Large Scale Health Applications

Large Scale Applications cover research topics that involve the development, implementation, and subsequent use of large datasets that include the EQ-5D, or an application of the EQ-5D in a setting with a wide scope. Such data are likely to be collected as part of a routine process, and aim to cover patient or regional populations. The term ‘application’ may be a little misleading: there is a lot of research in optimization methods of the use of health status measures in quality processes, in the validity of widening its use, and in methods to incorporate EQ-5D information in indicators of (ill) health.

Broadly, we identify two fields of application:

**Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs) programmes**

PROMs are sometimes defined very broadly, but the remit of the LSA covers the use of EQ-5D as a PROM in large scale data defined by a patient population and/or by providers. The patient population could be defined by condition, treatment; the provider can be the primary care organisation, or the hospital. In the typical case of PROMs, the focus of interest is the performance of the provider, taking case mix into account. The data could be held by individual hospitals, clinics, or primary care practices, by others such as regional or national health bodies or insurance organisations, or as part of national or regional disease or other patient registries. We are especially interested in research proposals in the following areas:

- Implementing systems for analysing and reporting EQ-5D as PROM

  The interest here is in specific issues related to EQ-5D (its generic nature, hence the use of additional condition-specific instruments or not), the analytical formats (what statistical methods are used to highlight under-or over-performers in terms of EQ-5D), and the details on presentation and communication (how are EQ-5D results, descriptive and/or index values, transformed into actions for improvement; for patient vs. provider). Having available successful formats of the complete performance process might establish EQ-5D as routine component in PROMs programmes.

- Examining how PROMs are used

  Our focus is on their use in three areas: quality control at large; performance management (also at the managerial and individual provider level); and individual patient decision making. In general this deals with comparing EQ-5D results with an estimated expectation, but at this stage little is known
what and when its use is effective and accepted by all stakeholders. Even the methods to measure any degree of success are underdeveloped, so there is much room for improvement and innovation.

- **Examining the impact of PROMs**

There is a serious lack of information about the impact that PROMs have on outcomes, such as evidence that they have resulted in changes in, for example, clinical practice, hospital performance and the health of patient populations. Demonstrating such impact is difficult (with any measure), so we are especially interested in innovative ways to quantify this, also in the context of EQ-5D versus specific instruments.

It is essential that the research that we fund is primarily about the specific use of the EQ-5D, rather than including the EQ-5D as an incidental component of a PROMs programme. In balancing shorter vs. longer instruments, generic vs. specific instruments, we want to know whether EQ-5D can do the job, perhaps with a minimal extension (e.g. a bolt-on).

We are interested in how the EQ-5D can be used in combination with other data collected within a PROMS programme, including other PROMs and Patient Reported Experience Measures (PREMs). Similarly, it may be informative to learn about the extent to which additional condition/treatment specific PROMs are stated to be needed (and implemented), and whether this truly resulted in valuable additional information (which may also provide useful evidence for the bolt-on initiative).

**Population health data**

This application covers datasets that attempt to measure the health of general populations that include EQ-5D data. Currently we are interested in studies that measure inequalities in health and health care using the EQ-5D, including the relationship of inequalities to social and individual determinants of health, and specific policies (local, national). If EQ-5D is contrasted with other measures of morbidity, properties of EQ-5D might be explored in this context.

We strongly support projects which collaborate with the EuroQol Foundation’s collaborative programme agreements, currently in Sweden and Canada, with more to come. For advice or guidance in developing your research proposal, please feel free to contact the Co-chairs of the LSA WG (info listed at the end of this document).