Why Economic Analysis of Health System Improvement Interventions Matters

There is little evidence to direct health systems toward providing efficient interventions to address medical errors, defined as an unintended act of omission or commission or one not executed as intended that may or may not cause harm to the patient but does not achieve its intended outcome.

Lack of guidance on what is the most efficient way to reduce medical errors and improve the quality of health-care limits the scale-up of health system improvement interventions. Challenges to economic evaluation of these interventions include defining and implementing improvement interventions in different settings with high fidelity, capturing all of the positive and negative effects of the intervention, using process measures of effectiveness rather than health outcomes, and determining the full cost of the intervention and all economic consequences of its effects. However, health system improvement interventions should be treated similarly to individual medical interventions and undergo rigorous economic evaluation to provide actionable evidence to guide policy-makers in decisions of resource allocation for improvement activities among other competing demands for health-care resources.

In this Perspective Article in Frontiers in Public Health, Edward Broughton and Lani Marquez discuss why economic analyses of health system improvement interventions matter and what must be done to ensure more rigorous evaluations are done.

Click here to read the full article. [1]

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