

Psychotherapy of depression saves costs

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In the current issue of P&P a group of German investigators analyzes whether to treat depression with psychotherapy is worth the cost. Major depressive disorder (MDD) causes a massive disease burden worldwide. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is an important treatment approach for depression. Cost-utility analysis (CUA) is a method to support decisions on efficient allocation of resources in health policy. The objective of our study was to systematically review CUA of CBT in the treatment of patients suffering from MDD.

The Authors conducted a systematic literature search in Medline, Embase, PsycINFO and National Health Service Economic Evaluation Database (NHS EED) to identify CUA of CBT for MDD. Cost data were inflated to the year 2011 and converted into USD using purchasing power parities (USD PPP) to ensure comparability of the data. Quality assessment of CUA was performed. Twenty-two studies were included in this systematic review.

Overall, results showed that no study employed a time horizon of more than 5 years. In most studies, individual and group CBT as well as CBT for maintenance showed acceptable incremental cost-utility ratios (

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