



Training and education outcomes of the Pilot Training

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Psychosocial Crisis Management for individuals with visual and hearing impairment

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EUNAD Pilot Training Denmark

Psychosocial Crisis Management for Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals

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Danish National Centre for Psychotraumatology

EUNAD STAFF (AB2) and pilot training organizers

Centre Director: Professor Ask Elklit

Research Assistants: Tina Jeppesen & Lotte Skøt

- Part of the Institute for Psychology at the **University of Southern Denmark**.
- Leading national resource center for Psychotraumatology; working to strengthen research on **trauma-related conditions** in order to improve prevention and treatment both nationally and internationally.

Pilot Training in Denmark: Objectives

- One-day pilot training at the University of Southern Denmark, Odense (8th September, 2014) for first responders (police officers, firefighters, rescue workers, paramedics) and mental health professionals.
- **Overall goal:**
 - To provide professionals with training in psychosocial crisis management (in **acute** and **aftercare** situations) for Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals. The primary focus was on deaf individuals in acute situations.
- **Approaches:**
 - To provide professionals with a better understanding of the needs and expectations of Deaf (and hard-of-hearing) individuals in the event of crises, serious accidents and disasters.

- To present current findings relating to the topic and offer/discuss practical recommendations and solutions.
- To provide materials that can be used in the future education of professionals.
- **Expected outcomes:**
 - Guidelines for best practice in both acute and aftercare situations.

Pilot Training Participants

- **Klinik für Psychotraumatologie, Krefeld**
 - Professor Robert Beering: *EUNAD coordinator*
- **Danish National Center for Psychotraumatology, University of Southern Denmark**
 - Professor Ask Elklit: *Center Director*
 - Tina Jeppesen: *Research Assistant*
 - Lotte Skøt: *Research Assistant*
 - Maria Louison Vang: *Student Assistant*
- **Danish Deaf Association**
 - Lars Knudsen: *Political Consultant*
 - Jørgen Sandholt: *Sig language interpreter*
- **Odense Fire Brigade**
 - Jesper Winther Pedersen: *Chief, preparedness director of the Fire Academy*
 - Michael Roed Jensen: *Firefighter*
- **Rescue Centre Denmark**
 - Eigil G.R Hvid: *Course Instructor/team coordinator*
- **The Rescue Workers' Developmental Secretariat (3F)**
 - Mikkel Andersen: *Chief, FALCK rescue worker*
- **Danish National Police, Police Academy**

- Julie Marie Brandt: *Psychologist and teacher*
- Mia Marlene Von Qualen: *Psychologist and teacher*
- **Local Police Force, Fyn**
 - Katja Krogh Sørensen: *Incident commander*
 - Torben Schultz-Petersen: *Director of the control centre*
- **Language House, Odense**
 - Mikkel Freund: *Hearing consultant*
- **Center for Deaf – Sign Language Interpreter Booking**
 - Susanne Larsen: *Department director of the West region*
 - Hanne Pia Andersen: *Sign language interpreter*
- **Deaf Interview participant: Qualitative study on hearing impairment, Denmark**
 - Liza Rosa Shanella Rolighed

Training Material: Sign Language Alphabet



Training Material: Information booklet for parents of children who have been in an accident



Recommendations (acute situations)

- More knowledge about the needs and expectations of Deaf (and hard-of-hearing) individuals in acute situations; heterogeneous population.
- Important not to treat Deaf people as handicapped.
- **Focus on efficient communication:**
 - Arrange for an acute sign language interpreter (this is not the responsibility of the Deaf individual).
 - Arrange for remote sign language interpretation in the event where a sign language interpreter cannot physically be present.

Recommendations (acute situations)

- **Ways of communicating while waiting the sign language interpreter:**
 - Use mimic.
 - Use intuitive body language.
 - Use universal signs (yes, no, come, calm, stay there).

- Point to body parts (arms, legs, head, stomach, me, you).
- Write things down; find out whether the person can write - have a pen and paper ready or write things down using the text function on a mobile phone.
- Perform basic phrases in sign language (e.g. “are you deaf”, “are you OK?”, “where does it hurt?”, “a sign language interpreter is on the way”).

Recommendations (acute situations)

- **Technical devices/materials that can assist communication:**
 - Apps for mobile phones or tablets e.g. SpeakRead (translates speech to text) and Polycom (video communication).
 - Postcard or mobile phone/tablet with pictures of the sign language alphabet.
 - Action cards (with pictures)
 - Basic signs (in sign language can be found on the internet (www.tegnsprog.dk, www.streetesigners.dk, www.youtube.com)).
- Possibility for professionals to find out about sign language courses via the Danish Deaf Association (www.ddl.dk.)

Recommendations (acute situations)

- **Good advice in acute situations:**
 - Where possible, professionals should approach the Deaf person from the front in order to make eye contact.
 - Eye contact is extremely important for creating a calm and secure atmosphere.
 - Speak slowly and clearly; don't shout.
 - Make sure that lighting conditions are good.
 - Avoid having anything in your mouth (easier for person to lip read).
 - Where possible, communication should take place at eye level.

Recommendations (acute situations)

- **Professionals need to be aware of:**
 - Deaf individuals are very expressive in their use of body language; this can be alarming for professionals if they don't know that the person they are dealing with is Deaf.
 - Because Deaf individuals rely mostly on body language when communicating, they can appear to be more contact seeking and externalizing in their behaviour than hearing individuals.
 - If there are enough resources for it, then it is best if only one professional communicates with the Deaf individual.
 - Professionals who wear helmets (e.g. firefighters) should take them off when communicating with Deaf individuals.
 - Professionals need to be proactive when it comes to identifying the needs of Deaf (and hard-of-hearing) individuals by trying out different communication strategies.

Recommendations (aftercare)

- More knowledge about the needs and expectations of Deaf (and hard-of-hearing) individuals in aftercare situations; heterogeneous population.
- Important not to treat Deaf individuals as handicapped.
- A sign language interpreter should automatically be provided (this is not the responsibility of the Deaf individual).
- The same sign language interpreter should be made available if, for example, multiple psychological treatment sessions are needed.
- Find out about support groups for Deaf individuals (e.g. crisis groups, bereavement groups).
- Make use of technical devices/materials that can assist communication.
- Send written documentation of important meetings/sessions - important to get all information in written form.

Outcomes: Evaluation of Pilot Training

- Participants were asked to fill out an evaluation form after the pilot training

- **Summary of evaluations:**

- Positive evaluations received all round
- Participants found the discussions and materials to be of future benefit to their professions
- Teachers from the Police Academy want to include training in psychosocial crisis management for Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals in their teaching module 'violent incidents'
- The representative from the Fire Brigade Academy is considering introducing psychosocial crisis management for Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals as part of the education for firefighters.

Conclusion

- Professionals need to broaden their knowledge about the needs and expectations of Deaf (and hard-of-hearing) individuals in both **acute** and **aftercare** situations.
- Information about Deaf (and hard-of-hearing) individuals and sign language should be incorporated in the work and education of first responders and mental health professionals.
- Important to create a calm and secure atmosphere for Deaf (or hard-of-hearing) individuals - **eye contact** is an integral part of this process.
- Book a sign language interpreter as quickly as possible - let the person know that a sign language interpreter will be booked.
- Try to communicate in other ways while waiting for the sign language interpreter.

Thank you for your attention

Professor Ask Elklit (aelklit@health.sdu.dk)

Questions?