasted after the professional's arrival. This individual programme should fully consider the specific motivations of the professional and it should be flexible so that appropriate alterations can be made once the professional has taken up his attachment. An outline of the training programme must be sent by the host or the participant to the National coordinator, preferably by e-mail, before 31 March 2024.
3. To improve the quality of the scheme, the national co-ordinator should personally contact the employer of the professional and especially gather the professionals from his/her country before their departure. To this meeting he/she could invite professionals who participated in previous programmes to exchange experiences and practical information. He/she could also assemble the hosts.
4. All professionals allocated to the same country should at least meet each other at a one-day meeting organised by the national co-ordinator of the host country at the beginning of the scheme to meet professionals of other nationalities, to get a general introduction on the health structure of the host country as well as on the course of the scheme and to learn about the healthcare systems in other countries. If possible, such contacts should be repeated.
5. The person designated by the host as responsible for the scheme should preferably be a person who facilitates social contact and an easy day-to-day contact and/or a former participant of the Exchange Programme (who is familiar with the Programme and with possible needs of professionals living abroad).
6. Shared training attachments (two or more professionals, if possible, from different countries) can stimulate contacts and decrease the energy to be spent by the host in organising a social programme. The professionals can support each other more easily. It is obvious that the host facilities must then enable an attachment for several professionals. In case of group exchange, an interchange between different organisations is possible.

7. Professionals should have a sufficient proficiency in a language used or accepted by the host country. The national co-ordinator of the host country is kindly asked to test the knowledge of the language indicated by the professional before attachment is confirmed. The participant should contact the national co-ordinator of the host country by phone before 31 January 2024 so that the latter can test his language knowledge.
8. Opportunity should be provided for professionals to see a variety of institutions and health services other than those belonging to the host. Contacts should be arranged with other health organisations, departments of health administration, politicians, etc; so that they get a good overview of the healthcare system of the country they are visiting. To this end regular and varied visits outside the host organisation are a must, though simple repetitions should be avoided.
9. Selected professionals should have the appropriate "international" mentality and be open for a different way of living; they should be flexible enough to change their habits and behaviour and should learn as much as possible from the cultural, emotional and social aspects of the host country.
10. Hosts should offer accommodation on a free basis and meals at a reasonable price or free of charge.
11. Hosts should prepare a social programme for the professionals who in their turn should make an effort in organising a social life for themselves. Experience shows that some psychological stress may occur during the first days and in the middle of the exchange period. These tensions could be prevented by the social programme. However, the professionals should be given enough spare time for personal activities.
12. The closing conference held at the end of the Exchange Programme should not only include an evaluation of the scheme and a theoretical discussion. The items for discussion should be communicated to the professionals before they leave their country of origin so that they can prepare their participation in an adequate way. A minimum financial contribution of Euro 300 will be asked of the participants as booking fee for the accommodation, the meetings and the meals that are offered.
13. At the end of the exchange period the professionals will receive a certificate. This certificate does not entitle to wage demands.
14. National co-ordinators, in collaboration with HOPE, should examine possibilities to give Exchange Programmes an appropriate follow-up (e.g., seminars, bilateral contacts) and reports of professionals should be used in a more effective way.
15. National co-ordinators should make enough publicity for the Exchange Programme and the evaluation meeting.
16. National co-ordinators should contact first each other before contacting HOPE in case of bilateral problems or questions concerning the professionals.