

Swedish for Russian Health Care Personnel

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Learnwell Oy is starting to offer internet-based courses in Swedish for Russian health care personnel. When the number of foreign caretakers increases, so does the need for their ability to speak Swedish.

For some time now, The Swedish Culture Foundation has studied how they could offer internet-based courses for foreign health care personnel. In particular, there is a great need in the areas of day- and elderly health care of individuals who can speak Swedish. A possible target group for the development project has turned out to be the Russian-speaking health care personnel who are interested in working in the health care for the elderly in Finland.

Language teacher Veronica Gilhooly is the Managing Director of Learnwell Oy and the owner of the web-portal The Language Menu. The course material will be outsourced in cooperation with Arcada and Birgitta Dahl, who is the director of the geronom program (health care for the elderly in English).

The Project “Health Care in Swedish” will offer free internet-based training materials in Swedish to the Russian health care personnel. The training materials consist of self-paced internet-based exercises including image files as well as different interactive exercises.

The vocabulary is based from the start in practical everyday Swedish for the health care workers for the elderly. The website will be in four languages (Swedish, Finnish, Russian, and English) and is available free for the users after registration.

Besides the study materials for independent studies in Swedish, the website will contain information and tools for employment search within the health care sector, information about Finland (registration of the foreign

occupational examinations, visas, tax questions, etc.), information about the cultural differences between Russia and Finland, and other helpful information for the target group.

The information, will emphasize that the health care personnel must have skills both in Finnish and in Swedish in order to work within the health care sector in Finland.

The target group is in part health care personnel that live in the St. Petersburg - Moscow axle who are considering employment in Finland, and partly also health care personnel living in Finland who lack the skills in Swedish.

In addition, weeklong intensive courses are offered within the program free of charge to those individuals who use the electronic training materials and who would like to practice their verbal skills. The courses are offered twice a year during a three-year period.

The project starts during the early fall of 2009 and the website is launched in the spring of 2010. Swedish Culture Foundation has decided to issue Ab Learnwell Oy 100 000 € for the project Health Care Swedish - internet-based courses for the Russian health care personnel.

<http://www.kulturfonden.fi/svenska/om/aktuellt/artikel-14395-10087.html>