

France – So close and yet so far?

Matthias Brunn, MD, PHD

Sciences Po Paris

Berlin, 19 May 2022

The paradox

- France: underrepresented in discussions
- Little workforce exchange with Germany
- BUT vivid patient traffic in border regions
- AND political commitment to close friendship

Key features of the health system

- Social health insurance of Bismarckian tradition
 - Increasingly tax funded
- Public hospitals with salaried doctors
 - Long length of stay
- Many specialists in ambulatory care

Two worlds of service delivery



<https://www.jeunesmedecins.fr/>



www.f1online.de/4784602

Key political differences with Germany

- Hospitals: focus on equality, not competition
- Macro-economics and structural funding: crisis
 - Blockage of hospital salaries for many years

Overall trends since 2010

- Move away from DRG and fee-for-service payments
- Medical “deserts”
 - Urban-rural divide = political issue
 - Empower regional health agencies
 - Soft-mergers of hospital in given area
 - Nudge ambulatory physicians towards cooperation

Selected reforms

- Medical homes (= MVZ)
 - Since 10 years, currently about 1500
 - Encourage registration with a physician
- Article 51 (since 2018): €500 Millions for innovative service delivery and financing, evaluation ongoing
- Proximity hospitals
 - First-line clinical hospital medicine, ER (no surgery)
 - Specialty consultations (complementary)
 - Support facilities (imaging, lab, etc.)
 - Can opt out of DRG system into historical budget scheme

Sainte-Ménéhould, East-France

- 4000 inhabitants, 6000 in wider catchment area
- Hospital first mentioned in 488 AD
- Today:
 - Wards: Acute Medicine, Geriatrics, Dementia
 - Rehabilitation, Nursing home
 - Pharmacy open to public
 - Imaging including ultrasound
 - Consultations in cardiology, dermatology, diabetes, ...



A word about digitalization

- France is not a frontrunner
- But high potential due to immense and centralized health insurance data base

Conclusions

- Emphasis on straightforward service delivery re-design
- Alternatives to DRG-system as an incentive to secure rural healthcare offer and aggregate providers
- A scenario for Germany within 10 years?

Merci !

matthias.brunn@sciencespo.fr

