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VERSORGUNGS FORSCHUNG

made in Jena



Series (Part 42): 'Quantitative Health Services Research' at the Institute of General Practice at the University Hospital Jena

'Reducing overuse is the focus of research'

A new Centre for Health Services Research (ZVF) has been established at the University Hospital Jena (UKJ), which bundles the expertise in health services research at the UKJ. Embedded in the centre is the professorship for Quantitative Health Services Research, which has been held by Prof. Dr Verena Vogt since 1 June 2023. Prof Vogt heads the research area Quantitative Health Services Research, which MVF presents in this instalment of the series 'Health Services Research made in ...'. The research area is based at the Institute of General Practice at the UKJ, which is headed by Prof Dr Jutta Bleidorn.

>> The ZVF, headed by Prof. Jutta Bleidorn (spokesperson) and Prof. Verena Vogt (co-spokesperson), aims to pool expertise and promote interdisciplinary cooperation, develop young scientists and answer healthcare-related questions.

The professorship for healthcare research was filled for the first time by Prof Christian Vollmar, who has been Head of the Department of General Medicine at Ruhr-Universität Bochum since 2018. The professorship was re-advertised in 2021 and has been held by Prof. Dr Verena Vogt since 1 June 2023. The research areaQuantitative Health Services Research works closely with the working group for routine data analyses led by PD Dr rer. Pl./habil. med. Antje Freytag, which is also based at the Institute of General Practice. Both groups work closely together to describe, analyse and improve care.

The team focuses on the following research areas:

1. healthcare in a regional context: we investigate how the socio-cultural and structural characteristics of a region influence healthcare provision and how they influence the quality of healthcare.has held the professorship in Quantitative Health Services Research since



Prof. Dr. Verena Vogt
hat seit 2023 die Professur Quantitative Versorgungsforschung inne und ist Co-Sprecherin des Zentrums Versorgungsforschung am Universitätsklinikum Jena.

Academic career/stations:

- 2020-2023: Junior professor (W1) for health services research and quality management in the outpatient sector, Technische Universität Berlin
- 2012-2019: Research assistant at the Department of Healthcare Management, Technische Universität Berlin
- 2017: Visiting Scholar at the Menzies Centre for Health Policy at the University of Sydney
- 2012-2017: Doctor of Public Health, Technical University of Berlin
- 2006-2011: Public Health studies (BSc and MSc) at the University of Bielefeld and the University of Sheffielld

2023 and is co-spokesperson of the Centre for Health Services Research at Jena University Hospital.
2. measure and avoid overuse: We analyse how frequently overprovision occurs in the German healthcare system, identify needs for action and develop strategies to reduce inappropriate medical services.
3. classify and visualise care pathways and processes: We research who receives what medical care when and where by classifying and analysing care pathways to better understand the care situation.
4. evaluate complex care interventions: We follow complex care interventions from needs analysis to evaluation and focus on how these projects can be sustainably integrated into practice, particularly with the aim of reducing overuse and addressing regional challenges.

In order to be able to work on these key research areas, data science methods are used to analyse large amounts of data, particularly SHI routine data, and to describe the provision of care. Verena Vogt explains: 'For example, we use bioinformatics techniques and genome sequence analyses to classify and map care pathways.' As the research questions addressed in the 'Quantitative Health Services Research' research area generally transcend the boundaries of individual disciplines, expertise from medicine, sociology, psychology and economics is combined with methodological knowledge from epidemiology, mathematics, econometrics and statistics in order to do justice to the associated complexity of health services research.

Verena Vogt acquired her scientific tools on her way into health services research. This began with her Bachelor's degree in Health Communication and Master's degree in Public Health at Bielefeld University and the University of Sheffield. However, she discovered her true fascination for the healthcare system and healthcare research during her time as a research assistant at the Department of Healthcare Management at TU Berlin under Prof Busse (see MVF 02/2019). 'I was particularly attracted by the practical relevance of health services research. In addition, in healthcare research I can live out my passion for statistical analysis, especially of large amounts of data, and at the same time gain relevant insights into healthcare,' continues Verena Vogt.

In the end, she was offered a professorship in Quantitative Health Services Research in Jena, which she believes fits her research profile and personal interests perfectly. However, the connection to the Institute of General Practice and the University Hospital Jena (UKJ) as well as the very cooperative environment were also decisive factors, as Verena Vogt considers the proximity to healthcare and clinical practice to be invaluable in healthcare research. According to her, the family-friendly city of Jena with its beautiful countryside and excellent daycare and primary school facilities also played a major role in her decision.

The 'Quantitative Health Services Research Department' is still very young at the UKJ. Nevertheless, great successes have already been achieved in the first year since the professorship was filled. Among other things, several third-party funded projects have been acquired, collaborations with university and non-university partners in Thuringia have been established and courses on the topic of healthcare research have been successfully introduced at the UKJ. Verena Vogt: 'Our symposium for healthcare research on the topic of 'Too much here and too little there - overprovision in times of structural underprovision' was a successful start. We were able to raise the profile of healthcare research at our location with a high-ranking group of participants from politics, science and clinical practice.'

Prof Dr Verena Vogt's long-term goal is to use her research to helpimprove the framework conditions for healthcare in Germany. For her, this means indirectly describing the care situation, identifying possible deficits and potential for improvement and - where possible - also researching the causes in order to develop scientifically sound measures that address these deficits. 'A particular vision for me is to drive forward research into the issue of overuse. I am concerned with the question of why we invest so many financial and human resources in international comparison, but still perform relatively poorly in terms of quality of outcome indicators,' says Verena Vogt, explaining her own motivation. In her opinion, reducing overprovision is essential to ensure the sustainability of our healthcare system. She wants to contribute to this with her research work. <<

Link

* https://www.uniklinikum-jena.de/versorgungsforschung



Richard Schmidt,
research associate

>> Why do you work in the field of quantitative health services research?

During my medical studies and subsequent work as a doctor, I regularly encountered healthcare shortcomings. As a research associate in the field of quantitative health services research, I enjoy being able to use analyses and their results to paint a precise picture of

health services and make a concrete contribution to their sustainable improvement.

What do you think characterises this area of research?

Quantitative healthcare research is characterised by its interdisciplinary nature and the use of data science methods from a wide variety of backgrounds. It brings together expertise from medicine, social sciences and economics, as well as statistics and computer science, in order to comprehensively analyse complex issues. Ever larger and higher quality data sets present us with new challenges, but above all offer the opportunity to gain well-founded insights into care processes. The analyses developed and their results often have the potential to be translated directly into care.

What topics and issues are you currently working on?

I am currently analysing healthcare-related data, in particular SHI routine data, in order to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of diagnostic and treatment processes. My topics include analysing regional differences in healthcare provision and evaluating diagnosis and treatment concepts in Thuringia. I also analyse longitudinal care processes and the use of healthcare services using methods from the field of (bio)informatics.

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

With my work in healthcare research, I would like to make a personal contribution to changing healthcare in a sustainable way and orienting it towards the well-being of patients. My aim is to draw a realistic picture of existing care structures and improve the quality of medical care by analysing them in an unbiased, data-focused way. I want to present care processes in an understandable way and develop innovative care concepts to enable improvements for everyone involved in the care process. <<



Meik Hildebrandt MSc, research assistant (with the intention of doing a doctorate)

>> Why do you work in the field of quantitative health services research?

During my Master's degree in Business Mathematics at the TU Berlin, I worked as a student assistant at the Department of Healthcare Management. The IndiQ innovation fund project brought me into contact with quantitative health services research and Prof Vogt for the first time. The experience motivated me to take further health economics modules and ultimately to research healthcare provision in detail as a research assistant, first in Berlin and since 2024 also in Jena.

In your opinion, what characterises the research area of quantitative health services research?

Quantitative health services research answers qualitative questions through concrete numerical results. With the help of descriptive and statistical methods, we want to measure the reality of healthcare in a well-founded way. The research area is characterised by the systematic collection and analysis of data, which we use to make efficiency, quality and results visible, with the aim of being able to derive health policy action requirements and corresponding recommendations.

What topics and issues are you currently working on?

At the moment, I am mainly working on completing the analyses in theIndiQ innovation fund project.This involves measuring indication quality in SHI routine data and deriving findings regarding the causes and distribution of overuse. In addition to the ongoing project work, I am also involved in the planning and implementation of future projects and new plans. These include the follow-up project DIAMANT, which aims to establish measures to reduce inappropriate thyroid diagnostics.

What would you personally like to achieve with healthcare research?

With evidence-based healthcare research, I personally want to ensure that healthcare in Germany becomes more efficient and remains sustainable without having to accept restrictions in the provision and quality of care. Through my work, I hope to help ensure that existing resources are optimally utilised and that innovative approaches continuously improve care. <<

MVF series 'Health services research made in ...'

Starting with the first instalment in 2016, when 'Monitor Versorgungsforschung' visited Greifswald to present the Institute for Community Medicine, this issue focuses on 42 very different locations.

What they all have in common is that they harmonise research and teaching and put a lot of passion and impetus into what health services research is really all about: the honest endeavour to improve people's lives and health care a little.

All previous episodes of the series can be found here: https://www.monitor-versorgungsforschung.de/cooperations/vf-serie/

If you think that MVF should also feature your department, institute or centre for good reason, please email stegmaier@m-vf.de