

What are some of the techniques or processes that can be employed to evaluate hea...



techniques for evaluating health policy Evaluation is defined as the assessment of the extent to which an action achieves a valued outcome (Nutbeam, 1998). The process itself also contributes to the value in terms of measurable achievement. Evaluation is also defined as " the use of the scientific method, and the rigorous and systematic collection of research data to assess the effectiveness of organisations, services and programmes such as health service interventions in achieving predefined objectives" (Bowling, 2002). The purpose of evaluation is to test the correctness of an implemented plan and to suggest corrections if deficiencies are encountered.

Grossly, there are three types' measures which are used for evaluation (Gilson et al, 1975). They include ' measures of structure, measures of process and measure of outcomes'. Measures of structure and process evaluate the strategies behind the policy while the measures of outcome assess the effects of the policy on the affected population. Community participation in the evaluation of any health policy is of prime importance and deliberative approaches when used by the concerned authorities are successful in yielding information which leads to the development of effective and appropriate modifications in any health programme (Gregory et al, 2008). A specific health intervention which has definite end points like the success of Polio immunization can be simply evaluated by taking the total figures of immunization doses administered (process measure) and demonstrable data of less occurrence of Polio (outcome measure) (Gilson et al, 1975). On the other hand more complicated policies like evaluating the outcome of preventive strategies for Alzheimer's disease might need more

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through data collection, research and analysis.

Evaluation of a health programme involves the general processes like audit and quality assurance to determine whether predetermined standards have been met (Bowling, 2002). It may be directly focussed on patients in relation to treatment and care, evaluation of specific biochemical indicators or on the measurement of broader quality of life of the patients. Outcome of medical interventions from social, psychological, physical and economic perspectives are measured (Bowling, 2002).

References:

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