

## OP22.1

### **Launch of patient-centered website is associated with reduced health care utilization: a nationwide natural experiment**

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**Background:** Health care costs and utilization are rising. High quality patient-centered online information may reduce health care utilization, but evidence of the effect of online health information on health care utilization is scarce. We hypothesized that the release of a nationwide evidence-based health website is associated with lower health care utilization.

**Methods:** An interrupted time series analysis was used to evaluate the association of the launch of an evidence-based patient-centered health website (GPathome) in march 2012 with primary health care utilization. Observational primary care data were used of on average 230 general practitioners from 2009 to 2014. The primary outcome was the slope change in primary care consultation rate (consultations/1000 patients/month). A control group was created by including consultations about which no online information was provided during the study period. In addition, subgroup analyses were performed for sex, age and socioeconomic status.

**Results:** After the launch of the website, the trend in consultation rate decreased with -1,620 ( $p < 0,001$ ). The trend in consultation rate of the control group did not change at all. Subgroup analyses showed a significant decline in all subgroups, except the youngest age group (<16 years).

**Conclusions:** The launch of an evidence-based health information website is associated with a decrease of primary health care utilization. This suggests that an evidence based e-health information website guides patients on their decision to visit a primary care physician.