Supplementary Online Content


eAppendix. Face-to-Face Time Trade-off Elicitation Technique

This supplementary material has been provided by the authors to give readers additional information about their work.
eAppendix

Face to Face Time Trade-off (TTO) Elicitation Technique

We presented a total of three health scenarios in order to allow subjects to think about how their medical conditions affected their life. The first scenario used paralysis as the reference health condition to familiarize subjects with the TTO elicitation technique. Following this scenario, two additional scenarios were conducted using two different reference health conditions 2) all the subject’s medical problems and 3) life with all medical problems but without the symptom of interest (e.g. pain or pruritus). This final (third) scenario was used to generate the subject’s health utility score for either pain or pruritus. The subject’s hypothetical life expectancy was used as the time horizon in the computerized utility instrument. An example of the TTO task with paralysis as the reference health condition is provided below.

In this example, the subject is a 50 year old female with chronic pruritus secondary to her psoriasis. She has an average life expectancy of 80 years. The trained interviewers were given a script and instructed to guide the subject as follows:

**Interviewer:** Imagine you are paralyzed from the neck down. Your first choice is whether you want to live the rest of your life for 30 years with paralysis or live without paralysis for 30 years and give up nothing. Which do you prefer or are the choices the same?

**Subject:** I choose the second option where I would live 30 more years without paralysis.

**Interviewer:** Your next choice is whether you want to live the rest of your life for 30 years with paralysis or live without paralysis for 0 years and give up 30 years of life. In other words, you'd die this year without any pain or suffering. Which do you prefer or are the choices the same to you?

**Subject:** I do not want to die now. I choose the first option and would rather live 30 more years without paralysis.
**Interviewer**: Your next choice is whether you would want to live for the rest of your life paralyzed for 30 years or live without paralysis for 29 years and give up 1 year of life. Which do you prefer or are the choices the same to you?

**Subject**: I would want to give up 1 year of life to have 29 years without paralysis. I choose the second option.

**Interviewer**: Your next choice is whether you want to live the rest of your life paralyzed for 30 years or live without paralysis for 28 years and give up 2 years of your life. Which do you prefer or are the choices same to you?

**Subject**: I would give up 2 years of my life to live without paralysis. I choose the second option.

A converging ‘ping pong’ technique was used by the computerized utility instrument to titrate down to the subject’s point of indifference. The iterations for each scenario were continued until subjects found the two choices equally good.