Development and organization of a nation-wide headache treatment network in Germany



Göbel Hartmut, Heinze Axel, Heinze-Kuhn Katja, Petersen Inga, Nielson Anneke, Kiel Headache Centre, Kiel, Germany, www.schmerzklinik.de kiel@schmerzklinik.de

Aims: The traditional treatment of headache patients involves care in separate sectors of the healthcare system. Many sufferers with chronic headache, frustrated with this lack of efficiency, look for alternative treatments outside of the professional system. In the long-term, headache disorders are thereby maintained and aggravated. Severe organ complications then bring patients back to medical care. This results in a marked individual burden as well as very high direct and indirect costs to society.

Methods: Contrasting with the traditional model, a nationwide treatment network of medical specialists in both outpatient centres and hospitals was developed in Germany for the specialized treatment and coordinated care of headache disorders. The participating therapists treat according to current scientific guidelines. Outpatient, rehabilitation and inpatient therapy are harmonized and tightly coordinated. Patients are actively involved through information, education and self-help group.

Results: Across Germany, more than 452 regional pain therapists in outpatient centres and hospitals collaborate as part of a national treatment network. Local doctors can be found on the network's website. The network is used widely and increasingly. At present, almost all large German statutory health insurers participate in this treatment project. The cost effectiveness has been confirmed through analysis of direct and indirect costs.

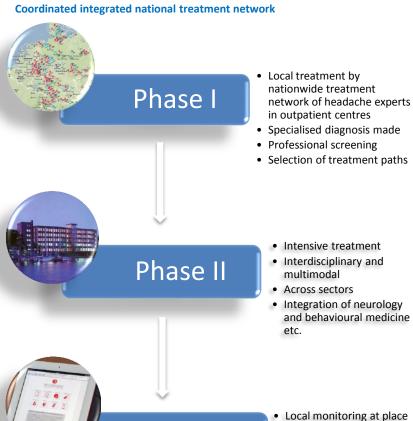
Conclusion: The development of this coordinated headache treatment network in Germany has progressed very successfully and is heavily utilized. With its introduction, the national landscape for specialized headache treatment has changed markedly. This confirms the innovation potential and effectiveness of modern headache care.

Correspondence:

Prof. Dr. Hartmut Göbel, Kiel Headache Centre
Heikendorfer Weg 9-27, D-24149 Kiel Email:
hg@schmerzklinik.de
Internet: www.schmerzklinik.de/aktuelles/

Traditional treatment





Phase III

- of residence
- Success control
- Adaptation, Education
- · E-Health, tele medicine