

Enhancing value in healthcare by incorporating the patient perspective - Integrating patient-reported outcomes and health economic tools to achieve patient-centered and cost-effective care

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Rising costs in healthcare systems are a pressing issue globally, Switzerland being a notable example with expenditures ranking among the highest worldwide. Despite advancements in medical technology and an aging population contributing to growing healthcare demands, the quality of care has not consistently advanced in parallel, raising questions about inefficiencies in healthcare resource allocation. To deal with these challenges, this dissertation develops a framework to improve value in healthcare by integrating the patient perspective. Value in healthcare is defined as the health outcomes achieved per dollar spent. Quality of care and cost of care are its two fundamental components, representing respectively the desired outcome and the optimization constraint. Since the final receivers of healthcare are the patients and an accurate measurement of quality of care is essential for quality improvement efforts, the transition to patient-centered care and the use of patient-reported outcome measures (PROMs) are key to the advancement of value in healthcare. Measured through PROMs, quality of care can be compared among interventions and evaluated along with cost considerations, to achieve a more efficient use of healthcare resources.

To achieve these objectives, the framework proposed in this dissertation addresses two building blocks: 1) improving quality of care through the accurate use of PROMs and 2) managing costs to improve healthcare system efficiency and resource allocation. The first building block proposes viable ways to accurately interpret PROMs and to incorporate them into routine clinical practice. It shows how this can improve clinical decision-making and enhance patient-physician communication, thus improving quality of care. The second building block introduces cost considerations to optimize healthcare resources while maintaining or enhancing quality of care as measured through PROMs. It does so by proposing ways to assess healthcare system efficiency and evaluate the cost-effectiveness of healthcare interventions.

By considering the perspectives of the different stakeholders in the healthcare system, this dissertation proposes a pathway to balance patient needs with system constraints, with the ultimate aim of advancing value in healthcare. Future research should focus on refining methodologies, expanding data availability and granularity, and exploring further applications of patient-reported outcomes and economic evaluations.