

Prof Jennifer Whitty

Professor of Health Economics, Norwich Medical School, UEA

“ Evaluating the costs and benefits of health care from a patient’s perspective: getting to the heart of the matter”

Seminar Presentation 1 – 2pm

Decisions on how to allocate resources and which healthcare services or interventions to deliver should be evidence-based. An evaluation of the costs and benefits of the intervention or service against competing alternatives is widely accepted as being an important aspect of the evidence required to inform decisions. However, the methods commonly used to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of health care predominantly rely on the quality-adjusted life year (QALY) as the preferred measure of benefit, and this constrains the benefits that are systematically considered to be somewhat narrower than the much more holistic range of health care attributes (such as how a service is delivered or its quality) that patients might consider to be important.

Using examples from research into heart failure disease management programmes undertaken with colleagues in Australia, I will share some insights into the types of evidence on costs and benefits that might inform resource allocation or service delivery decisions. In particular, I will discuss:

- Methods for evaluating the cost-effectiveness of interventions and services
- Some of the challenges in measuring and valuing outcomes
- Extending the evaluation to include patient preferences for service delivery (for example, of home or clinic-based heart failure management programs) using discrete choice experiments

Although the examples I will draw on mainly relate to multidisciplinary interventions for people with heart failure, the methods and concepts I will discuss can be applied and have been used much more widely across other areas of healthcare.

There will also be the potential to discuss opportunities for health economics input into studies led by the School of Health Sciences.

Brief Biography

Jennifer Whitty joined UEA in April 2016 as Professor of Health Economics. She leads the Health Economics Group and the Public Health and Health Services Research Theme at the Norwich Medical School. Her research focusses on evaluating preferences, choices and values in health and healthcare delivery and using these preferences to inform economic evaluation and evidence-based decisions. Jennifer has particular interests in preference elicitation methods (including the Discrete Choice Experiment), and evaluating interventions related to pharmacy and medicines use, nursing, telehealth, cardiovascular and respiratory conditions, and shared decision-making. Jennifer collaborates with a number of researchers in these fields who are based in Australia, where she holds Honorary appointments with the University of Queensland and Griffith University.

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