Five more years of healthy living for everyone

Coalition Health & Care tackles five Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport missions

A diverse societal coalition of citizens, companies, researchers and government will engage with our health. Together with prevention and care professionals, they will work on a new approach for health and care so that by 2040 we will enjoy five more years of healthy life. In doing so, the aim is to reduce the socioeconomic health differences that have proved so difficult to manage up until now by 30%. That is the central mission for the societal theme health and care developed by the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport for the Dutch cabinet’s mission-driven top sectors and innovation policy.

This ambitious central mission and the four underlying missions can only be realised if results are achieved in a range of areas in the coming years. A brief overview of where the Netherlands stands in 2019 and a glance ahead to 2023.

The Dutch health and care system faces various challenges. The number of people with a chronic condition will increase while the Dutch population will further age. Without a change in policy, we will experience an even greater lack of people and resources. In the coming years, a public-private coalition drawn from across society will work on a change of policy and practice that will also lead to economic opportunities. This will be realised on the basis of five inspiring, ambitious missions formulated by the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport and its partners.
Matryoshka model
The central mission and the four underlying missions jointly form a whole, just like the famous Matryoshka dolls that fit inside each other (Figure 1). The first mission, which is aimed at prevention, creates the conditions for realising missions II, III and IV. Mission II is vital for missions III and IV, and so forth. That is also clear from the Knowledge and Innovation Agenda (KIA) 2020-2023 that is based on these missions and which was formulated under the responsibility of Top Sector Life Sciences & Health (LSH; Health~Holland) in the first half of 2019 by the growing public-private coalition.

Promising developments
The coalition has taken its societal responsibility and through the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport’s missions, the KIA and the subsequent Knowledge and Innovation Covenant (KIC), it offers Dutch society an optimistic proposition, while at the same time providing commercial opportunities.

Several promising developments form a golden thread through these documents. The strength of citizens, for example, who are increasingly deploying local prevention and care initiatives, such as those brought together in NLZVE; Netherlands Cares for Each Other. That strength will further increase in the coming years, now a growing group

The missions

Central mission
By 2040, all Dutch citizens will live at least five years longer in good health, while the health inequalities between the lowest and highest socioeconomic groups will have decreased by 30%.

Mission I: Lifestyle and living environment
By 2040, the burden of disease resulting from an unhealthy lifestyle and living environment will have decreased by 30%.

Mission II: Care in the right place
By 2030, the extent of care will be organised and provided to people 50% more (or more often) than present in one’s own living environment (instead of in healthcare institutions), together with the network around people.

Mission III: People with chronic diseases
By 2030, the proportion of people with a chronic disease or lifelong disability who can participate in society according to their wishes and capabilities will have increased by 25%.

Mission IV: People with dementia
By 2030, quality of life of people with dementia will have improved by 25%.

Figure 1: Coherence between missions.
Like a set of Matryoshka dolls, the central mission comprises each of the others. Mission I also encompasses the subsequent missions II, III and IV, and so on. Mission IV, focused on quality of life for people with dementia, is the most specific mission. To achieve this mission, we need answers to knowledge and innovation questions concerning the health and social participation of people with chronic diseases (mission III), organisation of health and care (mission II), lifestyle and living environment (mission I) and health inequalities (central mission).
of healthy and often well-educated Dutch people are reaching pensionable age. This informal workforce will assist to help make major changes possible. That will definitely be the case if the health and care coalition, regional formal prevention and care, and industry support the talents of individual citizens and collective initiatives with technologies and, when and where necessary, therapies (Figure 2).

Public-private partnership
The innovative strength of our public-private partnerships is another golden thread in the KIA and KIC. Dutch knowledge institutions (universities, universities of applied sciences, UMCs and other institutes) belong to the world top in various areas. The same is true for Dutch knowledge-driven companies, including SMEs. Top Sector LSH and its fellow top sectors have realised many public-private partnerships in recent years (Oncode Institute, RegMed XB, etc.). These have given rise to a future-savvy knowledge and innovation infrastructure. The technologies and therapies needed for the missions can be developed from out of the basis of this infrastructure and, through social innovation, be used by everybody. The intrasectoral and intersectoral collaboration will be further expanded to enable the shift to prevention and care in the living environment. The growing coalition therefore invests more than one billion euros per year in cash and in-kind. This commitment was ceremonially ratified by the coalition on 31 October 2019 in Utrecht.

Coherence in societal themes
The mission-driven top sectors and innovation policy refers to the major global challenges. These have been consolidated by the Dutch government in four societal themes (which jointly have 25 missions):
- Energy transition and sustainability
- Agriculture, water and food
- Health and care
- Security

Initially, these themes appear to have little in common, but the societal changes taking place in each of these subjects affects the entire society. Energy transition, agriculture and security are inextricably linked with efforts to make the living environment healthier and to organise care together with the citizen in his or her own living environment. Reducing the number of cars, for example, will not only help support climate objectives but also reduce the amount of particulate matter in the air, as a result of which the life expectancy in the regions will gradually increase. Cross-sector collaboration in the mobilisation and facilitation of the informal workforce is needed to realise all 25 missions in time. Further information about all of the missions can be found at: www.topsectoren.nl
Field labs (Grozzerdammen)
High-quality prevention and care in the Netherlands are important sources of knowledge and experience that are vital for realising these missions. Through education and continuing development, professionals will be prepared for prevention and care tasks in the living environment with citizens. Under the coordination of Top Sector LSH, the various efforts by public and private sectors in all of these areas will contribute to the realisation of the five missions. For example, field labs – called Grozzerdammen in Dutch – and illustration projects will be set up to give the innovations a tangible form and to act as a source of information and inspiration for everybody, nationally as well as internationally.

Curious to know more?
Curious to know more? The Mission document, Knowledge and Innovation Agenda 2020-2023 and Knowledge and Innovation Covenant 2020-2023 can be downloaded via: www.health-holland.com/publications