



Dutch Recognition System for (health promotion) interventions



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Aim

The Centre for Healthy Living (RIVM) developed a quality assessment system for health promotion interventions: the Dutch Recognition System. The aim of the recognition system is:

- to gain a better understanding of the quality and effectiveness of health promotion interventions and
- to support the professional practice in health promotion in the Netherlands through identifying, selecting and disseminating best practices.

Assessment procedure

An organization or other entity that wishes to have an intervention formally recognized, submits a description of the intervention according to a standard submission form. The minimal requirements for submitting an intervention are the availability of a manual of the intervention (if relevant) and a process evaluation. Following submission, two types of assessment procedures have been designed which may result in five different assessment outcomes:

1. Peer review by professionals (potential outcome: Well Described)
2. Assessment by an expert committee with representatives from science, practice and policy (potential assessment outcomes: Theoretically Sound; Effective)

In addition, both types of assessment procedures evaluate how feasible implementation is in practice (i.e. expertise/skills, costs, dissemination plan, manual).

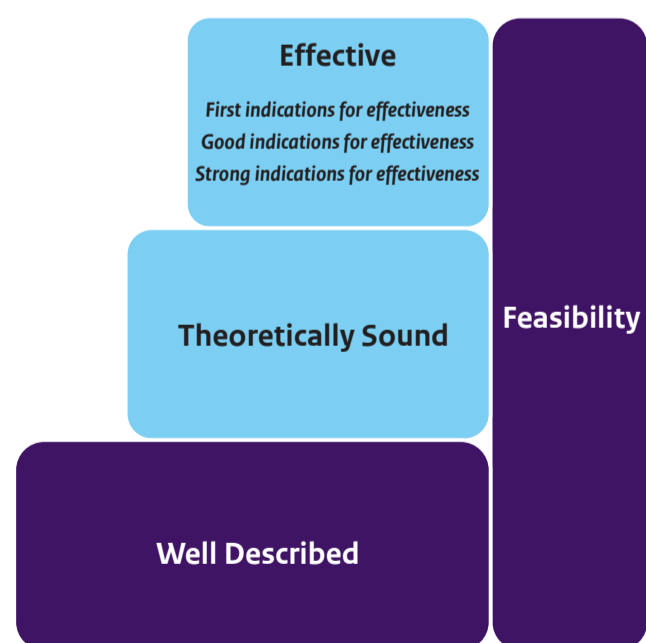


Figure 1. Levels of assessment according to the Dutch Recognition System. The recognition of an intervention is valid for 5 years.



36 interventions have received 'effective' qualification

The assessment system for health promotion interventions was first introduced in The Netherlands in 2008. The recognized interventions are available in the database Loketgezondleven.nl. After seven years, a total of 336 interventions were evaluated, (see figure 2), 36 of which were qualified as *effective* and 153 interventions as *theoretically sound*. Another 148 interventions are *well-described* (these are primarily interventions focusing on physical activity and sports).

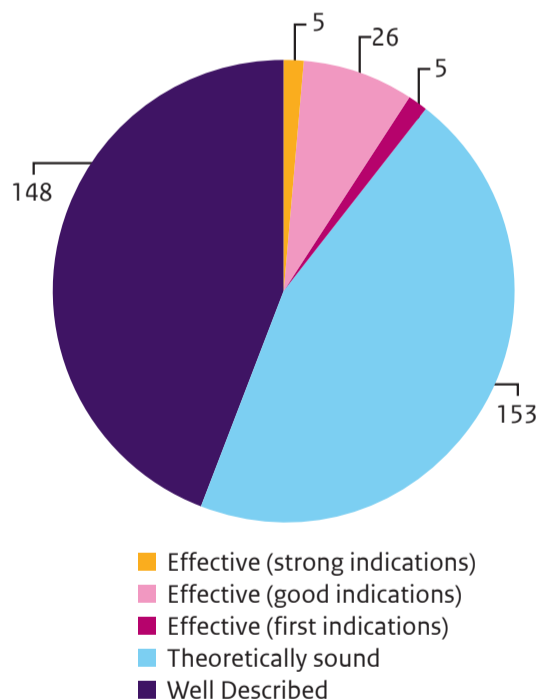


Figure 2. Number of interventions according to different assessment outcome levels, as included in national database in 2015.

Successes

- The stepwise system diminishes the barrier to submit an intervention
- Professionals appreciate the database with qualified interventions
- Support from the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports through funding initiatives encourages the submission and implementation of interventions
- Collaboration with other sectors within and outside of the health system (i.e. social services and care for older people) as assessment criteria are aligned to those applied within other sectors, resulting in one mutually agreed recognition system.

Challenges

- Submitting an intervention needs to be less time consuming
- The database contains few interventions for people with low socio-economic status. We need to add more assessment criteria with respect to equity, and empowerment
- Actual take-up of identified best practices in the municipalities is limited
- Professionals adjust best practices to the local context They need more information about the essential core elements of interventions which can't be left out.

Conclusion

The assessment system is a promising asset in quality improvements of health promotion. The Dutch Recognition System for health promotion interventions is well-known and supported by many stakeholders, as well as by the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports. Professionals appreciate the system but the scalability of best practices needs to be improved. Next year we focus our dissemination strategy on informing policymakers about the importance of the best practice portal in improving the quality of local health promotion.

Acknowledgement

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