



Health Technology Assessment Policy and Methods Review Reference Committee

Communique – 13 February 2023 meeting

The Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Policy and Methods Review (Review) Reference Committee (Committee) met by video conference on 13 February 2023.

All Committee members attended as well as support staff from the Review Secretariat in the Department of Health and Aged Care (Department) and the probity adviser. A representative from Medicines Australia joined as an observer for the meeting. Professor Michael Kidd AM, Ms Jo Watson and Dr Sally Wortley provided briefings on the new National Medicines Policy (NMP) and the Department's ongoing HTA consumer engagement work.

What did the Committee discuss?

Briefing on the review of the National Medicines Policy

Prof. Kidd highlighted the importance of the new NMP (published in December 2022) as a reference document for policy development, consumer advocacy and ongoing professional development for people across the medicines sector. Prof. Kidd outlined the key revisions to the NMP which included stronger focus on person-centredness, innovation, adaptability to future health needs and continuous improvement. The Committee was advised that key revisions to the NMP were guided by group meetings with stakeholders and open consultations.

Briefing on the enhanced consumer engagement process

The Committee also invited Ms Jo Watson, Chair of the HTA Consumer Consultative Committee (CCC) and Dr Sally Wortley, lead of the Consumer Evidence and Engagement Unit (CEEU) to provide a briefing on consumer engagement work undertaken by the CCC and CEEU. The Committee was advised the HTA CCC comprises of consumer committee members from the principal HTA committees and their related subcommittees. The CCC provides strategic advice and support to the CEEU as well as hosting consumer events which included the 2022 HTA virtual consumer symposium. The Committee was advised that the CEEU is currently conducting a series of consultations under the name 'Conversations for Change' to understand how to improve the inclusion of, and communication to and by, consumers and carers in HTA. The Committee was advised that input received had indicated a desire for earlier and more active participation of consumers in the process, greater clarity around partnerships and better support and stronger communication. The Committee was advised that further discussions were planned with other groups and stakeholders. The Committee considered it would be beneficial to continue to liaise with HTA CCC and CEEU and to seek support during consultations to inform the Committee of key HTA issues for consumers.

Finalisation of the terms of reference

The Committee reviewed revisions made to the terms of reference based on feedback received from stakeholders (see [communique](#) for the Committee meeting on 27 January 2023 for details of revisions made).

The Committee noted certain terms used in HTA have different meanings to different people and there is some debate about appropriate terminology (particularly in relation to references to patients and consumers). The Committee agreed that a glossary should be prepared to support the terms of reference and to ensure that it is not interpreted as excluding certain groups.

The Committee endorsed the terms of reference and noted that it would be submitted for Government approval. The Committee noted that the terms of reference would be published once they were agreed by Government.

Initial discussion of workplan including schedule for public consultation

The Committee held an initial discussion about a workplan for the HTA Review. The Committee agreed that it should develop a work plan and aim to publish details around the same time as publication of the terms of reference. The Committee agreed that the work plan should detail consultations and timing of documents to be prepared by the HTA Expert.

The Committee agreed that it would consult at multiple stages of the HTA Review and that consultations should include an opportunity for all interested stakeholders to provide written submissions, and face to face discussions on particular issues. The Committee also considered it would be important to consult with stakeholders on options to understand the impact of any potential recommendations.

Work to be undertaken by the HTA expert

The Committee noted minor revisions to clarify the proposed scope of work to be completed by the HTA expert based on its discussion on the matter at its previous meeting. The Committee agreed the scope of work and agreed that the Department commence processes to engage the HTA expert.