



Eviscore Foundation Course

Module 4 – APPLY

Worksheet 4B: Benefits–Harms Decision Matrix

Estimated Time: 15–20 minutes

Difficulty: ★★☆☆ Foundation

Name: _____

Date: _____

Article Title: _____

Learning Objectives

After completing this worksheet, you should be able to:

- ☐ Identify the expected benefits of an intervention.
 - ☐ Recognize potential harms and risks.
 - ☐ Consider practical issues such as cost and availability.
 - ☐ Make an evidence-informed recommendation.
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Before You Begin

Use the article you appraised in Module 3 and the patient from Worksheet 4A.

PART 1 – Patient Summary

Clinical Condition

Intervention Being Considered

Alternative (Comparison)

PART 2 – Benefits Assessment

List the expected benefits of the intervention.

Expected Benefit	Important to My Patient? (✓)
_____	☐
_____	☐
_____	☐
_____	☐

Overall Benefit

- ☐ High
- ☐ Moderate
- ☐ Low

PART 3 – Harms Assessment

List the possible harms or disadvantages.

Possible Harm	Important to My Patient? (✓)
_____	☐
_____	☐
_____	☐
_____	☐

Overall Harm

- ☐ High
- ☐ Moderate
- ☐ Low

PART 4 – Practical Considerations

Answer the following.

Question	Yes	No	Unsure
Is the treatment available?	☐	☐	☐
Is it affordable for the patient?	☐	☐	☐
Can the patient follow the treatment plan?	☐	☐	☐
Is follow-up feasible?	☐	☐	☐

PART 5 – Benefit–Harm Balance

Tick the statement that best describes your judgement.

- ☐ Benefits clearly outweigh harms
- ☐ Benefits probably outweigh harms
- ☐ Benefits and harms are balanced
- ☐ Harms probably outweigh benefits
- ☐ Harms clearly outweigh benefits

Explain your reasoning.

PART 6 – My Recommendation

Based on the evidence and your assessment, what would you recommend?

- ☐ Recommend the intervention
- ☐ Recommend with modifications
- ☐ Do not recommend

Reason

Clinical Decision Summary

Question	Answer
Expected Benefits	_____
Possible Harms	_____
Practical Barriers	_____
Overall Decision	_____

Reflection

What influenced your decision the most?

- ☐ Clinical benefit
- ☐ Safety
- ☐ Cost
- ☐ Patient preference
- ☐ Availability
- ☐ Other

Self-Assessment

- ☐ I can identify the expected benefits of an intervention.
- ☐ I can recognize potential harms.
- ☐ I can consider practical issues before making a recommendation.
- ☐ I can balance benefits and harms in clinical decision-making.

Evidence Pearl

Evidence-based decisions are not based on benefits alone. Good clinicians balance benefits, harms, feasibility, and patient preferences before recommending an intervention.

Faculty Notes

Suggested Discussion Points

Guide learners through four questions.

1. **What are the expected benefits?**
 - Which outcomes matter most to the patient?
 - Are the benefits clinically meaningful?

1. **What are the possible harms?**

- Are adverse effects common or serious?
- How might they affect this patient?

1. Are there practical barriers?

- Is the intervention available?
- Can the patient access and adhere to it?
- Is follow-up realistic?

1. Would you recommend it?

Encourage learners to justify their decision using evidence and patient context.

Common Beginner Mistakes

- ☐ Considering only benefits while ignoring harms.
- ☐ Ignoring patient affordability or access.
- ☐ Assuming statistically significant results always justify treatment.
- ☐ Forgetting that patient preferences influence the final recommendation.

Benefit–Harm Matrix

Benefit Level ↓ / Harm Level →	Low Harm	Moderate Harm	High Harm
High Benefit	✅ Usually recommend	⚠️ Consider patient factors	⚠️ Careful discussion
Moderate Benefit	✅ May recommend	⚠️ Individualize decision	❌ Usually avoid
Low Benefit	⚠️ Limited value	❌ Generally avoid	❌ Do not recommend

This matrix helps beginners visualize the balance between benefits and harms and encourages structured reasoning rather than relying on intuition alone. It also prepares them for shared decision-making in Worksheet 4C – Patient Values Discussion Sheet, where the patient’s preferences become the final component of the decision.

