

Comments. Aspects of Administration and Economical Planning of Clinical Laboratories in Sweden

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The tendency towards decentralization and delegation of economical responsibility is very clear also in Sweden in health care organization in general and in clinical laboratories in particular. In many administrative areas for health care - counties - it is planned from 1991 or 1992 not to give the clinical chemical laboratories a fixed annual budget but to distribute economical resources to the clinics and the primary care districts and let them buy laboratory services according to a predetermined price-list. This has been called "zero budgeting".

Economists have discussed to what extent the wards and the primary care units should request service from the laboratories of their own public health organization or from independent public or private laboratories. Most economists seem to agree that, in general, it is waste of resources not to primarily use the laboratories of the own organization.

In determining the prices of the price-list it is important to have the possibilities to charge higher fees for investigations with higher "laboratory quality specifications" or lower detection limits. This is an important argument for the work with quality specifications.

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