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Standardizing Health Metrics: The Sf-36 Health Survey And Beyond.

Abstract

The widespread adoption of the SF-36 Health Survey, which has been the subject of more than 5,000 publications, proves that a more practical psychometric tool for assessing health outcomes will be more widely used. The synergy that has resulted from using the same tool across population surveys, clinical trials and predictive studies of health care costs, work productivity and mortality leaves little doubt about the advantages of standardizing health metrics and of accumulating guidelines for interpreting what the numbers mean.

In response, not surprisingly, the field of outcomes research appears to be evolving at an increasingly rapid rate. So, what have we learned from using the SF-36 and what should happen next? In this presentation I summarize the problems with today's short-form tools and the strategy that I am adopting, with my collaborators, for maintaining comparability with the best of what we have today while developing and marketing the next generation of health status and outcomes assessment tools.

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