



The Quality-saving Function of the Federal Joint Committee (G-BA) in the Federal Insurance System of Germany – an Example for Europe?

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Speaker: Dr. jur. Rainer Hess, G-BA

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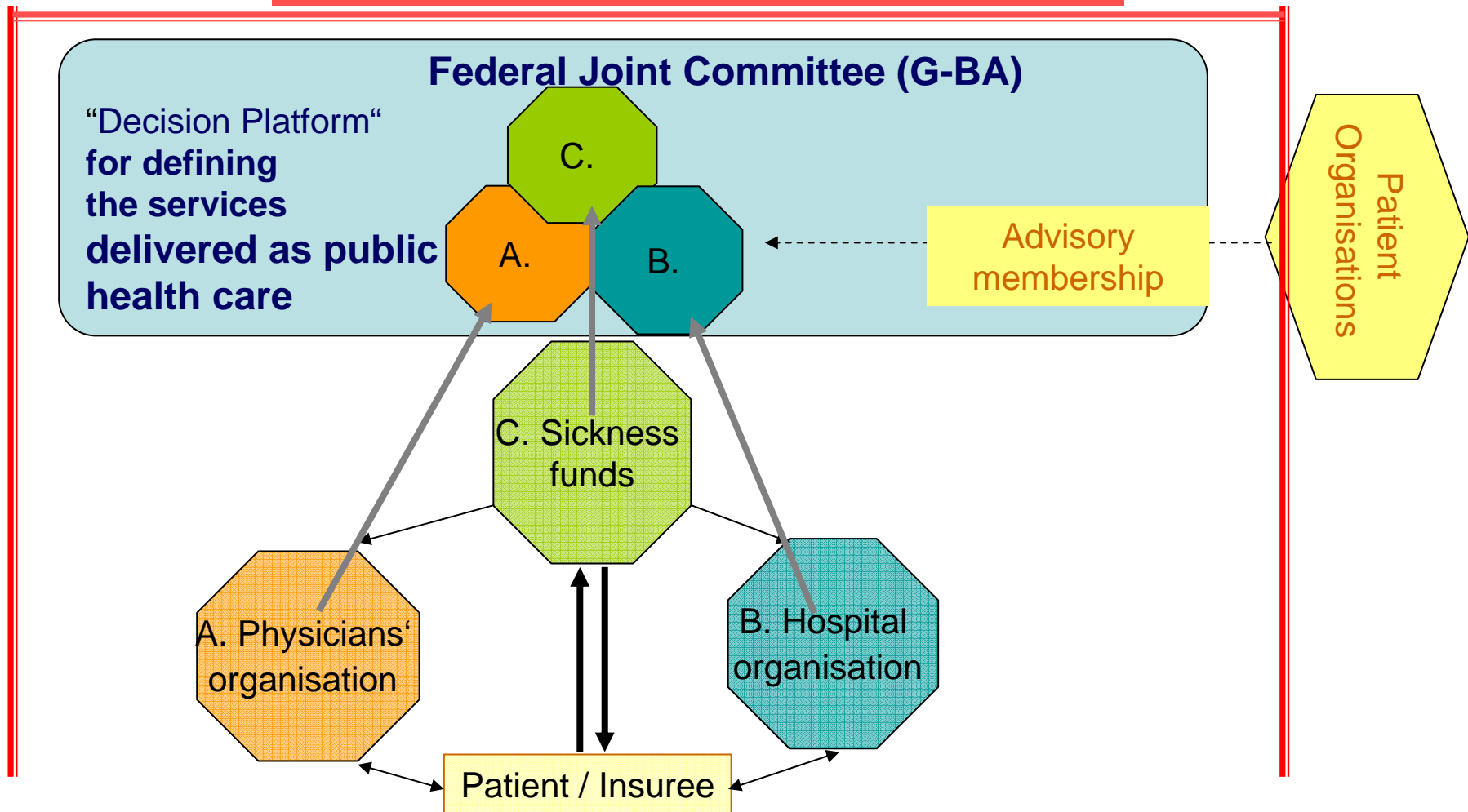
Structure of the health care system and the G-BA

Framework for health care:

- **Legislation** established by the parliament
- **Decrees** issued by the Ministry of Health
- **Directives** issued by the G-BA under supervision of the ministry
- **Contracts** between self-governing organisations under supervision of the ministry

Function of the Federal Joint Committee

Legal Framework for Health Care, set by law and the **Ministry of Health**



G-BA - legal consequences:

- G-BA is authorised by law to issue directives which are binding on sickness funds, the insured population, panel physicians and hospitals
- Where involved as a “third-party”, industry must accept reduced profitability in their market position, if the directive is in accordance with the standard of medical science (according to ebm criteria)
- Directives can reduce or exclude sickness fund benefits if the assessment does not prove medical necessity and efficiency
- Directives can define requirements for the qualifications of providers and the structure of delivery of services
- Directives are under the legal supervision of the ministry

G-BA – the federal regulatory body defining benefits and quality requirements by directives:

- Evidence-based health care: assessment of the efficacy, effectiveness and efficiency of medical services, drugs and devices in relation to patient-related objectives
- Cost/benefit comparison of equal / comparable services and products to define efficiency
- Strong quality initiative: quality management, quality assurance and quality reports combined with patient information to achieve transparency and to improve structure, process and outcome
- The IQWiG as scientific institute to provide evidence-based technology assessments on behalf of the G-BA

Health goals for patient right of self-determination:

- increase transparency
- develop empowerment
- strengthen patient-rights
- improve complaint management

➤ www.gesundheitsziele.de

Increase transparency:

- Transparency of decisions
- Information system for patients
 - about the efficiency of benefits
 - about the quality of providers
- device provided by the sickness funds, physicians' organisations, consumers' organisations
 - www.g-ba.de, www.iqwig.de



Develop empowerment:

- Direct participation in the meetings of the G-BA, its subcommittees and working groups
- Appropriate representation provided by representatives of self-help groups, consumer and patient organisations
- Equality in status without right to vote on the final decision
- Right to put topics on the agenda and to demand a vote



Strengthen patient rights:

- Obligation for the G-BA to justify decisions
- Legal supervision by the ministry
- Beyond the participation rights in the G-BA:
patients have the right to sue for reimbursement/coverage
by the sickness funds
- Legal right to bring in comments in the assessment
procedure of the IQWiG



Improve complaint management:

- Patient ombudsman appointed by Parliament
- Special bodies established by the sickness funds to advise on complaints
- Expert groups or arbitration boards established by the chambers of physicians