

assessments based on “significant unmet need” do not appear to provide consistent or equitable guidelines for addressing the issues specific to rare diseases.

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OP101 Do We Need To Extend Health Technology Assessment To Health Enhancement Assessment?

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INTRODUCTION:

Several health technologies used for therapy can also be used for health enhancement. Drugs stimulating cognitive abilities are but one example. Health Technology Assessment (HTA) has not been developed for assessing enhancements. This raises the question of how HTA should address the blurred distinction between therapy and enhancement. Should we (i) carve out a distinction between therapy and enhancement and limit HTA to therapy, (ii) use HTA for both therapy and enhancement (with some modifications), or (iii)

should we develop a separate health enhancement assessment (HEA)?

METHODS:

A literature search of the medical, philosophical, and bioethical literature was conducted for debates, arguments, and suggested solutions to the issue of therapy versus enhancement.

RESULTS:

The same improvement in health may be therapeutic in one patient, but an enhancement in another. Moreover, both therapy and enhancement share the same goal: increased health and wellbeing. A wide range of arguments try to establish a difference between therapy and enhancement. They refer to naturalness, rehabilitation, normality, species-typical functioning/potential, disease, sustainability, and responsibility. On closer scrutiny few of these arguments do the job in bolstering the therapy-enhancement distinction. We already use a wide range of means to extend human abilities. Moreover, the therapy-enhancement distinction raises a wide range of ethical issues that are relevant for the assessment of a number of emerging health technologies.

CONCLUSIONS:

Existing HTA methodology can address a wide range of non-therapeutic health enhancements. However, a series of broader issues related to the goal of health care and responsibility for altering human evolution may not be addressed within traditional HTA frameworks. Specific HEAs may therefore be helpful.

OP103 CONITEC's Rapid Reports As Technical Support In The Litigation

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