



# Introduction to Health Technology Assessment (HTA)

- Health care systems
- What is Health Technology Assessment?
- How can patients\* get involved?
- Who will help patients get involved in HTA?

\*Patients = those who have the condition being studied, or non-professional carers/care-givers, or patient organisations or self-help groups



# Our health systems

- People are living longer, with more long-term conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and HIV infection
- New treatments and medical procedures are available, but may be costly
- Annual healthcare budgets are fixed





# Difficult decisions



- Do new treatments and procedures add value compared to current treatment?
- If we invest in a new treatment there is an “opportunity cost” - we must take investment away from somewhere else in the system
- How do we decide what the priorities are?



# Health Technology Assessment

HTA is the systematic evaluation of the  
**clinical effectiveness**  
and/or **cost effectiveness**  
and/or **social and ethical impact**  
of a health technology  
on the lives of patients and the health care system

Ref: [www.htai.org](http://www.htai.org)



# Health Technology Assessment

- Assessments take international evidence about the new technology compared with the best standard of care used in the local healthcare context *to determine added value*
- The main purpose of HTA is to inform health care policy makers about
  - Whether a health technology should be used
  - How best to use it
  - Which patients will benefit most from it



# Health technologies

- A “health technology” is any intervention that may be used to promote health, to prevent, diagnose or treat disease, or for rehabilitation or long-term care
- This includes educational programmes, vaccines, diagnostics, medicines, surgical procedures, devices, screening programmes, organisation of health care etc...





# HTA and decision making

HTA:

1. Assessment: critical review of scientific evidence
2. Appraisal: value judgements about evidence and a range of expert (and patient) opinions

⇒ Decision-making about whether the technology is made available in the healthcare system (country, region, hospital) and its level of reimbursement



# HTA and decision making

- HTA can be considered as a bridge between scientific evidence and decision-making



- Patients' views can light up the HTA bridge to help make sure decision-making is rational





# Patients and HTA

- Patients bring real-life experience
- Living with an illness
  - ‘No one knows better what it is like to live with an illness day in, day out than those doing this - patients..’
- A technology
  - Their needs and preferences, benefits and unwanted effects

Understanding HTA. Health Equality Europe. 2008  
(Available in several languages). <http://www.htai.org/index.php?id=744>



## Patient Evidence

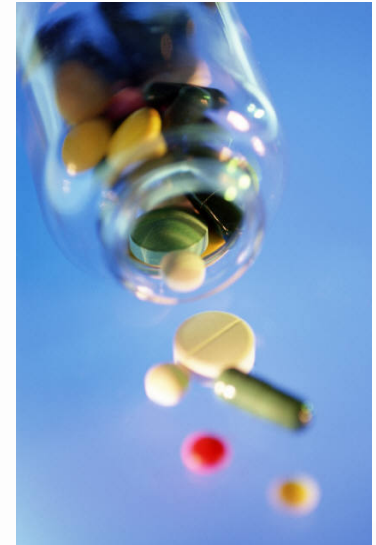
# Describing burden of illness

- Nature of illness (chronic, common, rare, life threatening, etc)
- Impact of illness daily life (home, work, social activities,...)
- Psychological and social issues (stigma, exclusion, mental wellbeing,...)
- The most difficult aspects of the illness



# Patient Evidence Impacts of Technology

- How current treatments are taken and issues arising – side effects, alteration of dosing,...
- How easily technology fits into daily life
- Outcomes from a treatment that would be most valued by patients, e.g.
  - relief of symptoms to allow return to work, ability to dress;
  - fewer visits to hospital



# How can patients' perspectives in HTA be a route to robust evidence and fair deliberation?

- HTA is a scientific process
- Patients and carers can contribute to HTA:
  1. By providing **EVIDENCE** about their experiences and preferences
  2. Through **PARTICIPATION** in the HTA process





# 1. EVIDENCE about patients' perspectives

- Gather robust evidence about a range of patients' views on the illness and existing and new health technologies
  - Clearly structured
  - Providing facts, not emotion
  - Showing sources, methods, assumptions, findings and limitations



# Gathering patients' experiences

- Quantitative
  - Survey/questionnaires
  - Review of health records
  - Review of helpline questions
- Qualitative Evidence
  - Patient stories (in person, videos)
  - Social networking
- Qualitative research
  - Interviews, focus groups, ..
- Building an evidence base



## 2. PARTICIPATION in the HTA process

At every stage:

- *Prior to HTA to help design studies*
- Suggesting topics for HTA
- Scoping what should be assessed in an HTA
- Submitting evidence
- Participating as a patient expert on an HTA committee
- Providing comments on draft reports
- Producing patient friendly summaries of HTA
- Dissemination/communication
- *Evaluating uptake of HTA recommendations*



# HTAi consumer and patient glossary

A beginner's guide to words used in  
health technology assessment

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[www.htai.org/fileadmin/HTAi\\_Files/ISG/PatientInvolvement/Glossary/  
HTAiPatientAndConsumerGlossaryOctober2009\\_01.pdf](http://www.htai.org/fileadmin/HTAi_Files/ISG/PatientInvolvement/Glossary/HTAiPatientAndConsumerGlossaryOctober2009_01.pdf)



# Health Technology Assessment International Interest Group - Patient/Citizen Involvement in HTA

- Website :glossary, Understanding HTA Guide, resources
- Email discussion list and ebulletins
- Working Groups:
  - Patient Involvement and Education
  - Methods and Impact
  - Citizen and Community perspectives
- Reduced HTAi subscriptions for patients
- Grants for patients to attend annual HTAi conference
- **Join the Interest Group for free!**



<http://www.htai.org/index.php?id=545>



# Patients developing HTA

- Engage with those running clinical studies to ensure they include outcomes that are important to patients
- Get involved in qualitative research
- Work with HTA Agencies to develop their processes for engaging patients so that patients can help demonstrate the value of a new technology
- Engage with politicians to ensure that robust HTA systems lead to rational and consistent decisions by healthcare payers
- Encourage collaboration among stakeholders to ensure rapid access to technologies that demonstrate value



# HTA and You!

- HTA is used to help health systems make investment decisions
- Patients and carers have important perspectives that can contribute to HTA
- Patient evidence should include clear facts about experience and views
- Patients and carers may be included in the HTA process at all stages
- Find out what happens in your local HTA process. Ask how you can be involved!

<http://www.htai.org/index.php?id=545>