

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