

SEMINAR ANNOUNCEMENT

"The Impact of a Billing System on Healthcare Utilization: the Case of the Thai Civil Servant Medical Benefit Scheme"

Nada Wasi

Puey Ungphakorn Institute for Economic Research,
Bank of Thailand

Jirawat Panpiemras

Bangkok Bank PCL

Wanwiphang Manachotphong

Department of Economics, Thammasat University

Abstract - While a large number of health insurance studies have found that an increase in cost-sharing reduces healthcare demand, few have investigated the effects of a policy change operating through a non-price channel. This paper examines how a billing process can affect healthcare utilization given no change in price. Specifically, we look at the launch of the Direct Billing Payment program (DBP) of the Thai Civil Servant Medical Benefit Scheme. In the past, although outpatient care was essentially free, its beneficiaries had to pay at the point of service and have their money reimbursed later. The DBP allows hospitals to charge the government directly. Using patient-level panel data from a large regional hospital, we find that the new billing system affects utilization through multiple channels. First, it increases the number of outpatient visits. Second, for each visit treatment costs and the share of the prescription drug charge are higher. These impacts are found to be persistent over time, although less so in the case of number of visits. In addition, our analysis suggests that the likely cash constrained patients increase their utilization more proportionally.

November 12, 2018

10.00 – 12.00 a.m.

5th Floor Meeting Room, Faculty of Economics,

Thammasat University (Tha Prachan Campus)

FREE/NO RESERVATION REQUIRED

www.econ.tu.ac.th