CASP Checklist: 12 questions to help you make sense of an Economic Evaluation

How to use this appraisal tool: Three broad issues need to be considered when appraising an economic evaluation study:

- Is the economic evaluation valid?  
- How were consequences and costs assessed and compared?  
- Will the results help in purchasing for local people?

The 12 questions on the following pages are designed to help you think about these issues systematically. The first two questions are screening questions and can be answered quickly. If the answer to both is “yes”, it is worth proceeding with the remaining questions. There is some degree of overlap between the questions, you are asked to record a “yes”, “no” or “can’t tell” to most of the questions. A number of italicised prompts are given after each question. These are designed to remind you why the question is important. Record your reasons for your answers in the spaces provided.

About: These checklists were designed to be used as educational pedagogic tools, as part of a workshop setting, therefore we do not suggest a scoring system. The core CASP checklists (randomised controlled trial & systematic review) were based on JAMA 'Users’ guides to the medical literature 1994 (adapted from Guyatt GH, Sackett DL, and Cook DJ), and piloted with health care practitioners.

For each new checklist, a group of experts were assembled to develop and pilot the checklist and the workshop format with which it would be used. Over the years overall adjustments have been made to the format, but a recent survey of checklist users reiterated that the basic format continues to be useful and appropriate.


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# Section A: Is the economic evaluation valid?

1. Was a well-defined question posed?
   - Yes
   - Can’t Tell
   - No

   **HINT:** Is it clear what the authors are trying to achieve
   - what is the perspective
   - How many options are compared
   - are both costs and consequences considered
   - what is the time horizon

   **Comments:**

2. Was a comprehensive description of the competing alternatives given?
   - Yes
   - Can’t Tell
   - No

   **HINT:** is there a clear decision tree (or similar given):
   - can you tell who did what, to whom, where and how often

   **Comments:**

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**Is it worth continuing?**
3. **Does the paper provide evidence that the programme would be effective?**
   (i.e. would the programme do more good than harm?)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Can’t Tell</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**HINT:** Consider:
- if an RCT or systematic review was used;
- if not, consider how strong the evidence was (economic evaluations frequently have to integrate different types of knowledge stemming from different study designs)

**Comments:**

4. **Were the effects of the intervention identified, measured and valued appropriately?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Can’t Tell</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
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</table>

**HINT:** Effects can be measured in natural units (e.g. years of life) or more complex units (e.g. years adjusted for quality of life such as QALYS) or monetary equivalents of the benefit gained (e.g. $)

**Comments:**

**Section B: How were consequences and costs assessed and compared?**

5. **Were all important and relevant resources required, and health outcome costs for each alternative identified, measured in appropriate units and valued credibly?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Can’t Tell</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
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**HINT:** Identified?
- remember the perspective being taken
**HINT:** measured accurately?
- appropriate units may be hours of nursing time, number of physician visits, years-of-life gained etc.
**HINT:** valued credibly?
- are the values realistic
- have opportunity costs been considered
6. Were costs and consequences adjusted for different times at which they occurred (discounting)?

- Yes
- Can't Tell
- No

Comments:

7. What were the results of the evaluation?

- Yes
- Can't Tell
- No

HINT: Consider
- what is the bottom line
- what units were used (e.g. cost/life year gained, cost/QALY, net benefit)

Comments:

8. Was an incremental analysis of the consequences and cost of alternatives performed?

- Yes
- Can't Tell
- No

Comments:
9. Was an adequate sensitivity analysis performed?

- Yes
- Can’t Tell
- No

HINT: Consider
- if all the main areas of uncertainty were considered by changing the estimate of the variable and
- looking at how this would change the result of the economic evaluation

Comments:

Section C: Will the results help in purchasing for local people?

10. Is the programme likely to be equally effective in your context or setting?

- Yes
- Can’t Tell
- No

HINT: Consider whether
- the patients covered by the review could be sufficiently different to your population to cause concern
- your local setting is likely to differ much from that of the review

Comments:

11. Are the costs translatable to your setting?

- Yes
- Can’t Tell
- No

Comments:
12. Is it worth doing in your setting?

- Yes
- Can’t Tell
- No

Comments: