

Summary

The Economic Burden of Patient Safety

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Patient safety has become a major concern of the general public and of policymakers. The results of this study will form the foundation of the scope of evidence currently available on economic evaluations in the area of patient safety and will provide guidance on the methodology required to conduct high quality economic evaluations in the area of patient safety.

The purpose of an economic evaluation is to “identify, measure, value and compare the costs and consequences of alternatives being considered” to inform “value for money” judgments about an intervention or program.

The primary goal of this proposal is to create the framework for the conduct of economic evaluations in the area of Patient Safety, which will in turn lead to the development of a Patient Safety Economic League Table.

In order to achieve this goal, the investigators propose to apply, in a stepwise manner, five core economic methods, namely 1) systematic review of the Patient Safety (PS) economic literature; 2) development of guidelines for the conduct of economic evaluations in PS; 3) determine the economic burden of PS issues to the Canadian health care system; 4) estimate the value of improving PS using economic analysis and 5) determine priority target areas for economic evaluations in the area of PS. In some cases, in order to illustrate the applicability of the methods to the overall goal of this proposal, these core economic methods will be applied to one or more case studies. The results of these case studies will provide guidance on how to extrapolate our methods to broader PS programs.

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