

The value of reputation in university and health care

Wim Groot
Kiev, May 2018



Reputation

- Reputation = a commonly held opinion of someone's character and accomplishments
- Reputation in academia and health care depends on:
 - Achievement and recognition of that achievement (the 'what')
 - Integrity and recognition of that integrity (the 'how')

Why does reputation matter?

- Increases productivity (f.e. in attracting research funding, PhD students, membership of editorial boards, committees, patients, etc.) → individual interest
- Trust in science and health care depends on trust in scientists and physicians, and reputation builds trust → social interest

Reputation and Integrity

- Integrity = the commitment to honesty and personal responsibility for one's actions
- Reputation is what you have, integrity is how to achieve it

Integrity

- Integrity includes among others:
 - transparency about (potential) conflicts of interests,
 - collegiality towards co-workers,
 - fairness in treatment of others,
 - responsible leadership,
 - respect for everyone's contribution to outcomes,
 - to advocate adherence to rules
- Integrity and misconduct are related, but not identical

University and health care organisations

- Professional organisations with highly educated workers and highly competitive environment
- Both deemed highly important institutional pillars of society
- Both with large amount of autonomy (as institutions and workers in these institutions)
- Productivity depending on trust and reputation
- Both hampered by issues with integrity during past years

Integrity in academia

- Concerns both students and faculty/researchers
- Teaching and research
- From bribes to plagiarism

Integrity in research

- Plagiarism, self plagiarism, fake data, fake results
- Retraction watch: <http://retractionwatch.com/>
- Professors in the Netherlands whose misconduct was detected: Diederik Stapel, Don Poldermans, Dirk Smeesters, Peter Nijkamp
- Also influence of ‘stakeholders’ on research outcomes

Integrity in academia

- More control mechanisms (plagiarism checks) and also actions to create culture of integrity
- The Netherlands code of conduct for academic practice <http://vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Onderzoek/The%20Netherlands%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20for%20Academic%20Practice%202004%20%28version%202014%29.pdf>
- Code developed by the Union of Universities in the Netherlands ('VSNU')

Code contains six principles of proper academic practices

- Honesty and scrupulousness
- Reliability
- Verifiability
- Impartiality
- Independence
- Responsibility

Why is integrity important in health care?

- **Positive** attitude towards health care and health care workers
- Support is **qualified**
- People **trust** health care and health care workers only if it can trust the workers and the institutions they work in



Breaches of integrity in health care

Examples from the Netherlands

Home care organisation 'Alliade'

Managers gave commissions to their own private companies

Excessive high income

Severance pay or use of company credit card by managers of health care organisations

Chairman executive board home care organisation who **veto's** members of his board of governance

GP's in a region who badgered another GP who had started a practice without their consent

Breaches of integrity in health care in the Netherlands: Examples of health care fraud

- In 2011, a dental clinic Beperspect Clinics was found to have billed patients and health insurers several hundreds of thousands of euro for care that was not delivered
- In 2012, three executives from a home care organization in Almere were arrested by the Dutch anti-fraud agency on suspicion of fraud with personalized budgets. The home care organization was suspected of fiddling with applying for a personalized budget and invoices
- In 2014 the police confiscated the administration of a company in Maastricht which managed personalized care budgets for clients. The company was suspected of large-scale financial fraud, forgery and money laundering
- In 2014 the Dutch Care Authority (Nza) fined the St. Antonius Hospital in Nieuwegein for incorrect billing for an amount of 24.6 million euros, about 1% of annual revenues

Governance and quality of health care

- Good governance by care providers means they:
 - ensure their patients receive safe, good-quality care
 - clearly allocate responsibility within the organisation
 - carry out good financial management.

Problems with good governance and the quality of health care

- Incidents where quality of care was compromised (Radboud UMC, MCT....)
- How to create an environment where incidents are reported or - better even - actions are taken to prevent them?
- How to learn from incidents?
- How to organise internal governance to achieve this?

How to improve governance?

- Improve quality of management and internal supervision
- Increasing external supervision of governance
- Increasing patient participation, so management can better factor in their needs.
- Emphasize the responsibility of directors and supervisors, for example through mandatory accreditation and registration of healthcare managers and amending the code of governance;

Fostering integrity

- Both individual and institutional responsibility
- Done by a variety of methods:
 - Organize activities to ensure compliance with regulations
 - Offer training to teach responsible conduct
 - Establish a climate and organizational culture to support responsible conduct
 - Develop a code of conduct



The governance code care in the Netherlands

- Instrument to organise governance to contribute to good quality care
- Stimulates reflection and discussion on behavior of executives, managers and members board of governance
- Code is a form of self-regulation
- Link to the code (in Dutch): <http://www.governancecodezorg.nl/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Governancecode-Zorg-2017.pdf>



What to do to promote integrity?

- Emphasize responsible conduct (that is also objective code of conduct)
- Impart essential rules and guidelines regarding responsible conduct
- Include integrity in education/training for researchers and health care practitioners
- Enable the development of abilities to effectively manage concerns about responsible conduct

Conclusion

- Reputation is important for individual performance and for trust in institutions like science and health care
- Integrity is essential for trust in both academia and the health care sector, and integrity refers to all aspects that contribute to trust in academic research/teaching and health care
- Integrity can be fostered in various ways



Thank you for your attention

