

Wennberg International Collaborative

Spring Policy Meeting

April 14-16, 2016

Reducing avoidable variation in healthcare: a goal for regional strategies and actions

The *Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna* (<http://www.santannapisa.it>) hosted in sunny Pisa the Wennberg International Collaborative Spring Policy Meeting on April 14th and 15th, focusing on “Reducing avoidable variation in healthcare: a goal for regional strategies and actions”. The conference was organized by the Management and Health Laboratory directed by Professor Sabina Nuti, member of the WIC research team, in collaboration with the **Network of the Italian Regions** (composed of/comprising 12 Regions). These Regions, on the initiative of the MeS Laboratory, have been comparing their respective performance since 2008, both at the regional and Local Authority level, aiming at providing performance evaluation system based on the shared indicators.

Of the 95 participants who attended the Conference, many came from foreign countries such as Austria, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, South Korea, Netherlands, Norway, Peru, Romania, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States.

In the first day Prof. Sabina Nuti has introduced the topic of variation in the Italian context, reporting the most significant/relevant data coming from the research activity carried on by the MeS Laboratory. Two presentations have been devoted to the Italian scenario: Marina Davoli presented the *Evidence from the Italian National Outcome Program*, and Renato Botti of the Italian Ministry of Health has outlined present and future perspectives. The international comparison included contributions by David Goodman and Albert Mulley on the USA experience and by Gwyn Bevan on the *paradox of unwarranted variations in hospital admission rates in a Beveridge system*. Therese Stukel has presented *the experience of the Ontario Health Links: an organizational policy initiative that targets high need, high cost patients*, while Gaetan Lafortune had dealt with the topic of *How to reduce inappropriate use within OECD countries*. Dominik von Stillfried has shared experiences and challenges from the German health atlas project with special reference to changing roles of ambulatory and inpatient care and Zeynep Or has parlato about the French experience, in particular about The avoidable variation in the elderly healthcare. Philip Da Silva has presented *The power of variation - from policy to practice in a complex adaptive system*. From United States John Wennberg has taken part to the debate through a videoconference with a significant contribution on *Health Care Surveillance: connecting variation to policy makers, clinicians and patients*.

The second day was developed in three parallel sessions dealing with the topic of avoidable variation addressed through a clinical perspective. Twenty papers have been presented and discussed in these sessions.

The meeting contributed to the discussion and debate between experts on how to manage the variation within regional health systems: identifying tools and experiences that have proved to support managers and policy makers in reducing unwarranted variation and showing how the performance evaluation may be used to increase awareness of policy makers on the topic.

The slides of the meeting are now available following registration on the website <http://wic-policy-conference.santannapisa.it/>.

For all those who could not collect the paper version of the recently published Report “Evaluating the network healthcare system performance”, the pdf is available at the following link:

<http://www.meslab.sssup.it/en/index.php?page=report-network-2014-en>

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