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# Improving the information available to health care decision makers in the field of economic evaluations

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## Abstract

In the current context of the growing of health care expenses, the allocation of scarce resources in the most efficient way becomes essential. Consequently, the routinely use of full economic evaluations in decision processes should be promoted. However, information provided by economic evaluations is not used in an optimal way by health care decision makers, mostly because of their lack of transferability to other countries and the difficulty of judging about their quality.
The aim of the thesis was thus to investigate a number of methods in the field of economic evaluations which could be used to improve the information transmitted to Belgian health care decision makers.

Three tools were investigated in this research: the use of Belgian administrative databases, the use of Markov models, and the use of quality assessment instruments. The first part of the thesis analyzed the use of Belgian administrative databases to assess the quality of prophylactic treatment in prevention of venous thromboembolism after major orthopedic surgery. In the second part, the use of Markov models to assess the treatment of patients with chronic hepatitis C was analyzed and finally, in the third part, three quality assessment instruments were compared and used in a systematic review of economic evaluations on the surgical treatment of obesity.

Such investigations allowed us to formulate methodological recommendations but also suggestions to improve the quality of care. While recommendations concerning the use of Belgian administrative databases and the use of Markov models were mostly specific to the Belgian context, recommendations on the use of quality assessment instruments had an international impact.

Health care decision makers could use the information provided by this research in decision processes concerning the reimbursement of health care programs but also in the process of determining new clinical practice and health economic guidelines. This research would thus be interesting not only for policy makers but also for medical care providers, health care purchasers, health economists, and other health care researchers.