# Performance Measurement for Health System Improvement

**Experiences, Challenges and Prospects** 

Peter C. Smith, Elias Mossialos, Irene Papanicolas and Sheila Leatherman

# HEALTH ECONOMICS, POLICY AND MANAGEMENT







# Performance Measurement for Health System Improvement

In a world where there is increasing demand for the performance of health providers to be measured, there is a need for a more strategic vision of the role that performance measurement can play in securing health system improvement. This volume meets this need by presenting the opportunities and challenges associated with performance measurement in a framework that is clear and easy to understand. It examines the various levels at which health system performance is undertaken, the technical instruments and tools available, and the implications using these may have for those charged with the governance of the health system.

Leading authorities in the field present technical material in an accessible way and illustrate with examples from all over the world. *Performance Measurement for Health System Improvement* is an authoritative and practical guide for policy makers, regulators, patient groups and researchers.

Edited by Peter C. Smith is Professor of Health Policy in the Business School and Institute for Global Health at Imperial College, London.

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# Performance measurement for health system improvement

Experiences, challenges and prospects

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Cambridge University Press The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521133487

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First published 2009 Reprinted 2010

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-0-521-11676-3 Hardback ISBN 978-0-521-13348-7 Paperback

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#### Foreword

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The provision of relevant, accurate and timely performance information is essential for assuring and improving the performance of health systems. Citizens, patients, governments, politicians, policy-makers, managers and clinicians all need such information in order to assess whether health systems are operating as well as they should and to identify where there is scope for improvement. Without performance information, there is no evidence with which to design health system reforms; no means of identifying good and bad practice; no protection for patients or payers; and, ultimately, no case for investing in the health system.

Performance information offers the transparency that is essential for securing accountability for health system performance, thereby improving the health of citizens and the efficiency of the health system. However, most health systems are in the early stages of performance measurement and still face many challenges in the design and implementation of these schemes. This book brings together some of the world's leading experts on the topic and offers a comprehensive survey of the current state of the art. It highlights the major progress that has been made in many domains but also points to some unresolved debates that require urgent attention from policy-makers and researchers.

This book arises from the WHO European Ministerial Conference on Health Systems: 'Health Systems, Health and Wealth', Tallinn, Estonia, 25–27June 2008. During the conference, the WHO, Member States and a range of international partners signed the Tallinn Charter that provides a strategic framework, guidance for strengthening health systems and a commitment to promoting transparency and accountability.

Following on from Tallinn, the WHO Regional Office for Europe is committed to support Member States in their efforts to develop health system performance assessment. Measurable results and better performance data will help countries to support service delivery institutions in their efforts to learn from experience; strengthen their health intelligence and governance functions; and contribute to the creation of a common ground for cross-country learning. By enabling a wide range of comparisons (for example, voluntary twinning or benchmarking) improved performance measurement should facilitate better performing health systems and thus the ultimate goal of a healthier Europe.

### Acknowledgements

The editors would like to thank all those who contributed their expertise to this volume. The authors responded with great insight, patience and forbearance. Furthermore, the project benefited enormously from the contributions of participants at the WHO Ministerial Conference in Tallinn, Estonia and the associated preparatory meetings. The editors thank WHO and the Estonian Government for organizing and hosting the WHO Ministerial Conference and the pre-conference workshop at which some of the book's material was presented.

Particular thanks go to Isy Vromans, Claudia Bettina Maier and Susan Ahrenst in the WHO Secretariat for planning and organizing the workshop, as well as to Govin Permanand for his guidance and help in writing the WHO policy brief based on the book.

The pre-conference workshop could not have happened without the contributions of Nata Menabde, Niek Klazinga, Enis Bariş, Arnold Epstein, Douglas Conrad, Antonio Duran, David McDaid, Paul Shekelle, Gert Westert, Fabrizio Carinci and Nick Fahy. Sara Allin, Cristina Hernández-Quevedo and Cristina Masseiria would like to thank Julian Le Grand for his comments on an earlier version of Chapter 2.6. In addition, the editors would like to thank Jonathan North for managing the production process along with Caroline White, Jo Woodhead for the copy editing and Peter Powell for the typesetting. Thanks are also due to Chris Harrison and Karen Matthews at Cambridge University Press for their invaluable guidance throughout the project. Finally, we would like to thank Josep Figueras and Suszy Lessof at the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies for their guidance and useful comments.

Nigel Rice and Silvana Robone acknowledge funding from the United Kingdom Economic and Social Research Council under their Public Services Programme.

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