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VERSORGUNGS FORSCHUNG

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Series (Part 38): Willy Robert Pitzer Institute for Health Services Research and Rehabilitation at the THM Faculty of Health in Giessen

‚Interlocking practice, science and teaching‘

The Willy Robert Pitzer Institute for Health Services Research and Rehabilitation was founded in 2022 with the establishment of the endowed professorship for Health Services Research and Rehabilitation at the Faculty of Health at the Technical University of Central Hesse (THM) in Giessen. The director of the institute is Prof Dr Susanne Hanefeld. In addition to filling the endowed professorship, she is also responsible for the Master's degree programme in Public Health, which focuses on the areas of healthcare research and rehabilitation. The founding father of the non-profit foundation is Willy Robert Pitzer, a pioneer in the German rehabilitation sector. The Willy Robert Pitzer Foundation, which is one of the largest foundations in the state of Hesse, has a strong scientific and medical focus.

>> The initiative to create an endowed professorship goes back to a joint project between the foundation and Prof Dr Henning Schneider, Dean of the Faculty of Health, at Studium Plus. The contracts were signed in 2016 and the official go-ahead was given at the beginning of 2022 with the establishment of the Institute for Health Services Research and Rehabilitation. Regular research and teaching work began with the appointment of academic staff. ‚The funding of the institute by the Willy Robert Pitzer Foundation gives us the opportunity to establish a contact point for healthcare research issues in Central Hesse, to pool expertise and thus to help shape and improve healthcare not only in Hesse, but also beyond the region,‘ says Prof. Dr Susanne Hanefeld.

Born in Marburg and with strong ties to her home region, the business economist with a doctorate has been responsible for healthcare management, healthcare research, empirical research and public health at the THM's Department of Health since the beginning of 2018, where she established the Master's in Public Health with a focus on healthcare research and rehabilitation ahead of the degree programme. Prior to this, she was a consultant in the



Prof. Dr. rer. pol. Susanne Hanefeld
holds the endowed professorship of Health Services Research and Rehabilitation and is Director of the Willy Robert Pitzer Institute for Health Services Research and Rehabilitation.

Academic career/stations
2003-2008 Studied business administration
2008-2014 Doctorate at the Chair of Marketing at the Philipps University of Marburg
2008-2014 Consulting projects in the healthcare sector
2014-2018 Responsible product manager for two international brands of HOPPE AG
2018-2019 Professor of Medical Management at THM
since 10/2019 Endowed Professorship for Health Services Research and Rehabilitation at THM
since 10/2020 Head of the Master's programme in Public Health at THM since 04/2022 Director of the Willy Robert Pitzer Institute for Health Services Research and Rehabilitation at THM

healthcare sector and a research associate in various strategy and evaluation projects at Philipps University Marburg.

After completing her doctorate in 2014, she pursued the goal of returning to research and teaching after a certain period of time. At the beginning of 2018, Prof Dr Susanne Hanefeld was then given the opportunity to take up a professorship in Medical Management at the Faculty of Health at the THM. ‚I was able to stay in my home region and pursue the profession and topics that I enjoy - a great stroke of luck,' says Hanefeld looking back.

Her personal goal is to ensure the quality of care for the population in the future. ‚I want to work towards fair access for all to sensible, innovative forms of care and thus make a contribution to the common good. I enjoy designing, analysing and evaluating, as well as engaging in critical discourse and rethinking established structures.' She would like to use all of this to ensure that the healthcare system in Germany continues to function and is affordable in the future and that ‚we also manage to integrate new possibilities'. However, she would also like to support young people on their path to being able to carry out precisely these activities in the future. ‚It is a great honour and pleasure for me to be able to train the shapers and leaders of our healthcare system of tomorrow, and I therefore attach great importance to dovetailing practice, science and teaching,' explains the professor.

The fact that the Faculty of Health has good visions for the future and wants to further develop relevant topics also spoke in favour of Giessen as a location: ‚This motivated me and resulted in the establishment of the Master's degree programme in Public Health with a focus on health services research and rehabilitation as part of my work as head of the degree programme in 2020 and the founding of the Willy Robert Pitzer Institute for Health Services Research and Rehabilitation.'

This endowed professorship is intended to contribute to securing future medical, nursing and rehabilitative care by developing and expanding sustainable care concepts that are sustainable under everyday conditions and thus offer added value for the population. The interlinking of health services research and rehabilitation, which characterises the endowed professorship, means that challenges that arise in the rehabilitative care of the population are particularly taken into account in the research activities. The Institute's practical activities and simultaneous teaching in the Master's programme in Public Health provide a very good opportunity to dovetail science, teaching and practice and to provide very realistic training.

With the improvement of existing care strategies by integrating digital developments and analyses based on data from the social insurance and healthcare systems, a broad range of topics in health services research is covered. In addition to a major healthcare research project on digitally supported outpatient medical rehabilitation for long/post-Covid syndrome, further cooperation projects are currently being pursued with stakeholders from the fields of psychiatry and geriatrics. ‚In addition to projects that focus on different medical specialities, our collaboration with public health service institutions enables us to carry out healthcare research projects on another level.'

In the still young history of the Willy Robert Pitzer Institute for Health Services Research and Rehabilitation, it is extremely noteworthy that the innovative health services research project AmRe-LoCO (digitally supported outpatient medical rehabilitation for LongCovid syndrome) was acquired, which is being funded by the Hessian Ministry for Social Affairs and Integration with a total project volume of around two million euros over a period of three years and was launched in September of this year. Cooperation with the district of Marburg-Biedenkopf and the Marburg health authority in the area of research and teaching with the aim of improving the health and care of the population has also been achieved, which is sure to result in many more exciting projects. >>



Jasmin Hüttl MSc, research assistant (intending to do a doctorate) at the Willy Robert Pitzer Institute for Health Services Research and Rehabilitation

>> Why do you work at the Willy Robert Pitzer Institute for Health Services Research and Rehabilitation?

The opportunity to work as a researcher in the field of health services research and rehabilitation already arose for me during my Master's degree in Public Health at the Technical University of Central Hesse in 2020.

I realised early on that the multifaceted nature of working in healthcare research offers a wide range of exciting topics for sustainably improving people's everyday lives by designing and implementing new, innovative healthcare approaches. In addition to supporting the founding process of the Willy Robert Pitzer Institute for Health Services Research and Rehabilitation, I am delighted that Prof Dr Hanefeld has given me the opportunity to deepen my work in health services research by taking up a doctoral project.

What do you think characterises the Willy Robert Pitzer Institute for Health Services Research and Rehabilitation?

Thematically, we cover a very wide range of issues, which means that we are able to work with many stakeholders from a wide variety of healthcare disciplines as part of our research activities. We are also a young and motivated team in which everyone can contribute their enthusiasm for different areas of interest.

What would you personally like to achieve with health services research?

I associate my work in health services

research with the opportunity to make my own personal contribution to better health care for people. Newly developed healthcare approaches can create added value for large groups of people and offer support and relief at a low level in the everyday life of individual patients, taking into account their personal needs and requirements. I find the proximity to medical issues particularly appealing and see it as a privilege to be able to contribute to the development of functioning care structures for the challenges of the future (demographic change, securing medical care in rural regions) in addition to the development of new care components for acute illnesses such as long/post-Covid syndrome. Working with experts from a wide range of professions always gives me the opportunity to gain exciting insights into other fields of activity, which I greatly appreciate. <<



Ann-Sophie Jacobs MSc, research assistant (intending to do a doctorate) at the Willy Robert Pitzer Institute for Health Services Research and Rehabilitation

>> Why do you work at the Willy Robert Pitzer Institute?

During my Master's degree in Public Health at the Faculty of Health at the Technische Hochschule Mittelhessen, which already focuses on health services research, I realised how extensive health services research is and how important it is in our healthcare system. After completing my Master's degree in 2022, Prof Dr Hanefeld gave me the opportunity to help establish the newly founded Institute for Health Services Research and Rehabilitation at the department from the very beginning. For me, this was a great opportunity to intensify my work in scientific research and now also to be able to do my doctorate at the institute.

What topics and issues are you currently working on?

We are currently working very intensively on topics relating to the clinical picture of long/post-Covid. At the moment, this involves concretising/shaping the conceptual content of the AmRe-LoCO healthcare research project. We are also actively involved in the expansion of geriatric care structures in the region and are constantly expanding our network and entering into collaborations in order to develop new care ideas and implement concepts with research colleagues and other stakeholders from other specialist areas.

What would you personally like to achieve with healthcare research?

I am convinced that we can make a valuable contribution to more needs-orientated care for the population with healthcare research. I think it is particularly essential to involve the stakeholders and, in particular, the patients concerned in the development and implementation of concept ideas in order to achieve improvements for those affected. I see great potential above all in the implementation of projects that start at an early stage of life in order to reduce undesirable developments at an early stage. <<

Completed Projekte

Hüttl, J., Hanefeld, S.: Bedarfsermittlung für Fort- und Weiterbildungen im Rahmen von Multiplikatorenkonzepten in der Gesundheitsförderung und Prävention im öffentlichen Sektor. Projekt 2020 abgeschlossen.

Jacobs, A. Hanefeld, S.: Die Auswirkungen der Kita-Eingangsuntersuchung und der damit verbundene Einsatz von Präventionsmanager:innen in der Landeshauptstadt Düsseldorf auf den kindlichen Spracherwerb: Ergebnisse einer Evaluationsstudie. Projekt 2020 abgeschlossen.

Jacobs, A. Hanefeld, S.: Methodische Evaluation einer PROM-Erhebung als Grundlage für ein Implementierungskonzept. Projekt 2022 abgeschlossen.

Selected Publications

Hoppe D, Hanefeld S. Bayes-Statistik im Kontext organisationaler Forschung – Anwendungsbeispiele (Teil 2). WiSt – Wirtschaftswissenschaftliches Studium. 2018; 47 (06): 4-11.

Hoppe D, Hanefeld S. Bayes-Statistik im Kontext organisationaler Forschung - eine Einführung (Teil 1). WiSt – Wirtschaftswissenschaftliches Studium. 2018; 47 (05): 16-23.

Hanefeld S, Hoppe D. Marketing-Instrument Chefarzt-Reputation. f&w führen und wirtschaften im Krankenhaus. 2017; (10): 920-923.

Hanefeld S, Lingenfelder M. Beeinflussen sich Stakeholder in der Reputationsbildung? – Eine Mehrebenenanalyse. marketing zfp. 2017; (04).

Hanefeld S. Übertragungsmechanismen von Reputation zwischen mehreren Bezugsgruppen – Empirische Untersuchung im Krankenhaus bei Einweisern und Patienten. 1. Aufl. Wiesbaden: Springer; 2015.

Willy Robert Pitzer

Willy Robert Pitzer was an architect by profession and began building a rehabilitation clinic consortium in the 1970s, which he eventually took over the management of. He bequeathed the majority of his estate to the non-profit Willy Robert Pitzer Foundation, which was established in 2001 and is now one of the largest foundations in the state of Hesse. With reference to the origins and life story of the founder, the foundation's funding focus is strongly characterised by science and medicine and primarily addresses projects and plans with a regional connection to the state of Hesse. With the establishment of an endowed professorship for healthcare research and rehabilitation, the Willy Robert Pitzer Institute for Healthcare Research and Rehabilitation was also founded in 2022 at the Technische Hochschule Mittelhessen in Giessen, which receives a large proportion of the foundation's income.

Every year, the Willy Robert Pitzer Foundation honours projects, institutions and individuals with the Erika Pitzer Prize and the Willy Pitzer Prize in recognition of their outstanding achievements and/or their dedication and exceptional commitment in the health, social and socio-political fields. The prize is awarded in memory of Mrs and Mr Pitzer, alternating by name.

The chairmanship of the Willy Robert Pitzer Foundation is held by former lawyer and notary Dr Helmut Häuser from Frankfurt am Main. In addition to his commitment to the common good and his work for the Willy Robert Pitzer Foundation, Dr Häuser is also involved in other foundations as well as cultural, sporting and scientific institutions.