

# Preface

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During the next decade, the development of new therapies will be stimulated by an increased understanding of disease processes at the genetic level and the application of biotechnology discoveries. The use of these new clinical agents in practice will be increasingly determined not only by their effectiveness, but also by the cost of the technology and the impact on patients' quality of life. In essence, the rising costs of health care will force decisions to be made regarding both the effectiveness of the technology and the overall cost implications. Therefore, the purpose of this book is to present various techniques, tools, and strategies to evaluate the economic contribution of specific drug therapies at a policy level and for individual patient needs and preferences. This information is relevant for researchers, practitioners, administrators, and students in health care. However, the major audience for this book is the introductory student. It should not be considered a text for the advanced level student of pharmacoeconomics.

Additionally, we hope that this book will further stimulate pharmacists, physicians, and others to generate more pharmacoeconomic research and reports to more adequately apply these principles to the prevention and treatment of disease. We believe that pharmacoeconomics as a discipline will not become a part of the mainstream of pharmacy education and practice until application of the research data takes place at the patient care level. The "genomics era" has great potential to enable practitioners to customize therapy, furthering the need for pharmacoeconomic analysis. The application of pharmacoeconomics to clinical practice and pharmaceutical care will be crucial to pharmacy's success in our future healthcare delivery system.

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