

De gezondheidszorguitgaven: determinanten en projecties

Nicole Fasquelle, Saskia Weemaes, Peter Willemé

nf@plan.be, sw@plan.be, pw@plan.be

ABSTRACT

Health care expenditures have risen considerably relative to GDP over the past decades in most industrialized countries, and Belgium is no exception to that rule. In this article we present a short overview of the models that are proposed in the scientific literature to explain this trend. The main conclusion from this literature study is that income and technology are the main drivers of increased health care spending, and to a lesser extent demographic ageing. We also present the models currently used at the Belgian Federal Planning Bureau to project future acute and long-term care expenditures. These models indicate a further increase of health care spending as a percentage of GDP over the coming decades, together with a rising share of long-term care spending in the total health care bill. This growing importance of long-term care can be attributed to the ageing of the population, which is expected to lead to growing numbers of (very) old people with functional limitations. The combination of the epidemiological/demographic and technological factors which could drive this evolution is explored in the final section of the paper.

Jel Classification – H51, H55, I18, J11

Keywords – Health care spending, demographic ageing, medical technological progress, epidemiology