

Introduction. The Department of Management and Incorporation of Technologies and Innovation in Health (DGITIS) acts as Conitec's Executive Secretariat. Among its attributions, it promotes the public/patient involvement in the health technology assessment (HTA) process. Recently, Conitec has been working on the inclusion of patient's testimonials about their illness experience in the plenary sessions, that is, the monthly meeting where technologies are assessed.

Methods. To support the action of including patient reporting in Conitec's HTA process, DGITIS developed research on HTA agencies websites worldwide. The main criteria was the inclusion of patients' reports in their Committee meetings. DGITIS contacted some of these agencies and requested a listserv question to the International Network of Agencies for Health Technology Assessment (INAHTA) members. These findings supported the DGITIS for the inclusion of patient participation in Conitec's meetings, from the selection process to the actual participation.

Results. For the Conitec's HTA process, the patients' participation should occur in the prior session to the public consultation, guaranteeing the inclusion of their perspective since the recommendation process beginning. Hence, every demand for incorporation to be discussed at Conitec's meeting should be preceded by a public call for patients with the clinical condition. The DGITIS will also hold preparatory meetings, which will serve as moments for shared construction of knowledge and literacy.

Conclusions. The nomination process, so far, has been grounded as a consensus among the patients. Thus, Conitec acts as a mediator, connecting the involved stakeholders, in a way that they can autonomously organize themselves and indicate the main representative and an alternate one. With the inclusion of the patient's perspective in the Conitec's meeting, another form of patient participation was opened in the HTA process. Therefore, the consolidation of this participation space is feasible and contributes to enrich the Brazilian HTA process.

OP318 Health Technology Assessment And Decision-Making Processes: The Purchase Of Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technology

Maria Maia (maria.maia@kit.edu)

Introduction. Medical devices play an essential role in health care, but they are also a leading causes of increasing healthcare expenditures. The purchase of technologies and the determination of how and when they should be used are among the most important decisions made by decision-makers, at the institutional level.

The present research focuses on the Portuguese health system and sheds light on the characterization of decision-making process by those involved in Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) purchases.

Methods. To characterize the decision-making process, results from forty questionnaires and twenty-seven semi-structured interviews with key decision-makers were merged, using a mixed method approach. To assess competences for decision-

making, a questionnaire was applied, and Exploratory and Confirmatory Factorial Analysis conducted.

Results. Cost and suppliers' characteristics are seen as the most important indicators to guide decisions. The decision is undertaken by a committee, in a bottom-up process, characterized by a bounded rationality, influenced by intuition and a consultant decision-maker. The reasoning and justification for selection of the committee members is unclear. The decision process is considered to be bureaucratic, time-consuming and long. Patients are negatively perceived as stakeholders in the process. Few studies were performed (mostly related to the workload of the Radiology Department) to support the decision and no national or international health technology assessment (HTA) study was used in the process, to guide decisions. Decision-makers have limited knowledge and training in areas of decision-making in the areas of health informatics, health economics and especially HTA. This may limit their ability to truly understand the future implications of their purchase decisions.

Conclusions. To foster HTA in decision-making processes, recommendations are made, in particular, to: (i) establish an HTA in-house unit, able to carry out studies considering the hospital context and aiming to inform managerial local decisions (ii) promote a team comprised of technology assessment multidisciplinary researchers but also professionals from the health institution able to carry out HTA studies (iii) foster common languages and values to increase uptake of HTA studies.

OP321 The Scale And Variation Of The Impact Of COVID-19 On Prescribing Of Medicines In Primary Care In Wales

Will Hardy (w.hardy@bangor.ac.uk), Dan McManus, Susan Murphy and Dyfrig Hughes

Introduction. Prescribing of medicines in primary care in Wales has been exceptional in 2020 due to COVID-19 and the associated changes to the delivery of health services. The changes are likely to have harmful, albeit unintended, consequences, including disruption of pharmacy stock management; unpredictable changes in prescribing; and interruption to patients' supply of medicines and reduced medication adherence. Changes in prescribing are unlikely to be distributed evenly across the country or population. Therefore, this study aimed to identify changes in GP prescribing compared with previous years, the variation of these changes, and factors related to the variation in changes, to identify patient subgroups for whom the impact is disproportionate.

Methods. We identified medicines of interest where concerns around prescribing have been raised and, for each of these medicines, retrieved monthly prescribing data for each GP practice in Wales (N = 492). We then linked these data with other publicly available data (for example, practice size, indices of multiple deprivation, disease prevalence).

We developed a novel approach to measure the impact of COVID-19 on GP prescribing. We compared observed with expected prescribing volume projected via time series modelling and differences were related to patient and practice characteristics using general estimating equations.