Results The overall level of obesity among Egyptian women rises from 30% in 1995 (urban=33%; rural=27%) to 40% in 2008 (urban=43%; rural=34%). Among urban women, in 1995, the prevalence of obesity is lower in the group without education (24%; 95% CI 19 to 29) in comparison to the group with secondary education (33%; 95% CI 29 to 37). In 2008, the prevalence of obesity has risen in a statistically significant manner in both groups compared with 1995. In addition, the prevalence in the group without education (45%; 95% CI 41 to 50) appears to have exceeded the prevalence in those with secondary education (41%; 95% CI 38 to 44). Although there is overlap in the CI at the 95% level, the overall trend suggests that the social gradient in obesity may be reversing, as predicted elsewhere.

Conclusion Egypt provides a dynamic model of the reversal of the social gradient of obesity. Further analysis of Demographic and Health Surveys using other indicators of socio-economic status and risk factors for obesity such as consumption of fruit and vegetables may shed light on the processes behind the probable gradient reversal, and the factors putting the poor at increased risk of obesity. This is important in informing urgent prevention efforts at a population level.

Policy

NEWS MEDIA COVERAGE OF NICE’S DECISIONS ON NEW HEALTH TECHNOLOGIES

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Objective This project aims to: (1) describe the frequency of news coverage in mass media related to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) draft or final guidance; (2) analyse the types of evidence and sources of information that was quoted in the news; (3) compare whether the patterns of coverage differ between media.

Design A survey of news articles related to decisions made by NICE’s Health Technology Appraisal committees was conducted. Relevant news articles were retrieved from websites of major UK news media. Inclusion criteria were: (1) news articles related to specific NICE decision(s); (2) articles were written by a reporter/writer/editor of the news media. Articles that mentioned NICE for other reasons, columns and readers’ letters were excluded.

Setting Major UK news media, including national newspapers and news channels.


Main outcome measure The following data were collected by one author and checked by another: nature of guidance (disease area; positive or negative recommendation), use of generic or brand name and source/type of evidence that was quoted. Descriptive statistics were compiled and comparisons between types/sources of news media were made using χ² test.

Results 329 articles were included. BBC, Daily Mail and The Telegraph published more than 50 articles related to health technology appraisal whereas ITN and News of the World published less than 10 articles during the 2-year period assessed. Two-thirds (220/329) of the articles were related to negative recommendations. There was significant difference in the proportion of articles relating to negative recommendations between individual sources of media (p=0.001) but not between types of media (p=0.236). Cancer (53%), neurology—mainly Alzheimer’s disease (22%), ophthalmology (13%) and rheumatology (10%) were most frequently covered areas. 58% (192/329) of the articles quoted only brand names without mentioning generic names of the drugs. Approximately 50% of articles included statements of effectiveness without referring to the source of evidence and another 40% did not describe clinical effectiveness. 24% of articles did not mention drug costs or cost-effectiveness.

Conclusion NICE decisions on new drugs, particularly negative recommendations, attracted significant media attention but the coverage and contents varied substantially between individual sources.
options. The cost-effectiveness of each chosen option will then be assessed.

Conclusions We have developed a provisional framework for developing policy options, initially for the prevention of CVD and diabetes. This is based on local epidemiological data, an assessment of the socio-political-cultural context and cost effectiveness. Policy-makers are involved throughout, and will be presented with costed policy options along with their potential consequences. Implemented options will then be evaluated. The framework represents a “policy-effectiveness-feasibility loop”, analogous to Tugwell’s clinical effectiveness loop. The impact of this approach, and its potential generalisability, will be rigorously evaluated.


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Objectives To assess the effect of social spending on population health.

Design Multivariate regression analysis was performed to investigate the relationship between age-standardised cause-specific mortality rates and social spending. Mortality data were collected from the European Health for All Database 2009 edition. Social spending per capita in purchasing-power-parity were taken from the OECD Social Expenditure Database (including family support, old-age pensions, healthcare, unemployment benefits, active labour market programmes, and support for people with disabilities). These relationships were compared with gross domestic product per capita (GDP), general government spending per capita (including prisons, education and defence), and healthcare spending per capita. Models also included controls for country- and period-fixed effects and expenditure was adjusted for inflation and purchasing power parity.

Setting 13 EU countries, 1980–2003: Belgium (only to 1998), Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

Participants n/a.

Main outcome measure Age-standardised all-cause and cause-specific mortality rates.

Results Each additional US$100 increase in social spending per capita is significantly associated with a 0.99% reduction in all-cause, age-standardised mortality rates (p<0.001). Healthcare spending per capita had no effect on all-cause mortality rates. Consistent with previous findings, we observed each US$100 increase in GDP was associated with a 0.28% fall in all-cause mortality rates (p<0.001), about one-fourth of the magnitude of the association of social welfare with mortality. After adjusting for social welfare spending, the association of GDP with all-cause mortality was reduced by over half (β=−0.11%, p=0.004). Healthcare spending was not associated with mortality. However, higher social welfare spending was significantly associated with reductions in alcohol-related deaths, cardiovascular disease and tuberculosis; findings which are biologically plausible.

Conclusion Reducing social spending could increase mortality rates. The majority of the benefits of wealth to health appears to be determined by the extent to which resources are invested in social welfare and healthcare systems. Investments in social protection seem to have greater protective effects on health than investments in health care. Stronger links between health and labour ministries offer an opportunity to take advantage of such positive synergies, especially important to protecting health during times of austerity.

Ethnicity

054 ANOTHER HISPANIC PARADOX? THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF HISPANIC COMMUNITIES FOR NON-HISPANIC MOTHERS AND INFANT

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Background and Objectives In the US, Hispanic mothers have rates of infant mortality and low birthweight that are comparable to non-Hispanic White mothers despite being more likely to live in socio-economically deprived areas. This well known phenomenon is