Centralization of care and quality of care
An insurers perspective on innovation

Jacqueline Klein Gunnewiek
Jan Reitsma
11-11-2021
Who we are

Zorgverzekeraars Nederland is the umbrella organization of health insurers in The Netherlands

Ambition 2025:

• sustainable care
• patient / individual centered
• care is delivered with compassion in an effective way in networks around the patient
• spending money wisely, economically and honestly in order to maintain solidarity
What matters from health insurers perspective?

Insurers primarily have a societal perspective. Three basic questions:

1. Is the care delivered insured care?
2. How is healthcare organized to obtain optimal quality and accessibility?
3. How do we keep costs manageable?
1 Insured care

Three conditions must be met according to Dutch law and regulations:

• **usual** care for the field or specialism
• **evidence** based and formal practice
• medically **necessary** for the patient

If not, insurers are not allowed to pay for it.

**Challenges** for innovation and evaluation:
- Providing adequate evidence
- Legislation that supports a learning system
2 Optimal organisation

Balance between: quality, accessibility and costs.

What is optimal organisation? E.g.:

- **Patients**
  - Good access to healthcare
  - Adequate process, outcomes and experience

- **Healthcare providers** improve their service:
  - Accumulate experience, learn from each other and from data
  - Quality, efficiency, proper use

- **Societal level**:
  - Healthy population
  - Capacity management, focused investments
Optimal organisation: data show that volume matters

• **Incontinence** is a common and unpleasant complication after radical prostatectomy (RP).

• 1 or more incontinence pads per day are claimed for **26% of RP patients**, 12 – 15 months after RP, which indicates incontinence.

• In hospitals that perform **more than 100 RPs a year**, patients are significantly less likely to suffer from incontinence.
Optimal organisation: developments

- **Volume standards** per hospital for RP increased from a minimum of 20 in 2017 to **100 in 2019**.
- Average number of **patients treated** with RP in hospital increased to **177** in 2020.
- Treatment is in 2020 **concentrated in 19 hospitals**, of which 17 conform to the new volume standard.
3 How do we keep costs manageable?

There is a big societal challenge:

- **Aging population** will increase number of patients
- **Lack of staff**: no more people available, staff overburdened
- **Healthcare budget** is not allowed to increase any further.

We need to treat more patients, with the same (shrinking) staff and budget.
Main challenge

Ziekteverzuim en verloop in zorg stijgen naar ‘alarmerende’ recordhoogte

Personeelstekort in de zorg stijgt verder: ‘We lopen achter de feiten aan’
3 How do we keep costs manageable?

Innovation and the societal challenge

• **Cost-increasing** innovation does not match available budget and staff. E.g. expensive medicines, advanced tools, time consuming treatment, digital care as something extra.

• **Moral dilemma:** more expensive or time-consuming treatment for patient A means no treatment for patient B.
  • Who wants to be patient B?
  • Who decides that patient A is more important than patient B?
  • Which patients will not get treatment to pay for innovation for others?
3 How do we keep costs manageable?

Major challenge is that we need innovations that
• are good for patients
• limit staff burden
• and reduce costs

Only innovations that meet all these criteria contribute to a solution for the societal challenge.
How to enhance implementation?

Challenges for implementation / scale-up of promising innovations

• ‘not invented here’ syndrome
• Tailormade versus one size fits all
• Across different domains of care
• The law does not allow to pay for innovations not yet scientifically proved to be effective

How can we help each other?
Wrap up with regard to manifest

Keep the societal perspective in mind:
- Make sure the requirements for insured care are met
- Make sure the organization of care is optimal
- Make sure innovation contributes to the societal challenge