Biopsychosocial law and healthcare reform: The effects of economic recession on interdisciplinary treatment cost

Presidential Paper Presentation to the American Psychological Association National Conference, Orlando, 2012

The effects of economic recession on interdisciplinary treatment costs

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Keywords: Biopsychosocial laws, Interdisciplinary treatment, Economic recession

METHODS

This study replicated the previously published study of Biopsychosocial Impact Study (BISI) and BESS (Bruns et al., 2010; Bruns and Warren, 2011), and applied to a larger number of subjects. The core of the BISI is a random sample of 22,065 patients in Colorado included on an annual basis, for an estimated additional 3.2 million (total 31.8 million) patients annually.

RESULTS

During the years 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009, the rate of the mean medical cost per case (MMC) in Colorado was 3.9% versus 3.4% and 3.0% respectively. In comparison, during the same years, the national rate was 2.6% (Bruns and Warren, 2011). The core of the BISI was the medical treatment costs for 6.1%, 8.0%, and 1.1% respectively. This was consistent with positive moral hazard effects.

CONCLUSIONS

These data suggested that Colorado’s medical inflation rates reported during recessions may be explainable, at least in part, by moral hazard effects.

The effects of economic recession on interdisciplinary treatment costs are complex. However, if healthcare reform is to be successful, it will be necessary to understand the economics of interdisciplinary care.