

Health and care economics

with Dr Michela Tinelli

Talking points

Knowledge & Comprehension

1. What are step-down services, and how do they support people experiencing homelessness?
2. Why has Michela developed integrated management dashboards?
3. Why might people experiencing homelessness have different healthcare needs to people with stable accommodation?

Application

4. The global population is ageing, meaning that a greater proportion of older people require age-related health and social care, funded by a proportionally smaller workforce. What sort of research questions could health and care economists investigate to find solutions to the economic, health and social challenges of an ageing population?
5. How could discrete choice experiments uncover the health and social care needs and preferences of older populations?

Analysis

6. Why do you think that step-down services appear so effective at helping people experiencing homelessness to move into stable accommodation?

Evaluation

7. Economics is typically based on quantitative metrics (such as costs), yet health and social well-being can be very subjective. How do you think health and care economists objectively analyse metrics such as well-being and quality of life?
8. To what extent do you agree that effective policymaking relies on data science?

Activity

Discrete choice experiments are a powerful method for understanding people's wants and needs. Participants are presented with two or more hypothetical options and asked to select their preference. By repeating the experiment multiple times with different trade-offs in the options, researchers can determine which trade-offs are most important to participants. The results of discrete choice experiments can then inform the development of appropriate services.

Think about an issue in your school that could be influenced by students' opinions, for example:

- The type of food served in the cafeteria
- The availability of sports facilities
- Access to health and well-being services, e.g., counselling, professional advice

Design a discrete choice experiment to survey your classmates' preferences on your chosen issue. Your survey should contain several questions, each offering two or more options that contain different trade-offs. For example:

Would you prefer to:

- Pay more for a vegetarian meal or pay less for a non-vegetarian meal?
- Pay less for a vegetarian meal or pay more for a non-vegetarian meal?
- Wait in a long queue and have multiple meal choices or wait in a short queue and only have one set meal option?
- Pay more and have multiple meal choices or pay less and only have one set meal option?

Once your classmates have filled in your survey, collect the data and analyse them to understand your classmates' preferences on the issue being investigated. What are the collective preferences on the issue? What does this tell you about how the issue could be addressed? Design a short presentation to present your recommendations to the school, by providing evidence-based suggestions for how services could be improved.

More resources

- Learn more about Michela's out-of-hospital care model integrated management dashboards: www.lse.ac.uk/cpec/research/OOHCM/integrated-management-dashboards
- This video from CrashCourse investigates the economics of healthcare, focusing on the US healthcare system and comparing it to other systems around the world: www.youtube.com/watch?v=cbBKoyjFLUY
- This blog, written by Michela, explains the importance of data-driven decision-making for improving services for people experiencing homelessness: www.sscr.nihr.ac.uk/data-driven-decision-making-in-homelessness-services