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Does health spending need to outpace GDP per head?

Abstract. Decisions on health spending depend ultimately on the valuation of human life in the country concerned. Previous attempts in the UK have been linked to the one-size-fits-all “value of a prevented fatality” (VPF), now shown to be based on a fundamentally flawed method. An objective and validated alternative is available in the J-value (J for “judgment”), which addresses the improved life expectancy a treatment offers. The J-value sheds important light on what Man chooses to spend on life-extending measures, allowing lessons to be drawn for the desirable relationship between GDP and spending on health.

Keywords: economics, GDP, health, J-value, life expectancy, life quality index

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