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# **English orientation guide for nurses working in older people care**

THESIS REPORT

DEGREE PROGRAMME IN NURSING  
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## ABSTRACT

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English orientation guide for nurses working in older people care

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Nurse orientation plays a very important role in supporting the transition of a new nurse into their roles in healthcare organizations. English-speaking nurses face additional difficulties during their first days at work in Finland because orientations are mostly done in Finnish language. Orientation provides support, training, and education which empowers the nurse to deliver compassionate and competent care to patient while promoting patient safety and enhancing excellence in nursing.

This project was aimed at producing English orientation guidebook for new nurses coming to work in an older people care facility in Finland. The purpose is to enhance smooth introduction and transition of new nurses into their new work environment. This improves the self-confidence of new nurses, thereby promoting safety and quality of patient care.

The project was conducted using agile method of project implementation. The project had four phases namely initiation, planning, implementation and closing phase. Agile methodology was used because of its ability to accommodate changes and modifications during the project lifespan.

The final product is a digital guidebook created with FlipHTML5® software. It is a 17-page digital guidebook including the cover page, that is divided into four chapters starting with introduction, two main contents, and legislation for employees in Finland. The digital guidebook is electronically compatible with all electronic devices such as mobile phones, laptops, computer, and ipad.

Keywords: Working in Finland as a nurse, nursing in Finland, nurse orientation, guide

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Peltokoski et al., (2016) says that orientation programs for new nurses increases retention and reduce turnover, which means that good work orientation is beneficial to both employers and employees. Studies equally suggest that language is the biggest cornerstone for new nurses' entry into the work environment, work adjustment and work orientation (Välipakka, 2013). Language barrier for non-Finnish speaking nurses has a negative impact on their adaptation in new workplace and most often leads to a stressful beginning of work period (Välipakka, 2013). Studies suggests that successful orientation period has a huge effect in enhancing positive experience of new nurses as it makes the new nurses perceive themselves as full members of the healthcare community(Mattila et al., 2010).

The purpose of this project was to produce English orientation guidebook to nurses working in older people care in Finland. The objective of this thesis is to enhance smooth introduction or transition of new nurses into their work environment and better understand their role. This improves the self-confidence of new nurses, thereby promoting safety and quality of patient care.

This thesis will be conducted as a project with project task to produce an English orientation guide for nurses coming to work in an older people care facility in Finland. This older people facility serves the older people all over Finland. Its mission is to provide round the clock care for assisted living and quality healthcare for older people, where the individual has a flat that suits their needs and where they receive care and attention from the unit nurse without delay and at any time of day, even if they have an emergency. Care is provided according to the older people's individual needs, activities that maintain and promote functional capacity, meals, clothing maintenance, cleaning, and

activities that promote inclusion and social interaction. It has 40 rooms, with all older persons having his/her own private room with a bathroom.

In this thesis, the authors have used perchance.org (AI image generator) to generate image and MOT to check English language grammar used in this thesis. The authors have used AI applications appropriately with due respect for data protection. AI has not been used to write this thesis.

## 2 THEORETICAL BASIS OF THE PROJECT

The key concepts of this thesis are working in Finland as a Nurse, Nurse orientation, Nursing in Finland, and a guide.

### 2.1 Working in Finland as a Nurse

In Finland, employee's union and employer's union agree on terms of employment, includes working hours (maximum working hours is 40hours per week and overtime should be compensated, weekly off days and annual Holidays of about 4 weeks and family leave) and minimum wage which is usually at least 8 Euros and note that training periods are paid (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland, 2022). The employer and employee are expected to make a more detailed employment contract. Contracts must be written in a language that both employer and employee understand with terms explained to the employee and finally signed by both parties (Employment Contract Act, 2018).

The employment contract is a legal act. It comes in force when an employer allows an employee to work for him. An employment contract can be either fixed-term or indefinite, with the duration being particularly important at the end of the employment period (Employment contract act Section 3(1224/2010). Work is conducted based on a contract agreed upon by both the employer and

employee, with the employee obligated to personally perform the work. Key details included in the contract are the start date, duration (if fixed term), trial period, work location, principal duties, pay structure, working hours, annual leave arrangements, notice period, and adherence to any applicable collective agreements. Employees are obligated to demonstrate loyalty to their employer. This includes avoiding any actions that conflict with the reasonable expectations associated with their role. This obligation commences upon entering the employment contract and extends to some extent even during the employee's free time. For instance, employees should refrain from engaging in activities during their free time that could adversely affect their work.

Finnish citizens do not need any work permits but foreigners need a resident permit to work in Finland and they would have same rights and responsibilities as a Finnish employee (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland, 2022). In Finland, employers expected to care for all employees equally regardless of their nationality and there should be no discrimination based on gender as laid down in the Act on Equality between women and men (Employment Contract Act 609/1986). Non-discrimination Act section 8 says no one shall be discriminated against on basis of Nationality, race, colour, language, origin, religion, political activity, opinion, state of health, sexual orientation, disability, or any personal characteristics. Discrimination of all forms are completely banned even if it is based on fact or assumption regarding the individual (Non-discrimination Act 1325/2014).

The employers in Finland have responsibilities like ensuring that employees can carry out their duties, opportunities to improve their abilities to advance in their careers, ensure occupational safety and health of employees to protect against accidents or health hazards, information on principal terms of work (Employment Contract Act 609/1986).

Employment Contract Act (55/2001, amendments up to 204/2017 included) says in Section 11 (1448/2016) that employees who are not able to work because of an accident or illness are entitled to pay during illness. If the employment relationship has been for at least a month, the employee is entitled to full

pay for the period of disability up to the end of the ninth day following the date of falling ill but only till the point at which the employee's right to national sickness allowance under the Health Insurance Act (1224/2004) takes effect. In situations where the employment relationship has lasted for less than a month, employees are correspondingly entitled to 50% of their pay. The occupational healthcare Act (1383/2001; amendments up to 555/2021 included) stipulates that employees must undergo health check examination either at the beginning or at a later stage of their employment to investigate the employee's state of health, functional capacity, and ability to work. The health examination is done with mutual agreement with employees as provided in section 6 of Act on Status and Rights of Patients (785/1992).

Valvira, the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health in Finland requires everyone who wants to practice as a nurse to have a license. This supervisory authority (Valvira) gives, upon application the legal rights to practice and authorizes the use of occupational title in healthcare professional (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2011). Valvira can grant in special reasons and conditions prescribed, nationals of non-EU or non-EEA states who have completed their studies from other non-EU or non-EEA states the rights to practice in Finland if they possess the qualifications needed and proof of adequate language proficiency needed for managing their job as requested by the government (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2011). It should be noted that to practice in Finland as a nurse, you possess intermediate level of Finnish or Swedish. (Finnish Nursing Association, 2023).

## 2.2 Nurse orientation

In Finland, the law makes it clear that every employer has it as obligation to provide adequate orientation to new employees with details of duties to be performed, safe working practices, guidance to eliminate hazards and risks of work endangering safety and health (Occupational Safety and Health Act 609/1986). Pohjamies et al., 2022 says in many hospitals, nurse orientation is usually a process whereby an experienced nurse is paired with the new nurse

during the entire orientation period. This is on the contrary criticised by preceptors as they consider the orientation process time consuming because they have their own caseload, therefore making the preceptor role represents more responsibility to the nurse's initial tasks. The importance of work orientation cannot be under-estimated because it helps the new employee to learn about the job from the beginning, reduce the number of mistakes and reduces safety risks. Studies suggests that successful orientation of new employees has many benefits as it is connected to safe patient care, positive work culture, decreased workforce attrition and organizational commitment (Pohjamies et al., 2022).

Ensuring successful orientation of new nurses should be an important goal of healthcare organizations and this can be achieved through improving the orientation competence of nursing staff and preceptor should not be chosen based on availability rather based on clinical competence (Pohjamies et al., 2022). Preceptors should be supported by co-workers, nursing managers and leaders as been seen to increase self-evaluated orientation competence.

### 2.3 Nursing in Finland

Registered Nursing education in Finland is provided by University of Applied Science (UAS), the degree program last for 3.5 years and comprises a total of 210 ECTS credits (Finnish Nursing Association, 2023). Nursing education in Finland is based on European Union's Directives 2005/36/EC, amended by Directives 2013/55/EU. Therefore, the requirements in Finland are like those elsewhere in the European Union and other collaborating European countries. (Finnish Nursing Association, 2023.)

The Finnish Nursing Association, 2023 says nurses are the most qualified health care professionals. In Finland, Nurses work responsibly, independently and based on nursing science. Nurses in Finland have varied opportunities as they can work in direct clinical patient care in health care settings, like primary health care, prisons, home care, school health, national defence, public and



private sectors. Nurses equally have great career opportunities as they can further their education and training to become managers, educators, researchers, supervisors, or administrators (Finnish Nursing Association, 2023).

In Finland, belonging to a work union is very beneficial. Once you have been registered as a nurse by Valvira, you can apply for membership of Finnish Nurses Association and the Finnish Union of Health and Social care Professional (Tehy). Joining this association is completely voluntary but is highly recommended to join.

Nurses work in a patient-centered, holistic approach and health focused with their tasks being to be alleviating suffering, preventing, and treating illness, and promoting and maintaining health (Finnish Association of Nursing, 2023).

## 2.4 Guide

Cambridge dictionary, 2024 says a guide is a book that gives or provides an individual with the most important information about a specific subject, destination, advice, and particular topic. A guide can come in many formats including e-books, online guides, print publications, and mobile apps. A guide is usually characterized with comprehensive information, tips and practical advice, structured format, visual elements such as photographs, maps, which helps readers deepen their understanding with information shown the guide, thereby making understanding easier.

### 3 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this project was to produce English orientation guidebook to nurses working in older people care in Finland. The objective of this thesis is to enhance smooth introduction or transition of new nurses into their work environment and better understand their role. This improves the self-confidence of new nurses, thereby promoting safety and quality of patient care.

### 4 PROJECT METHOD

#### 4.1 Description of target group

The target group of this project is new nurses who are coming to work in an older people care facility in Finland. Producing orientation guidebook in English will help facilitate their orientation process, boost their confidence and patient safety.

#### 4.2 Agile project management strategy

The Agile project management strategy was found to be the most effective for this project. Agile methodology is a form of project management that focuses on cross functional teams working together for continuous improvement of a project (Wrike, 2023). It breaks down projects into smaller segments and helps teams through the cycles of planning, implementation, and assessment or evaluation of the project. It is designed as a more flexible and efficient method of bringing products to the market (Wrike, 2023).

The word “Agile” means the ability to move fast or quickly and easily. This method allows team to adjust faster and more easily compared with other project methodologies. The Agile method works in the ongoing sprints of project planning and execution, enabling you to continuously adapt and mature your

plan, scope, and design throughout the project. The Agile life cycle consists of four phases namely the requirement phase, the implementation phase, the testing phase, and the customer review to collect input that may be addressed in the next iteration (Chen et al., 2023).

The supervising instructor monitored the thesis' progress and provided guidance at each stage. Using this methodology, the authors could make adjustment to any changes suggested by the supervisor and new ideas at any point during the project, avoiding risks and assuring a high-quality outcome. With the Agile methodology, the authors may update the product based on orderer's suggestions after the project have been finished.

#### 4.3 Resources and risks of the project

This project was carried out by two Nursing students, the authors' working tools were computers, phones, internet connections, car, notebook, pens, and finance. The risks of this project were limited time for the authors, inadequate information in respects to orientation materials, unavailability of the subscriber organization's contact person was a risk.

There was risk of virus attacking our computer and making us not completing the project in time. The authors used SWOT (strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and Threats) analysis to analyse the risks in the project. SWOT analysis is defined as an organisation's internal strengths and weaknesses, their opportunities for improvement and growth, and the threats the external environment presents (table 1) (Weyne Gretzky, 2010).

Table 1. The swot analysis of this project

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>--Good understanding of orientation needs of new nurses</li> <li>--Experience working in Finland as a nursing student</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>--Limited Finnish language skills</li> <li>--Limited experience in conducting academic writing</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>--The product will help new nurses transition into their new workplace</li> <li>--The project was a good learning process to the authors</li> <li>--The authors improved on their computer skills</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>--Communication problems</li> <li>-- Client unsatisfied with the orientation material</li> <li>-- Limited time</li> <li>--Unforeseen future events</li> <li>--Unavailability of subscriber organization's contact person</li> </ul>

## 5 THESIS REPORT

### 5.1 Phases of the project

The project methodology was agile method, the project phases were grouped into four phases namely initiation, planning, implementation and closing phase. (Wrike, 2023.)

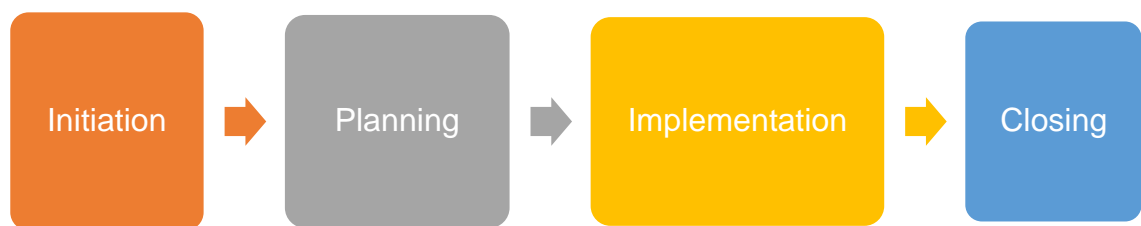


Figure 1. Stages of the project (Modified from Wrike, 2023)

#### 5.1.1 Initiation

In August 2023, the initiation phase began with choosing a preliminary topic for the thesis after doing various tasks and assignments several tasks to understand thesis writing better, the project topic was modified by the supervisor and the purpose, and objectives of the project were defined including the preliminary keywords. These keywords were later turned into key concepts and used as a tool for literature search. The authors defined the key concepts and familiarized themselves briefly with the theoretical background during this phase.

#### 5.1.2 Planning

Moving on to the planning stage, the authors decided to determine the steps that will be used to achieve this project purpose and objective. They also decided to use the agile methodology for the project implementation for its

flexibility and adaptability. The project was broken down into iterations called sprints. The project timelines and assessment plan were established at this phase as well as the necessary materials needed to complete the project. During this phase, the authors analysed the project resources and risks through the SWOT analysis and planned the thesis product. The literature retrieval gave the sufficient theoretical knowledge to proceed to project implementation and creation of the orientation material.

### 5.1.3 Implementation

The implementation phase included creating and developing the final product based on the feedback from the supervising teacher and the ordered. A digital guidebook was produced that contains orientation materials for employees. Throughout, the project was closely monitored by the supervisor. They also worked on tasks, regularly checking them off with the supervisor weekly for feedback. The authors completed the tasks. Suggestions and feedback were responded to and adapted to the project where necessary, and the process was described in thesis writing.

### 5.1.4 Closing

Finally, in the closing phase, the authors presented the final product to the supervisor and the necessary feedback and suggestion were received, changes were made, and the product was sent to the orderer with an evaluation form from Satakunta University of Applied Sciences. Authors equally sent the product to six nursing students working in the organization for feedback and suggestions.

Table 2. The phases of the project

Time Stage	9-10.2023	11-12.2023	1.2024	2.2024	3-4.2024	5.2024
Project initiation						
Project planning						
Project implementation						
Closing of The project						

## 5.2 Literature retrieval

The databases used are SAMK FINNA, Google Scholar, CINAHL, Manual search and MEDIC. SAMK's Librarian guided the authors in searching the right search words for this thesis. The search words were Orientation AND international AND nurse AND finland, orientation OR onboarding OR "new employee" OR "new employees" OR induction OR orienting) AND (international OR cross-cultural OR multi-cultural OR foreign) AND (nursing OR nurses) AND (finland OR finnish). Table 1 shows the search and results.

Table 3. Databases and search words

Database	Keywords	Results	Accepted projects/articles/researches

Google scholar	Orientation AND international AND nurses AND finland	56700	3
Google scholar	orientation OR onboarding OR "new employee" OR "new employees" OR induction OR orienting) AND (international OR cross-cultural OR multi-cultural OR foreign) AND (nursing OR nurses) AND (finland OR finnish)	172000	3
SAMK FINNA	Orientation AND international AND nurses AND finland	954	3
	orientation OR onboarding OR "new employee" OR "new employees" OR induction OR orienting) AND (international OR cross-cultural OR multi-cultural OR foreign) AND (nursing OR nurses) AND (finland OR finnish)	3,150,523	4
MEDIC	Perehdytys Or kansainvälinen OR sairaanhoitaja	2096	0
Manual search	Finland labour legislations		5
CINAHL	Orientation AND international AND nurses AND finland	2,646	3
	orientation OR onboarding OR "new employee" OR "new employees" OR induction OR orienting) AND (international OR cross-	174,656	2



	cultural OR multi-cultural OR foreign) AND (nursing OR nurses) AND (finland OR finnish)		
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### 5.3 Description of the Digital Guidebook

The English orientation guidebook was created initially with the latest version of Microsoft Word 365 because it was easy to amend during the entire project life. The first thing that was done was to identify what aspects new nurses coming to work in this older people care would like to know during their first days at work. After identifying these things, the authors presented them to the supervising teacher. The authors had several meetings with the supervising teacher, during which some points were modified, and other points were taken off as well. The authors had a meeting with the ordered for questions and what they wanted to be included in the guidebook.

The final product was a 17-page digital guidebook including the cover page, table of contents, introduction, the main contents, legislation for employees in Finland, and references. A brief introduction and description of this older people care facility was done with some photos for new nurses to have an idea of the facility. The next chapter was a description of working in this older people care facility which includes detailed information on the role of registered nurses, role of shift manager and role of team leader.

After this, the authors described the working schedule (three shifts system which are morning, afternoon, and night) in this older people care facility with detailed instructions on the activities and tasks carried out in each work shift. Lastly, the guidebook contains legislation for employees in Finland and the legislation discussed were employment contract, working time, holidays, sick

leave, and equality. The font type (Arial) and font size (12) of the texts were chosen to give legibility and clarity to the guidebook.

The nice transformation from Microsoft Word 365 to PDF to FlipHTML5® software was done easily, keeping the logical progression of ideas. The final product was presented in a digital format with the use of FlipHTML5® software. FlipHTML5® software made it easy for readers to easily navigate the chapters in the guidebook with simplicity. The use of fonts, photos, headers made the digital guidebook visually attractive and an engaging presentation. All these features made the guidebook interactive, and the use of clear and simple English makes the guidebook easy to read. The digital guidebook is electronically compatible with many electronic devices such as tablets, mobile phones, computers, laptops, and iPad.

#### 5.4 Evaluation

After the completion of the project, a link of the guidebook was sent to the ordered with an attached SAMK feedback form by email. The feedback was received after the ordered has critically gone through the orientation guidebook. The ordered gave satisfactory feedback but believed that the orientation guidebook is not comprehensive enough to be used as orientation guide for new nurses.

The authors asked voluntary feedback from six nursing students working in the organization and four of them responded. They said, the guidebook was very informative, useful and did not have anything more to add. They equally added that the guidebook has new things which they were not aware, and the guidebook will be very useful for new English-speaking nurses. The nursing students explained that during orientation, the preceptor may not have enough time to educate the new nurse on all these things but if the new nurse reads this guidebook before or during orientation, the new nurse will know a lot of things which will boost self-confidence and help to provide adequate care.

## 6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

According to Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) the guidelines of TENK: “Universities and universities of applied sciences should ensure that their students are well versed in the principles of the responsible conduct of research and that the teaching of research integrity is integrated into their graduate and post graduate programmes” (Arene, 2020, p.5). All the tasks in this thesis project like project planning, gathering data, project implementation and evaluation were done following the principles of responsible conduct.

The authors produced a digital orientation guidebook in English for new nurses coming to work in an older people care facility. Following the teacher's and organisation approval of the thesis plan, the production of the digital orientation material began. The orientation guidebook provides accurate, updated, and transparent information about orientation within the older people's care facility. The authors are aware that misleading or incomplete information will lead to misunderstandings and ethical dilemmas. Receiving feedback from the organization, the supervising teacher and four nursing students working at the older people facility on the completed digital guidebook was the last step.

This project was conducted in accordance with the Ethical guidelines, by avoiding plagiarism, maintaining originality, and using appropriate referencing in accordance with the responsible conduct of research and copyright legislation (Arene, 2020, p.12). The authors wrote the thesis project in their own words and gave credit to authors whose work were used, and only scientific, and reliable sources were used in this project.

In the project, the authors followed the fundamental principles of reliability, honesty, respect, and accountability (National board on research integrity, 2023). Reliability is accomplished by using the right project design, methodology, analysis, and quality resources. The authors communicated in respect

and honesty with each other and with the subscriber organisation. This helped to promote transparency, fairness and unbiased.

The authors obtained consent agreement from the organisation that needs the project (National Board on Research integrity, 2023). Before the starts of the project, the authors agreed on the objectives, rights, and obligations of each partner. Also, the authors agreed on their commitment to carrying out a good research practice.

## 7 DISCUSSION

To assess this project, we began by assessing the project defined objectives and purpose. This includes a review of the project methodology, ensuring it aligned with our goals. Agile method (Wrike,2023) was used in the project, and it was very important because it provided a structure that was followed throughout the project lifespan and the method equally allowed the authors to make several changes on our product in the process.

Establishing a timeline and milestones was crucial for keeping the project on schedule. Ethical considerations were also addressed to ensure adherence to ethical guidelines throughout the research process. The authors documented all changes that were made in the project plan. The authors had frequent meetings with the thesis supervisor, during which changes, and modifications were made on the product. Lastly, the authors requested feedback from the organization and from four nursing students working in that older people care facility.

The project progress went fluently without many setbacks and project timeline was met because the authors had frequent meetings with the supervising teacher, who guided the authors throughout the process. The process and product needed many revisions, which were done accordingly to produce exactly what the subscriber needed.

## 8 CONCLUSIONS

Taking this project journey together and working as a team has given the authors opportunity to improve on important skills such as communication skills and team working skills. This project has been transformative for our personal and professional growth, especially in terms of thesis writing and the importance of orientation in nursing. Through this endeavour, we explore further into nursing practices in Finland and the corresponding legislation, therefore increasing our understanding of nursing in Finland.

On a personal level, this has significantly enhanced the authors' communication skills, encountered during the initial challenges in team collaboration. Despite initial difficulties, the authors learned to work cohesively, fostering better communication amongst themselves. Additionally, the project propelled the authors to acquire new computer skills, particularly in creating digital guidebook which was entirely new. This newfound knowledge will undoubtedly benefit the authors in the long term.

However, the journey wasn't without its obstacles. Balancing the project with ongoing internships posed a motivation challenge for one of the authors. Nevertheless, mutual encouragements, supports, and the fact that the authors have worked together in other several school assignments, created a better understanding of each other's strengths and weaknesses. These helped overcome the hurdles faced, highlighting the importance of effective teamwork.

Throughout the process, we encountered various challenges, including communication barriers and time zone differences especially when one team member relocated to another country. These challenges tested our adaptability and resilience, ultimately strengthening our ability to navigate complex situations. Overall, this project was a pivotal experience, fostering both personal and professional growth. It enhanced our English proficiency skills, particularly in academic writing, and equipped us with essential project management skills, digital literacy, and communication skills. Moreover, it taught us how to effectively

balance our personal, family, professional, and academic responsibilities. These insights will undoubtedly guide us in future endeavours.

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## APPENDIX 1: AI PHOTOS

AI Prompts:

1. Create an image of a nursing team, male and female, happily shaking hands and welcoming new nurses to work.



Image: Anim & Mofor 18.4.2024 by perchange.org

2. Create an image of a nurse and manager happily signing new work contract



Image: Anim & Mofor 18.4.2024 by perchange.org

3. Create an image of a person on holidays, with a beautiful background in a beach



Image: Anim & Mofor 18.4.2024 by perchange.org

4. Create an image of a male person feeling sick, having nausea



Image: Anim & Mofor 18.4.2024 by perchange.org

5. Create an image demonstrating of male, female, disabled people, people of different culture equality and inclusion for nurses at work.



Image: Anim & Mofor 18.4.2024 by perchange.org