

## ABSTRACT

## A Framework for the Prioritization of Health Programmes for Trinidad and Tobago.

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No society can provide all health interventions for all of its citizens. There are now several approaches that policy makers can take towards optimizing resource allocation decisions among treatments, interventions and programmes in health. This study seeks to identify a suitable framework to do this for Trinidad and Tobago. The study begins with a consideration of the basic efficiency, equity, and other criteria that can guide resource allocation decisions in health. A literature review covers the theoretical issues and practical experience in other countries with frameworks based on these criteria and concludes that Programme Budgeting and Marginal Analysis (PBMA) represents an ideal initial framework for Trinidad and Tobago. The literature review continues on to the methods of health programme assessment and identifies Cost Utility Analysis using the EQ-5D descriptive system as the appropriate efficiency criterion to support the PBMA framework. The methods currently used to develop EQ-5D value sets are evaluated and two elicitation approaches are developed that are more suitable for the Caribbean—utilizing small samples and avoiding some of the issues that have been raised with methods used elsewhere. A new visual analogue scale (VAS) protocol, and two discrete choice experiment (DCE) designs are developed and tested on a sample of university students and a representative sample drawn from the general public. The VAS and the D-Efficient DCE are found to perform as well as methods that have been used in other countries involving much larger respondent samples and requiring highly trained interviewers. An EQ-5D Value set is developed for the general public of Trinidad and Tobago using the DCE data. The study ends with a set of recommended PBMA implementation guidelines for Trinidad and Tobago, along with some recommendations concerning the inclusion of equity and process considerations in the PBMA framework.

Key Words: Henry Hugh Bailey; prioritization; Cost Utility Analysis; EQ-5D.