



Project Title: Can we accurately measure patient preferences for health care?		Code: SPH8
Host School / Institute: Sydney School of Public Health		Address: Room 314, Edward Ford Building (A27), Fisher Road, Camperdown Campus
Certificates & Clearances required: No		
Primary Supervisor: Dr Alison Pearce		
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Co-Supervisor/team: This is a collaborative project led by Alison Pearce with collaborators Brendan Mulhern and Rosalie Viney at UTS and Verity Watson at the University of Aberdeen. Alison is a health economist specialising in the economics of cancer.		
Project Type: Data Analysis; Survey		
Project Category: Health economics; Public Health		
Skills / Attributes of a successful student: This project would suit a student with a keen interest in quantitative data analysis methods. Although this project is based in health economics, no prior knowledge is required and this is not a costing-based project. It is more important to be organised, have good attention to detail and be willing to learn and be part of the team.		
Project Keywords: Patient preferences; Health literacy; Survey design; Survey analysis; Shared decision making		
<p>Project Description: There is a growing movement for patient involved decision making in health care. One important component of this is to capture patient preferences for their care. To quantitatively elicit patient preferences, health economists are increasingly using a type of survey called a discrete choice experiment. The results of these choice surveys can be used to inform policy and practice decisions about health care provision and funding.</p> <p>However, choice surveys can be complex for participants to complete, and research suggests some people find them so confusing that they answer them inaccurately. To try and identify these participants, researchers will often include questions about the perceived difficulty of the survey at the end of the survey. However, in our previous research we found that a participants' reported difficulty with the confusion did not always match the accuracy of their answers. This project uses data from eight previously conducted choice surveys (with nearly 5000 respondents), each of which collected questions about perceived survey difficulty, along with socio-demographic factors such as age, gender, income, health status and health literacy. The student will analyse whether these socio-demographic factors influence how difficult people find the choice surveys, and whether some questions are better able to identify people who may have had difficulty.</p> <p>This project is part of an ongoing body of work, and the student would be joining a productive and engaged research collaboration. The area of discrete choice experiments is currently a 'hot topic' in health economics and shared decision making, and this is an exciting opportunity to contribute to important research that will improve the methods we use to capture vital information about patient preferences for their care and how it is provided.</p> <p>There will be opportunities to prepare the results for presentation at conferences and for publication in a peer-reviewed medical or health economics journal. Support would be provided to the student to gain an understanding of survey methodology, health economics and discrete choice experiments, and shared decision making literature. During the project the student will gain practical skills in cleaning and analysing data using a statistical software package such as SPSS, STATA, SAS or R, as well as gaining experience in project management including leading reporting on progress in team meetings and presenting results for different audiences (including a blog post and/or infographic).</p>		