Reviewer's report

Title: Market failure, policy failure and other distortions in chronic disease markets

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Reviewer: Barry Popkin

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Market failure, policy failure and other distortions in Chronic disease market

Overview: This is a fairly standard uncreative perspective on the rationale for government intervention.

First there are other issues—externalities for one—ignored
Second prevention is a key issue but much of the cost of prevention weighs on the consumer in terms of time costs. This entire issue is ignored.

Finally there are the issues of political power and influence on costing and service delivery. The drug and hospital sectors and current curative medical societies have a lot at stake in the current pricing. Who cares about the alternative world? How does this enter in a democracy? This element must enter the new political economy of public finance dialogue

Specifics

1. The writing is jargony and wordy. There is an enormous amount of paring that can be made.

2. Discuss the key chronics—obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and other elements of heart disease and the key preventive aspects of the major cancers[see for example for a layout of preventive options this volume--(WCRF 2007 ). The authors need to go beyond simplistic words to some depth about the key preventive issues—diet, activity, smoking cessation for these diseases—and think what prevents the medical care and entire health care financing system from pushing them.

3. The intro should focus on all high income countries—the minor variations in the systems does not beget the huge costs for medical care in most of these nations, the large rates of obesity [e.g. the UK,. Australia and the US all have about 2-3rds overweight adults—see a recent paper on this I saw by popkin]

References

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests