

Health technology assessment as a tool for medical devices management in hospitals

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Summary

While health technology assessment proved to be a standard for drug and therapeutic intervention effectiveness analyses on (national) regulator's level, the field of medical devices has resisted an application of HTA methods for a long time. The problem is in expressing the outcomes of a device application, since (patient-reported) health-related quality of life (e.g. QALYs) cannot be used in most cases. Only recently it was shown that the problem appears above all when we are appraising diagnostic devices, while the therapeutic ones can be assessed together with the entire intervention. In diagnostic devices, the idea of multiple-criteria analytic methods utilization brought more interest and quite some progress. In the last years, HTA methods are more and more used also on a hospital level. This approach, called hospital-based HTA, has different objectives and employs different methods than the traditional HTA approach. In hospitals, HTA methods are usually applied to strategic decisions, device procurement and management, and general organizational issues. All of a sudden, medical devices are the main field, where hospital-based HTA proved beneficial. The paper will show examples of different ways, how HTA can be applied on a hospital level. Typical examples of utilization for decisions on device selection and procurement, intra-hospital organization, and/or strategic decisions are shown.