The Music Therapy Master study program at the University Liepaja/Latvia

• Reiner Haus

Abstract

In August 1998 a co-operation contract was signed between with the Children Hospital Datteln, University Witten-Herdecke / Germany (Prof. Dr. W. Asdoru) and the Paedagogical Academy Liepaja / Latvia (LPA) to develop a music therapy study program and the necessary infrastructure for music therapy practice all over Latvia.

In the following four years 12 guest lectures (1-2 weeks) and strategy seminars were held in Liepaja by Dr. Reiner Haus, project leader and music therapist at the Children Hospital Datteln. In this time the professional standards, scientific basics and practical methods were taught to the staff of the music faculty of the LPA as well as to paediatricians, other physicians, psychologists and musicians in the region of Liepaja to process the selection and coordination of staff members for a music therapy study program to come (medicine / psychology / music science / music improvisation / special education). The co-operation with the Latvian Ministry for Health and Ministry for Education and Science was the intensive process with high complexity, since the last 50 years as outcome from the centralistic structure all education programs for health care professions had all been linked to the Medial Strazdins University in Riga (RSU). The music therapy study program in Liepaja was therefore the first professional training program for the health system, which did not follow this tradition, because it was obvious, that in Liepaja were the best prerequisites for the implementation of this training program compared with other locations in Latvia. On this background a Music Therapy Fund was founded in Liepaja in 2001 to raise finances for the infrastructural development for music therapy practice.

The study program started September 2002 as postgraduate part time study program with a 3 years duration (110 CP) with license from the Ministry for Science and Education Riga under the head lecturer Dr. Reiner Haus. Due to the high standards of scientific and practical training in the study program the study program got its accreditation as a Master program for a 6 years period in March 2006. As result of strong infrastructural development different EC programs and German funds and public institutions supported the program with an amount of 145,000 Euro from 1999 until 2007. Based on this program an European ERASMUS Music Therapy Master study program is planned in conjunction with several other leading European training institutions.

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