

# Introduction to the Dutch healthcare system

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# Insurance

- Since January 2006: every citizen has obligatory Dutch medical insurance
- Basic coverage: All GP (general practitioner/Family Doctor), pharmaceutical and basic hospital care is covered.
- Extra services (psychology, physiotherapy, alternative medicine etc.): coverage dependent on individual policies.

# Finding the doctor you need (1)

- Step 1: register with a GP and dentist, before you need to see one!
  - Why register:
    - In case of medical emergency GP does home visits.
    - Faster access to specialist consultations if referred by GP
    - Some areas have shortage of GP's, no guarantee that GP can see you if you're not registered. For dentists this problem is even bigger.

## Finding the doctor you need (2)

- Call Doctor's practice, assistant and Doctor will assess medical situation, consultation will be arranged
- GP diagnoses, decides if referral to specialist is useful. General Practice itself is a specialism in the Netherlands, GP's are trained to treat most diseases themselves.

# Direct access to specialists

- Expats are used to direct access to specialists
- In The Netherlands this is possible too, but:
  - Specialists are hesitant to see patients without referral, how does patient know which specialist to consult.
  - Access to specialists is faster when GP refers.
  - Many treatments in the Netherlands are done by GP's that at home are done by specialists, ie PAP-smears, pediatrics, minor surgery.

# Who provides expat-GP care in The Hague

- The 'local' GP. Probably Dutch, will speak English reasonably well, if you're lucky some understanding of expat related problems.
- Independer. Mostly Dutch GP's, some native speaking foreign language
- CMF, native speaking Dutch/French GP
- International Health Centre The Hague, several (native) languages available.