

Putting the 'extra' in animal welfare: health maximisation for non-human animals

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What's the issue?

A unique set of features in the (human) medical care industry make **market failure** inevitable (Arrow, 1963).

This (in part) gave rise to non-traditional, non-welfarist approaches to **economic evaluation** and resource allocation in health care.

- Need to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of new pharmaceuticals.
- Practical and theoretical limitations to utility maximisation in health.

In Europe, 'extra-welfarism' became the norm (n.b. NICE).

- **Maximisation of health** within a given budget.
- Health state valuation is an essential feature of the framework.

Markets for animal health care exhibit similar characteristics (Einav et al, 2016).

The extra-welfarist framework has not been evaluated in the context of **animal welfare**.

Why extra-welfarism?

Animal health as a public / merit good

- Alternative **outcomes** and a broader understanding of 'value'.
- Information beyond utility – i.e. provision of services not just because people would pay for them (n.b. animal rights).

Variety of perspectives

- Beyond individual preferences to include other **sources of values**.
- Owner / society / decision-maker.

Cross-sector application

- Allows for **weighting of outcomes** according to characteristics.
- Standardised evaluation across species, with differential valuation.
- Interaction with human health e.g. antimicrobial resistance.

Flexibility

- **Interpersonal comparisons** take us beyond Pareto optimality.
- Allows for trade-offs between individual animals and groups.
- Improvement of average health + reduction of inequalities.

The market for animal health care is as unique as the market for human health care

"What is peculiar about the duck-billed platypus?... many birds have duck-type bills, and lots of animals have furry bodies, and as for laying eggs, this is common among birds and reptiles, and all mammals suckle their young, therefore the duck-billed platypus 'would appear to have no characteristics which differentiate it sharply from other...' etc. I hope my point is clear."

Alan Williams (1961)

Externalities

Provision according to 'need'

Asymmetric information

Uncertain outcomes

High training costs

Licensed professions

Agency relationships

Irregular and unpredictable demand

Inconsistent pricing

Societal expectations

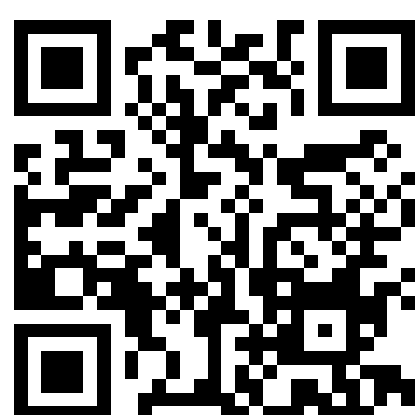
A reflection on end of life care

Common challenges	Extra-welfarist solutions
Improbability of survival gain	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time trade-off technique allows for explicit trading between quality and quantity of life.• Estimate quality-adjusted life years (QALYs).• Euthanasia for health states 'worse than dead'.
Changing priorities / reference points	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on capabilities rather than functioning.• Domain-specific evaluation of a 'good death'.
High costs, on multiple sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Definition of opportunity cost in terms of health displaced avoids low-value care.• General outcomes with broad relevance.
Caring externalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessment of carer quality of life.• Collective valuation of outcomes.
Ethical concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Weighting of outcomes (e.g. 'fair innings').• Allocation according to need / severity.

Where should we go?

Extra-welfarism may be a valuable framework for the evaluation of animal health care

1. A deliberative process is needed to identify **objects of value** and to determine the evaluative space in animal health (Sampson, 2016).
 - i. These may differ in companion / livestock / wildlife contexts.
2. Mixed methods research to understand **priorities** and ethical principles across sectors and perspectives.
 - i. For pharmaceutical (and other health care) evaluation.
 - ii. For policy analysis.
3. Foster **collaboration** between economists and veterinary researchers.
 - i. Assessment and validation of existing tools.
 - ii. Development of new tools for animal health state valuation.



References

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