

## ***Contemporary Issues***

### ***Editorial Comment***

Health status measures are standardized questionnaires used to assess patient-level acuity across broad domains, including symptoms, physical functioning, work and social activities, and mental well-being.<sup>1</sup> A measure can be disease-specific or generic for any condition, and it can generate a profile of scores or a single index. A score can be based on personal preference (eg, the EuroQol EQ-5D) or, more usually, on arbitrary scoring procedures (eg, the SF-36 Short Form Health Survey, which assumes equal weighting for most items).<sup>2</sup>

Preference-based health status measures are known as multi-attribute utility scales.<sup>3</sup> These preference-based measures produce a single index score for each state of health examined and take on values of 1 or less, where 1 is equivalent to full health and 0 is death. These scores, called *health state utilities*, are used to calculate what are known as *quality-adjusted life-years*.<sup>4</sup> Herein, Dr. McAlearney and colleagues detail the application of health status measures, the technical differences between instruments, and a framework for future research.

I trust the readership will find this article to be of interest and value.

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### **REFERENCES**

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