



# Towards a Multi-sectoral Approach to Population Health: A Scoping Review of Cross-sectoral Evaluations of Health Interventions

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## Abstract

**Background** Health interventions, particularly those targeted at health promotion and disease prevention, often have a range of impacts that span beyond the healthcare sector. Making the case for investment in these interventions may require an inventory of costs and outcomes across multiple sectors beyond the health sector.

**Objectives** To perform a scoping review of economic evaluations that used existing approaches for cross-sectoral evaluation of healthcare interventions and provide an understanding of how these approaches have been applied in empirical studies.

**Methods** Scoping reviews, a type of evidence synthesis, follow a systematic approach to map evidence on a topic and identify main concepts, theories, sources, and knowledge gaps. We used the PRISMA extension for scoping reviews and a pearl-growing search approach. A forward citation searching in Google Scholar and Web of Science of an initial set of selected papers that recommend cross-sectoral evaluations of health interventions was performed, complemented by free-word search in Google and Google Scholar. Cross-sectoral evaluations of health interventions that consider costs and outcomes beyond healthcare were included.

**Results** From the 204 identified cross-sectoral evaluation studies of health interventions, the vast majority (85%) were cost-effectiveness and cost-utility analyses taking the societal costing perspective. Other approaches included social return on investment (6%), cost-benefit analysis (4%), cost study (3%), and combined approaches (2%). Two-thirds of the studies evaluated a treatment-based intervention while the remainder evaluated preventive interventions. In addition to healthcare, studies evaluated mostly costs related to productivity and non-direct medical costs, e.g., transport costs. Outcomes were focused on clinical results and patient-reported health and well-being.

**Conclusions** There is a limited number of published cross-sectoral evaluations of health interventions despite the need of public and private investors for global value assessment. Issuing guidance on performing cross-sectoral evaluations and highlighting their need by health technology assessment agencies may improve existing evidence and therefore novel forms of investment in population health interventions.

## 1 Introduction

Health interventions, particularly those targeted at health promotion and disease prevention, often have a range of impacts that span beyond the healthcare sector. Furthermore, other sectors outside the healthcare system (e.g., education, environment, employment, social security) can have an impact and contribute to health. However, reimbursement decision making of healthcare services is predominantly based on their clinical benefit and specific cost-effectiveness

relative to directly comparable interventions [1, 2]. Some jurisdictions (e.g., the Netherlands, Portugal, Norway, Denmark, Sweden Spain, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, etc.) advise a broader focus of economic evaluations of healthcare interventions. However, in most cases, there remains a paradox of a continued use of a narrow focus of intervention assessment despite well-documented impacts outside the healthcare sector [3, 4], which is especially observed for evaluations of public health and prevention interventions [5]. In addition, a barrier for investing in health interventions can occur when their benefits are realised in other sectors [6], therefore creating misaligned incentives between payers

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## Key Points

Despite the need expressed by public and private investors especially across non-health sectors for global value assessment and recommendations by HTA bodies, the number of cross-sectoral evaluations of health interventions remains limited.

A clear guidance accompanied by a “multiple sector impact inventory” with proposed methods for measurement and valuation of outcomes and costs in sectors beyond health could facilitate the improved adoption of cross-sectoral economic evaluations of health interventions.

and beneficiaries, referred to as ‘wrong pocket problem’. The need for cross-sectoral evaluations is more apparent in local decision making, where local authorities (e.g., counties or municipalities) are responsible for comprehensive services related to public health, social care, schooling, housing, etc. [7].

Approaches have been developed to facilitate cross-sectoral evaluation, i.e., the assessment of the impact of healthcare interventions in sectors outside healthcare (e.g., workforce, education, criminal justice, and environment), including social return on investment (SROI), and cost-benefits analysis (CBA). Yet each of these individual approaches has its own challenges for implementation. These methodological challenges include difficult valuation of opportunity cost, lost productivity due to morbidity and unrelated downstream costs, and double counting of outcomes, to list a few. Furthermore, additional data challenges can occur from a lack of available data on all relevant outcomes and costs, or a lack of country-specific unit costs outside the healthcare sector [8, 9]. The latter was documented in a recent review for prevention of alcohol addiction, which found that the challenge of consistently and accurately measuring non-health costs was still prevalent in several studies [10]. Insufficient and unsystematic reporting of the methods and results in studies employing such evaluation approaches as well as the lack of standardisation in reporting of societal impact have been observed [7, 11]. To mitigate these challenges, health technology assessment (HTA) agencies in some countries (e.g., the Netherlands [12]) recommend the adoption of the societal costing perspective in economic evaluations of health services and interventions to include productivity gains, reduction in informal care costs, expanding the consideration of spill-over effects, e.g., change of caregiver quality of life, and future unrelated medical costs. Nevertheless, there are still many effects of prevention outside the

healthcare sector that are not yet addressed and the spill-over effects to specific sectors that could be considered in investment decisions are not explicitly incorporated (e.g., the employment sector in which productivity gains are taking place).

Applied studies aimed at cross-sectoral evaluation of preventive and health promotion interventions need improvement to ensure that they are theoretically sound and feasible. Coupled with the challenges mentioned previously, this may highlight the need for guidance on how to perform such evaluations to inform investment decisions across sectors. Robust evidence from cross-sectoral evaluations would facilitate the decision-making process as stakeholders’ resource investment and impact on local budgets will be considered, and offset against local priorities and needs, in addition to valuing the outcomes that are relevant to local populations.

To contribute towards the development of such guidance, we aimed to perform a scoping review of economic evaluations that used existing approaches for cross-sectoral evaluation of healthcare interventions and provide an understanding of how these approaches have been applied in empirical studies.

## 2 Methods

A scoping review of empirical evaluations of health interventions that incorporated outcomes and costs in sectors beyond healthcare was performed to provide an overview of underlying evaluation approaches. The review adhered to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR) guidelines [13].

### 2.1 Search and Selection of Sources

A search method, previously described by Hinde et al [14, 15] as “pearl-growing”, was applied to review the literature on cross-sectoral evaluations of health interventions. The rationale of this search method is that instead of the traditional literature search of combining key terms and Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) in a search strategy to be used in search engines, the search will start with a pool of relevant papers (called by Hinde et al. [14, 15] “initial pearls”). This pool constitutes a more targeted approach. In pearl-growing, the pool of literature is grown through both references and citations until all relevant papers have been retrieved. Forward citation searching was used in this review. Hinde et al. [14, 15] have previously demonstrated that pearl-growing resulted in the identification of a number of papers comparable to the number identified by traditional

search. A search using pearl-growing is dependent on the expertise of authors on the published literature rather than the searcher's knowledge of applicable terms.

In this review, a set of initial papers was used, which included the recommendations on economic evaluations in healthcare by:

(a) The Second Panel on Cost-Effectiveness in Health and Medicine that recommends the use of an "impact inventory" in order to capture outcomes and opportunity costs across all relevant sectors [16].

(b) Publications of the European Union (EU)-funded PECUNIA project, which aimed to establish standardised costing and outcome assessment measures across the EU to optimise national healthcare provision and enhance efficient and evidence-based collaborative care models and inter-sectoral funding. Initial papers were identified through the project website [17].

(c) The Social Value Self-Assessment tool, which was developed by Social Value United Kingdom (UK) as a guide to estimate Social Return on Investment [18].

(d) The Cost-Benefit Analysis tool developed by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCBA) that incorporates potential outcomes and costs and a pricing approach for their valuation [19];

(e) The Framework for Economic Evaluations When Costs and Effects Fall on Multiple Sectors and Decision Makers developed by Walker et al [6].

(f) A review of HTA guidelines and the recommendations regarding the societal perspective evaluation of healthcare interventions [20].

The initial set of papers was a starting point for the review since these publications specifically advised going beyond healthcare in terms of costs and outcomes when evaluating the impact of health interventions taking a cross-sectoral approach. The initial papers were selected if they considered the broader cross-sectoral perspective of economic evaluations in healthcare and provided tools, frameworks and recommendations on performing the assessments. Furthermore, these publications specifically focused on the spill-over effects of health interventions in different sectors. We aimed to select papers that were not published very recently as this would usually result in fewer citations. Textbooks and conceptual theoretical papers were not included as they did not provide applied examples or specific guidance in implementing cross-sectoral evaluation.

Web of Science and Google Scholar were used to perform forward citation search of the selected initial papers. These searches were supplemented by free-text searching in Google and Google Scholar (in March 2024) for economic evaluations of healthcare interventions including cross-sectoral impact (see Online Appendix 1 for search terms). EndNote was used for managing downloads and de-duplication.

The reports that used the Social Value Self-Assessment tool were identified through the report database on the Social Value UK webpage by filtering for topics related to mental and physical health and wellbeing.

## 2.2 Eligibility Criteria

Scientific papers and consultancy/advisory reports were selected if they evaluated the impact of health interventions by using an empirical cross-sectoral evaluation and reported impact on costs and outcomes, or only costs, beyond the healthcare sector (e.g., healthcare and at least one other government sector). In this review we referred to a health intervention as a "intervention" to apply to any activity undertaken with the objective of improving human health by preventing disease, by curing or reducing the severity or duration of an existing disease, or by restoring function lost through disease or injury [21]. We were interested in evaluation frameworks that allow for assessing the impact of health interventions in other sectors as broader assessments could support cross sectoral investment in health services. Indeed, non-health interventions in other sectors could impact health; however, to keep the review manageable we focused only on health interventions. Only articles and reports written in English and fully accessible were included in the Google and Google Scholar free-word searches. We did not apply a restriction on the year of publication. The citation trail followed a chronological order, and anachronistic citations were not included. Publications and reports that evaluated non-healthcare interventions (e.g., improvements in housing or schooling) were excluded to keep the scope of the review manageable and feasible.

## 2.3 Data Extraction and Charting

Publications citing the initial papers were identified through Google Scholar and Web of Science, downloaded into EndNote, de-duplicated, and screened for inclusion eligibility based on their title and abstract by one reviewer (RKK). Full text screening was performed by one reviewer (RKK, EH, or BN) and second and third reviewers (AT, SW) were involved to screen full text in case of doubt or disagreement. Data extraction was performed by two reviewers (RKK, BN) and a third reviewer (EH) double extracted a set of all included papers to ensure that the target of inter-reviewer agreement was 95% as done previously in another review [22].

We extracted data from all included papers on: (a) source that the study was retrieved from, which included either through an initial paper or through free-text search in Google and Google Scholar, (b) type of intervention—prevention or treatment; c) evaluation approach, e.g., cost-effectiveness

analysis (CEA), cost-utility analysis (CUA), cost-benefit analysis (CBA), social return on investment (SROI), cost study, (d) included sector, (e) type of costs and outcomes, (f) measurement methods of costs and outcomes, and (g) valuation method, if applied. Economic evaluation approaches were grouped based on the outcome of assessment in the study. For example, if a case study used quality-adjusted life years (QALYs) as an outcome measure, it was classified as a cost-utility analysis. We considered all approaches (cost-effectiveness, cost-utility, cost-consequence, cost-minimisation, cost-benefit, SROI, cost study) for evaluating health interventions.

### 2.3.1 Empirical Application of Different Approaches

The included initial papers recommended different types of approaches to evaluating the cross-sectoral costs and outcomes of health interventions. While some initial papers such as the Second panel [16] and the review by Avsar et al [20] had more general recommendations, e.g., listed the sectors that might be considered in economic evaluations, others like the GMCBA [19] had unit costs and a structured excel file that can facilitate the performance of CBA. Similarly to GMCBA, PECUNIA [17] had developed a resource use instrument that includes service lists and coding system, and is accompanied by unit cost templates and compendium, that can be used to evaluate the costs of health interventions going beyond the healthcare sector. Social Value UK [18] have developed a ‘value map’, which is a resource use measurement template that can be used to perform SROI analyses. Walker and colleagues [6] have also developed a framework consisting of a generic impact inventory, that can be utilised in performing cross-sectoral evaluations.

The recommendations and the tools provided by the initial papers (i.e., the impact inventory [16], the resource use instrument [17], the value map [18], etc.) were used to develop a bespoke data extraction template, which included the sectors considered (e.g., health, workforce, education, social care, justice, transport, environment, other), source of outcomes and costs data, measurement and valuation methods for costs and outcomes. In addition, we used the recommendations and tools in initial papers to categorise data items as described below.

### 2.3.2 Data Items

The measurement methods for costs and outcomes were categorised based on the method of data collection into (a) primary data collection on health and wellbeing, including trial data, patient-reported outcome tools used in the included study; and (b) published sources. The valuation

method of costs and outcomes were grouped into: (a) estimation, such as, methods using an arbitrary proxy; (b) assumption based on the assessors’ own judgements; (c) price, such as one set in a market or paid by a consumer; (d) unit cost, such as the national average cost of a unit of service; (e) valuation of resource use in other sectors, for example human capital approach for estimating productivity losses, well-being valuation method or willingness to pay for valuing health gains, etc.

## 2.4 Synthesis of Results and Data Analysis

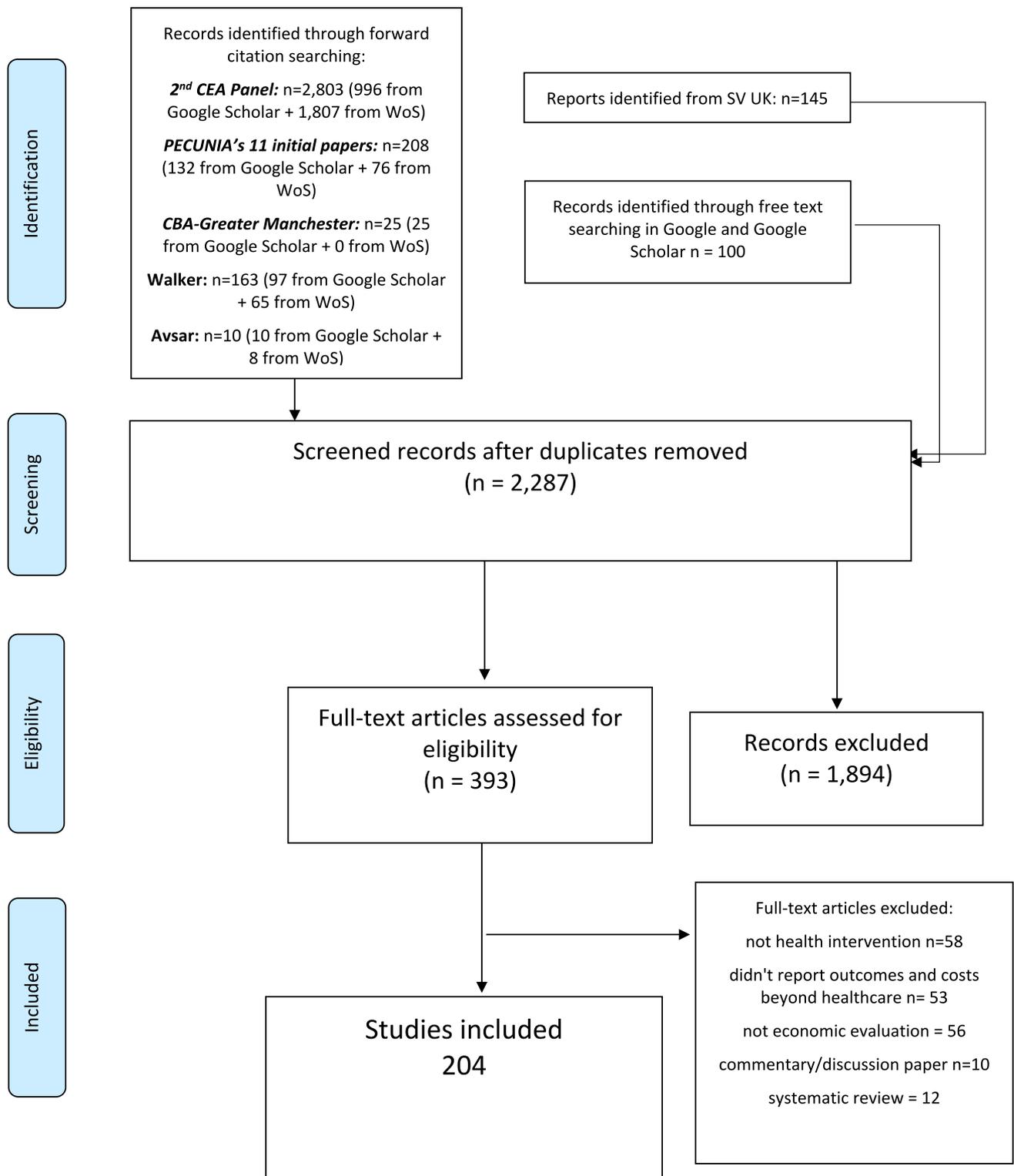
The sectors and approaches for performing economic evaluation as proposed by the initial papers were used to organise and analyse the extracted data in themes. Data were collated into variables that indicated the methods for measurement and valuation of outcomes and costs. All descriptive data were aggregated, and summary measures were created for each column: evaluation approach, sector, outcomes type, outcome measurement, outcome valuation, cost type, cost measurement, cost valuation method. Basic descriptive statistics (e.g., frequencies) and narrative synthesis were used to summarise and highlight important characteristics of the studies.

## 3 Results

A total of 2287 records were screened, and 204 publications and reports were included in the data extraction and synthesis process [23–226] (Fig. 1). Treatment-based interventions were evaluated in 66% of the included studies, while 34% of papers evaluated preventive interventions.

### 3.1 Evaluation Approaches and Included Sectors Beyond Healthcare

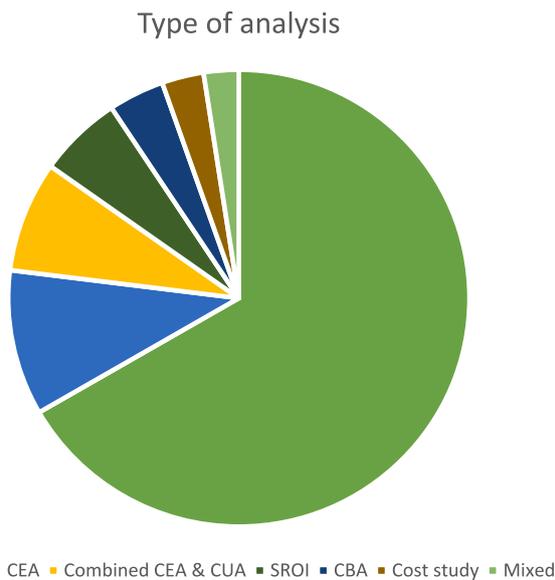
The most common evaluation approach used was CUA (67%), CEA (10%), combined CEA and CUA (8%), SROI (6%), CBA (4%) and cost study (3%); the remainder of papers were a different combination of two of these approaches (Fig. 2, Appendix Table 2). Most empirical evaluations resulted from the Second Panel on Cost-Effectiveness in Health and Medicine [23–201], followed by the Social Value Self-Assessment tool [202–212] and the Framework for Economic Evaluations [6] developed by Walker et al [213–217], while a similar number of papers resulted from the PECUNIA [223–225], Google and Google Scholar searches [219–222]. One paper [226] resulted from the review of HTA guidelines and the recommendations regarding the societal perspective evaluation of healthcare interventions [18] (Fig. 3). The included papers most commonly (90%) considered workforce as an additional sector,



**Fig. 1** PRISMA diagram. *2<sup>nd</sup> CEA Panel* the Second Panel on Cost-Effectiveness in Health and Medicine, *Avsar* a review of HTA guidelines and the recommendations regarding the societal perspective evaluation of healthcare interventions by Avsar et al, *CBA-Greater Manchester*—the Cost-Benefit Analysis tool developed by the Greater

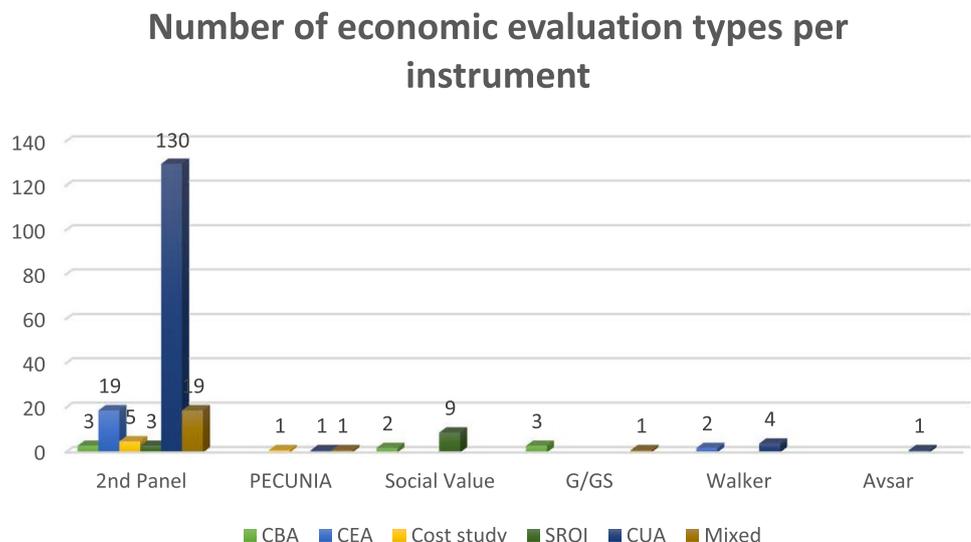
Manchester Combined Authority, *SV UK*—Social Value United Kingdom, *Walker framework*—Framework for Economic Evaluations when Costs and Effects Fall on Multiple Sectors and Decision Makers developed by Walker et al

using different methods to measure and value productivity, and 33% of papers considered multi-sectoral analysis of costs and outcomes (e.g., including three or more sectors) (Fig. 4). The other included sectors were related to transport, education, social care, justice, environment and other non-medical sectors (insurance, facility and equipment, housing, training of health professionals, activities of daily living, childcare, assistive devices, modifications to housing or transport) (Fig. 4, Appendix Table 2).



**Fig. 2** Type of evaluation approach. Mixed includes combined CUA & SROI, CUA & CBA, CEA & CBA, CEA & SROI. CBA cost-benefits analysis, CEA cost-effectiveness analysis, CUA cost utility analysis, SROI including social return on investment

**Fig. 3** Type of studies in relation to the initial papers. CBA cost-benefits analysis, CEA cost-effectiveness analysis, CUA cost utility analysis, – including social return on investment



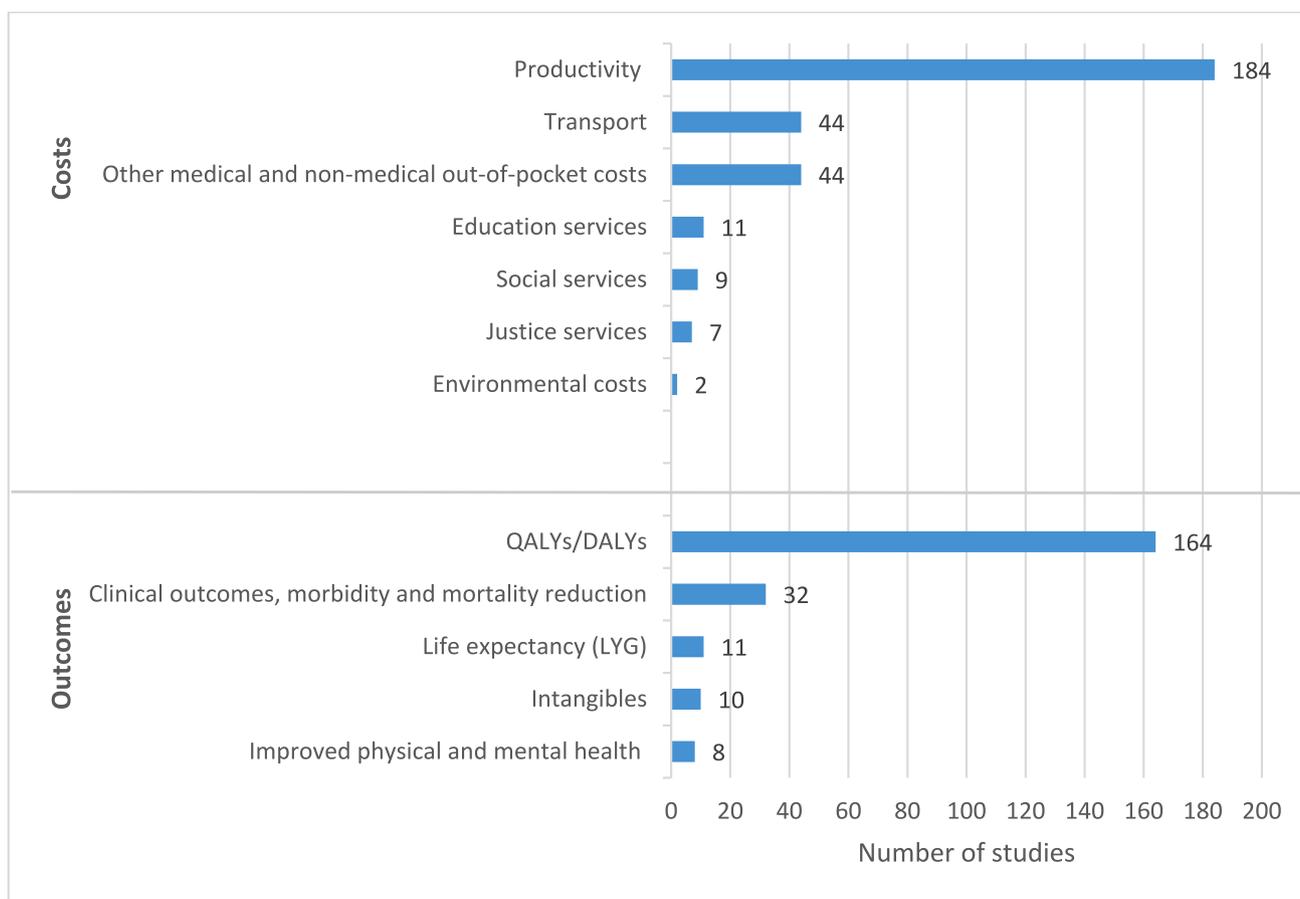
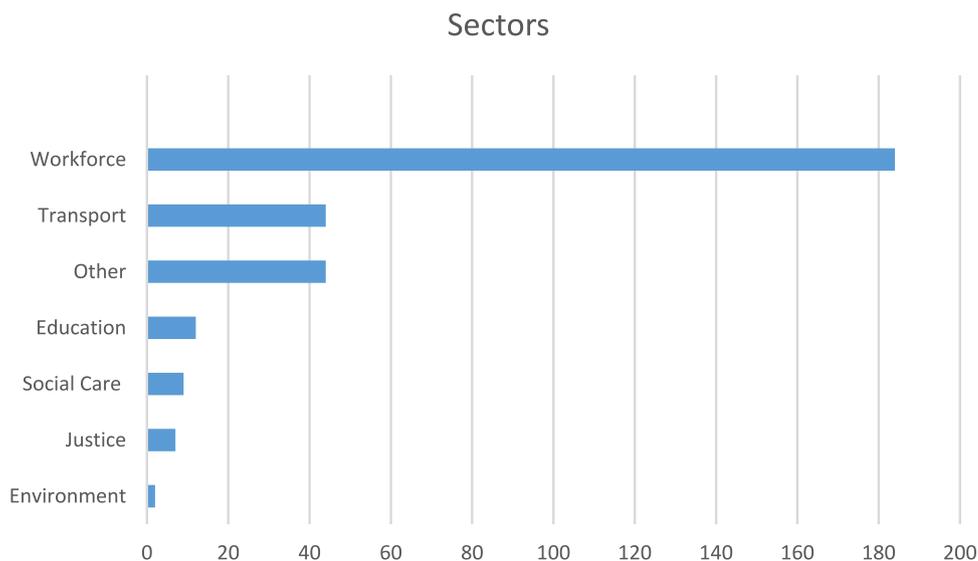
### 3.2 Measurement and Valuation of Outcomes

As Fig. 5 shows, the most frequently reported outcome (80%) was quality-adjusted life years (QALYs) or disability-adjusted life years (DALYs), often measured using the EQ-5D questionnaire or estimated through lifetables and published utilities (Fig. 5). The second most commonly used outcome was related to clinical effectiveness—morbidity and mortality (16%)—followed by life expectancy (5%), well-being (5%) (e.g., intangibles, measures that were related to suffering, stress, happiness, confidence, life control, relationships, maintaining dignity, or sense of self), and improvements in physical and mental health (4%) (Figs. 5, 6). Most well-being measures were captured by a questionnaire and there was a variety of instruments used including CORE-10, ÖMPSQ 10, PAM score, and ICECAP-A. There was a variety of patient-reported outcomes measures including EQ-5D, CHU-9, GAD-7, IPAQ-short, International Physical Activity Questionnaire Item, and PHQ-9 used to measure quality of life. For improved mental health, most studies overlapped with those of well-being outcomes and therefore used similar tools as those listed above or domain-specific quality of life tools for mental health (e.g., a self-designed survey based on EQ-5D, GAD-7/ General Anxiety Disorder-7, or SF-12).

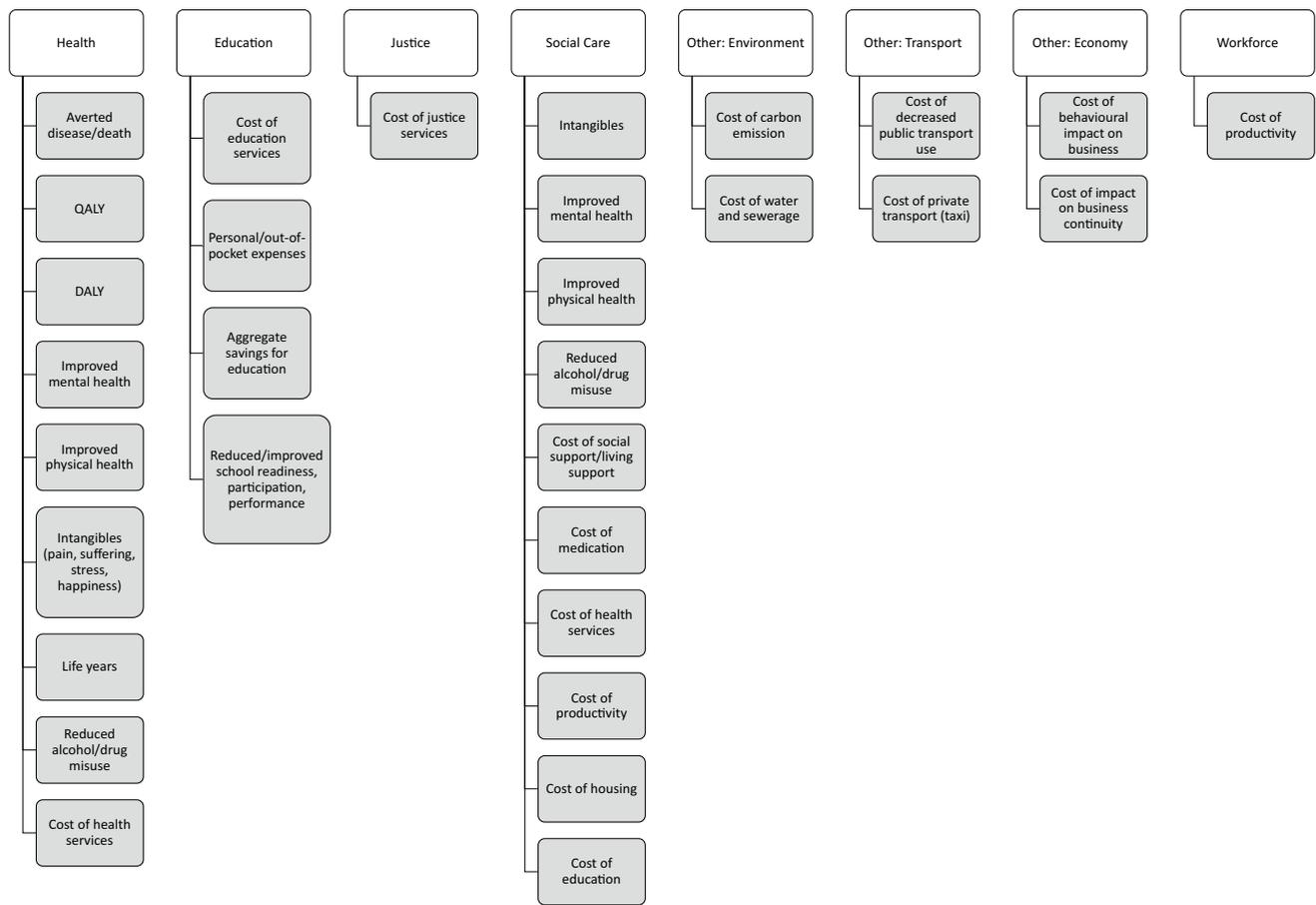
### 3.3 Measurement and Valuation of Recourse Use in Different Sectors

Healthcare costs were measured in all studies, and measurement and valuation tools adopted included WHO-CHOICE, CDC data such as CDC Vaccine Price List, Medical Expenditure Panel Survey, International Medical Products Price Guide, unit costs from reimbursement claims. The most common additional cost that was measured was productivity

**Fig. 4** Sectors covered in the included studies. Other sectors include insurance, facility and equipment, housing, training of health professionals, activities of daily living, childcare, assistive devices, modifications to housing or transport



**Fig. 5** Frequency of costs and outcomes across the included studies. *DALY* disability-adjusted life year, *LYG* life years gained; *QALYs* quality-adjusted life years



**Fig. 6** Outcomes and costs included in different sectors

found in 90% of all studies. Frequently, statistical data from the Bureau of Labour Statistics, Census data, OECD labour force participation rate, or OECD average wage data were used to derive estimates for wages and were used to estimate productivity loss based on reports from patients/carers or assumptions. The descending frequency of other costs were transport (22%), other medical and non-medical out-of-pocket expenses (22%), education services (5%), social services (4%), justice services (3%), and environment (1%) (Fig. 5, Table 1).

## 4 Discussion

Our scoping review identified 204 papers and reports of cross-sectoral evaluations of healthcare interventions. Most included costs and outcomes in the healthcare sector in combination with another sector (e.g., workforce), while 33% of papers included three or more sectors. Given that the scoping review included evaluation papers of preventing or treating a particular health condition, QALYs and DALYs were the most frequently used outcomes. Our review found

that currently economic evaluations of health interventions seldom include a cross-sectoral approach and assess the impact in multiple non-healthcare-related sectors, which limits the societal perspective.

Although the societal perspective is recommended in many HTA guidelines, the costs and benefits of economic evaluations in healthcare are still restricted to loss of productivity by patients or carers (i.e., overall economy) and the gains for specific employers rather than specific sectors outside healthcare. A recent review of guidelines by HTA agencies found that direct medical and non-medical costs to patient and carers were still the most commonly recommended, followed by indirect costs, e.g., productivity, while wider impact has not been recommended by examined guidelines [20]. Similarly, the Second Panel on Cost-Effectiveness in Health and Medicine [16] advocated the use of a budget/impact inventory to capture outcomes and costs across several sectors. However, findings from our review and others [227–229] suggest that evaluations currently do not take a multi-sectoral approach. The number of economic evaluations considering a societal perspective is increasing but the perspective is still narrowly defined to

**Table 1** Examples of reported measurement and valuation methods of costs and outcomes

Type of cost/outcomes	Measurement	Valuation	References
QALY/DALY	Questionnaire (EQ-5D, CHU-9, CORE), primary data collection, statistical data	Utility value sets, published utility scores, life tables	[23–27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 37–40, 42, 44, 46–57, 59–61, 63, 65–68, 70, 72–74, 76–79, 81–85, 87–109, 111–113, 115–122, 124–128, 131–133, 135–141, 143–149, 151–156, 158, 159, 161–169, 171–179, 181, 183–187, 189–198, 213–215, 218, 222, 223, 225, 226]
Clinical outcomes (LYG, averted cases/deaths)	Trial data, primary data collection, statistical data	Estimation, assumption	[26, 34–36, 40, 43, 45, 46, 49–51, 58, 62, 69, 75, 80, 86, 105, 116, 117, 120, 142, 150, 153, 157, 160, 170, 174, 185, 186, 198–200, 202–205, 208–212, 214, 216–220, 223]
Healthcare cost	Primary data collection, statistical data	Unit cost, list price, DRG	All papers include healthcare costs
Productivity cost	Primary data collection, statistical data	Human capital approach, published statistical data on country-specific wage and employment	[23–40, 42–54, 57–77, 79, 81–84, 86–94, 96–99, 101–117, 119–136, 138, 139, 141–153, 155–201, 204, 206, 209–211, 213, 216–226]
Transport cost	Primary data collection, statistical data	Published literature and statistical data on country specific mileage and fuel prices	[28, 31, 32, 37, 40, 41, 48, 51, 52, 67–69, 73, 78, 79, 81, 85, 86, 96, 100, 108, 112, 114, 123, 124, 127, 137, 146, 150, 153–155, 159, 161, 172, 177, 182, 186, 191, 201, 212, 217, 218, 221]

DALY disability-adjusted life year, DRG diagnosis related group, LYG life years gained, QALYs quality-adjusted life years

productivity and direct medical and non-medical costs borne by patients and carers [227–229]. Similarly, the initial papers have proposed approaches for capturing the wider impact of health interventions across multiple sectors, but our review suggests that economic evaluations in healthcare are still very much confined to a limited societal perspective. The PECUNIA project [17] proposed a standardised costing and outcome assessment measures. However, the utilisation in practice is yet to be seen as the project has concluded only recently. Social return on investments has a map for measuring proposed value; however, many evaluations did not follow it nor sought further verification through the assurance process offered by Social Value UK [18]. As with any SROI, which necessarily involves subjective judgements to be made, there is a risk of error. In a relatively small cohort size, this risk is magnified. Since SROI is a principle-based methodology, this verification step is valid but was not taken by a majority of the included studies using the Social Value Self-Assessment tool [18].

Health technology assessment bodies, including the National Institute of Health and Excellence (NICE), are increasingly raising the importance of capturing the value of health interventions in terms of benefits to health and broader public welfare, as well as costs falling in other sectors outside of healthcare. It has been recognised that changes in health can affect productivity of the affected person but also of family and caregivers, and thus consumption, for example, which warrants broadening the scope of economic evaluations in healthcare [227]. Internationally and in Europe (e.g., Portugal, Norway, Denmark, Sweden Spain, Germany, Hungary, Ireland), HTA agencies are increasingly recommending the inclusion of a societal perspective in economic evaluations of healthcare, with some agencies (e.g., the Netherlands) providing specific guidance on methods and approaches to be utilised [20]. A particular example are the formal guidelines in the Netherlands for performing a societal cost-benefit analysis in the social domain [12]. However, there is no specific guidance in these national recommendations on how to measure costs and outcomes in specific sectors (e.g., spillovers) that could inform investment decisions for stakeholders across different sectors. Our findings are similar to a previous study, which found that the most common non-health impacts included in economic evaluations of health interventions were productivity or transportation, as well as direct and non-direct medical costs; however, the included societal perspective is still limited [227]. Similarly, a study on the economic impacts of epidemics recognised that a multi-sectoral lens is lacking in most evaluations [228]. However, there is a promising trend of guidance from other scholars in adopting this approach, for example a commentary and a review have provided a modified impact inventory to help evaluators consider broader consequences of COVID-19 [3, 229].

In addition to the relatively limited number of evaluations involving multiple non-healthcare-related sectors, a lack of transparency and consensus across the methodologies used in the evaluations was observed in our review, which could be a barrier for assessing study quality in a consistent manner in the future. Multiple guidelines and checklists on reporting CEA are available (CHEERS [230], ISPOR [231], Drummond [232], CHEC (-extended) [233]), but it is unclear if adherence is lagging in cross-sectoral reporting. In addition, it should be noted that these checklists have not been specifically developed for reporting and evaluating cross- and multi-sectoral evaluations of health interventions focused on prevention and promotion. Therefore, more standardised quality-appraisal systems of CEA, CBA, and SROI could be developed (including a GRADE- [Grading of Recommendations, Assessment, Development, and Evaluations]like tool), which could provide an opportunity to improve their protocol and thus better inform decision makers in reviewing, interpreting and vetting their evidence.

A recent systematic review summarised the concepts used to evaluate the societal impact of health interventions and established an analytical framework to comprehensively organise and describe the different elements of societal impact [11]. Like our findings, they reported that published economic evaluations seldom considered the impact of health interventions on non-healthcare sectors, such as criminal justice and education. In our review, we found that the most common sector considered was workforce and that cross-sectoral evaluation of the impact of health interventions is attempted by one-third of the studies included. While Seddik and colleagues [11] provided a framework to standardise and harmonise the reporting of societal impact, our review provided more details on the scope of cross-sectoral evaluations and the way the included studies operationalised the different frameworks and approaches they have used for assessing the broader societal spill-over effects of health interventions.

Our scoping review adds to the available body of literature reports on cross-sectoral evaluations of health interventions. The results of this scoping review of empirical evaluations that used existing approaches for cross-sectoral evaluation of health interventions, and the application of these approaches, could inform the next step in developing guidance for cross-sectoral evaluation. The guidance will include “sectoral impact inventory”, to assess the direct impacts, opportunity costs and impacts in non-healthcare sectors of health interventions aimed at health promotion, disease prevention and treatment, financed by different

investors and impacting different stakeholders from a multidimensional and multi-sectoral perspective. Our results could also be used by decision makers and stakeholders involved in current multi-sectoral evaluations of health interventions to consider which sectors, outcomes, and costs to include, as well as the methods to evaluate costs and outcomes.

A limitation of our scoping review was not undertaking a quality assessment of included economic evaluations. It has been recognised that the choice of checklist can affect conclusions regarding the methodological quality and rigor of studies [234], and existing checklists have no particular emphasis on evaluating and reporting of cross-sectoral impact. In addition, no checklist dedicated to cross- and multi-sectoral evaluation of health interventions related to promotion and prevention is currently available. That we have possibly missed cross-sectoral evaluations of non-health interventions is a further limitation. These cross-sectoral evaluations could have complemented the types of outcomes and costs and methods identified in our scoping review by narrowing the scope down to only health interventions. We might have also missed some cross-sectoral evaluations of health interventions due to the applied ‘pearl growing’ search method; however, we applied free-word search in Google and Google Scholar to diminish the number of potentially missed studies.

## 5 Conclusion

There is a limited number of cross-sectoral evaluations of health interventions despite the recommendations expressed by HTA bodies, especially across non-health sectors for global value assessment and recommendations. Developing a clear guidance including a “multiple sector impact inventory” with proposed methods for measurement and valuation of outcomes and costs in other sectors beyond healthcare, could facilitate the improved adoption of cross-sectoral economic evaluations of health interventions.

## Appendix

See Table 2.

**Table 2** Evaluation approaches and considered additional sectors

	References
<i>Evaluation approaches</i>	
Cost-utility analysis	[25, 27, 29, 30, 33, 37–40, 42, 44, 46–53, 55–57, 60, 61, 63, 65–67, 70, 72–74, 77, 78, 81–85, 87–107, 111–113, 115, 116, 118–122, 124–128, 131–133, 135–141, 144–149, 151, 152, 154–156, 158, 159, 161–169, 172–179, 181, 183, 184, 187, 189–198, 213–215, 218, 225, 226]
Cost-effectiveness analysis	[36, 41, 45, 58, 62, 69, 71, 75, 80, 110, 130, 157, 160, 170, 180, 182, 199–201, 216, 217]
Combined cost-effectiveness and cost-utility analysis	[23, 24, 26, 54, 59, 68, 76, 79, 108, 109, 117, 143, 153, 171, 185, 186, 223]
Social return on investment	[43, 150, 188, 202–205, 208–212]
Cost-benefit analysis	[34, 35, 64, 206, 207, 219–221]
Cost study	[28, 114, 123, 129, 134, 224]
Combined type of studies	[31, 32, 86, 142, 222]
<i>Considered sectors in the economic evaluations</i>	
Workforce	[23–40, 42–54, 57–77, 79, 81–84, 86–94, 96–99, 101–117, 119–136, 138, 139, 141–153, 155–201, 204, 206, 209–211, 213, 216–226]
Transport	[28, 31, 32, 37, 40, 41, 48, 51, 52, 67–69, 73, 78, 79, 81, 85, 86, 96, 100, 108, 112, 114, 123, 124, 127, 137, 146, 150, 153–155, 159, 161, 172, 177, 182, 186, 191, 201, 212, 217, 218, 221]
Education	[24, 70, 75, 80, 161, 192, 193, 197, 204, 205, 218, 222]
Social care	[176, 202–205, 207–209, 211]
Justice	[55, 56, 64, 95, 137, 140, 203]
Environment	[123, 127]
Other non-medical sectors	[30–33, 37, 41, 52, 65, 67–69, 73, 75, 81, 84, 85, 96, 100, 108, 111, 117, 118, 124, 134, 136, 137, 146, 153, 154, 156, 157, 176, 182, 192, 193, 197, 201, 209, 214, 215, 218, 220, 221, 226]
Multi-sectoral analysis of costs and outcomes (including three or more sectors)	[24, 28, 30–33, 37, 40, 41, 48, 51, 52, 64, 65, 67–70, 73, 75, 79, 81, 84–86, 96, 100, 108, 111, 112, 114, 117, 123, 124, 127, 134, 136, 137, 146, 150, 153–157, 159, 161, 172, 176, 177, 182, 186, 191–193, 197, 201, 203–205, 209, 211, 217, 218, 220–222, 226]

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## Declarations

**Conflicts of Interest/Competing Interests** The authors declare no conflicts of interest that are directly relevant to the content of this article.

**Ethics Approval** This study did not require approval by a medical ethics committee.

**Code Availability** No programming was used in this study.

**Consent to Participate** Not applicable.

**Consent for Publication** Not applicable.

**Availability of Data and Material** Search strategies used for the review are available in the supplementary files. The Excel file used for the data extraction during the review can be made available upon request.

**Authors' Contributions** AT outlined the concept and broad methods for this study. RKK, EH and BN conducted the literature review and together with AT and SW wrote the manuscript. All authors provided multiple rounds of critical feedback.

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