

Addressing methodological concerns in analysing direct cost: Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

We are writing to express our concerns regarding an article published in your esteemed journal by Hayder et al, titled "Direct medical cost related to the management of pemphigus: A pilot Tunisian study" (1). We appreciate the efforts made by the authors, but we have identified a significant flaw in their study.

The authors state that they employed an annual discount rate of 3% in accordance with the INEAS guideline. These guidelines aim to assess the pharmaceutical industry in the submission of a drug evaluation dossier to the INEAS (2). This discount rate is intended to be applied to future costs (future drug). Indeed, costs and effects anticipated to arise in the future are deemed to hold lesser value than those experienced presently.

Furthermore, the authors referenced public tariffs from the years 2006 and 2008 for their calculations (3,4), which may introduce a gap since the study was conducted between 2015 and 2019. This temporal discrepancy in timing poses a potential source of bias in the cost analysis. In fact, costs should be from the current (or previous) year, adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Price Index provided by the Central Bank of Tunisia (2).

Finally, given that the study was carried out over a five-year period, the costs calculated at the beginning may differ from those at the end. This may shed light on the kinetics of pemphigus management costs.

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References

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