

‘Three essays on experimental health economics’

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Abstract

Coordination is the key to the success of any organization. In the healthcare sector, departments with higher level of coordination result in greater promptness and quality of care and lower mortality rates. Sharing of codes of conduct and procedures has been shown to reduce postoperative pain and improve postoperative functioning. For these reasons, enhancing coordination between health professionals is becoming central in many countries healthcare policy, including Italy. However, despite the various attempts to encourage care coordination, Italian health sector continues to be characterized by a high level of fragmentation which led to a waste of 2,58 millions of euros in 2017. In this study, I investigate for the first time the level of coordination among the Italian health professionals in the context of the hospitals of Reggio Calabria, by using a simple, portable and incentive compatible tool such as the coordination game (Krupka-Weber norm elicitation task), widely adopted in previous literature, though in other settings. Upon being provided with three clinical vignettes, physicians have been asked to evaluate the appropriateness of each of the possible actions to match the modal judgement. Data show that the average frequency of coordination across the experiment is 52% and that coordination increases when physicians do often exchange opinions and share positive feedbacks with colleagues. In addition, the presence of a leader in the medical department, facilitates coordination. Evidence provided by this study shows that coordination in the Italian health sector could be missing, which makes the need for action all the more acute.