

# A Systematic Review of Economic Evaluation Literature in Thailand

## Are the Data Good Enough to be Used by Policy-Makers?

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### Abstract

In many countries, including Thailand, there is an increasing impetus to use economic evaluation to allow more explicit and transparent healthcare priority setting. However, an important question for policy makers in low- and middle-income countries is whether it is appropriate and feasible to introduce economic evaluation data into healthcare priority-setting decisions. In addition to ethical, social and political issues, information supply challenges need to be addressed. This paper systematically reviewed the literature on economic evaluation of health technology in Thailand published between 1982 and 2005. Its aim was to analyse the quantity, quality and targeting of economic evaluation studies that can provide a framework for those conducting similar reviews in other settings.

The review revealed that, although the number of publications reporting economic evaluations has increased significantly in recent years, serious attention needs to be given to the quality of reporting and analysis. Furthermore, there is an absence of economic evaluation publications for 15 of the top 20 major health problems in Thailand, indicating a poor distribution of research resources towards the determination of cost-effective interventions for diminishing the disease burden of certain major health problems. If economic evaluation is only useful for policy makers when performed correctly and reported accurately, these findings depict information barriers to using economic evaluation to assist health decision-making processes in Thailand.

There are insufficient resources to provide all patients in all circumstances with the best possible healthcare, making the rationing of healthcare resources one of the most, if not the most, difficult