

Integration of Relevant Issues and Values in Health Technology Assessment within the Framework of INTEGRATE-HTA

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Background

Health Technology Assessment (HTA), summarizes information on **medical, social, economic, ethical and legal** aspects of health technologies in a systematic, transparent, unbiased, robust manner. However, relevant issues like **patients' perspectives, context, setting and implementation** are sub-optimally assessed in current HTAs and guidance on **integrating** all relevant aspects to aid health policy / decision making are currently still missing.

Aim

To bridge HTA methodology gaps and support good HTA based health policy and decision making by identifying, adapting and developing, **methods and processes for integrating relevant issues** of health technologies suitable for the assessment of complex interventions.

Method

- **Systematic literature searches:** Medical and non medical databases (iterative search approach: Each search iteration informs subsequent searches to allow for the integration of emerging evidence / capture complexity of the search question).
- Search for key authors / reference lists / grey literature
- Search for methods of integration in HTA agencies guidelines.
- **Inclusion criteria:** Papers that describe or elaborate on formal methods, approaches or processes that facilitate the integration of relevant issues and value in HTA and transparency in policy / decision making

Results

Multi-criteria decision analysis (MCDA) in HTA

Identifying and weighting (multiple / competing) criteria and assigning performance scores (relative importance) to improve decision transparency

- ❖ **Deliberative MCDA approaches / tools (implicit):** E.g. Decision conferencing, Discrete Choice Experiments (DCE), Conjoint Analysis, and 1000 Minds software for eliciting preferences
- ❖ **Quantitative MCDA approaches (explicit):** E.g. linear aggregation $\sum(\text{weight} \times \text{score})$, Analytical Hierarchical Process (AHP), Multi-attribute Utility Theory (MAUT), Outranking and Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) for establishing weights / scores across criteria
- ❖ **The EVIDEM Framework:** MCDA Value Matrix
- ❖ **Accountability for reasonableness (A4R):** E.g. Used together with Program Budgeting and Marginal Analysis (PBMA) for integrating fairness in priority-setting processes

Approaches of integration by selected HTA agencies

- ❖ **NICE:** Integration of stakeholder perspectives in scoping process
- ❖ **SBU:** Integration of patients' perspectives throughout assessments
- ❖ **IQWiG:** No formal procedures for integration of relevant issues.

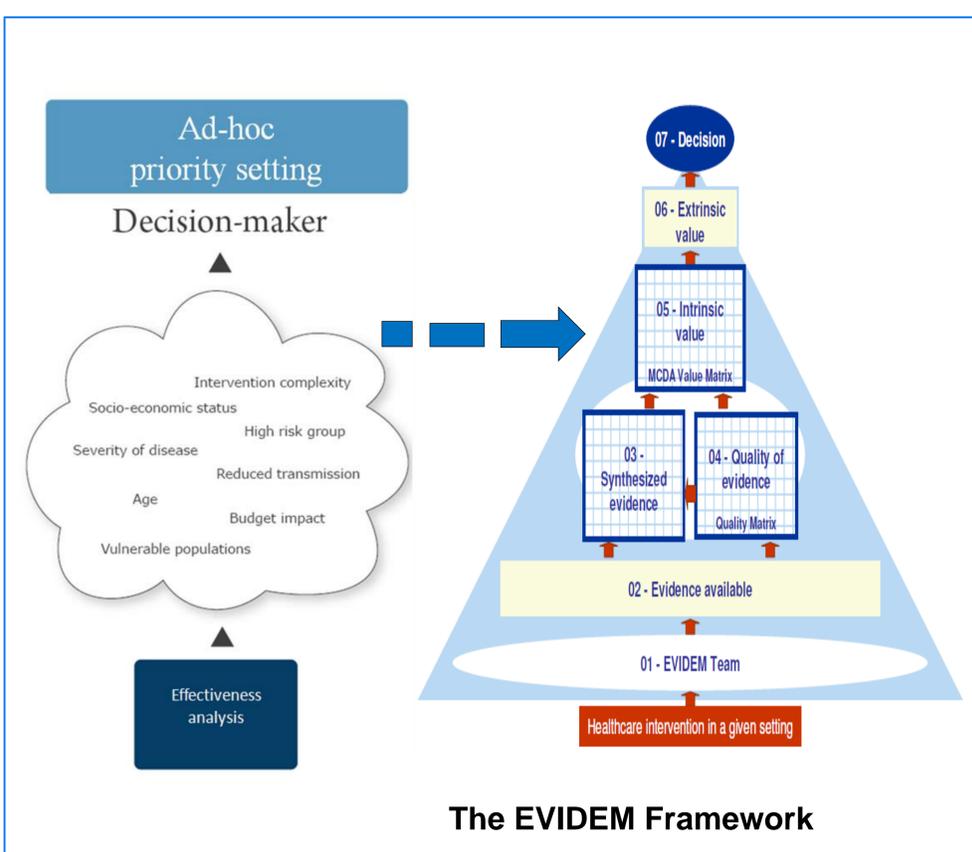


Fig. 1. Goetghebeur, MM et al. Evidence and Value: Impact on DEcisionMaking – the EVIDEM framework and potential applications. BMC Health Services Research 2008, 8:270. doi:10.1186/1472-6963-8-270

Conclusion

- Frameworks for the assessment of some relevant issues in HTA exist e.g. EUNetHTA core model, but processes of integration are still underdeveloped
- Ethics, equity, fairness, socio-cultural issues and patients' perspectives are considered in HTAs, but context and implementation remain unaddressed
- Some HTA agencies unsystematically integrate stakeholders perspectives or context criteria after assessment but no explicit processes e.g. IQWiG.
- Continuum between deliberative and quantitative MCDA approaches of integrating issues and value in HTA
- The INTEGRATE-HTA Project (www.integrate-hta.eu) aims to further develop approaches for bridging methodology gaps to achieve comprehensive, transparent and explicit HTA.

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