ICER Misses the Numbers That Matter

The Institute for Clinical and Economic Review wants to assess the cost-effectiveness of breakthrough drugs for cystic fibrosis. But their analysis overlooks key points.

90%

The percentage of cystic fibrosis patients now treatable with the introduction of triple-combination therapy. ICER’s report makes no mention of this feat.

30 years

Three decades after Congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Act, ICER is using a discriminatory metric known as the QALY, which experts say violates the law.

$500,000

ICER’s cost-effectiveness threshold for rare disease therapies. Yet ICER uses a lower threshold, designed for widespread diseases, to evaluate triple-combination therapy.

ICER doesn’t account for quality-of-life factors like the ability to draw a full breath, to climb stairs, to sing or to exercise without being winded.

Instead of waiting for robust data, ICER assigns B+ and C++ grades to triple-combination cystic fibrosis therapy, citing insufficient data.

ICER’s mathematical shortcomings could equate to coverage barriers and access challenges for patients who’ve waited years for cystic fibrosis treatment.