

Policies to assure and improve the quality of care

- state of the art in Europe -

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- why quality policies?
- what is quality of care?
- activities of professionals
- activities of institutions
- quality policies related to patients
- quality policies of insurers/financiers
- quality policies of government
- considerations in developing new policies

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Reasons for quality policies

- assuring that health services and the health system contribute to health
- evidence-based medicine
- responsiveness to patients demands and needs
- accountability of professionals and institutions
- management (plan/control) of health care

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What is quality of care?

- aspects:
- structure / process / outcome
- relative notion, related to evaluative activities
- assurance and improvement
- definitions IOM, ISO, EU

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Quality improvement activities of professionals

- education
- licensing / law on health care professionals
- continuous education
- re-licensing / registration
- professional by laws/ethics
- visitatie programmes/peer-review programmes
- clinical registries
- audit
- practice guidelines
- clinical indicators
- local peer-review/improvement projects

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Quality improvement activities of institutions

- Law on health care institutions
- Certification / accreditation
- Committee activities (i.e. complaint handling, autopsies, anti-biotic policies, medication policies, infection control, ...)
- Quality systems
- Hospital performance indicators
- Local quality improvement projects

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Quality policies related to patients

- legislation (privacy, informed consent)
- complaint handling
- patient centered care delivery (satisfaction/experiences)
- patient organizations
- patient participation



Quality policies of insurers / financiers

- decision making on innovations and coverage (HTA)
- quality in contracts (SLA)
- supporting quality improvement initiatives
- performance indicators
- performance payment



Quality policies of governments

Legislation on professionals, institutions and patients

Legislation on technologies and pharmaceuticals

System design and financial incentives

⇒ Performance indicators (i.e. EU, OECD, WHO)

Overall quality policies and national quality programmes

Inspectorate of health



Considerations in developing quality policies (1)

- relation of quality policies with foreseen health system design (insurance system, privatizations, incentive structure, patient needs and demands)
- role of government in the health care system (politics)
- role of patients, citizens, tax-payers, insured, employers and employees



Considerations in developing quality policies (2)

- self-regulation professions (professionalization/scientization, role of specialists, general practitioners, allied health professionals and nurses, push and pull policies)
- self-regulation institutions (accreditation, planning, modernization towards home care/nursing home care, organized delivery systems)
- information / indicators
- balancing internal dynamics and external control



Project with The Netherlands

- knowledge sharing
- description of existing quality policies
- support in developing new or strengthening existing policies
- pilot studies professionals/institutions
- linkage with WB and WHO initiatives

