

Propositions

belonging to the thesis

Mergers and Competition in the Dutch Healthcare Sector

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- 1.** The Dutch health policy debate about the merits of introducing more competition into the hospital sector has paid too little attention to the underlying structural changes in this market, which have greatly enhanced hospitals' market power. (this thesis)
- 2.** The introduction of price liberalization is not found to have had an impact on quality of care provided to hip replacement patients in the Dutch hospital sector. Price competition may nevertheless jeopardize quality if there is an absence of adequate information on quality. Therefore, if policy makers commit to regulated competition, a real effort needs to be made to increase the availability of information on quality. (this thesis)
- 3.** Mergers may have heterogeneous price effects across health insurers, hospital products, and hospital locations, and these differences should be taken into account in prospective merger analyses. Existing merger simulation models can be adjusted to capture these differences. (this thesis)
- 4.** Healthcare organizations merge to improve the provision of healthcare services and to strengthen their market or bargaining position. Also, regardless of their motivations, healthcare executives have a high degree of autonomy when deciding whether or not to merge. (this thesis)
- 5.** The current level of concentration and the fact that most research suggests that the effects of concentration in healthcare may not have been beneficial for society or the organizations involved, indicates that further consolidation in the healthcare sector may well be harmful. Therefore, antitrust laws should be enforced as strictly in the healthcare sector as in any other sector. (this thesis)
- 6.** Public information about hospital contract prices will not improve patient choice.
- 7.** Early selection and limited possibilities for promotion to a higher educational level in Dutch secondary education leads to a waste of talent.
- 8.** Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world. (Albert Einstein)
- 9.** In end-of-life care, the goal should be to add life to days, not days to life. (Dame Cicely Saunders)
- 10.** To divide is to multiply is especially true for scientific knowledge.
- 11.** When life gives you scraps, make a quilt.