OP112 Project Management for EUnetHTA Non-Pharmaceutical Technologies

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Introduction. The European Network for Health Technology Assessment (EUnetHTA) facilitates and produces Health Technology Assessments (HTA) across Europe. Project Management (PM) provides the coordination and strategic overview of assessment production and enables the flow of scientific knowledge and assessment publications through collaboration and standardized processes, procedures and documentation.

Methods. EUnetHTA established a central PM function at the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for HTA (LBI-HTA) for central coordination and assessment production of non-pharmaceutical technologies. LBI-HTA subsequently pursued capability and capacity through a decentralized hub-and-spoke-PM model with six activity centers (AC) providing decentralized coordination and PM of assessments. LBI-HTA provided central oversight and supervision with training days, e-meetings and ad hoc e-mail and telephone support as required. This was complemented by standardized operating procedures (SOPs) in the online Companion Guide (CG). A qualitative data collection via electronic questionnaires collected feedback from AC-PM, LBI-HTA-PM and assessment authors. Specific questions with free-text responses assessed current experiences, challenges, recommendations, communication and task distributions of the centralized and decentralized PM processes from these different perspectives.

Results. The feedback concluded that PM is a separate, well-defined and important role for assessment coordination and production. The AC-PM received adequate training from the central PM and authors experienced no difference between projects managed centrally or decentrally. The CG and SOPs are important for guiding standard practice and allowing AC-PM to operate independently. Challenges were around extended timelines due to complex topics, external stakeholder involvement, insufficient team communication and not yet published SOPs resulting in additional central support.

Conclusions. Decentralized coordination of assessments, knowledge management and governance achieve scale, capacity and capability through a designated pool of agencies with established roles and growing experience in sustainable collaboration of HTA production. Valuable insight into the PM model's operational efficiency, avoidance of duplication and resource savings potentially provides a sustainable post 2020 European network policy and efficiency model for high quality HTA assessment production.

OP115 Expanding Perspectives: The Role Of Environmental Scanning In Health Technology Assessment

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Introduction. Environmental scan reports, usually consisting of literature reviews and/or key informant consultations (such as online surveys or personal interviews), broadly describe the current local, national, and international landscape surrounding health care practices, programs, or the use of technologies. Funding agencies and health organizations recognize environmental scans as a valuable way to inform decision-makers about the context, practice variations, and knowledge gaps surrounding a topic. Despite their increasing popularity in health technology assessment (HTA), there is limited guidance available for conducting environmental scans, variation in methods used across and within HTA agencies, and lack of consensus on an appropriate definition, purpose, and process.

Methods. We conducted an informal literature review and consulted experienced researchers from other HTA agencies to identify existing methods guidance for conducting environmental scans. We then adapted these methods to conduct an environmental scan of initiatives to accelerate cancer diagnosis.

Results. There was limited and vague guidance on the definition, purpose, and process of conducting environmental scans in the context of HTA. This introduced challenges but provided the flexibility to modify our approach to meet requestor needs. Our environmental scan included: (i) a literature review, to identify and describe relevant initiatives and to locate data on effectiveness (which is often out-of-scope for environmental scans but was of priority to the requestor); (ii) stakeholder surveys, which helped "fill in the gaps" of the literature review and helped locate additional initiatives; and (iii) targeted key informant interviews, which provided rich follow-up data on the initiatives most important to the requestor.

Conclusions. By describing our experiences adapting limited methods guidance to meet requestor needs, we hope to contribute to the evolving discussion about the definition, purpose, and process of environmental scans to inform health policy decision-making. We will reflect on challenges encountered, potential solutions, and lessons learned, and will discuss ongoing areas of methodological uncertainty.

OP122 Resource Use Measurement Issues: A Scoping Review

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Introduction. Resource use measurement is known to be a challenging and time-consuming, but essential step in economic evaluations of health care interventions. Measuring true quantities of resources utilized is of major importance for generating valid costing estimates. As consequence of the absence of a gold standard and of acknowledged guidelines, the choice of a measurement method is often based on practicality instead of methodological evidence. An overview of resource use measurement issues is currently lacking. Such overview could enhance clearance in the quality of resource use measurement methods in economic evaluations and may facilitate to opt for evidence based measurement methods in the future. This study aims to provide an overview of methodological evidence regarding resource use measurement issues in economic evaluations.