

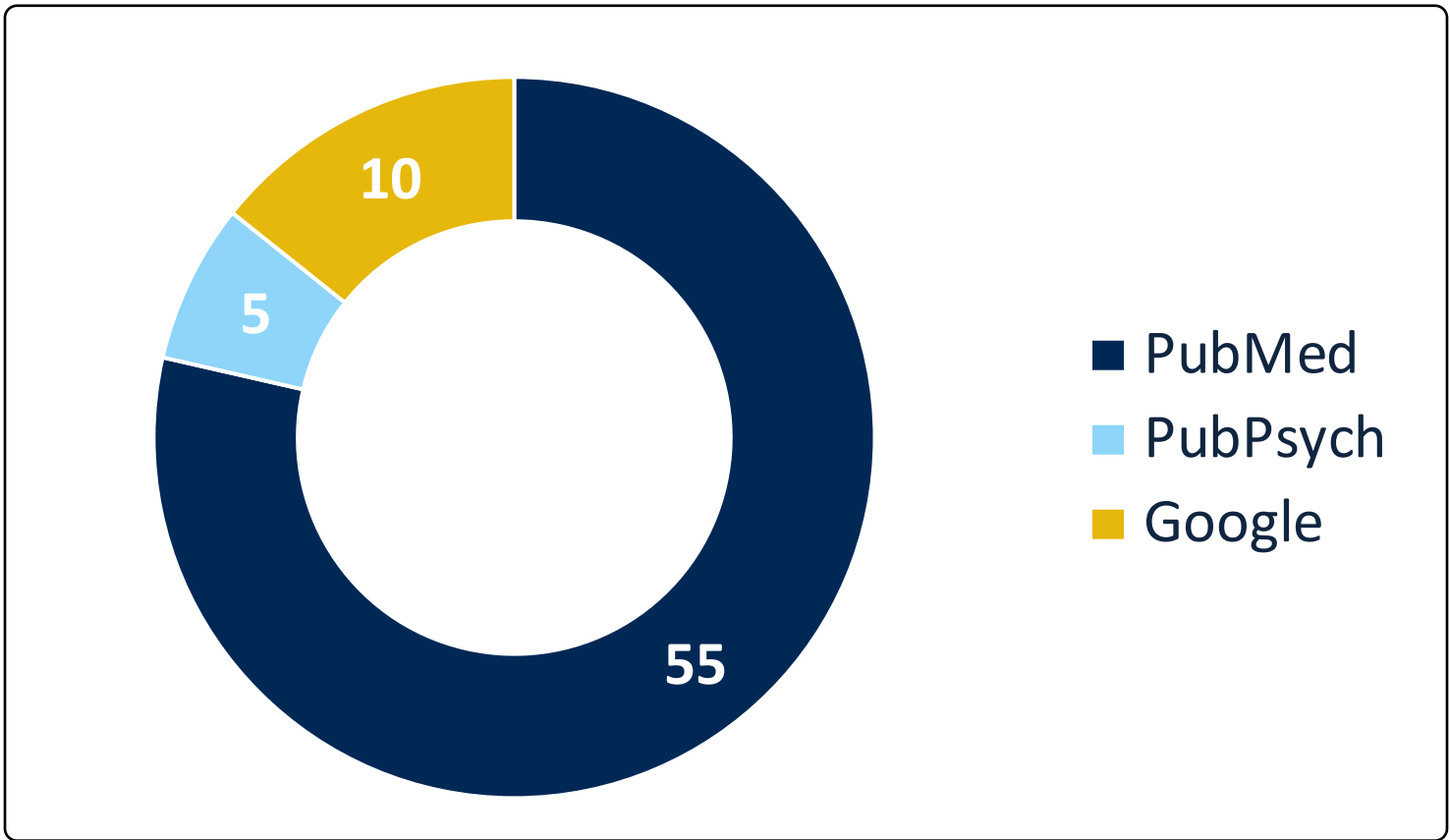
INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

- Healthcare payers face the challenge of making **complex decisions**, balancing factors like evaluating evidence for interventions, meeting patient and clinician needs, and managing limited budgets
- Payers follow a review process that examines clinical studies, health outcomes, and economic analyses to inform their decisions. However, they often must make choices despite **uncertainty regarding a product's value and supporting evidence**
- We aim to explore whether **psychological factors** also influence the **decision-making process** of payers in healthcare

METHODS

- A **targeted literature review (TLR)** on “psychology and payer decision-making in healthcare” was performed on **3rd May 2024** on PubMed. This was supplemented with a targeted search on PubPsych for “risk and uncertainty in decision making”, and a Google search on the “psychological aspects of payer decision making”. (**Figure 1**)

Figure 1. Sources for TLR



RESULTS

- The ABC model of attitudes, which includes affective, behavioural, and cognitive components, was identified as a useful framework for decision-making, where cognitive and behavioural elements can help manage negative affective responses and uncertainty, which are also influenced by personality traits¹ (**Figure 2**)
- Seven** articles were identified as relevant to the psychology of payer decision-making.²⁻⁸ Between the factors contributing to payers’ decision making, uncertainty in evidence and how risk is framed (relative vs absolute) have the greatest influence. Affective factors, anecdotal data, and a slight preference for quicker rewards also play notable roles in the decision-making process (**Figure 3**)

Figure 2. ABC model

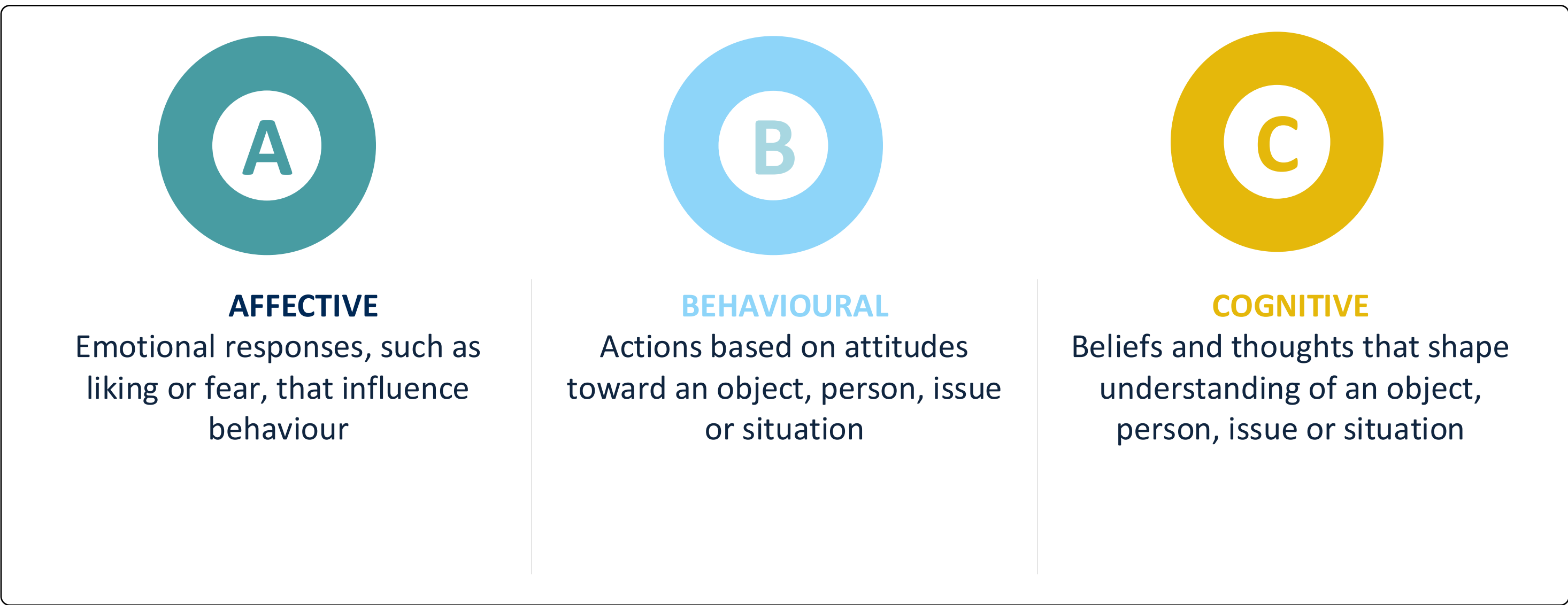
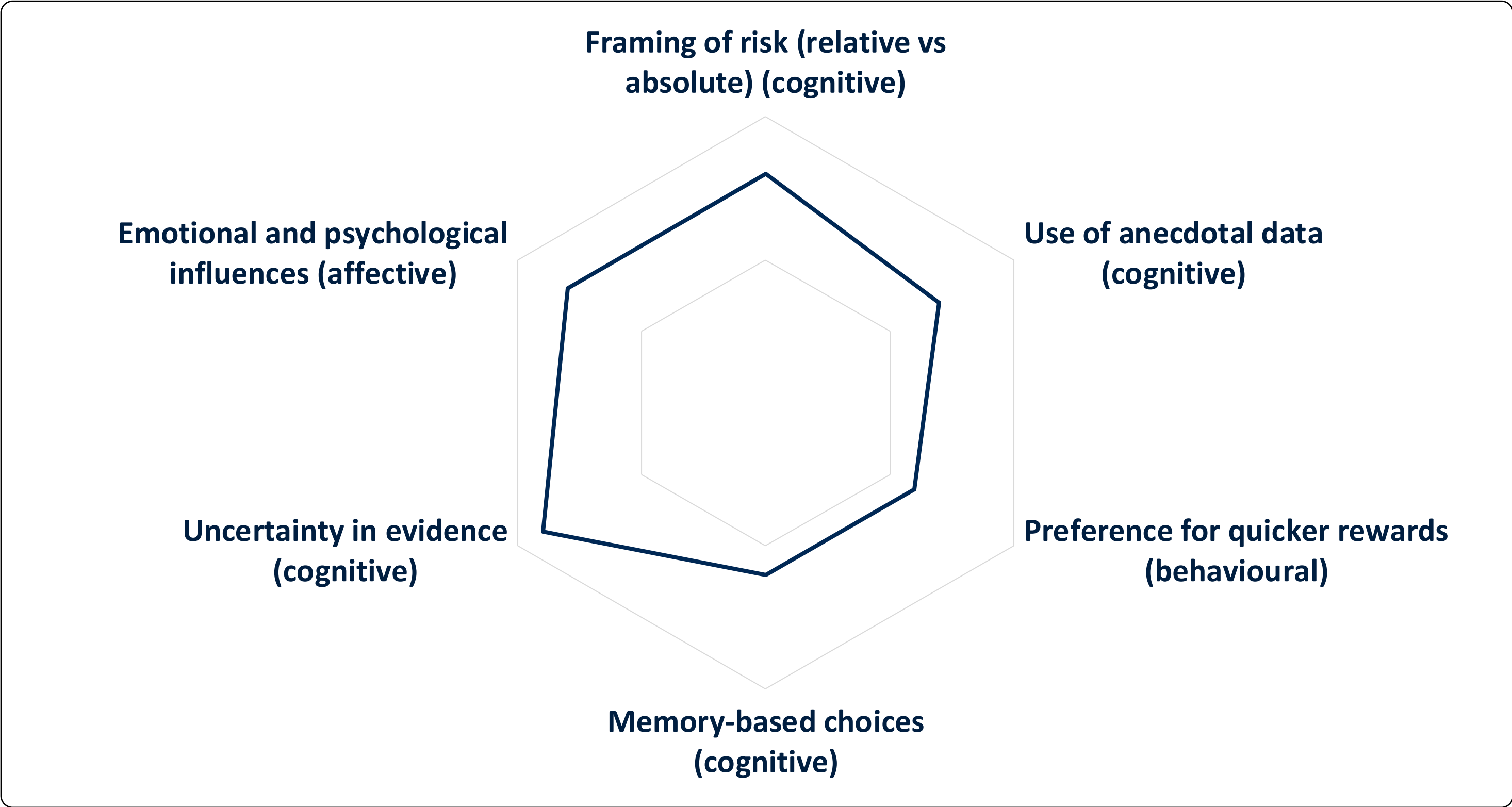


Figure 3. Factors influencing payers' decision making



- Three** of the identified studies directly focused on **payer decision-making**, while the other four, though not specific to payers, highlighted **general factors that could influence decisions** in a payer context (**Table 1**)

Table 1. Results from the targeted literature review

STUDY	CONCLUSION
Studies related to payer decision-making	
Roberts 2020 ²	Payers have concerns about real-world studies which are associated with poor data quality, internal validity, potential bias, and lack of meaningful endpoints
Mezzio DJ 2018 ³	Payers demonstrate a tendency to underestimate risks when presented in relative risk terms rather than absolute (e.g. a 40% higher risk of adverse events seems less concerning than stating the actual events); they slightly prefer rewards with less delay (choosing immediate discounts over delayed rebates) and prefer riskier options for costs but safer for patient safety and efficacy
Leung MY 2012 ⁴	Payers will rely on anecdotal findings or expert opinion when high-quality trials or other studies are considered inconsistent or inadequate
Studies related to approach to risk and uncertainty	
Weilbacher RA 2020 ⁵	People prefer better-remembered options under uncertainty, usually avoiding risks when there is a chance to gain something but more willing to take risks when facing potential losses, regardless of how uncertain the situation is
Foken J 2016 ⁶	Risk-taking is linked to emotional involvement, with more emotionally engaged individuals being more risk-averse in experimental settings
Volz KG 2012 ⁷	Decisions under risk and uncertainty involve different cognitive processes, with simple heuristics - problem solving approaches based on reason and experience - being more effective in uncertain situations
Luhmann C 2011 ⁸	Higher intolerance of uncertainty leads to a preference for immediate, lower-value rewards and influences decision-makers' sensitivity to outcomes

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

- Despite having a defined framework for assessing medical interventions, payers can face **uncertainty about the supporting evidence**
- Emotional, behavioural and cognitive factors as described in the ABC model may influence their decisions. Studies show **payers interpret risks differently based on how the information is framed** (risk presented in relative terms is underestimated) and may **rely on anecdotal data** or **clinical opinion** when evidence is lacking, with a slight preference for **quicker rewards**. Additionally, under uncertainty, people favour **better-remembered options**
- More research is needed to understand the psychological factors shaping payer decision-making in the field of reimbursement and coverage

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