

GERMAN PHARMACIST DAY 2010

Working group 2

Challenging and promoting young talent

More elderly people to be cared for, less skilled young people: How can the supply of pharmaceuticals be mastered in the coming decades? This was the topic of working group 2.

The first issue was the figures on demographic change. Here Dr. Harald Michel, head of the IFAD - Institute for Applied Demography in Berlin, cleared up a general misconception. Neither immigration nor family support policies could stop the shrinking of the German population. "The process is far too complex", said Michel. "We can't do anything against this change." The question now is how we deal with it.

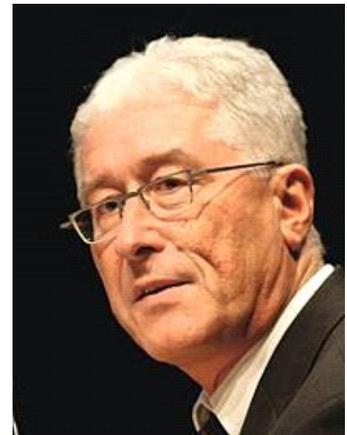
An accurate census has not been available for a long time. According to estimates, the population of the Federal Republic had reached its peak in 2004 with approximately 80 million inhabitants. Since then, the population has been declining to



around 50 million in 2050, with life expectancy continuing to rise, the birth rate declining, and the population migrating further from rural regions to urban areas. In the next ten years, for example, there will already be problems in the care of senior citizens in the eastern federal states, as the younger ones have long since moved away.

And there is hardly any new blood in sight. Michel cited the district of Demmin in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, which is as large as Berlin, as an example. In 2020, there will be almost no 25- to 30-year-olds left there. "This has consequences for the economy and politics", said Michel. This district, however, was only a pioneer.

In any case, child friendliness is an important value that must also be preserved politically. The image of the elderly, on the other hand, would turn to the positive by itself. After all, this group is gaining more and more purchasing power. And also in political influence. But Michel appealed for more generational justice. The increasing debt is an unreasonable burden for the coming generations.



Dr. Harald Michel

The next step must be to activate existing potentials, for example to let older people who can and want to work do so. On the other hand, young people should be offered the best possible training, regardless of whether they are immigrants or not.

The demographic development also affects pharmacists. Many will leave the profession in the coming years. In addition, the sector will have to compete more closely with other academic disciplines for young people and expand clinical-pharmaceutical services, explained ABDA Managing Director Dr. Christiane Eckert-Lill.

It is now necessary to consider how pharmacists can ensure the high-quality supply of people in sparsely populated regions with a reduced infrastructure. To do this, pharmacists need good training.

Is studying pharmacy still attractive? Yes, said Professor Dr. Bernd Clement from the University of Kiel. This is demonstrated by the high demand for study places. The broad spectrum of university education is positive. However, the demand for qualified graduates is not only high in the field of officinal pharmacy. "Pharmaceutical analysis, medical chemistry, pharmacology, toxicology - pharmacists are wanted." Colleagues should advertise for pharmacy studies: "Present the profession as beautifully as it is."

The BPhD, the Federal Association of Pharmacy Students in Germany, is committed to the optimal implementation of training in clinical pharmacy at all universities, BPhD President Maria-Christina Scherzberg assured. "In the third stage of training, it is up to you as a trainer to determine how well the next generation of pharmacists is prepared for their professional life," she addressed the auditorium. With a view to the "Academic Training Pharmacy" in Baden-Württemberg, she promoted a well-structured training

For pharmacist Freifrau Stephanie Schauff von Sobeck-Werder from Hamm, the Practical Year (PJ) is "a bridge to practice". A preliminary evaluation of a BPhD survey showed



Maria Christina Scherzberg

that this time plays a decisive role in the decision for the future occupational field. Only a minority of the first-year students want to go to the public pharmacy first; in fact, the majority of them go to the pharmacy, Scherzberg explained. "This change of heart probably takes place mainly in PJ."

"Encourage and challenge" is the maxim for Dr. Frank Dörje, head of the pharmacy at the University Hospital Erlangen, who underlined the students' right to an adequate education in the PJ. However, many students chose their training pharmacy more according to the environment than the qualification, criticised BAK President Erika Fink. She also pleaded for lifelong learning. Dörje referred to the further training courses offered by the chambers, which qualify colleagues

for future tasks, and mentioned the further training courses on prevention and health promotion and geriatric pharmacy.

Pharmacists must think about how they can ensure the supply of drugs in thinned-out regions at an early stage, Eckert-Lill demanded. This is particularly important in places where doctors in private practice no longer practice and a pharmacy can therefore no longer be maintained. This gap could not be closed by mail order pharmacies. "We need intelligent solutions here," said Eckert-Lill.

Conclusion of the working group: The pharmacy in 2050 must be much closer to the patient and make a lot of effort to achieve this. /

Comment: **More pride**



Erika Fink

Pharmacists are concerned about their young professionals. A profession that is not seen by the public as having a secure future is not very attractive for young people. Obviously many pharmacists are not really convinced of the future either. This was shown by the reaction to the spontaneous question of the moderator Dr. Albrecht Kloepfer who would recommend his children to study pharmacy. Many delegates did not raise their hands. This is a pity, because being a pharmacist is a beautiful and valuable profession. We should represent it with pride and joy. If we actively promote this to the outside world, it will be the best advertisement for the profession. Being a pharmacist with pleasure gives the profession attractiveness and charisma. This message should come from the Pharmacists' Day.

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