Progress requires research and development. ZonMw funds health research and stimulates use of the knowledge developed to help improve health and health care.

ZonMw’s main commissioning organisations are the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport and the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research.

Being healthy

Everyone wants to be healthy and feel good. People who are ill want to get well soon. And people with chronic conditions want to be able to participate in society to the best of their ability. That is why it is important that we gather knowledge to help us prevent or deal with problems. What we want is good quality health care and satisfied clients at an affordable price to society, both now and in the future.

Challenges

Flu pandemics, an ageing population, new ‘epidemics’ such as depression, diabetes and obesity, problems in youth care services: society is constantly facing new challenges. These challenges are associated not only with ‘new’ diseases and problems, but also with the organisation of the whole range of care and assistance. How can we make sure that people receive the right assistance fast? How should we deal with ethical issues? How can we prevent people becoming ill or developing problems in the first place? And, not least: how can we head off impending staff shortages in the health care sector? Researchers continue to produce streams of new information on topics like the relationship between the brain and behaviour, and new techniques like stem cell research and gene therapy. How can we best apply all of this new knowledge in the day-to-day health care practice?

Answers

ZonMw ensures answers to questions like this, so that the health care and social welfare can innovate continuously. We fund research and encourage the application of new knowledge. We highlight problems, look for answers (both at home and abroad) and encourage policymakers and people working in health care and welfare services to use them. As such, ZonMw functions as an intermediary between policy, practice and research.

Funding innovation

ZonMw develops grant programmes on a wide range of subjects on behalf of the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), other government ministries and other clients (some of them in the private sector). As an independent organisation, ZonMw takes great care when awarding grants, applying clear procedure on which we communicate openly. We are aware that thorough procedures take time. By working effectively and efficiently, however, we cut processing times where possible, without losing sight of the need for careful and transparent procedure.

Quality and innovation

In selecting grant proposals, ZonMw always looks for a combination of innovation and quality. Innovation requires creative ideas that are developed and tested in accordance with the highest standards. Only then can we meet the complex challenges of today’s society, and provide clients with affordable, high-quality health care. ZonMw aims for the best possible result.

ZonMw encourages implementation

ZonMw is an intermediary between research, policy and practice. ZonMw provides grants for innovation and development. ZonMw ensures that new knowledge is brought into practice. The effects of new knowledge cannot be achieved by bringing them into practice. ZonMw is always looking to ensure that new knowledge is used. This is why ZonMw funds programmes such as the Innovation Network on Depression, the Dutch Research Organisation for Infection, and the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment.

ZonMw encourages research on new topics and in new areas. ZonMw is always looking for new knowledge to bring into practice. This is why ZonMw funds programmes such as the Innovation Network on Depression, the Dutch Research Organisation for Infection, and the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment.

This model is an aid to provide insight into the dynamics of the innovation and implementation process.

The Netherlands Organisation for Health Research and Development
Laan van Nieuw Oost-Indië 334
2593 CE The Hague
PO Box 93245
2509 AE The Hague
The Netherlands
Phone +31 (0)70 349 51 11
Fax +31 (0)70 349 51 00
info@zonmw.nl
www.zonmw.eu

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Using new knowledge

In our view, two things are necessary to improve health care: knowledge in itself, and the actual use of that knowledge. Often, it still takes too long for new insights to be applied in practice. ZonMw administers all kinds of grant programmes in support of the entire innovation cycle, from fundamental research to the implementation of new treatments, preventive interventions or improvements to the structure of health care. Because real change comes from developing, testing and applying new knowledge.

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