Workshop on “Economic Returns of Medical Research”

Sigtuna 19-20 November 2007

SRC - medicine
“If you believe research is expensive -
try disease.....”

Mary Lasker
1901 - 1994
The aim of the workshop is to learn, discuss and proceed with the work on how to measure the impact and outcomes of medical/health research.
How to measure the impact and outcomes of medical research

Questions to be approached among others are:

• How to proceed from earlier attempts and **identify the key issues**?
• What **is working and not working well** with earlier approaches?
• What are the **country experiences** in using different approaches?
• How to define the **scientific metrics** to do systems evaluations?
• How to **improve the theories and methodologies** about assessing the socio-economic values of medical research?

• What will be the next step?
“Economic Returns of Medical Research”

Programme

Monday 19 November

10.00 Welcome and introduction  Professor Håkan Billig, Secretary General, Swedish Research Council, Medicine
10.15 Introductory Speech Professor Björn von Sydow, Chairperson, Swedish Research Council

Assessing the benefits of medical research for society: the UK Evaluation Forum
10.30 “The lure of figures – false sirens?” Dr David Cox, University Relationship Manager, MRC, UK
11.15 Coffee

Different approaches in measuring returns
11.30 “The Payback Model - An overview” Dr Steven Wooding, Head of Science and Tech., RAND Europe, Cambridge
12.20 Lunch
13.30 “Estimating economic benefits from health research at a national level: Problems and possibilities” Professor Martin Buxton, BrunelU
14:00 “Quality of Life Returns from Biomedical Research: Many Dimensions of Value” Professor Susan Cozzens, Georgia Tech U
14.30 “Societal impact evaluation of research groups: the communication model” Dr Gerrit van Ark, Strategic and Board Affairs, ZonMw
15.00-15.15 Coffee

Country experiences
15.20 Canada: “Measuring the Impact of Health Research in Canada”, Director Peggy Borbey, Canadian Institute of Health
15.50 The Netherlands: “The experiences of the Leiden University Medical Center with its Societal Impact project and its potential for national implementation” Dr Stefan Ellenbroek, Leiden University Medical Center

Pause
16:30 Ireland: “An impact assessment study to identify the socio-economic returns from Irish health research: from biomedical to health services research.” Dr Brendan Curran
17.00 Sweden: “An initiative to estimate economic value of medical research and innovations in Sweden” Professor Per Carlsson, Linköping University
19.00- Dinner

Tuesday 20 November

Policy-making and impact
9.00 “Biomedical Research in the U.S.A/ The Strategic National Importance of N.I.H. Peer Review” Director Toni Scarpa, National Institute of Health
9.30 “The utilisation of health research in policy-making: concepts, examples and approaches to assessment” Dr Stephen Hanney, Brunel University
10.00-10.30 Coffee

How to proceed - issues to be explored

Working group sessions:
10.30-11.30 First sessions
11.30-12.00 Plenary discussion
12.00-13.00 Lunch
13.00-14.00 Second sessions
14.00-14.30 Plenary discussion
14.30-15.30 Conclusion and future work
Professor Håkan Billig
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1st Workshop Session: What are the right questions?

General question

1. How can a constructive dialogue be promoted to steer stakeholders (internal and external) towards the right set of questions and right set of techniques?

Valuing benefits

1. Is “economic return” a meaningful concept in relation to benefits from medical research?

2. Can a reliable figure ever be obtained, or will the assumptions always be too heroic?

3. Can outcomes be related to groups of inputs in a meaningful way, or does linking outcomes to inputs always have to be undertaken at a more generalised level?

4. How do we get the best out of a case study approach and can studies ever be “representative”?
1st Workshop Session: What are the right questions?

Understanding the innovation system

1. To what extent does a systems analysis ("logic chain") approach offer a way of measuring success in knowledge transfer?

1. Is this a good way of getting policymakers away from methods which appear as if they ought to show whether recent government investment has been worthwhile, but in fact record events that happened some time in the past? (The time lag problem.)

1. Is it realistic to think of systems type indicators as a way of getting at those key success factors that will determine how well the results of a scientific research are (or will be) translated into economic impact?
2nd Workshop Session:
How can these questions best be answered?

Getting the methodology right

1. Is there a “best” approach or are questions of economic benefit best answered using a collection of evaluation tools? Which approaches offer the best value for money in terms of convincing evidence per thousand money.

2. Are the necessary data sources available, and how good is the data quality?

3. If so, how can the best be got out of combining macroeconomic and microeconomic return studies?

4. What should be done at a national level and what would be best at an international level?

Getting the presentation right?

1. Is the evidence likely to be important to policy makers and other stakeholders?

2. Is the evidence likely to be believed by such people?
Core working group

- David Cox, MRC
- Jonathan Grant, RAND Europe
- Gerrit van Ark, ZonMW
- Martin Buxton, Brunel
- Toni Scarpa, NIH
- Per Carlsson, LiU, **coordinator**
The work of the group will be funded by SRC and supported by staff from SRC.

The task is that after the discussions in Sigtuna follow up some issues/questions that have been identified to be pursued in more depth. The proposed working group should deliver a position paper during the autumn 2008 to be discussed at a new meeting on November 20-21 in the Stockholm area.
The position paper should cover:

- Theoretical and methodological issues
- What are the questions to be asked
- The data situation; micro-macro level/quantitative data
- Policy communication issues
- Need/potentials for comparative studies
Questions to be addressed:

- Provide a system of accounting for past spending
- Make international comparisons
- To understand better the various steps and stages between research and "final" benefits