

Conference abstract

Does integrated care lead to both improved service quality and lower care cost?

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Abstract

Purpose and context: ‘Gesundes Kinzigtal’ is one of the few population-based integrated care approaches in Germany, organising care across all health service sectors and indications. The management company and its contracting partners (the physicians’ network in the region and two statutory health insurers) strive to reach a higher quality of care at a lower overall cost as compared with the German standard. During its first two years of operation (2006–2007), the Kinzigtal project achieved surprisingly positive financial results compared with its reference value. To gain independent evidence on the quality aspects of the system, the management company and its partners provided a remarkable budget for its evaluation by independent scientific institutions.

Case description and data sources: We will present interim results of a population-based controlled cohort study. In this study, quality of care is checked by relying on health and service quality indicators that have been constructed from health insurers’ administrative data (claims data). Interim results are presented for the intervention region (Kinzigtal area) and the control region (the rest of Baden-Württemberg, i.e., Southwest Germany).

Preliminary conclusions and discussion: The evaluation of ‘Gesundes Kinzigtal’ is in full progress. Until now, there is no evidence that the surprisingly positive financial results of the Kinzigtal system have been achieved at the expense of care quality. Rather, Gesundes Kinzigtal Integrated Care seems to be about to increasingly realize comparative advantages regarding health service quality (in comparison to the control region).

Keywords

Gesundes Kinzigtal Integrated Care, quality of care indicators, cost of care/health services, population-based integrated care
