The evaluation of health promotion and the evidence postulate – Five arguments about the applicability to health promotion

Thomas Elkeles
University of Applied Science Neubrandenburg

Abstract

Postulating evidence-based interventions in health is founded on the lack of self-regulation mechanisms in the healthcare system. When transferring the evidence postulate to the health promotion programs of German health insurance funds, no heed is taken of the fact that the methodological ideal of evidence-based medicine with its evidence hierarchy is inappropriate for social programs. The paper demonstrates this with five arguments and material from selected fields of application (community and company health promotion programs, health promotion programs for the unemployed). Discourse on the transfer of the evidence hierarchy model entails the danger of obscuring the necessities for conceptional development of the evaluable of complex social health promotion programs. Finally, it is postulated to make project funding dependent on the ex-ante estimate regarding the plausibility of program effectivity.