

# Steering on Outcomes and Costs

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## Introduction

In 2023, we started the Linnean working group 'Steering on Outcomes and Costs' to help care organizations deliver the best possible care for patients, given challenging healthcare needs and limited resources. Typically, healthcare organizations deploy medical directors to steer on costs, whereas medical specialists focus on improving patient-relevant outcomes. We need to bridge these approaches, by enabling healthcare organizations to steer on patient value: patient-relevant outcomes in relation to their costs.

Our ultimate goal is to provide tools to assess patient value from an integrated care perspective, also taking into account primary care and society. As a first step, we focus on medical specialist care, and have three aims: 1) to assess what value-based health care (VBHC) can adopt from well-established methods such as cost-effectiveness analysis, 2) to identify other relevant methods in the literature for relating costs and outcomes, and 3) to examine (inter)national frontrunners that steer on outcomes and costs in daily clinical practice.

## Methods

By participating in monthly meetings, 16 experts in the field (a patient, care providers, managers, researchers and an insurance expert) combined their experiences and knowledge with a comprehensive literature search to identify ongoing (inter)national initiatives. We assimilated our findings into a whitepaper, which was shared for consultation with a group of 20+ independent (inter)national experts. The contents of the whitepaper and feedback were distilled into a roadmap and presented in a webcast.

## Results

The roadmap guides healthcare organizations in managing patient value in daily practice through seven steps: 1) Select a care pathway based on expert criteria, such as the potential for value improvement and the impact of the disease; 2) Assemble a multidisciplinary team consisting of patients, healthcare professionals, IT, data professionals, and managers. Appoint both a medical and operational leader; 3) Gain insight into the health outcomes and costs associated with your selected care pathway 4) Design a dashboard to display measured outcomes and costs. 5) Decide on what method to use to connect outcomes to costs. This can be divided in: a) a two-dimensional approach that displays outcomes and costs in a matrix, or b) the estimation of value in a single number, using for example Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (also see figure 2); 6) Decide on a threshold for which additional outcomes are worth the additional costs and use this threshold to compare, for example, improvement initiatives; 7) Steer on patient value and share lessons-learned with other healthcare organizations.

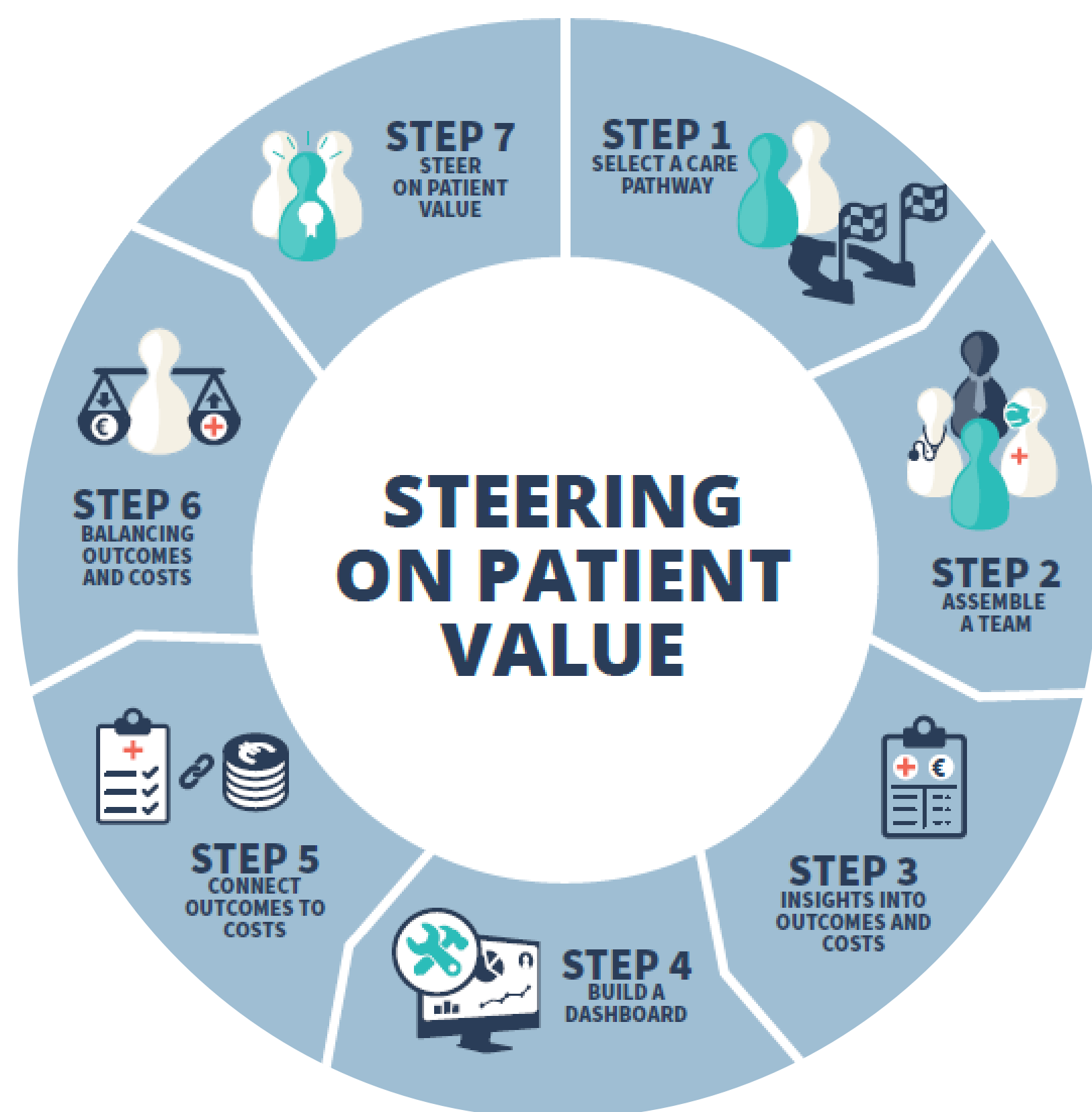


Figure 1. Expert roadmap: In 7 steps to steering on patient value

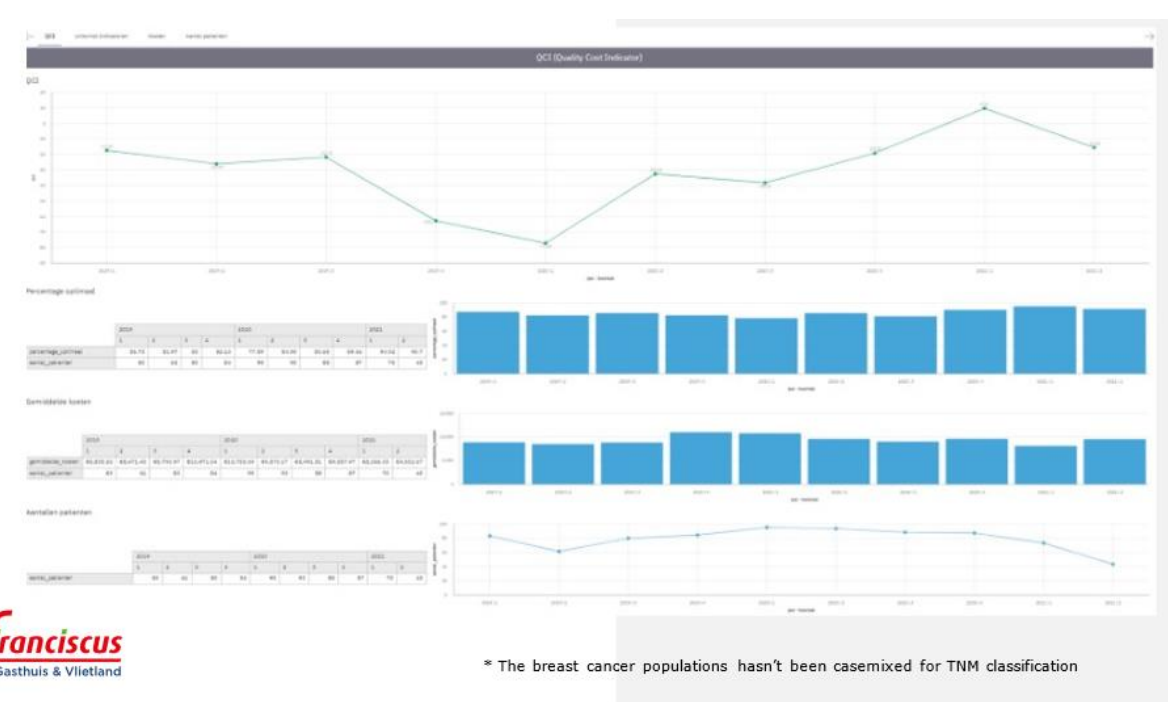
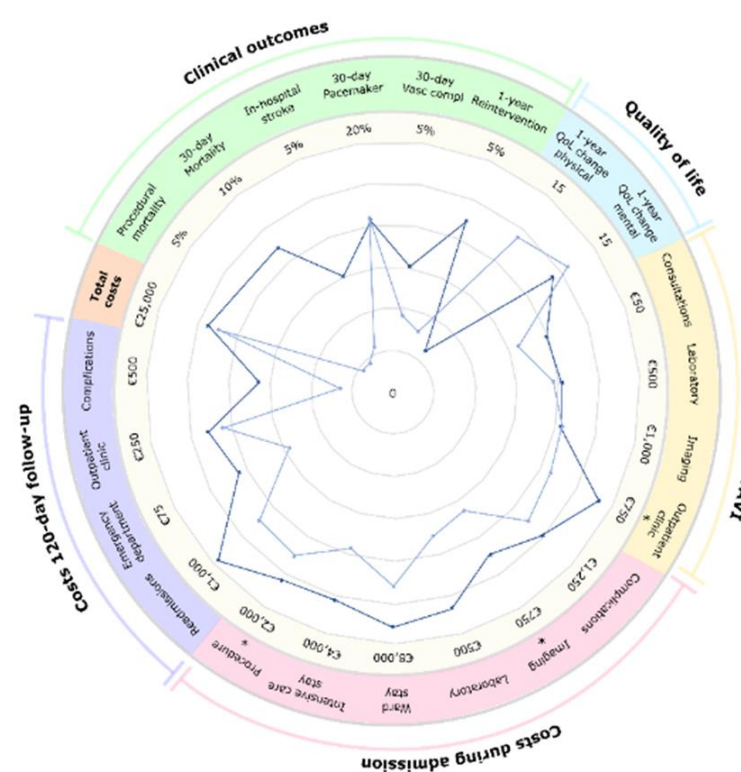
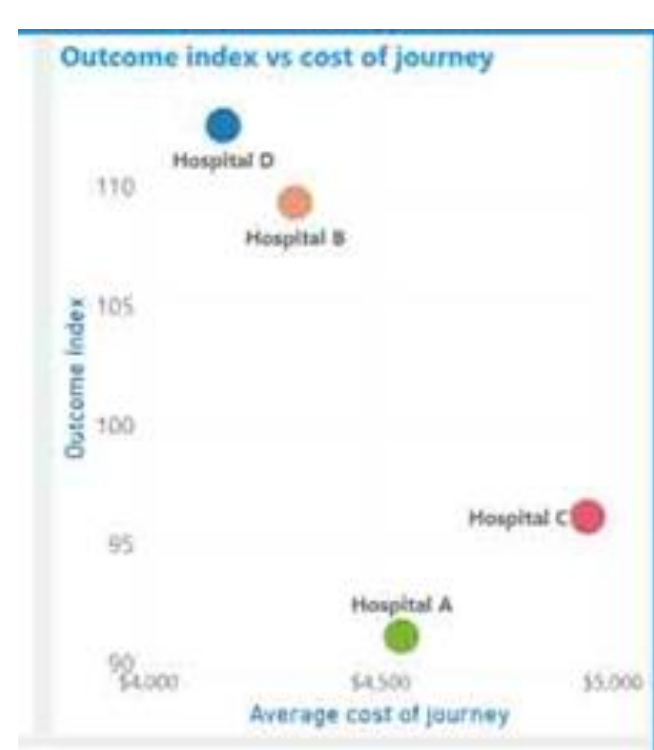


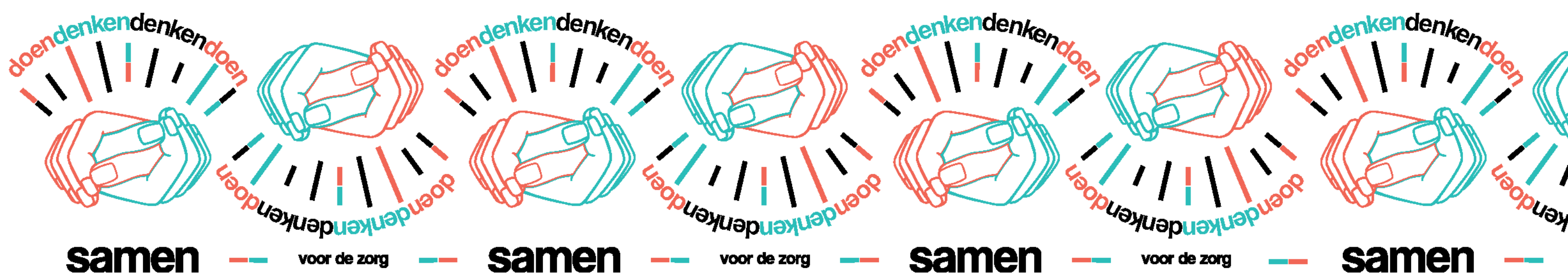
Figure 2. International practical examples identified and described in whitepaper. From left to right: Stroke Dashboard by Nordic Healthcare Group, Estonia; Spider Chart by Catharina Hospital, The Netherlands and Quality-Cost-Indicator Framework by Francisus Gasthuis & Vlietland, The Netherlands.

## Discussion & Conclusion

The roadmap provides key steps for implementing management dashboards that combine outcomes with costs in value-based healthcare, and supports healthcare organizations in continuously applying this information in decision-making. In practice, (inter)national frontrunners have not yet implemented all steps of the roadmap. In 2024, the workinggroup is continuing its efforts: we encourage healthcare organizations to start working with the roadmap, so we can start with evidence based care evaluations and gather insight on whether the roadmap is complete and what works best. Moreover, we are expanding our (inter)national network to share our insights with a broader audience. In the long run, we hope to shift our focus from medical specialist care to integrated care.

## Acknowledgements:

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all members of our Working Group 'Steering on Outcomes and Costs' of Linnean.



Scan QR for:  
➤ Whitepaper  
➤ Roadmap  
➤ International practical examples  
➤ Webcast

