Background:
In this way, they attributed a central importance for human health to the “living worlds”, such as municipalities, districts or cities.

Since health—i.e., as an elementary component of the community—ranks high in the value of citizens, states and municipalities there hence present particular control and supervisory functions in the sense of public welfare provisions.

In order to identify the future regional and local challenges in the health sector, in the state of Baden-Wuerttemberg at an early stage and to proactively control them, municipal health conferences were introduced in 2013 by the state government.

In 2015, these became compulsory for all counties and municipalities and should take place at least once a year, usually under the direction of the district administration.

Assessing the current municipal health conferences objectively shows, that only a few well-functioning and working conferences can be identified.

Key questions remain: What are the factors that promote and hinder the establishment? And how can results be measured?

Method:

The 37 counties / urban areas were examined with regard to their implementation and realization status.

In the process, the implementation processes have been analyzed and problem areas were identified through interviews and through participation as guests.

Internal sources
– Websites of county administration, health offices, health conferences
– Universities in Baden-Wuerttemberg
– Regional / local newspapers
– Free search (grey literature)*

Interviews (12 interviews)
Participatory observation at the municipal health conferences and the state health conference

Results:

Legal definition of municipal health conferences in Baden-Wuerttemberg

Municipal Health Conferences are:

– Steering committees that advise on needs-based, municipal analyses and recommendations for health and decide on their implementation (Figure 1).

– Processes in which the relevant actors jointly negotiate common strategies and weaknesses, identify municipal needs and seek for solutions.*

Delegation of implementation on municipal level

Overall Baden-Wuerttemberg consists of 37 Counties which since 2015 are obliged to establish a health conference.

The degree to which this has been actually implemented differs but for the majority (94.04%) of counties this has succeeded, 4.5% are in development and 11.9% do not yet have a conference established (see Figure 2).

In terms of implementation of the field of action the degrees offer much more. A summary of the degree of implementations is provided in Figure 4.

Figure 2: Public Health Action Cycle

![Figure 2: Public Health Action Cycle](image)

In order to assist the Municipal health conferences to get into a working process, the State Public Health office together with the State level health conferences has defined five action fields – Occupational Health Management; Medical care supply; Healthy Aging; Growing Healthy; Cities – Provisions. Further other topics have been set up to agenda of individual conferences according to their problem identification.

Conclusions:

On the whole, health conferences as a driver and designer of regional health care, which is to actively advise and decide on a future-oriented, needs-based health care provisions, remain behind its possibilities.

Clear guidelines for action and best-practice examples are encouraging processes in which the relevant stakeholders jointly identify municipal needs, negotiate municipal strategies and weaknesses, and look for new care solutions.

The actual possibilities can be found in already well functioning health conferences, which unfortunately are far from the majority.

At the same time policy processes indicate that legislative changes will lead to a transfer of power to include primary health care provisions at community level to municipally authorities.

Therefore, municipality should strengthen activities in order to be prepared for future tasks and responsibilities.

References:


