

Community Care: Understanding the system in Germany

This country profile assesses community care in Germany including key initiatives, best practices and challenges. This profile understands community care as all care outside of hospitals, including in-centres, primary and residential care.

MedTech Europe's Community Care group calls for better patient outcomes and more attention to the community setting. For more information visit www.medtecheurope.org

Health spending

11,1%
Of country's
GDP

2nd
Highest in
G7 countries

Health system

58%
Statutory health
insurance (SHI) financed

12.5%
Out-of-pocket
payments

Strengthening long term care

Annual €5bn
Spending in Long Term
Care Insurance

Strengthening integrated care

To reinforce cross-sectoral care delivery in Germany, the GKV Modernisation Act laid out new foundations to strengthen integrated care and bridge the gap between inpatient and outpatient care. Since 2015, a number of initiatives and policies seek to stimulate innovative forms of care.

Contract Design

Has been restructured to offer an opportunity for outpatient and inpatient stakeholders to contract projects of integrated care. The aim is to strengthen the role of family doctor as a health care coordinator, and ensure reduction of unnecessary hospital visits for patients.

300 million €

Invested in the Innovation Fund, a tool adopted by the GKV Modernisation Act to promote integrated care through funded projects on a wide areas of diseases including **renal and chronic conditions**.

Programmes

Include coordinated care, primary care and e-health services for patients with chronic diseases and in need of long term care such as post-stroke care.



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Regional and country-wide initiative

Innovation Fund

The Federal Government has launched an innovation fund with an annual budget of €300 million from 2016 to 2019. The fund aims to promote improvements in the quality of care provided under the statutory health insurance system. Programs and projects funded under this fund relate to e-health and aim at ensuring that new forms of care are widened, overcoming the fragmentation of healthcare sectors.

Projects include telemedical support for emergency care, aftercare monitoring for patients who had kidney transplants, drug therapy and care management supported by digital apps. In March 2019, the governing parties of Germany have agreed to extend the innovation funding until 2021 with an annual budget of € 200 million.

119

projects in the field of new forms of care



171

projects in the field of healthcare research



Remaining gaps

Key challenges and remaining gaps

A shortage of qualified staff remains one of the biggest challenges in Germany today, with more than 35,000 nursing care vacancies throughout the country.

15,000 of these vacancies are in elderly care alone. To address this shortage, the Nursing Care Reform Act promulgated in 2017 offers a more generalist education for nurses in health, pediatric and elderly care.

Furthermore, the Act includes an immediate program of 13,000 additional jobs aimed at medical treatment care.

To ensure the right services for ambulatory care are provided, homecare companies offer medical technical aids and any other relevant services that contribute to community care.

The healthcare system lacks integrated care, due to a strong separation between ambulatory care and hospital care, as well as primary and specialist care.

The Digital Care Law (Digitales Versorgungsgesetz) is currently in the legislative pipeline and will have patients under public health insurance schemes able to use digital health and care solutions.

REFERENCES

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