Monthly news from the German Medical Technology Association: BVMed, Reinhardtstrasse 29b, D-10117 Berlin
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Minister Spahn steps up the pace for e-health

Berlin. Compared with others, especially the US and Scandinavian countries, Germany lags behind when it comes to e-health solutions. Among the electronic health card, Minister of Health **Jens Spahn** wants to have smartphone apps as additional terminal points to securely access the healthcare data network. He wants to create the legal basis for it still this year. Besides, eight health industry associations recommend a "dialog platform for specifying the e-health target for Germany." More at **www.medinsight.de.**

Long-term care law will affect DRGs from 2019

Berlin. In August 2018, the Federal Cabinet decided on the draft law for the reinforcement of care staff. It is generally accepted that nursing care deserves greater appreciation, but this will have negative consequences for the hospitals' medtech costs. "The strict separation of nursing care costs from other types of costs in the future German DRG system will put a stop to any kind of economic incentive to invest in innovative technologies. At present, medtech costs can be compensated by shorter stays in hospitals and therefore lower nursing costs," BVMed said in a statement.

Chancellor Merkel: Staying ahead in the development of AI

Berlin. The German government is currently developing the key points for its artificial intelligence (AI) strategy, which will be passed in the autumn of 2018. It ought to establish a connection between scientists and the commercial AI applications.

New leadership trio for the G-BA committee

Berlin. The G-BA committee, the highest decision-making body of the joint self-government of the German healthcare system, has undertaken a restructuring and redefined the responsibilities of the three impartial members. The impartial chairman **Josef Hecken** will remain in office for another term. Furthermore, **Elisabeth Pott** and **Monika Lelgemann** took office as the new impartial members in early July 2018.

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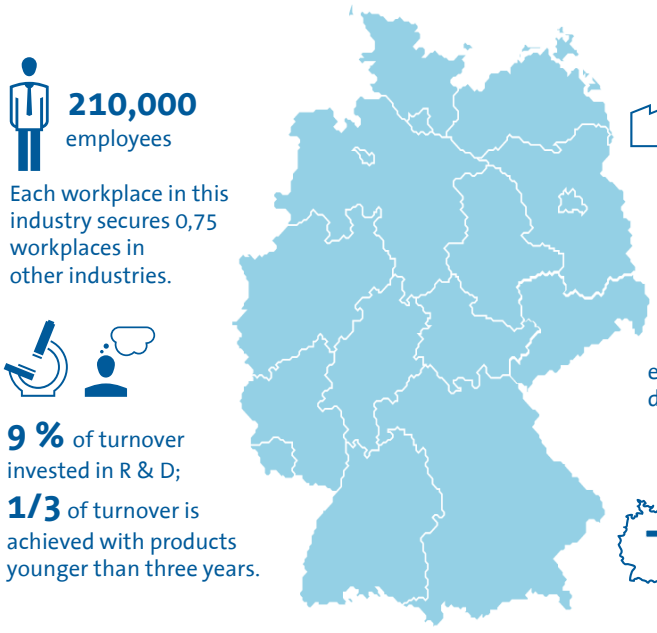
Will Josef Hecken open the doors to the G-BA?

Berlin. Professor **Josef Hecken**, the impartial chairman of the Federal Joint Committee (G-BA), no longer rules out the possibility that additional health professions will be included in the committee's structures. "We have to discuss whether the composition of the G-BA is still adequate," said Hecken on the occasion of the "Hauptstadtkongress" Conference in Berlin. He was not worried about discussions regarding the democratic legitimation of the highest body of joint self-government, said Mr. Hecken.
Before the 2018 summer break, the Ministry of Health had published three expert reports in this regard. The reports had been commissioned after the Federal Constitutional Court had raised doubts in November 2015.
BVMed also advocates greater transparency with regard to the decisions of the self-governing bodies. "All in all, this requires a more active involvement of patient associations, professional associations, the nursing sector, and the manufacturers in the decision-making processes of the self-governing body and its committees," says BVMed CEO **Joachim M. Schmitt**.
Read more at **www.medinsight.de**.

Discussions on European HTA continue

Berlin. Germany and France are calling for modifications to the planned centralized benefit assessment of new pharmaceuticals and medical technologies by the European Union (EU) as described in the proposal for a regulation on health technology assessment (EU HTA), published by the European Commission in January 2018. This emerges from a so-called non-paper, an unofficial working document that was agreed between the two countries in summer 2018. According to the document, Germany and France are pressing for not having to submit to a Europe-wide benefit assessment scheme and prefer being able to carry out their own assessments if necessary.
The European Commission's proposed regulation provides for HTA experts from the member states to work together in a coordination group to jointly assess whether or not a medical device provides additional benefits compared to standard therapy. The result shall be binding for all member states, which should no longer carry out individual clinical assessments, but remain in charge of pricing and reimbursement issues.
BVMed advocates removing medical technologies from the planned EU legislation on health technology assessment. The EU proposal does not contribute to increasing patient safety, said BVMed. More at **www.medinsight.de**.

Basic data of the German medtech industry 2017



210,000 employees

Each workplace in this industry secures 0,75 workplaces in other industries.

9 % of turnover invested in R & D;
1/3 of turnover is achieved with products younger than three years.

€ 29.9 bn gross value

€ 32 bn expenditures on medical devices in Germany

€ 19.05 bn export

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The German medtech industry has a total turnover of more than 29 billion euros and is a large job supplier with more than 200,000 employees.