



OPEN CONSULTATION ON A PROPOSED UPDATED DEFINITION OF HEALTH TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

March-April 2019

INTRODUCTION

An international joint task group co-led and convened by the International Network of Agencies for Health Technology Assessment (INAHTA) and Health Technology Assessment international (HTAi), with representatives from the European Network for Health Technology Assessment (EUnetHTA), the Network to Strengthen Collaboration among Health Technology Assessment Agencies in Asia (HTAsiaLink), the Health Technology Assessment Network of the Americas (RedETSA), the HTA Glossary English Editorial Board, the World Health Organization (WHO), and ISPOR – the professional society for health economics and outcomes research, proposes an updated definition of health technology assessment (HTA) that consolidates and simplifies the various definitions in existence and which reflects the current and emerging realities of HTA.

The joint task group is now issuing this call for input from the HTA community to build broad consensus on the updated definition of HTA.

THE PROPOSED UPDATED DEFINITION

The joint task group proposes the following updated definition of HTA. Further information about the joint task group, the guiding principles and process followed to develop this definition along with next steps is provided in the Appendix.

Health Technology Assessment (HTA) is defined as:

A multidisciplinary process that uses explicit and scientifically robust methods to assess the value of using a health technology at different points in its lifecycle. The process is comparative, systematic, transparent and involves multiple stakeholders. The purpose is to inform health policy and decision-making to promote an efficient, sustainable, equitable and high-quality health system.

Note 1: A [health technology](#) is an intervention, health product or service developed to prevent, diagnose or treat medical conditions; promote health; provide rehabilitation; or organize healthcare delivery. The intervention can be a test, device, medicine, vaccine, procedure, program or system.

Note 2: The dimensions of value for a health technology may be assessed by examining its clinical effectiveness and safety, costs and economic implications, wider implications for the patient and caregivers, and any ethical, social, cultural, or legal issues, as well as organisational and environmental aspects. The overall value may vary depending on the perspective taken, and the decision context.

Note 3: HTA is a process that may include several activities related to the lifecycle of a health technology. This comprises identification (e.g. horizon scanning), prioritisation of what to assess, assessment (evaluation of effects and impacts), appraisal (determining overall value), and implementation and monitoring (e.g. re-assessment).

HOW TO PROVIDE INPUT

Comments on the proposed updated definition are welcomed from individuals as well as official comments on behalf of organizations. Comments are to be provided in writing and sent to the INAHTA secretariat at HTAdefinition@ihe.ca

DEADLINE FOR COMMENTS: 30 April 2019

Appendix.

ABOUT THE JOINT TASK GROUP

The joint task group was founded in 2018 and includes representatives from the following international and regional organizations:

INAHTA:	Brian O'Rourke (co-Chair), Karen Macpherson, Michelle Mujoomdar, Tara Schuller
HTAi:	Wija Oortwijn (co-Chair), Gert Jan van der Wilt
HTAsiaLink:	Jasmine Pwu, Dong-Ah Park, Jeonghoon Ahn
EUnetHTA:	Iñaki Imaz-Iglesia, Pablo Chalco-Orrego
RedETSA:	Alicia Framarin, Verónica Gallegos
HTA Glossary:	Tracy Merlin
WHO:	Sue Hill, Sarah Garner, Adriana Velazquez-Berumen
ISPOR:	Finn Boerlum Kristensen, Kelly Lenahan

The objective of the task group is to update the definition of HTA. This initiative was begun after a task group review that concluded that it is feasible and valuable to update the definition by consolidating and simplifying the many different definitions of HTA into one.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES & PROCESS FOR UPDATING THE DEFINITION

The joint task group developed a set of principles to guide the update of the definition, which state that the definition should be:

- Simple, use minimal jargon or language not easily understood by non-native English speakers.
- Short, memorable.
- Descriptive of what HTA is, including the multi-disciplinary nature of HTA. It should not be limited to only health economics, for example.
- Easily translatable to other languages.
- Acceptable to stakeholder groups associated with HTA.
- Future looking or open to the future so the definition remains relevant for many years. (i.e., HTM, HTO, HTR, lifecycle HTA, etc.).
- Congruent with ISO standards.

The draft definition presented in this open consultation with the HTA community was developed through a consensus-building process among the organizations represented in the joint task group. The feedback gathered from this open consultation will be considered by the joint task group as they proceed in their work to finalize the definition.

Once the final definition is ready, it will be shared with the HTA community by several means including the [HTA Glossary](#), organizational websites of the joint task group members and their newsletters, and publication of an article in the *International Journal of Technology Assessment in Health Care* and *Value in Health*.