Cultural Competence in Hospice & Palliative Care
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Introduction
The need for support from hospice and palliative care (HPC) services by minority ethnic groups is increasing in Germany. In Stuttgart for example in 2014, 42.2% of registered inhabitants had a migration background compared to 37.2% in 2000°. A review of international literature revealed the lack of cultural competence by the HPC providers as one of the main problems. This paper seeks to address the question of what are the main cultural competences in HPC for those working in Germany today, and whether these competencies can be developed into a training program for HPC staff.

Method
Qualitative methodology using Grounded Theory was used to explore cultural competences. Data was collected from seven interviews and one focus group. The interviews explored the experience of those working in HPC services from different disciplines, as well as one patient with Arabian ethnicity and one relative of a deceased patient from an African background. The focus group consisted of a HPC service team who were caring for an Asian migrant.

Results
Core competencies emerged from the qualitative data and related to personal skills, teamwork skills and skills in the interactions with carers and patients. The aspect of self-reflexion emerges nearly in every category of our data evaluation.

"I guess I take a closer look now. How are they? What kind of attitude do they have? I try to look more at the human side, for example them being Greeks? And sometimes the children are completely different than their parents. I also observe the second generation sitting between the cultures." (Physician in palliative care)

"The humour was still there, which was so important! My mother has always taught me a lot when everybody was over. It always took long for her to trust others. But with the nurses it was different. And this was ideal!" (Daughter of a patient with an African cultural background)

"A lot of it is unknown to me. That’s what makes it hard for me to encourage. Perhaps I talk less than I would with a familiar person, because I never know if there are misunderstandings. It makes me cautious and also less empathic." (Physician in palliative care)

Training
The results were used to develop a training program for HPC staff. Evaluation of a pilot workshop showed that the training of a transcultural attitude, which focuses on building human relationships beyond cultural differences, was the most important skill for the participants.

Conclusions
The research was conducted only at one place in Germany with limited participants. Nevertheless the study and the workshop showed, that an education for cultural competence should have primarily the goal to encourage palliative care specialists to overcome the distance to people with an unfamiliar cultural background.