

# The first steps towards an integral spinal cord injury care approach

Ilse van Nes<sup>1,2</sup>, Tijn van Diemen<sup>1</sup>, Stella Thissen<sup>1,2</sup>, Luc van Ginneken<sup>1,2</sup>, Nelleke Langerak<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sint Maartenskliniek, Nijmegen, The Netherlands, <sup>2</sup>Radboud University Medical Center, Nijmegen, the Netherlands

## Introduction

- The demographics of people with spinal cord injury (SCI) are changing to an older population with more co-morbidity and complications.
- This leads to a higher need for care and increasing costs.
- In the current Dutch healthcare system, there is an increasing need for better continuity of care.

## Methods

Semi-structured interviews were held by two trained students, with fourteen persons with a SCI, three informal caregivers and fifteen primary healthcare providers.

The information from the interviews was analysed and divided into themes and categories leading to a proposed network design.

## Aims

To determine the wishes and expectations of a SCI-care network by people with SCI, their caregivers and their primary healthcare providers and to develop a first design of an integral care approach.

### Wishes and expectations of a SCI-care network

Persons with SCI and caregivers	Primary healthcare providers
Flexible personal care by home care nurses	Sufficient specific knowledge and expertise exchange between secondary and primary care
Improved knowledge of all primary healthcare professionals	Optimalisation of transfer system from secondary to primary care
Optimal transition from rehabilitation center to home environment	Better interdisciplinairy collaboration
Adjusted home situation after discharge	Clear working arrangements and task division
Sharing of medical files and smoothless communication between professionals	

### Proposed network design

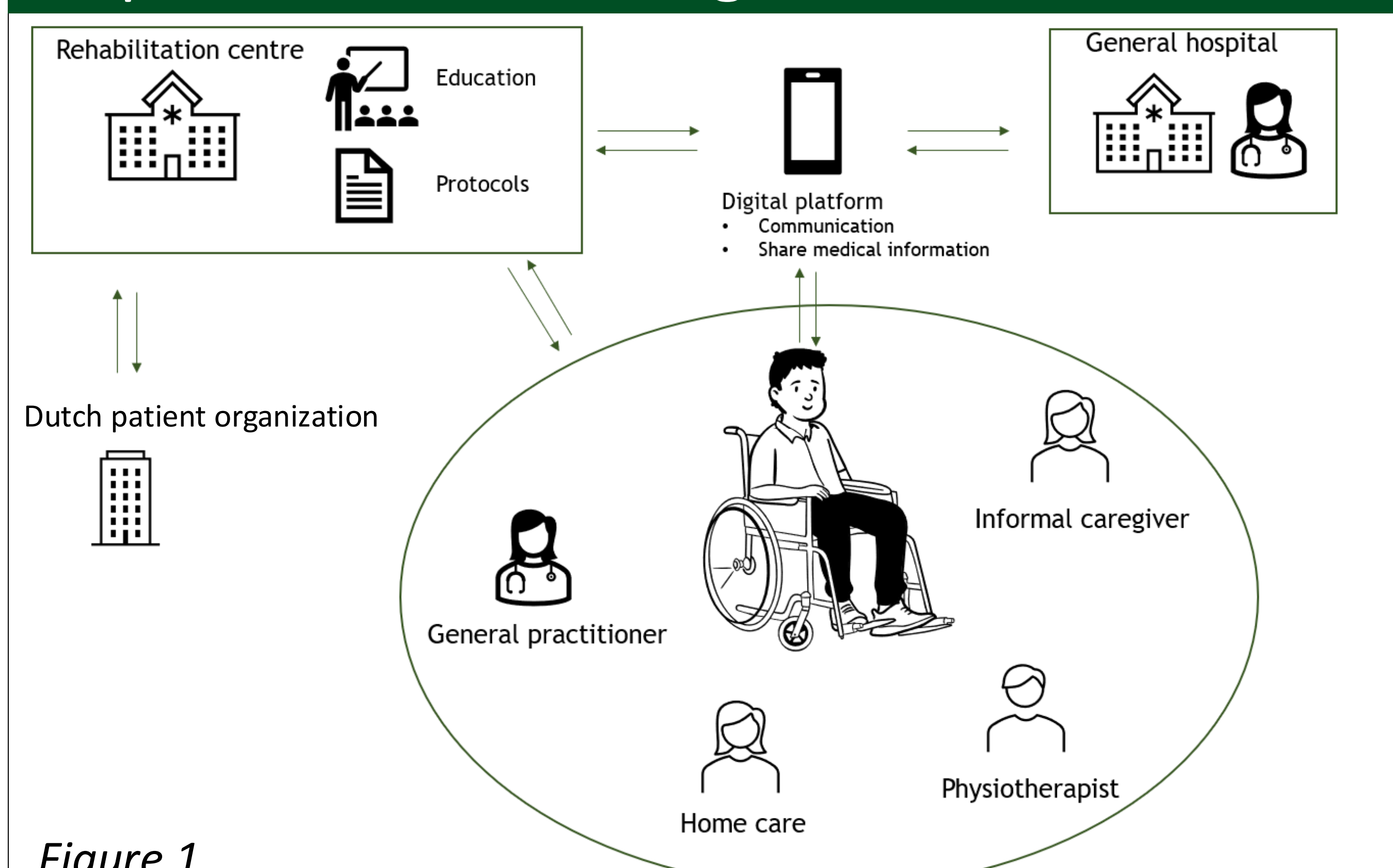


Figure 1

## Conclusion

Considering the current political and socioeconomic changes in the Netherlands, the development of a care network would be the next step.

Good mutual information exchange and task division seem to be crucial factors in the proposed network (see figure 1).

