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### The Netherlands

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#### Focus on the Patient

As of 2008, a total of 54 billion Euros will be available for healthcare in the Netherlands. Minister of Health Ab Klink argues that “ the keyword for the coming years is attention for the patient ” and together with State Secretary – Jet Bussemaker aims to focus on six themes : quality and innovation, prevention, safety, working in healthcare, and participation. It has been announced as well that together with home care and nursing will be able to take on between 5,000 and 6,000 additional staff.

Additional measures will be taken on the following issues :

Ó Replacement of no-claim bonus in health insurance

Ó Smoking ban in cafés and restaurants from July 1, 2008

Ó Influenza vaccinations for over 60s

Ó Extension of standard health insurance package (inclusion of contraceptive pill, extra home maternity care, dental treatment for 18- to 21-year olds, short-term mental health care)

As for long-term care under the Dutch Exceptional Medical Expenses Act, it remains accessible and under control and the charges for support services are expected to fall by next year.

For further information, please visit: <http://www.minvws.nl/en/nieuwsberichten/staf/2007/putting-the-patient-centre-stage.asp>

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