

HEALTH PROMOTION AND DISEASE PREVENTION A Handbook for Teachers, Researchers, Health Professionals and Decision Makers	
Title	Quality Improvement in Health Care and Health Promotion – Health Grants
Module: 5.15	ECTS: 0.25
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Key words	Health care, health promotion, health grants
Learning objectives	After completing this module students and public health professionals should have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased their understanding of how to arrange a competition of practice-oriented projects in health care • explored the similarities and differences between existing public offers of health grants and the selection procedures • an idea of how the selection procedure can be optimized • an idea of how an independent jury should be put together.
Synopsis (Abstract)	The public offer of health grants is a possibility to get an overview of project activities within a certain region. Innovative, economic and qualitative highly valued approaches can be made familiar to the general public by this procedure. If applicable, such problem-solving approaches can be taken over by other projects in a modified form. In so far the identified projects can serve for quality improvement in various fields of health care and health promotion.
Teaching methods	Teaching methods include lecture and intensive group discussion.
Specific recommendations for teacher	The module should be organized within 0.5 ECTS, out of which a third is the lecture and supervised group discussion. Two-thirds are individual work: searching the internet in order to find public offers of health grants in their own (and adjacent) countries.
Assessment of students	Written design of how to offer a health grant.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT IN HEALTH CARE AND HEALTH PROMOTION – HEALTH GRANTS

Jürgen Breckenkamp, Ulrich Laaser

Introduction

The public offer of health grants is a possibility to get an overview of project activities within a certain region. Innovative, economic and qualitative highly valued approaches can be made familiar to the general public by this procedure. If applicable, such problem-solving approaches can be taken over by other projects in a modified form. In so far the identified projects can serve for quality improvement in various fields of health care.

Based on accomplished inquiries further eight “Health Grants” could be identified, which can be compared with the awarding procedure of the North Rhine-Westphalian Health Grant. Beside the grants, which have been awarded since the mid- or end of the nineties, there also are relatively young grants, which have been offered since 2002. Half of the prizes are being offered regionally. With the other grants different potential applicant groups, such as organization units of local governments, which operate in the field of public health, or institutions insured at a professional (insurance) association, are being addressed.

Grants, which are concentrated on one working field of a professional group, such as the Physician-Right-Prize, were not the goal of the inquiry. Therefore, some of these grants will be shortly presented, just as an example for the multitude of public offered prizes.

The North Rhine-Westphalia Health Grant

In 1994 the Regional Health Conference (RHC) has made the decision to found the Project Association “Healthy North Rhine-Westphalia”. The content wise framework of the Project Association was determined by the WHO health goals for Europe and the health goals for North Rhine-Westphalia, for the first time formulated at the State Health Conference.

The Project Association Healthy North Rhine-Westphalia is embedded into the European network “Regions for Health”, in which origination the state North Rhine-Westphalia took a major part.

In annual announcements invitations are made to participate in the Project Association. The announcement is limited to North Rhine-Westphalia and therefore implies that projects which are active outside the regional borders, have at least a relevant part of the project work done in North Rhine-Westphalia or for the people of that region.

The Project Association should announce projects and project ideas, which stand out for innovative approaches, quality and also economic efficiency. The conceptional orientation, the announcing procedure and the procedure of selecting the projects for the Project Association was determined by members of the Regional Health Conference and the Preparing Committee of the RHC, respectively. The Project Association has been accompanied by the Preparing Committee of the RHC ever since.

The announcements for participating at the Project Association “Healthy North Rhine-Westphalia” take place at the annual turnover. The announcements consider projects with public health relevance. Here it is of no significance whether the applications come from institutions such as sickness funds, regional associations of statutory health insurance physicians, pension scheme holders or from private (registered) doctors or self-help groups. Projects considering basic medical research do not accord to the pre-determined objectives, and therefore will not be affiliated to the Project Association.

The admission to the Project Association takes place by a qualitative selection procedure.

Therefore, the Preparing Committee of the RHC hired a working group for project selection, which consists of members of the Preparing Committee, members of the ministry, and one external scientist. The more practical orientation of the work group guarantees, considering the practical orientation of the Project Association that the project ranging occurs considering the current economic and political developments.

Every application for affiliation to the Project Association NRW goes through a multi step process. The stocktaking of the submitted projects serves for the description of the spectra of applications. This means, that the number of applications is being analyzed which an institution (e.g. insurance companies) is presented with, and which organizations of the health-care system the announcement didn't reach at all or didn't reach enough. It is being analyzed, which topic fields (e.g. fighting cancer) the applications cover and if they regard to the 10 prior health goals for North Rhine-Westphalia. Since 1998, as an attachment to the - in respect of content - not limited so-called "General Announcement", the "Focus Announcement" was organized. It is being checked in how far the focus of the announcement matches the applications. Besides, it is being checked in how far the applications correspond to the formal guideline. Here, important aspects are completeness of the submitted papers, information about project-financing and realization-stage of the project plan. The realization stage means that, on one hand the realization of the project idea should already have been started and that the financings are secured. On the other hand a project character has to be recognizable and the described project mustn't be a part of the regular care.

In a second step, the hired work group makes a selection of the projects, based on health-scientific and health-political assessment. The results of the working group are being presented to the Preparing Committee of the State Health Conference. The committee decides about the affiliation to the Project Association and to whom the awards go. Since the Association's founding, the grant has been given out annually. Every year at the award ceremony the health minister of North Rhine-Westphalia gives out one or more first, second and third prizes. Besides the grant, the projects affiliated to the Project Association especially profit by the continual public relation of this association (1, 2, 3).

Initiated by a recipient of the NRW Health Grant project, the State Ministry of Health founded the Quality Forum of NRW and organized three events in 2003. Against the background of tight financial resources, the goal of the "Quality Forum in Health Care" is to establish a discussion forum which should present good examples from the practice ("from the practice – for the practice") and serves to make contacts on a certain professional level. The introducing event had been themed: "defining of position and perspectives", followed by two further events with the subjects "making quality transparent – quality reports" and "patient security and risk management". With the regular conducting of quality forums on regional levels, North Rhine-Westphalia has taken over leadership in the meantime. Comparable approaches for other regions could not be investigated. The "Hamburger Forum" organized in Hamburg by many institutions (among others, the General Medical Council of Hamburg, Department of Labor, Health and Social Issues of the free and hanseatic city Hamburg, the German organization for care professions, the regional association of Bremen, Hamburg, and Schleswig-Holstein), takes place on irregular basis every few years and can barely cope with the needs of a contemporary information exchange. (4, 5, 6, 7).

The Janssen-Cilag Future Grant

Since 1997 the Janssen-Cilag Future Grant has been given out in irregular periods. Unlike the NRW Health Grant projects can not apply but have to be proposed. In order to limit the number of proposals from the beginning, a checklist has been added to the papers for the Future Grant, which helps proving the proposal beforehand. But, not all of the criteria have to be fulfilled by the projects:

- “It concerns an institution, organization or individual, which positively stimulates the German health-care system by a project or idea and has rendered outstanding services to people.
- The project is no longer in the planning phase, yet has already been realized to some extent.
- The project promotes social thinking and is being quickly accepted by people concerned (social tolerance).
- The project financially makes sense; the cost-benefit relation is justifiable (economic practicability).
- The project also makes a general economical sense, as it increases the welfare in the affected area (people’s economical profit).
- The project can be well embedded into the existing social environment and contributes to the improvement of coexistence of people (social integration-ability).
- The project contributes to the establishment of German’s health care future (future potential)” (8).

There are seven jury members, which are named in the announcement. They check the submitted proposals according to the above-mentioned criteria. Patents and new products are excluded from the awards. Also projects which are still in the planning-phase are not being considered. To be considered the planned project has to be realized at least to some extent.

The Future Grant awards three projects with 5000 € each without the intention to range them as first, second, and third prize. The most important advantage of this grant is, as well as the advantage of the NRW Project Association and the NRW Health Grant, that the awarded projects become very well known (8).

The Bavarian Health Promotion and Prevention Grant

The Bavarian Health Grant is being offered by the State Agency for Health annually since 2002 for “realization of innovative ideas and for exemplary services in the field of health promotion and prevention” (9).

Individuals, institutions, initiatives, associations, firms and others can apply. Only one project can be submitted per institution/individual. The participation in the competition is limited to projects from the region of Bavaria.

Regarding to the content, the grant is oriented towards projects in following fields:

- projects “which occupy with health promotion and prevention, for example in the fields of ‘psychosocial health’ (e.g. mental health, welfare), ‘lifestyle’ (e.g. nutrition, exercise), or ‘areas of life’ (environment, arranging the living-space, e.g. in kindergartens, schools, firms, associations, communities),
- which were developed and realized in Bavaria,
- which were finished not longer than 18 month ago,
- which can be presented on posters” (9).

The excluding criteria arise from the above mentioned orientation of the health prize.

A working group is responsible for perusal and assessment of the projects and presents the projects to the jury. The jury, which consists of scientists and experts from ministries and different institutions of the health-care system elects the projects' order of precedence. The valuation criteria are "project originality", the "issue actuality", the "methodological realization" as well as "indications for a sustainable effect" of the project (9). Five projects are being awarded: the first-place project with 3000 €, and others with 2500 €, 2000 €, 1500 € and 1000 € (10).

The Berlin Health Grant

The Berlin Health Grant has been offered by the AOK sickness fund (AOK Federal Association, AOK Berlin) and the Berlin General Medical Council on a two-year cycle since 1995. The Berlin Health Grant awarding took place in 1995, 1998, 2000, and 2002.

The mottos of the announcements were:

1995 – Man is our measure (11)

1998 – Health goals – strategies for better health (12)

2000 – (Old) age and health – more quality by networked care (13, 14)

2002 – Quality offensive in medicine and care – mistake-avoiding and security-culture (15)

Allowed to participate at the competition are individuals and institutions, associations, self-help groups, people-initiatives etc. with projects from all over the state. All submitted projects take part in a multi-step selection process. A working group, called-up by the initiators is responsible for the evaluation of the applications (inspecting the completeness, proving if the previously given criteria are fulfilled). The results are being prepared for the constituted jury (16). The members of the jury are scientists, experts from different health services and political institutions. The valuation criteria depend on the announcement subject. For the announcement of 2002 (quality offensive in medicine and care – avoiding mistakes and safety culture) the judgment of the jury was made considering the following criteria:

- "documentation of mistakes and unwanted events, as well as their reasons are being presented,
- the measures to avoid mistakes and unwanted consequences are being described in detail,
- concrete results of measures are being presented,
- the approach can be applied to the daily routine of care,
- the measures have a reasonable cost-benefit relation,
- communication and cooperation. Mutual problem-discussion and goal-discussion are guaranteed,
- the project presentation is understandable and conclusive,
- the discoveries will be integrated in further education, which is in internal and external quality circle." (15).

The jury decides about the winners. The awards are 15.000 € for the first, 10.000 € for the second and 5.000 € for the third prize. Additionally up to 50.000 € go to special awards (17). The presentation of the award-winners in printed media indicates as well as in other health grants, that public relation besides the grant presents an important component of the awards (18, 19).

The Regional AOK-Health Grant

Since 1997 the AOK-Rhineland has been giving out the Regional Health Grants for the administrative districts of the cities Cologne and Düsseldorf. In this way 13 prizes are being given out. The awarding takes place every two years. It hasn't been decided yet if there will be further announcements because of the quantitative decrease in applicant numbers depending on small regional unities.

Predestinated for participating are self-help groups, associations for people with disabilities, kindergartens, schools, universities, educational-organizations, companies, environmental-groups, sport-associations, physicians, hospitals etc. (20, 21).

The content wise orientation of the announcements is health promotion. Here:

- “healthy nutrition, exercise, stress-handling,
- drug-prevention, drug-avoidance, medication-usage,
- accident-prevention, traffic-security”

are named as activity-fields as well as

- “self-help promotion,
- company-health promotion,
- (and) social and ecological environment” (20).

The first step is to get an overview of the submitted projects, which the professional service marketing does. The applications then are being prepared for the jury by the professional service. That means, missing documents are being requested and, if there are any lacks of clarity, necessary clarifications with the applicant are made.

The jury decides about the awarding. The jury gathers scientists, experts from institutions of health services, and presenters of communities, politics, media and celebrities.

As a rule, three grants are being given out. The first prize is 1000 €, the second prize 800 € and the third prize 700 €. But, the jury can turn away from this procedure (22). Beside the grants these projects profit by the presentation of their activities and reports about the awarding ceremony in the regional press.

The Hamburg Health Grant for Companies, Economy and Administration

In 2003 the Hamburg Work Group for Health Promotion offers the Hamburg Health Grant for Companies, Economy and Administration for the third time. The public offer of the award for health promotion in companies has been taking place in a two year cycle since 1999.

The explicit goal of Hamburg's Work Association for Health Promotion (German: HAG) is the “maintenance and promotion of the physical, mental and social well-being of the Hamburg citizens. Members of the HAG are sickness funds, companies, physician- and dentist-organizations, pharmacy-associations, health care institutions, state-institutional posts, welfare-associations, working groups, parent-, women-, pedagogic- and further associations.

Potential participators can already be diverted from the grant's name: The announcement addresses to all firms and companies as well as to the administration of Hamburg and neighborhood-districts.

For the selection of potential award-winners it is especially being considered:

- “that the status of health promotion in the whole company and not only individual health promotion measures are being considered,

- that already the way itself (and not only the achievement) of a health-promotional goal should be rewarded,
- and that a difference is made between company categories.” (23)

The selection of potential award-winners takes place in a two-step process. In the first step, the documents (application forms) submitted from companies and administrations are being evaluated. For the projects which have been included into the narrow choice, the members of the jury get further information directly from the companies/administrations. Afterwards the jury decides about the awarding. The grant is being given out by the Senator of Environment and Health.

The jury consists of experts from sickness funds, councils, scheme holders, unions and trade unions (24).

The jury considers the following criteria while evaluating the submitted applications:

- “Conceptional embodiment of the company’s health promotion in the entire company (among others: company-goals, eventually company-philosophy; integration and networking with other company capacities and organizations, e.g. health-protection at work).
- Structure and general conditions of a company’s health promotion (among others: central committee, employee-participation, information).
- Health data collecting (among others: hazard-analysis and -judgment, health reporting, quality management etc.).
- Measures of a company’s health promotion (among others: improvements of working environment and labor organization, qualifying etc.).
- Organization for supporting disadvantaged groups or problematic age-groups (among others: people with serious disabilities, adolescents).
- Offering prevention and support to health promoting behavior (among others: sports, care, smoking-addiction treatment etc.)” (23)

Three grants are being given out. The first prize is being awarded with 4000 €, the second with 3000 €, and the third with 2000 €. During the official awarding ceremony the winners are given a chance to present project work. As well the winners are allowed to use the logo of the Hamburg Health Grant as a quality stamp for their activities and for the presentation on memorandums.

The Quality Initiative Grant

The Quality Initiative, (formerly the Lower Saxony Association for Quality Promotion in Health Care) has been offering the Quality Initiative Grant annually since 2002.

Projects, which are for six month or longer in the realization stage and can potentially be taken over into regular care are allowed to apply. Projects, which are being considered for the Quality Initiative Grant are not allowed to have received any other prize.

Conditions for the application are structured by:

- “goal definition,
- project design (chosen method, project-plan),
- project realization - results,
- evaluation, cost-benefit-analysis, in a certain case advice for overtaking into regular care.” (25)

The jury consists of the executive committee of the Quality Initiative and another three members elected from the Initiative, and decides about the awarding. For choosing the grant winners the realization of a “coordinated cooperation of all institutions and professional groups, participating in the care process in a joined force for optimal quality” is the deciding criteria. Such an approach corresponds to the ideas and to the conception of the Quality Initiative, which sees as its duty “promoting creative, patient-oriented, interdisciplinary and inter-institutional approaches (25).

The Quality Initiative Grant awards with 5000 € and is given out during the general meeting (26).

The Quality Grant of the Academy for Public Health Service in Düsseldorf

The Quality Grant of the Academy for Public Health Service in Düsseldorf was given out for the first time in 2002. The public offer of the grant takes place every two years.

This grant-offer addresses to organizational units of a local government, “which carried out and established successful quality-assurance, quality-improving measures and procedures in the field of public health” (27). It is being expected that the projects:

- “present the measures or the procedure,
- document the practical realization and
- represent and evaluate the results.” (28)

A jury decides about the awarding. The jury consists of altogether 12 presenters from the quality-management field of holding regions of the Academy, as well as from the fields of science, practice and politics.

A condition for being awarded is that the projects describes measures and procedures,

- which pursues new methods in internal and external quality-management
- and, which “presents successful procedures which in its conception, realization and evaluation contributes to a professional and material quality gaining for public health.” (27)

The Quality Grant awards 5000 € and is being offered all over the country. Depending on the quality of the applications, one or more applicants are being awarded. The grant is being given out during the annual conference of the Academy. Additionally, the measures and procedures of the awarded projects are being included into the academy’s education-offer and the promotion of the spreading of measures and procedures in public health services.

The BGW Health Grant

The Professional (Insurance) Association for Health Service and Social Welfare (in German, the BGW) has been offering the BGW Health Grant in a two-year cycle since 2001. In 2003 the grant was given out for the second time.

The announcements address to organizations insured at the Association (BGW), “such as, sheltered workshops, workshops for persons at risk, homes for persons with disabilities, daycare centers for persons with disabilities” and “driving services for persons with disabilities” (29). According to this, the first announcement referred to geriatric care organizations and the second one to sheltered workshops. The third request addressed to hospitals. The Association (BGW) writes to every client-organization, so they would all have the same information.

The evaluation is based on a questionnaire form that needs to be completed. The questions are based on “the regulations of the ‘European Network for Company’s Health Promotion’, a cooperation-project with the World Health Organization (WHO)”, (29).

In this context the applicants are being asked about:

- the status of health care
 - in company policy,
 - in personal policy and at work organization,
- the planning stage of measures and available resources for measures,
- organization of health promotion,
- previous results,
- employee-participation.” (29)

The jury consists of two representatives from each, employers and the insured ones, from “the self administration of the Professional (Insurance) Association for Health Service and Social Welfare” (29) and rates the measures according to the practical realization and the embedment into a functional care system.

One institution is being rewarded for its work. The grant covers altogether 30.000 €. The money is to be spent for a specific purpose and can be invested into external consulting, for financing a pursuing project and for investments for the employees’ health promotion (19, 30,31).

Further Grants

Beside the already presented grants there are many further competitions. Yet, there are partially some more special conditions for these grants. A few will be mentioned below. There can be made no request to completeness and the named projects should rather be interpreted as examples.

Since 1992, the *Richard-Merten Grant* is being offered annually. Projects are addressed, which by their approach of using information technologies substantially improve “the quality of diagnosis, therapy, statistics or documentation in health care” (32).

The seven members of the board of trustees prove the submitted proposals considering the following four criteria:

- “The medical benefit for quality-assurance and -improvement of diagnosis and therapy.
- Proved originality and innovation in comparison to the state of affairs.
- Scientific benefit for health care in detail (hospital, practice) or health care in general.
- The possibility to realize proposals for health care in detail (hospital, practice) or health care in general.” (32)

Table no. 1: Health Grants

	The North Rhine-Westphalia Health Grant	The Jannsen-Cilag Future Grant	The Bavarian Health Promotion and Prevention Grant	The Berlin Health Grant	The Regional AOK-Health Grant	The Hamburg Health Grant for Companies, Economy and Administration	The Quality Initiative Grant	The Academy Grant for Public Health Service	BGW Health Grant
Announced since:	1994	1997	2002	1995	1997	1999	2002	2002	2000
Announcing cycle:	annually	irregularly	annually	every two years	every two years	every two years	annually	every two years	every two years
Announcements are planned in future:	yes	yes	yes	yes	open	yes	yes	yes	yes
Election of grant winners by a jury	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
The grant is being given out by:	The Minister of Health, Social issues, Women and Family	jury	jury	jury	jury	The Senator of Environment and Health	jury	jury	jury
The number of awards:	1st to 3rd award in certain case for several projects	three grants	1st to 5th award	1st to 3rd award, also special grants	1st to 3rd award	1st to 3rd award	one award	one award or several awards	one award
The grant amount altogether:	5.000,00 €	15.000,00 €	10.000,00 €	50.000,00 €	2.500,00 €	9.000,00 €	5.000,00 €	5.000,00 €	30.000,00 €
Indirect / direct public work for grant winners:	Awarding ceremony, Brochure of the Project Association Healthy Region NRW	Awarding ceremony, Brochure	Awarding ceremony, Posters	Awarding ceremony, Presentation of Grant winners in printed media	Awarding ceremony, Presentation of Grant winners in the regional press	Awarding ceremony, presentation during the awarding ceremony, logo of the Hamburg Health Grant	Awarding ceremony	Awarding ceremony, inclusion of project measures into education-offer, spreading of measures in public health service	Awarding ceremony the money is to be spent for a certain purpose

The Richard-Merten Grant awards altogether with 20 000 €.

The journal “Quality Management in Clinic and Practice” of the Frankfurt pmi-publisher has been giving out the *German Grant for Quality in Health Care* annually since 1996. Projects or institutions, which have been gaining exemplary achievements in quality management for a longer period of time are being proposed by the newspaper’s advisory board and experts in the field of quality management. Every member of the advisory board gives its opinion about the proposals. As a part of the German Quality Day in Health Care the award (a medal and a certificate) is being given out. Similar to all other grants the public recognition connected to the awarding is the most important aspect of the prize (33).

The *Young Scientist Award* of the German Stroke Foundation was announced for the first time in 2001, and given out in 2002. The goal of the prize was to award a young physician less than 35 years of age, who had done excellent work in the field of stroke research (prevention, epidemiology, treatment, diagnostic, patho-physiology). Projects on basic research in medicine have not been considered. The project was awarded with 5000 €. It is still not known whether the prize will be given out in future (34).

The Bertelsmann foundation gives out the *Carl Bertelsmann-Grant* on the annual turnover donating 150 000 €. The prize is being given out for innovative approaches in “central socio-political working fields”. In the year 2000, the Grant was dedicated to the theme “reforms in the health-care system”, in 2005 to “corporate culture and leadership behavior” (35) Strictly speaking this grant is not a health grand.

The German Heart Foundation awards with the annual promoting grant “Wilhelm P. Winterstein-Grant” for research work in the field of heart and circulatory diseases. Here a research close to the patient is of special importance. The Heinz Meise Grant is also being given out by the German Heart Foundation. This prize focuses on research work in the field of vascular diseases (36).

At the end of the nineties, the private health insurance companies in cooperation with a publisher were giving out the German Health Grant. In the meantime participating in the Health Grant has been stopped by private health insurance companies considering economic issues (37).

Exercise: Health grants

Task:

Students should search the internet in order to find public offers of health grants in their own (and a adjacent) countries. They should describe the target groups, rate the quality of the selection procedure and gauge the transferability to other areas of the health care system. Students should discuss the possibility of a public offer of a health grant by their own institution and the way of how to implement it.

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