Levels and types of policy questions
Policy questions are:

- Related to a choice among courses of action
- Related to questioning or clarifying one or more issues in a policy statement
Health Services Research Questions are

- A subset of health policy questions
- Directly related to the structure, process or outcomes of one or more health services or health structures
Related to a choice among courses of action

- If I do X, Y or Z, what are the likely consequences?
- When X, Y or Z was tried in the past, what was the experience?
- I want to accomplish Goal 1 for Group A, but I need to know more about them, their experiences
## Questioning or clarifying one or more issues in a policy statement

- In order to accomplish ____,
- it is the policy of ______
- that ___
- should do ____
- for _____
- at ______ cost.
Basic research question forms:

- How much did this policy really cost?
- Was the stated goal really achieved?
- Is X the best actor?
- Is Y the best action?
- Is Z the best recipient?
- Was the approach put together/managed most efficiently?
- Why this policy and not some other?
Asking policy questions:

- overall policy questions
- Action choice questions
- Actor questions
- resource questions
- Outcome questions
- Cost related
Overall policy questions

- what is range of possible choices
- who is defining the range
- what are the defining factors in choice
Action choice questions (overall, or method)

- what is being done
- what else could be done
- how do two or more actions compare
Actor questions:

- who is doing this
- who could be doing this
- how do two or more actors compare
Resource questions:

- what has to be present for this to work
- what variations can be made
Outcome questions

- what is the range of results
- do results vary with changes in actor or actions
Cost related:

- what is the cost
- what is the cost compared to the benefit
- what is the cost compared to other choices
- willingness to pay
Typical Research Designs:

- Case Studies
- Survey Research
- Multivariate analysis of administrative/clinical data bases
- Experimental models (e.g. Rand experiment)
- Historical/biographical studies
- Ethnography or grounded field
Specific populations frequently of interest

- Uninsured--perception that they drive costs and aren’t adequately cared for
- Underserved--perception that they get too much high end care
- Poor--perception that they are denied access while Medicaid costs too much
- Children--societal investment,
Populations of interest, cont.

- Elderly--perceived high out of pocket cost, growing cost of Medicare
- Women--perception of bias in access and quality
- Race/Ethnic minorities--perception of bias in access and quality; overlap with poor, uninsured, underserved
From cross-cutting health perspective:

- Understanding components of costs and economic incentives
  - Unbundling
- Tracking shifts in location and components of care
  - Cataract surgery
- Technology introduction and control
  - CABG
Cross-cutting, cont.

- Health professions intersections
  - ANP and PA
- Impact of social or physical environment
  - Inner city ‘doughnuts’
- Outcomes
  - 5 year cancer survival rates
Blendon, et al

- question
- design Polling (survey)
- population
- sampling
- questions
- findings
- discussion
References for next week