

DEAF PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA: CHALLENGES FOR HEALTH CARE AND DIAGNOSTICS

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Deaf people face **major barriers** to information about health and a **shortage of specific health care provision**.

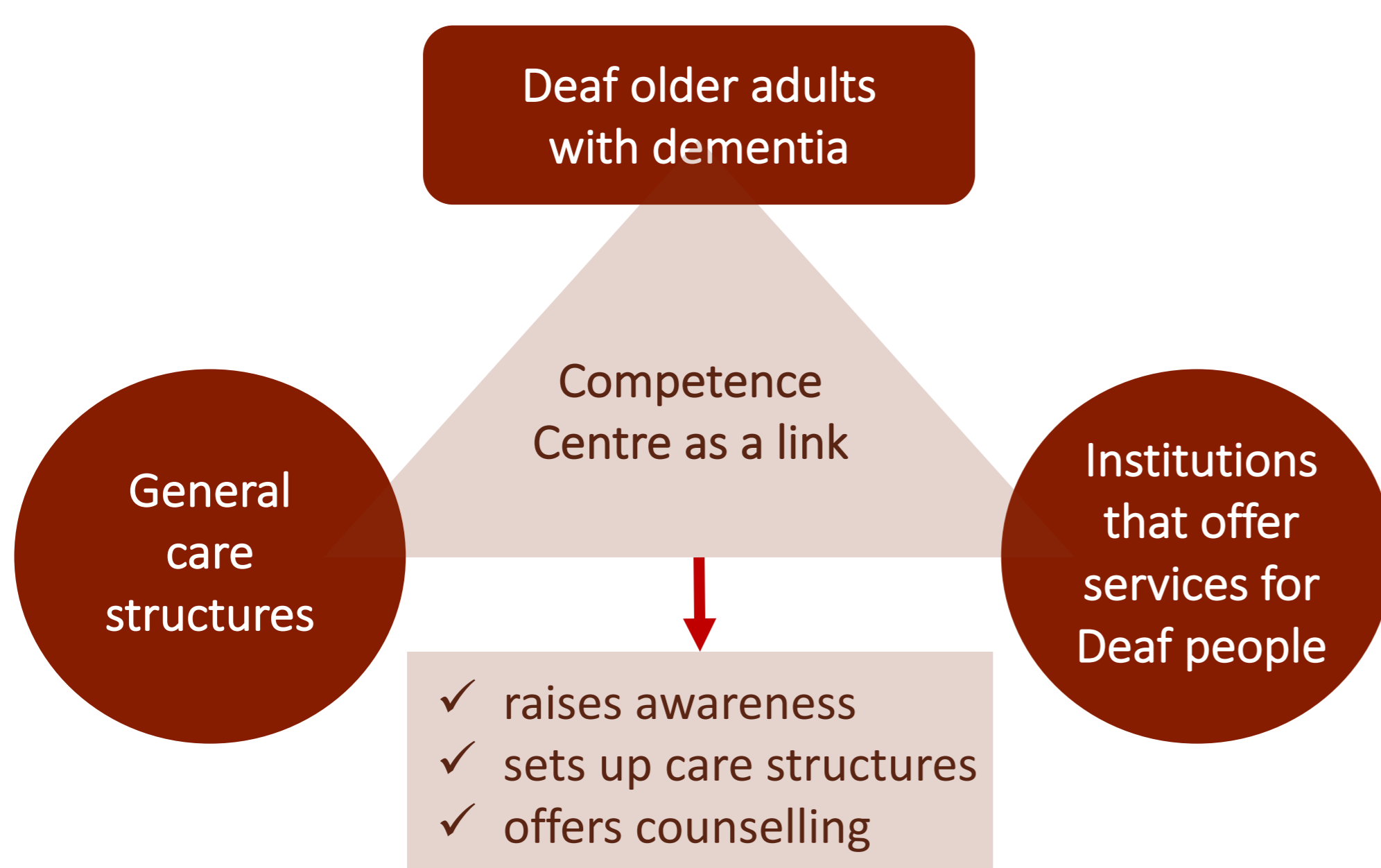
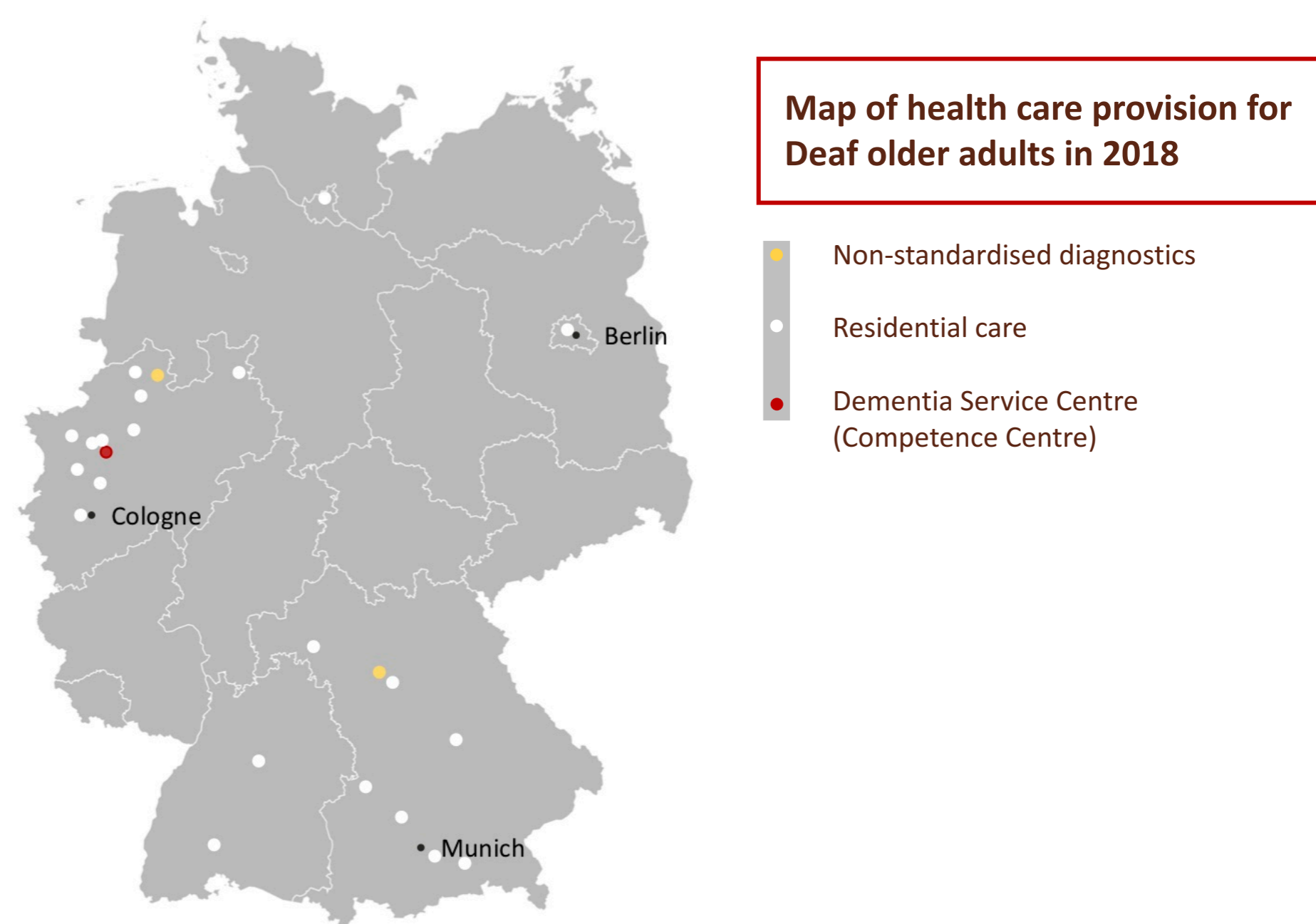
This means a high risk of **false diagnoses** and isolation.



Our **aim** is to improve health care for Deaf people with dementia.

What we accomplished (2006 – 2017)

- Deaf older adults in Germany were interviewed (N= 247) and we identified specific services for the Deaf and how dementia in Deaf people is currently diagnosed.
- We found a **huge gap** in health care provision for Deaf older adults.
- Therefore we set up a **Competence Centre model**:



- It needs a **supporting organisation, funding** and **qualified personnel** for successful implementation.
- Currently there is one Competence Centre in Germany with long-term funding.

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What we are working on (2018 – 2022)

- Standard dementia screening tests (e.g. MMSE) cannot be used for Deaf people with dementia because Deaf people use **sign language** for communication.
- In the UK, the first **sign-language based dementia screening test** was developed, the **British Sign Language Cognitive Screening Test** (Deaf with Dementia Project, funded by the Alzheimer's Society UK, 2014-2016).
- Access via: www.dcalportal.org
- A **Specialist Memory Clinic for Deaf people** who use British Sign Language has been established by the NHS at the **National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery in Queens Square** in London.
- We create a German Sign Language test **considering German Deaf culture and language**.

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