

PAYER INVOLVEMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR A SUCCESSFUL EUROPEAN HEALTH TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

The International Association of Mutual Benefit Societies (AIM) is the leading international association of not-for-profit healthcare insurers. AIM welcomes the validation in COREPER of the provisional interinstitutional agreement between the Council and the European Parliament on Health Technology Assessment (HTA). The text will lead to better patient protection, give enough space for national healthcare systems to adapt, all while supporting evidence generation on medicines and high-risk medical devices' added therapeutic value. However, stakeholders are of paramount importance to the functioning of the future HTA framework.

Proper payer involvement will be crucial!

AIM members are important end users of health technology assessments. In the future European HTA framework, they must be involved in discussions about methodologies to be used, data requirements and priority setting. AIM calls for commitment of the members of the Coordination Group to make sure that the provisions on stakeholder involvement included in the legislation are conducive to meaningful exchanges with relevant stakeholders including payers. In this respect, more specific guidance on when stakeholders must be invited to the Coordination Group meetings is necessary. Equally, stakeholders must not only be observers but be in a position to also contribute to the discussions in the Coordination Group. Of course, an appropriate policy against conflicts of interest and undue influence from stakeholders into the work of the Coordination Group is necessary.

A framework to support evidence generation on medicines and high-risk medical devices' added therapeutic value for the benefit of patients

A permanent HTA cooperation framework based on a dedicated legislation will help deliver on sustainable evidence generation on added therapeutic value for the benefit of healthcare systems and patients. AIM appreciates the fact that co-legislators specified the content of the methodology for joint clinical assessment further in comparison with the initial European Commission text. This was a key demand of AIM, already voiced at the early stages of the negotiations on the dossier. The agreed framework will also level the playing field between Member States regarding joint clinical assessment, while allowing Member States to do context-specific additional assessments. AIM also embraces that high-risk medical devices are in the scope of the legislation.

Supporting timely access to quality healthcare products

Timely phasing-in of the framework is crucial. A number of new products are expected in the area of cancer medicines. Some of these products that have already or that will reach the market are advanced therapeutic medicinal products. They pose very difficult challenges to health technology assessment bodies and payers throughout the European Union. Their promising efficiency claims are in effect unverifiable, while their price poses strong affordability issues to healthcare systems and patients. It is therefore very important that the EU fosters as soon as possible the generation of clinical evidence on these medicines to support their appropriate assessment which will, in turn, make sure that patients actually benefit from the best quality medicines.

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