Rationale and Terminology of Outcomes Research

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Outline

• Rationale for outcomes research
  – Domains of quality
• Complex taxonomy
• The outcomes tool box
Evaluating the Quality of Medical Care

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This paper is an attempt to describe and evaluate current methods for assessing the quality of medical care and to suggest some directions for further study. It is concerned with methods rather than findings, and with an evaluation of methodology in general, rather than a detailed critique of methods in specific studies.

This is not an exhaustive review of the pertinent literature. Certain key studies, of course, have been included. Other papers have been selected only as illustrative examples. Those omitted are not, for that reason, less worthy of note.

This paper deals almost exclusively with the evaluation of the medical care process at the level of physician-patient interaction. It excludes, therefore, processes primarily related to the effective delivery of medical care at the community level. Moreover, this paper is not concerned with the administrative aspects of quality control. Many of the studies reviewed here have arisen out of the urgent need to evaluate and control the quality of care in organized programs of medical care. Nevertheless, these studies will be discussed only in terms of their contribution to methods of assessment and not in terms of their broader social goals. The author has remained, by and large, in the familiar territory of care provided by physicians and has avoided incursions into other types of

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The Pillars of Quality

(1) **Efficacy (and Safety):** the ability of care to improve health

(2) **Effectiveness:** the degree to which attainable health improvements are realized

(3) **Efficiency:** the ability to obtain the greatest health improvement at the lowest cost;

(4) **Optimality:** the most advantageous balancing of costs and benefits

(5) **Acceptability:** conformity to patient preferences regarding accessibility, the patient-practitioner relation, the amenities, the effects of care, and the cost of care

(6) **Legitimacy:** conformity to social preferences

(7) **Equity:** fairness in the distribution of care and its effects on health

*Arch Pathol Lab Med.* 1990 Nov;114(11):1115-8
Figure A-1.
Revenues and Primary Spending, by Category, Under CBO’s Long-Term Budget Scenarios Through 2080
(Percentage of gross domestic product)
Healthcare-associated infection index rate

Hand hygiene compliance rate

$r = -0.65$

$R$-squared = 0.42

p value < 0.001
A CONTROLLED TRIAL OF ARTHROSCOPIC SURGERY
FOR OSTEOARTHRITIS OF THE KNEE

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Baruch A. Brody, Ph.D., David H. Kuykendall, Ph.D., John C. Hollingsworth, Dr.P.H.,
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180 Patients Randomized

Arthroscopy and debridement

Sham arthroscopy

Arthroscopy and lavage

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80,000 procedures performed last year for osteoarthritis
Why Outcomes Research?

• Things aren’t right in surgery
  – Disconnect between evidence and practice
  – Variability in process of care and outcomes
  – Complex systems delivering unsafe care
  – Economic implications

• Traditional surgical research having limited impact on the quality of surgical care
A Confusing Taxonomy

- Evidence based surgery
- Clinical effectiveness research
- Comparative effectiveness research
- Health services research
- Quality of care research
- Outcomes research
- Patient centered outcomes research
Define the field by its goals

Moving beyond what we can do to what we should be doing for patients ...