

# Prognostication and use of evidence in disability assessments

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## Faculty Disclosure

	No, nothing to disclose
x	Yes, please specify:

<i>Company Name</i>	<i>Honoraria/ Expenses</i>	<i>Consulting/ Advisory Board</i>	<i>Funded Research</i>	<i>Royalties/ Patent</i>	<i>Stock Options</i>	<i>Equity Position</i>	<i>Ownership/ Employee</i>	<i>Other (please specify)</i>
Academic Medical Center							x	
Dutch Institute for Employee Benefits Schemes (UWV)			x					



# Background

## Prognosis assessment / prognostication

- Core task for physicians performing disability assessments in the Netherlands and elsewhere
- Includes judgement of individuals health problem, functioning and capacity to work and

*make some prediction .... about the future*



## 2008 Survey (Kok 2008)

- Among 66 Dutch insurance physicians
- Prognostic questions are most prevalent of all health related questions by insurance physicians (IPs) (38%), followed by therapeutic questions (27%), etiological or diagnostic questions (both 17%) (Kok et al 2008)
- What do physicians do when they have a question?
  - ask their colleague for right answer (79%)
  - use a handbook (70%)
  - ask for advice during meeting with colleagues (45%)
  - search PubMed or other evidence (21%)

# 2013 Survey among Dutch Insurance Physicians

## Aim

To evaluate the role and challenges of prognostication including the use of evidence by insurance physicians.

## Design

Survey with quantitative & qualitative questions



# Survey 2013: Methods

- Survey distributed in 2013 among 196 physicians across Netherlands working for the Dutch Institute for Employee Benefits Schemes (UWV),
- including physicians who completed a EBM course in past 3 years or were still in training as insurance physician
- 94 /196 physicians returned questionnaire (48%)



# Survey: results

## Characteristics of physicians (n=94)

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Age, mean (SD)	45	(9.9)
Male, n (%)	51	(54%)
Years working as doctor, years (SD)	17.6	(9.6)
Years working as IP, years (SD)	11.4	(8.6)
Registered as IP, n (%)	57	(61%)
In training as IP, n (%)	37	(39%)
EBM training, n (%)	61	(65%)

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# Survey: quantitative results

## Importance of substantiating judgement and use of evidence

Important (0-10)	mean (SD)	Min-max
A How important is it for you to substantiate your prognosis judgement?	8.0 (1.2)	5-10
B How important is the use of evidence for you in your work?	7.7 (1.2)	3-10
A+B How important do you find the use of <u>evidence in substantiating your prognosis judgement?</u>	7.3 (1.3)	3-10





# Survey: qualitative results

## Experiences and views of IP on substantiating their prognosis judgement and role of evidence

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### Theme: Importance of substantiating judgements by using evidence

- Use evidence to inform my own judgement
- To minimise interdokter variation
- Importance of using guidelines
- Legal reasons

### Theme: Barriers in using prognostic evidence

- Translating evidence to individual
  - Difficult: role of coping, psychosocial factors
  - Perception/experience of lack of evidence
  - No time
  - No infrastructure to use evidence
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# Survey: quantitative results

## Assessment of prognosis difficult in clients with

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	n	%
Comorbidity	66	70
Vague complaints	52	55
Rare diseases	45	48
Psychological disorders	44	47
Cancer	19	20

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# Survey: qualitative data

## **Assessment of prognosis is also difficult if (*views physicians*)**

- treatment effects of interventions are unclear
- (effective) treatments have not been provided (yet)
- if disease is fluctuating: getting better- getting worse
- if case is complex
- in case of psycho-pathology: autism, ADHD, behavioural
- secondary gains / possible malingering



# Survey: qualitative data

## **Needs for support or tools in assessing prognosis: views by IPs**

Theme: need for more guidelines and research

Theme: need for support in specific situations

- translating evidence to individual clients
- classifying: “no recovery” vs “some recovery” in future
- assessment of coping, motivation

Theme: need for education

- (refresher) courses in EBM
- help in finding evidence

Theme: need for infrastructure, expert advice, and time

Theme: no need for further support

Theme: practical tool suggestions to support use of evidence

- prognosis guideline or tool: which steps to follow
  - internet site with information on course, prognostic factors, relation with work
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# Conclusions

- Substantiating the prognosis is important to physicians, including using evidence, for several reasons
- Using evidence to support the assessment of prognosis is difficult in specific situations and cases
- Physicians indicate a need for more prognostic evidence and practical tools to use in everyday practice to support *prognostic decision making*



## Follow up: new studies

- Follow up of this study: start august 2014
- Part of 5 year PhD project by insurance physician researcher
- Title “*Evidence based prognostication in insurance medicine: development and evaluation of a tool to support prognostic decision making*“
- Funded by Dutch Institute for Employee Benefits Schemes (UWV) under supervision of the Dutch Research Center for Insurance Medicine (KCVG)



Questions?

Share ideas / information on topic of prognostication in insurance medicine?

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