SKIN CANCER PREVENTION IN THE NETHERLANDS: THE ROAD TO AN EFFECTIVE STRATEGY

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In the Dutch Cancer Society's ideal world no one dies from cancer any more. Our strategy is to prevent cancer, to cure more cancer patients, and to increase their quality of life. That's why we raise funds to facilitate scientific research, influence policy, and share our knowledge about cancer. Skin cancer incidence and mortality is rising rapidly in the Netherlands. In order to stop this increase, many short-term efforts have been made in the past.

For this policy period (2015-2018), we have identified UV protection as one of the two major topics to address in cancer prevention. This presentation describes the process how we developed an effective and supported strategy to prevent skin cancer in the Netherlands. The following steps were taken:

1. In the decision making process of the focus of our team we looked at the Population Attributable Fraction (PAF) and the effect and impact that the Dutch Cancer Society could have on the particular risk factor. It turned out to be difficult to determine the sun exposure behavior of the Dutch population. Therefore, the percentage of cancer in the Netherlands that is related to UV, could not be calculated. The main reason that we did decide to focus on skin cancer prevention, is the absence of other organizations active in this area.
2. We translated the US Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent Skin Cancer to the Dutch situation in order to come to an evidence based strategy to prevent skin cancer for our country. This strategy was discussed in two consensus meetings with experts in skin cancer and sun protection in the Netherlands.
3. The plan will be finalized at the end of 2015 (before the conference) and will be implemented from 2016 onwards. In the plan, we will describe the role of public affairs, research and information sharing (for instance mass media communication).

The coming years our activities will be evaluated and monitored by the University of Maastricht. We hope to contribute to the skin cancer problem worldwide and possibly set the marks for interventions that can be conducted in other countries.