

Policy Statement on HERC Use of Quality Adjusted Life Years

Posted for 21-Day Public Comment 8am 10/11/2022 until 8am 11/1/2022

Plain Language Summary

Quality adjusted life years (QALYs) are a way for researchers to measure and predict the value of a medical service and its effect on a person's length and quality of life. This document contains two policy proposals to guide the use QALYs in HERC's meeting materials, processes and decisions.

The Health Evidence Review Commission (HERC) seeks comment about two policy proposals to guide the use of quality adjusted life years (QALYs) in HERC processes and decision-making. View the guidelines for submitting public comments on this [webpage](#).

In addition to understanding the benefits and potential harms of covered services, HERC has previously used QALYs as another factor in decision-making regarding which services will be covered by the Oregon Health Plan according to the Prioritized List of Health Services. It is important for HERC to consider the potential impact of using QALYs on health inequities, particularly for populations with older age or disability.

Two options for the use of QALYs by the HERC

1. HERC staff will incorporate the following adjustments when referencing QALYs as part of their recommendation development for the HERC to prevent the inappropriate use of QALYs:
 - a) Only use QALYs to compare treatments for the same population. QALYs will not inform scoring used to rank lines for the Prioritized List.
 - b) Perform a literature search for alternative measures of cost effectiveness and cite any that are relevant.
 - c) Explicitly describe the role of QALYs vis a vis other decision factors considered using a simplified Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (defined below), including benefits, harms, costs, values and preferences and delivery system issues relevant to the topic at hand.
 - d) Offer HERC's consumer advocate members an opportunity to review and comment on meeting materials prior to public meeting material release. These comments will inform potential modifications and will be shared as part of public meeting materials.
 - e) Continue to explore opportunities to improve accessibility for public testimony as part of HERC deliberations.
2. Do not mention QALYs in staff-prepared meeting materials and do not discuss QALYs at Commission meetings. Staff will also search all studies for "QALY" and redact any mention of QALYs from published articles.

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For more information, please review this [summary document](#) from the October 6, 2022 HERC meeting materials.