



## Quality of Care

### The mission of Inspire2Live is:

Get cancer under control and inspire people to lead Happy and Healthy lives in Harmony with cancer.

We achieve this by motivating as many people as possible to constantly challenge and expand their boundaries.

Inspire2Live has the following themes:

- Quality of Life
- Reducing incidents
- Quality of Care
- Innovation of the Clinical Practice
- Understanding Life (the Inspire2Live program to get cancer under control)

### Quality of Care

**Mission: The best quality of care for all cancer patients in the Netherlands**

**Strategy: Emphasise the importance of good governance in health care**

It goes without saying that we all want everyone who has cancer to get the best possible treatment.

Unjustifiably, this is currently not the case. We of Inspire2Live think it should go without saying.

There is no way to explain that cancer care is not of the same, excellent quality across the entire country.

Not everyone knows that differences in results from one hospital to the next are too great to be due to coincidence.

I2L wants to make it known explicitly, in the interest of current and future cancer patients, that the welfare of a patient and their loved ones depends crucially on the quality of care, and that high quality care is within reach.

Sections 2 and 3 of the Dutch Quality of Health Care Institutions Act read:

*"The care provider shall provide responsible care. Responsible care is defined as care of good quality, which is provided in an effective, efficient and patient-oriented manner and is attuned to the patient's realistic needs.*

*"The care provider shall organise the provision of care in such a manner, provide the institution with such personnel and equipment, in both qualitative and quantitative terms, and provide for such a division of responsibilities, that together, these provisions result, or should reasonably result, in responsible care.*

Thus people in the Netherlands have a right to high quality care. Access for everyone to such high quality care is a matter of organisation.

### Good doctors, good governance and the right culture – those are *the* preconditions for the welfare of patients and their loved ones.

We need doctors who put patients first, who keep abreast of the cutting edge of knowledge, who act responsibly, both singly and jointly. Such doctors do exist – but not everywhere.

The directors of a health care provider must ensure that all staff members deliver their best performance.

Good cancer care is available in the Netherlands – the evidence is there and some of us live to tell the tale. But other evidence shows that such good care is not available to all as a matter of course.

An inspiring environment, where everyone pulls their weight and asks of others to do the same, is an essential element of culture to ensure good quality care.

**never ever quit!**



Undertreatment and overtreatment must be banned.

Unfortunately, not everyone lives up to their responsibility, including health care providers. Think of timely treatment, manners towards patients and their loved ones, information about the treatment, involvement, efficient employment of people and resources, knowledge and skill maintenance.

Hiding behind regulations is bad practice: you don't need to comply, as long as you can explain. Health care providers asked to implement improvements often say they may not or cannot do so. Very often, they're wrong. In many cases, they can but don't know they can, or don't know how. Or they don't want to. Institutions' budgets could be spent more sensibly, so that better care could be given.

Indeed, patients may often improve their well-being themselves, by cooperating in their treatment and after-care. In fact this is their duty – the collateral of their right to good care.

### The crux of the matter: good governance

The boards of partnerships, whether temporary or not, must organise the individual health care professionals so as to bring out the best in them, so that they inspire each other to deliver optimally, keep abreast of their trade and, most importantly, put the patient first always.

Boards should realise there is academic knowledge available on success factors for innovation governance. (See e.g. *Meer rendement uit R&D, Nederlandse Life Sciences en Medische Technologie*, Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus universiteit, 2008.) Such knowledge can be readily translated for health care environments.

Relevant topics are *organising flexibility* (e.g. horizontal collaboration and knowledge sharing, taking professional views into account when making decisions), *dynamic management* (e.g. experiences inside and outside the sector, diversity in knowledge and backgrounds among the management team, visionary leadership, group rewards) and *cooperation with outsiders*.

What it boils down to is collaboration on the work floor, managers who ask themselves and others new questions, who are open to innovative solutions, who dare to look ahead and who reward teamwork, and first of all collaboration with outsiders so as to arrive at innovative solutions.

And that is a matter of organisation!

In an optimal culture, good doctors and good managers work together in a way that can only lead to good quality care. It's all in the patient's interest. That is why we, PAs of Inspire2Live, stand for it.

**never ever quit!**