

grows. A new HTA course, tailored to the specific needs of the Republic of Moldova's health system, was launched under a joint project—a collaboration between the World Bank, the Swiss Cooperation Office, Radboud University Medical Center, and the School of Public Health Management. The course targets first- and second-year master's students, and health professionals enrolled in continuing education.

**Methods:** The course aimed to introduce the fundamentals of HTA. Participants included 49 master's students and 26 health professionals. A pre- and post-test model was employed, with participants completing a 10-(multiple) question HTA knowledge assessment at both the start and end of the course.

**Results:** Initial pre-test results showed an average score of 30 percent, reflecting limited prior HTA knowledge. Following course completion, the post-test average escalated to 80 percent. This 50 percent increase in knowledge was consistent across student and professional groups. While a significant 79 percent of participants accurately answered questions about the use of HTA reports from other jurisdictions, identification of stakeholders, and the elements of establishing PICO (population, intervention, comparator, outcome), they found it more challenging to understand the deeper aspects of HTA. Notably, about 72 percent had difficulties with questions related to the main goals of HTA, evaluating the broader impacts of health technologies, and starting the evidence-based deliberative decision-making process.

**Conclusions:** The HTA course successfully covered basic concepts, yet it also highlighted the need for more comprehensive teaching of complex topics. The participants showed varying levels of understanding. This underscores the necessity for an HTA curriculum that equally emphasizes fundamental knowledge and in-depth analysis, preparing future healthcare professionals for complex decision-making in their roles.

## PP59 Do Patient Contributions Matter? A Thematic Document Analysis Of NICE Ultra-Rare Disease Appraisals

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**Introduction:** Patient organizations play a crucial role in health technology assessment (HTA), especially for rare diseases. Despite their important role, the contributions and impact of patient organizations have been overlooked in the literature. This study aims to address this gap by examining the contributions of patient organizations and their nominated experts in National Institute for Health Care and Excellence (NICE) highly specialised technology (HST) appraisals.

**Methods:** We thematically analyzed the scope and frequency of contributions from patient organizations and experts associated with 10 NICE HST appraisals completed between January 2022 and September 2023. First, to allow for a representation of what patient contributions focus on, their written submissions were categorized according to themes following a deductive/inductive approach, employing a tiered system for disease-, technology-, or submission-

specific themes. Second, we compared the themes identified in written submissions with those found in the final NICE recommendations, included in the final evaluation determination (FED), to understand whether and to which extent patients' contributions were considered.

**Results:** From 2013 to 2023, 22 drugs underwent HST assessment, with nearly half appraised during 2022 and 2023. All technologies received positive recommendations. A total of 475 unique patient contributions—from both patient organizations and their nominated experts—were identified in their written submission in support of the 10 HST appraisal assessed, predominantly emphasizing disease-specific themes (53%), such as quality of life. While 42 percent of raised themes aligned with FED content, 52 percent did not. When looking at individual appraisals, the share of themes mentioned in patients' written submission explicitly considered in the FEDs ranged from nine percent to 73 percent, with a median of 50 percent.

**Conclusions:** Despite progress in integrating patient inputs into HTA, this study reveals a discrepancy between patient priorities and explicit consideration in NICE's final recommendations. While NICE consistently adheres to its methodology, certain patient-raised aspects are overlooked. Further research is important to discern the optimal areas and timing for patient contribution, refining NICE's involvement strategies in their decision-making processes.

## PP60 Enhancing Patient Empowerment: European Capacity Building Initiative And Curriculum Development In Health Technology Assessment Training

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**Introduction:** The new Regulation (EU) 2021/2282 on health technology assessment (HTAR) highlights the increasing importance of patient perspectives, emphasizing their crucial role in HTA. The European Capacity Building for Patients (EUCAPA) project aims to empower patients for active involvement in HTA. EUCAPA focuses on equipping patients with capacities through the development of HTA training, including introductory, fast-track, and extended training programs.

**Methods:** Within the EU-funded EU4Health program, the EUCAPA consortium was tasked with capacity building for patients and patient representatives. Training programs were developed using a coproduction approach, integrating patient representatives' perspectives into both curriculum development and the design of training sessions. This innovative approach involved close collaboration between patient representatives and HTA scientists, jointly shaping the

program content. The curriculum was designed to incorporate the heterogeneous medical and cultural backgrounds and varying levels of prior knowledge among participants, recognizing diverse experiences that individuals bring to the training. To enhance accessibility, a blended learning approach with offline, virtual, and in-person parts was adopted.

**Results:** The training comprised introductory (two hours), fast-track (eight hours), and extended (four days) training sessions. Training modules include competencies such as a profound understanding of HTA processes and key principles, domains, impact of HTA, outcome measurements, and study designs to raise awareness, promote, and enhance patient engagement as foreseen in the HTAR. The training modules focus on empowering patients to advocate for their rights and communities and to contribute meaningfully to comprehensive treatment evaluation. Specifically, modules on communication and personal skills, patient involvement, and engagement at both national and European levels underscore promotion of patient empowerment. Training sessions can be accessed online (EUCAPA.eu).

**Conclusions:** The training development within the EUCAPA project addresses the evolving landscape of joint HTA by emphasizing the significance of patient perspectives, fostering core competencies, and responding to the increasing demand for active patient involvement and advocacy at both national and supranational levels.

## PP61 A Decade Of Enhanced Patient And Citizen Involvement In Health Technology Appraisal In Scotland

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**Introduction:** Over the past 10 years, the Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC) has strived to strengthen the involvement of patients and citizens in its work and improve public understanding of health technology appraisal (HTA). A series of innovations have been brought in since 2014 to increase levels of engagement and satisfaction of participants. This work describes these and their impact.

**Methods:** SMC has introduced numerous transformational changes since 2014. Innovations include a new Patient Group Partner (PGP) registration system, strengthened patient group submission process, participation of patient representatives at Patient and Clinician Engagement (PACE) and SMC Committee meetings, embargoed early release of SMC decisions to PGPs, provision of Summary Information for PGPs (from submitting company), and revised role of public representatives. The creation of the SMC Public Involvement Network Advisory Group has underpinned these achievements, as has the provision of comprehensive one-to-one support, information and education to PGPs. SMC has continually evaluated the satisfaction of participating PGPs using an online questionnaire.

**Results:** There has been a sustained increase over the past 10 years in both the number of patient groups engaging with SMC and the number of PGP submissions that SMC receives. Adopting a

continuous improvement approach, working in partnership with PGPs and public representatives, has helped SMC to ensure that stakeholders in the HTA process are effectively engaged and informed about the HTA of new medicines in Scotland. Surveys of public involvement in SMC consistently show an extremely high level of satisfaction from PGPs who work with SMC, with most PGPs consistently rating their experience of working with SMC as excellent.

**Conclusions:** Over the past 10 years, SMC has strived to strengthen how it involves citizens and patient representatives in HTA. Various innovations and a continuous improvement approach have helped to ensure that there are high levels of satisfaction and understanding of the HTA process from patient groups who engage with SMC. This is underpinned by a partnership approach to working.

## PP62 Improving Patients' Access To Medicines Through Health Technology Assessment In Ukraine: Measuring The Impact Of The National HTA Roadmap

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**Introduction:** In 2020, health technology assessment (HTA) became mandatory for any new medicine covered by public funds. The aim of the review is to present the impact of HTA implementation despite Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine. Thanks to the introduced reforms, including HTA introduction, the coverage from the public payer in providing patients with medicines increased from 11 percent in 2013 to 34 percent in 2023.

**Methods:** This review summarizes all Department of HTA conclusions with recommendations made during 2023, decisions made by the Ministry of Health (MOH) based on these recommendations and their impact on patient access, and the steps made to further institutionalize HTA in Ukraine. In 2023, the HTA guidelines for medicines were revised based on the lessons learned and global experience along with knowledge exchange with the United Kingdom HTA agency, NICE International.

**Results:** In 2023, the HTA Department prepared 19 HTA conclusions. The majority concerned treatment of oncologic diseases (32%), orphan diseases (21%), and multiple sclerosis (16%). HTA assessments resulted in recommendations for listing (84% cases). Fifty-three percent of medicines were recommended for managed entry agreement, and the MOH decided to forward 10 medicines for negotiations in 2023. Thirty-two percent of recommendations considered inclusion into the National Essential Medicines List (NEML); 16% with further access through the reimbursement program. Almost 70 percent of total need in NEML is currently covered by