



# Critical Appraisal Toolkit

# 4

# Critical Appraisal Toolkit for Economic Evaluations

## How to use this toolkit?

Three broad issues need to be considered when appraising an economic evaluation:

- Is the economic evaluation likely to be usable?
- How were the costs and consequences assessed and compared?
- Will the results help in purchasing services for local people?

The 10 questions on the following pages are designed to help you think about these issues systematically.

The first three questions are screening questions and can be answered quickly.

### 1. Was a well-defined question posed?

Is it clear what the authors are trying to achieve?

Yes  Can't Tell  No

### 2. Was a comprehensive description of the competing alternatives given?

Can you tell who did what to whom, where and how often?

Yes  Can't Tell  No

### 3. Does the paper provide evidence that the programme would be effective (i.e. would the programme do more harm than good?)

Consider if a RCT was used; if not, consider how strong the evidence was.

Yes  Can't Tell  No

**If you have answered "Yes" to all three questions, it is worth continuing with the appraisal**

### 4. Were all important and relevant resources used and health outcome consequences for each alternative:

	Yes	Can't tell	No
a) identified			
Consider what perspective(s) was / were taken			

### Critical Appraisal Toolkits

Case Control Study	1
Cohort Study	2
Diagnostic Test Study	3
Economic Evaluations	4
Qualitative Research	5
Randomised Controlled Trials	6
Systematic Reviews	7

	Yes	Can't tell	No
b) measured accurately in appropriate units prior to evaluation?  Note: appropriate units may be hours of nursing time, number of physician visits, years-of-life gained etc.			
c) valued credibly?  Have opportunity costs been considered?			

**5. Were resource use and health outcome consequences adjusted for different times at which they occurred (discounting?)**

Yes  Can't Tell  No

**6. Was an incremental analysis of the consequences and costs of the alternatives performed?**

Yes  Can't Tell  No

**7. Was an adequate sensitivity analysis performed?**

Consider if all the main areas of uncertainty were considered?

Yes  Can't Tell  No

**8. Did the presentation and discussion of the results include enough of the issues that are required to inform a purchasing decision?**

Yes  Can't Tell  No

**9. Were the conclusions of the evaluation justified by the evidence presented?**

Yes  Can't Tell  No

**10. Can the results be applied to the local population?**

Consider whether a) the patients covered by the review could be sufficiently different to your population to cause concern b) your local setting is likely to differ much from that of the review

Yes  Can't Tell  No

For more information or assistance in using this toolkit, please contact the Knowledge and Informatics Trainer for the Knowledge and Information Service:  
01522 57(3478) or [Library.Informatics@ulh.nhs.uk](mailto:Library.Informatics@ulh.nhs.uk).