

ASCERTAIN: New Horizon Europe research project to improve the affordability and sustainability of innovative health technologies

Rotterdam, 28.11.2022 The affordability of newly approved innovative health technologies (IHTs) is challenging in many health systems. Health care payers and health care industry across the European Union (EU) have explored different ways of defining payment for new products. Starting in December 2022 the HORIZON funded project ASCERTAIN (Affordability and Sustainability improvements through new pricing, Cost- Effectiveness and Reimbursement models to Appraise iNnovative health technologies) addresses the need of patients, physicians, payers, regulators, and manufacturers to improve the affordability and accessibility to innovative health technologies (including pharmaceuticals) in Europe.

“Making high-cost drugs more and faster accessible in Europe”

The Erasmus University Rotterdam works together with nine consortium partners: Comenius University Bratislava, Gesundheit Österreich GmbH, University of Oslo, Association Internationale de la Mutualité (AIM), Nuromedia GmbH, European Hematology Association (EHA), Myeloma Patients Europe (MPE), Chino SRL and OptiMedis.

Prof. Carin Uyl-de Groot from Erasmus School of Health Policy & Management and ASCERTAIN project coordinator states: “Our mission is to make high-cost drugs and technologies more and faster accessible in Europe. The project gives us the opportunity to work on it.”

Tomáš Tesař from the Comenius University Bratislava adds: “Our goal is to develop a sustainable solution. We are happy to contribute our expertise in the field of medical devices and reimbursement”.

Kate Morgan from Myeloma Patients Europe argues: “It is important for us to identify patients’ needs and preferences and to include their perspective when developing new models. Also, there are huge inequalities in medicines access across Europe, so we are happy to contribute to a project exploring innovative pricing and reimbursements models and ways of addressing this issue”.

Finding a balance between all stakeholders’ needs

ASCERTAIN aims to enhance current methods of (value-based) pricing, cost-effectiveness modeling, threshold-setting, reimbursement, and payment, to set affordable prices, and to facilitate a cyclic assessment of broader societal benefits including costs and risks. It seeks to find a sustainable balance between access to affordable technologies, the need to stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship, and the need to consider the environmental impact of innovations.

Sustainable tools that improve transparency, reward innovation, and accelerate access

Guided by a conceptual framework integrating pricing, health technology assessment and reimbursement/payment, ASCERTAIN will develop open-access, easy to use, policy-supporting tools including (i) pricing models, (ii) value assessment models, and (iii) reimbursement models, which will be adaptable to country-specific conditions and patient preferences. These tools will improve transparency and accountability of decision-making, reduce uncertainty for all stakeholders, reward innovation in areas of high unmet need, accelerate access for patients, and support long-term planning and sustainability. Further, these tools will be developed, tested, and validated for three use cases, including precision cancer medicine, cell- and gene therapy, and medical devices or in vitro diagnostics.

The multinational, multidisciplinary ASCERTAIN consortium is complemented by an international advisory board consisting of key stakeholders, with whom the policy-supporting tools will be co-created. All tools will be hosted on a cloud-based, publicly accessible, user-friendly platform following open science principles. The ASCERTAIN project starts in December 2022 and ends November 2026. It receives funding from the Horizon Europe Framework Programme under grant agreement No 101094938.

Collaborating partners

[Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam](#)

[Univerzita Komenskeho V Bratislave](#)

[Gesundheit Osterreich GmbH](#)

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[Association Internationale de la Mutualité](#)

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[Chino SRL](#)

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Press contact

Name: Prof.dr Carin Uyl-de Groot

Position: Professor of Health Technology Assessment and Director of the Institute for Medical Technology Assessment (iMTA), Project coordinator of the Horizon Europe project ASCERTAIN

Erasmus School of Health Policy & Management (ESHPM)

Erasmus University of Rotterdam

E-Mail: uyl@eshpm.eur.nl

Telephone: +31 10 4081583