Quality reports of hospitals now on the Internet

Berlin. Since the beginning of August it is possible to investigate online which hospital has specialized in the treatment of a certain condition, how often a hospital performs a certain kind of surgery or where the complication rate is particularly low. For the first time, sickness funds have published structured quality reports of hospitals on the internet at https://www.g-qb.de. Hospitals are legally bound to submit a structured quality report - for the first time in 2005 for the year 2004. The health insurance funds’ associations in turn must publish the complete and unaltered reports.

IQWiG presents first report schedules

Köln. The German Institute for Quality and Cost-Effectiveness in Healthcare (IQWiG) has presented so called report schedules for five different comprehensive scientific papers. These include, for example, the assessment of the medical benefits of vacuum sealing therapy for wounds or an evidence report on the ratio of the quantity of services rendered and the quality in PTCA (Percutaneous Transluminal Coronary Angioplasty - balloon dilation of coronary vessels). More at www.iqwig.de.

You may find more news in brief at www.bvmed.de (English version).

BVMed member companies report 2.9 % growth in turnover in the first half of the year

Berlin. In the first six months of 2005, the more than 200 industry and trade companies represented by BVMed experienced a slightly improved development in turnover. BVMed’s statistics of reported turnover show an increase of 2.9 per cent compared to the previous year. At the same time the year before, turnover growth had been reported at only 1.3 per cent, whereas there had still been an increase of 3.3 percent in 2003. Due to the weak growth rate in the first two quarters of 2004, which stemmed from the effects of the German health care reform, there can, however, be no question of significant stimulation yet, states BVMed.

Turnover growth in incontinence and ostomy care remains restrained. In this area, the poor result of 2004’s first term, which can be attributed to the effects of the health care reform, could be improved only slightly. In view of demographic trends and rising case numbers in incontinence and ostomy care, this development gives rise to the concern that the medical care of patients might suffer. The stipulation of nation-wide reference prices, which were then in various cases severely decreased, also caused significant insecurities.

Turnover in the categories “single-use surgical equipment” (plus 3.5 per cent) and “single-use devices in intensive care” (plus 3.2 per cent) developed slightly positive. According to BVMed, this is mainly based on volume growth. In BVMed’s view pressure on prices increased even further, which is, above all, due to budget restrictions on the hospital side and regulatory interventions in the medical technical aids market. Furthermore, rising distribution expenditures and increased raw material prices raise the costs for the companies. Thus, the profit situation of BVMed’s member companies remains strained. More at: www.bvmed.de (press releases).

MEDICA 2005: German DRGs in the spotlight

Berlin. By the time the 37th Medica exhibition and associated events get underway in November 2005, Germany’s hospitals will have had sufficient experiences with the new DRG system. 2005 is the first year of the convergence in which hospital budgets will be gradually aligned until 2009. The full effects on hospitals are still very much a grey area though, a fact borne out by the theme chosen for this year’s German hospitals federation’s (DKG) 28th annual congress “hospitals 2006 - closure or future growth?”. Many senior political and hospital representatives, as well as those from academia working within the 64 billion Euro German hospital sector are expected among an estimated 1,500 delegates during the three-day congress at the Dusseldorf exhibition centre. More at: www.dkgev.de or www.medica.de

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