

## Editorial

### Editorial statement on negative findings

The Editors of the health economics journals named below believe that *well-designed, well-executed empirical studies that address interesting and important problems in health economics utilize appropriate data in a sound and creative manner, and deploy innovative conceptual and methodological approaches compatible with each journal's distinctive emphasis and scope* and have potential scientific and publication merit, regardless of whether such studies' empirical findings do or do not reject null hypotheses that may be specified. As such, the Editors wish to articulate clearly that the submission to our journals of studies that meet these standards is encouraged.

We believe that publication of such studies provides properly balanced perspectives on the empirical issues at hand. Moreover, we believe that this should reduce the incentives to engage in two forms of behavior that we feel ought to be discouraged in the spirit of scientific advancement:

1. Authors withholding from submission of such studies that are otherwise meritorious, but whose main empirical findings are highly likely 'negative' (e.g. null hypotheses not rejected).
2. Authors engaging in 'data mining', 'specification searching' and other such empirical strategies with the goal of producing results that are ostensibly 'positive' (e.g. null hypotheses reported as rejected).

Henceforth, we will remind our referees of this editorial philosophy at the time they are invited to review papers. As always, the ultimate responsibility for acceptance or rejection of a submission rests with each journal's Editors.

*American Journal of Health Economics*  
*European Journal of Health Economics*  
*Forum for Health Economics & Policy*  
*Health Economics Policy and Law*  
*Health Economics Review*  
*Health Economics*  
*International Journal of Health Economics and Management*  
*Journal of Health Economics*