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A difficult balancing act : Informing breast cancer patients about adjuvant systemic therapy

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About the author

Ellen was born on Bonaire, where she attended the Scholengemeenschap Bonaire (SGB). After getting her high school diploma (HAVO) in 2003, she moved to The Hague, The Netherlands. She studied nursing at the Leiden University of Applied Sciences, and obtained her Bachelor in Nursing in 2007. After a 1-year pre-master, followed by a 2-year research master, Ellen obtained her master in Health Sciences at the VU university in Amsterdam in 2010. After obtaining her master degree, she stayed on as a research assistant at the Division of Psychosocial Research and Epidemiology of the Netherlands Cancer Institute (NKI), where she had done her master internship. During her time at the NKI, she developed a keen interest in oncology, particularly breast cancer. September 2011, Ellen started as a PhD student at the Department of Medical Decision Making at the Leiden University Medical Center. Her work there gave her the opportunity to develop herself as a researcher, while maintaining a connection to clinical practice. During her time in Leiden, Ellen developed a keen interest in risk communication, the role of prediction tools in decision-making, and shared decision-making in general.

Ellen has given both oral and poster presentations at national and international conferences. In 2014, she won a *Lee B. Lusted Student Prize* in Decision Psychology and Shared Decision Making from the Society for Medical Decision Making. Until May 2017, she was the editor of the digital newsletter of the Dutch Psychosocial Oncology Association. Ellen is currently the deputy editor of the newsletter of the international Society for Medical Decision Making. As of the summer of 2016, she chairs the web editors of the Dutch Epidemiology Association and also is a member of the PR working party. The research presented in Chapter 8 of this thesis has been selected as *co-recipient of the Outstanding Paper by a Young Investigator Award for 2017 from the Society for Medical Decision Making*.

Since February 2016, Ellen works as a researcher at the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics of the VU University Medical Center in Amsterdam. Until November 2016, she worked on a project in which she assessed the clinical usefulness of available decision support tools for decision-making about palliative care for incurable colorectal cancer, and inventoried oncologists' unmet decision support needs in that setting. She is now working on a grant proposal to develop a decision support tool for decision-making about extended adjuvant endocrine therapy for breast cancer. Additionally, Ellen coordinates the Methodology research program of the Amsterdam Public Health research institute, which has resulted from collaboration between VU, VUmc, AMC and UVA research programs in the field of Health Sciences and Public Health.

