

PRiMHE

Programme in the Methods of Health Economics

“Update of the Dutch manual for costing studies in health care”

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Summary:

Objectives. Dutch health economic guidelines include a costing manual, which describes preferred research methodology for costing studies and reference prices to ensure high quality studies and comparability between study outcomes. The Dutch health economic guidelines have been updated and this paper describes the most important revisions of the costing manual compared to the previous version.

Methods. An online survey was sent out to potential users of the costing manual to identify additional aspects for improvement. The costing manual was aligned with contemporary health economic guidelines. All methodology sections and parameter values needed for costing studies, particularly reference prices, were updated. An expert panel of health economists was consulted several times during the review process. The revised manual was reviewed by two member of the expert panel and by reviewers of the Dutch health care institute.

Results. The majority of survey respondents was satisfied with the costing previous manual. Respondents asked for updated reference prices and improved methodological descriptions. Three categories of costs were distinguished: 1) costs within the health care sector; 2) patient and family costs; and 3) costs in other sectors. Methodological descriptions and reference prices were updated to reflect 2014 values. Upon request of survey respondents, reference prices for diagnostic procedures and nurse practitioners were included in the updated costing manual.

Conclusions. The update further increased feasibility of the costing manual to improve quality and comparability of costing studies in economic evaluations in health care.

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