

Demand for health care services – The effect of franchise levels on health care utilization

Background

In the Swiss healthcare system, insured persons have a franchise in their mandatory health insurance equivalent to the amount of money that needs to be paid by the insured, i.e., the amount which is not reimbursed or paid for by the health insurance. Consequently, the insurance company only pays costs exceeding the franchise. The insured can set the franchise between CHF 300 and CHF 2500. A lower franchise decreases the deductible but increases the monthly insurance premium. Insured with higher expected healthcare expenses (i.e., insured with chronic diseases) and insured with higher risk-aversion opt for a lower franchise. For patients with a higher franchise, on the other hand, there might be an incentive not to waste own resources on unnecessary healthcare services.

Data

Due to an ongoing project with a health insurance company, administrative patient data is available at our chair. The data includes the utilization of healthcare services over several years and insured persons' franchise level.

Possible research topic « *The effect of franchise levels on health care utilization* »

As bachelor or master thesis, it could be investigated, how (unexpectedly) exceeding the franchise changes patient behavior and health care utilization. A hypothesis would be that exceeding the franchise would lead to higher patient demand for health care services and thus higher spending as the incentive of the franchise to utilize health care resources economically no longer exists.

If you are interested in and/or have questions about the above-mentioned topic area and would like to write your thesis at our chair, please contact Johannes.Cordier@unisg.ch and Justus.Vogel@unisg.ch. You can also propose your own research topic, and we will be happy to advise you. Generally, we can supervise all students of management, finance, economics, and medicine (Joint Medical Master).

We look forward to receiving your exposé with a proposal for a concrete research question, methodology, and approach!