

More attention to cost-utility analyses urged in spine care

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(HealthDay)—More attention to cost-utility analyses (CUA) research and the quality of these studies is needed in spine care, according to the authors of a review published in the Jan. 1 issue of *Spine*.

Benedict U. Nwachukwu, M.D., M.B.A., from the Hospital for Special Surgery in New York City, and colleagues conducted a systematic review to identify U.S.-based CUA in spine care. Twenty studies met the inclusion criteria and their quality was examined using the Quality of Health Economic Studies instrument.

The researchers found varied evidence for the cost-effectiveness of operative spinal intervention. Most studies reported favorable cost-effectiveness ratios, while few studies indicated that certain operative interventions were not cost-effective. For all included studies, the

average Quality of Health Economic Studies score was 75.1. The quality of evidence varied and weaknesses were seen in the literature, mainly that few studies (three of 20) included a long-term aspect or adequate follow-up. Sensitivity analysis, societal cost perspective, and a funding disclosure were more likely in studies that scored high on the Quality of Health Economic Studies instrument.

"This study highlights the need for more attention to CUA research and the quality of these studies in spine care," the authors write.

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