

## **B6 Total quality management in the Dutch home health care sector: Results and implications of a benchmarking approach**

### **Leader/s:**

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### **Objective and rationale:**

Benchmarking is generally seen as a useful tool for quality management in the health care sector as well as for empowering the users of these services. At the same time it can be noticed that benchmarking data on a national level, to assess the efficiency and/or quality of the services provided, are scarce.

The objective of this workshop is threefold. (1) To outline and discuss the relevance and possibilities of the benchmarking approach as an instrument for total quality management (TQM) and the empowerment of patient organisations in the health care sector. (2) To present data from the benchmarking study that was carried out in 2001/2002 among 106 Dutch home care organisations, to explore the relationship between the different elements of these results and to compare these results with data from the 1<sup>st</sup> benchmarking study carried out in 1997/1998. (3) To discuss the specific benchmarking model that was chosen, to relate the results of the study to future developments in the Dutch home health care sector and to look at these results from an international perspective.

The objectives of the workshop touch upon the main topics of the conference such as the measuring of health care performance data from different perspectives, strategies to empower client organisations, the implementation of quality improvement policies and practices and the use of new technologies to achieve more efficiency and quality of care.

### **Outline for Workshop content:**

The session will be structured around a series of three presentations. The first presentation will offer the delegates a general overview and state-of-the-art of the use of benchmarking studies in the field of health services research. The role of benchmarking, as a tool for comparison of practices and outcomes across organisations with an aim to identify 'best practice' organisations and improve performances, will be described and further elaborated. Conditions for an effective use of benchmarking (and equivalent) models that may help to improve transparency in the care sector and encourage parties to compete for efficiency and quality, will be presented and discussed.

The second presentation will focus on the results of a benchmarking study among 106 home care agencies recently carried out in the Netherlands. Data on the efficiency of 96 home care agencies were collected at the unit level using standardised protocols. These data were supplemented by data from management questionnaires (100% response rate), quality of care questionnaires completed by a random sample of 24,579 patients (46.5% response rate) and job satisfaction questionnaires completed by 48,207 home care workers (43.9 response rate). Analysing techniques included data-envelop analysis (DEA), multivariate adaptive regression splines (MARS) techniques and multi level modelling. Detailed results to be presented refer to the separate studies, the overall results and a comparison with data that were gathered in 1997/1998 as part of the first benchmarking study in the home care sector.

The third presentation starts by looking at the implementation strategies to disseminate the results of the benchmarking study among the different parties, including the possibilities to empower client organisations to work with benchmarking data. Secondly, the pro's and con's of the underlying benchmarking model will be discussed and elaborated in terms of its potential power to explain differences in efficiency and quality of care scores. Thirdly, the results of the study will be related to future benchmarking studies in the Netherlands and the possibilities for similar studies in other countries.

### **Leadership:**

The workshop will be co-ordinated by Herman J. Sixma and Robbert-Jan Poerstamper. Herman Sixma is a senior researcher at the Netherlands Institute for Health Services Research (NIVEL) and an expert on quality of care research. Robbert-Jan Poerstamper is partner and senior consultant of Pricewaterhouse-Coopers and an expert in benchmarking studies in the health care sector