Consumer-Directed Home Care in The Netherlands, England and Germany

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Introduction

• Key issue: Degree of consumer control.
• Agency directed vs. consumer-directed home care.
• Goals of consumer-directed care.
• Originated by younger people with disabilities.
Introduction (cont.)

- US: CA, MI, OR, WA, WI, and “cash and counseling demonstration.”
- Study of the Netherlands, Germany, and England.
Overview of Health and LTC

- Aging societies.
- Provide universal health care.
- Long-term care:
  - England: Largely means-tested system at local level.
  - Germany and the Netherlands: universal social insurance systems.
Home Care Benefit

- All three countries offer choice.
- Netherlands: “Personal budget.”
- England: “Direct payments.”
- Germany: Cash payment, 40-50% of service by disability category.
- Netherlands and England must spend on services; Germany has no restrictions; support family.
Administration

• Varies in extent to which client responsible.

• Netherlands and England: Complicated, designed to protect workers and prevent abuses; shift responsibility to client.

• Germany: Simple because few restrictions.
Beneficiaries

- Wide range of disabilities and ages.
- Netherlands: Growing rapidly due to supply constraints in system.
- England: Very small, but growing. Local authority reluctance.
- Germany: 3/4 of home care clients.
Informal Caregivers

- Role varies.
- Netherlands: Heavily family, including spouses and parents.
- England: Close relatives generally excluded.
- Germany: Most money for informal caregivers.
Cost Containment

- Way of reducing costs compared to agency care.
- Netherlands and England: Not pay for agency overhead.
- Germany: Cash is 40-50 percent of service benefit.
- On other hand, attractive benefit (especially cash) may increase use and total spending.
Quality Assurance

• Lacks traditional quality assurance mechanisms.
• All three countries have some external review, but minimal.
• Depend on consumer, market, and family.
Conclusions

- Consumer-directed care growing in all three countries.
- Elderly and severely disabled people participate in all three countries.
- Likely to play an increasingly important role as way of empowering people with disabilities.